



A NEW LEAF

a creative publication of Marijuana Anonymous

January 2026

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Letter from A New Leaf Publications

Greetings Fellows,

Happy New Year! We at A New Leaf are excited to see what 2026 will bring and look forward to how upcoming developments will add to Marijuana Anonymous and the support that you, dear readers, receive.

Seeking Submissions

Next month, February, is Black History Month! In honor of Black History Month, we encourage submissions from Black MA members highlighting their experiences in recovery to feature in next month's issue of A New Leaf. Due to our publication schedule, please submit stories for February ASAP. Typically, it can take two or more months before submissions are published, so please be patient if you've submitted content that has not yet been featured.

MA World Services' Literature committee is always seeking longer stories of 1,000-4,000 words, especially more diverse stories that are not currently represented in MA literature. We are eager and excited to collect these stories for a future Book of Member Stories being developed. For more info about submitting your story, visit: MA12.org/Stories.

Connecting with ANLP Liaisons

Liaisons serve as a vital connection between ANLP and members by sharing ANLP-related announcements and bringing members' suggestions to ANLP.

- Please continue to share ANLP announcements using ANLP12.org/pitchpoints.
- For more information about being a Liaison, visit ANLP12.org/Liaisons.
- We want to connect with you if you're interested in being of service as a Liaison (or already serving as one). Email LC@MA12.org to join our email list.

Being of Service to ANLP in 2026!

The new volunteer position of Correspondence Editor is still available! Their primary responsibility is to communicate with members about their submissions. Learn more at ANLP12.org/service. Additionally, many of ANLP's current Officers and Editors will be ending their terms in 2026, so there are other ways to be of service opening soon. Your service is more helpful than you know! Email Chair@ANLP12.org for more information.

As always, we thank you for contributing to A New Leaf Publications. You help us grow and carry the message of recovery. We encourage folks to learn more about ANLP's service commitments and invite anyone who is curious to come to one of our meetings to learn more about ANLP.

Wishing you serenity, courage and wisdom in this new year!

Yours in Service,

P.S. Sometimes these emails get cut off because they are filled with so much amazing information! If at the bottom you see [Message clipped] please click "View entire message."

Visit the Pages from the Past – our revitalized A New Leaf Archives

A New Leaf's Purpose

A *New Leaf* celebrates MA member creativity and seeks to publish the message of hope in recovery. With your many wonderful and creative submissions, **A New Leaf continues to unify us in our shared experience as marijuana addicts.**

The articles contained in A New Leaf are the sole opinions of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole. MA is not affiliated with—and does not endorse or accept contributions from—any outside enterprise.

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Turning 40 Written by, River B.

My birthday is in the fall, often landing on or shortly after the autumn equinox. This year in celebrating with a weekend at my parent's cottage on the shores of Lake Huron with four of my closest friends, who have all agreed to a sober weekend in support of my new recovery. I am so grateful to have friends like them.

This will be my first birthday sober since weed was legalized where I live. Something about a sober September birthday, here in the early days of recovery, has me reflecting on new beginnings. Perhaps because my birthday always coincided with the return to school, the fall has always felt like the start of a new year even more so than January. And this year I'm entering a new decade, which of course has me reflecting in the past decade and how much is different in my life from the last ten years.

Sobriety, on the surface, feels like the biggest change of course, but I have also grown in my ability to love myself and others, and in my understanding of my Higher Power. Every day recovery brings new lessons into my life and asks me to let go of old habits and unhealthy

patterns. Like the trees dropping their leaves in preparation for the spring that is coming, I hope to let go of what no longer serves me so I can continue to grow in my recovery in new ways.

Choosing Life *Written by, Mirabelle H.*

I smoked for the first time when I was 16. I didn't feel anything physically, but emotionally, I felt guilt—like I was stepping over a line I wasn't ready to cross. I told myself it would be different when I was older, when it was “okay.” So I made a deal with myself: I'd wait until I turned 21 and graduated college. Then it would be fine.

But the truth is, I never really gave life a chance to show me what it could be. Instead of staying open to opportunities or facing my discomfort head-on, I took matters into my own hands. I started smoking marijuana regularly—and I didn't stop for 11 years.

I got sober when I turned 32. It felt like a new beginning. I made it ten months—ten solid, challenging, important months. And then one day, I found myself thinking, “What's the point?” That thought led me back to using. The relapse lasted two months.

It took time, humility, and a lot of soul-searching, but eventually, I came back to sobriety. I found Marijuana Anonymous. At first, I'd show up to the online meetings still high. I didn't know how to do it any other way—but I showed up. That was the beginning.

Every day since then has been a challenge. Some days feel lighter than others. Some feel like uphill climbs. But I've learned to show up anyway. I've learned that I'm stronger than I ever gave myself credit for. I've learned that I'm capable of change—and I've proven it to myself every single day.

As of today, I've been sober for 876 days. That number means something to me—not just as a measure of time, but as a reminder of every decision, every temptation resisted, every moment I chose to stay the course.

If you're reading this and you're struggling, I want you to know this: If I can do it, you can too. No matter how far down the path you feel, there is always a way back. You're not alone. And it's never too late to choose something better.

Sobriety didn't come with a dramatic epiphany. It came day by day, sometimes hour by hour. Some days are still hard. Others feel lighter. But each day sober is a decision I make—a choice I keep making.

Today, I've been sober for 876 days. That number matters to me. It marks every moment I've chosen clarity over escape, life over numbness. I've learned that I'm stronger than I ever believed. I've learned how to sit with discomfort, how to feel fully, and how to forgive myself. If you're struggling, I want you to hear this clearly: If I can do it, you can too. No matter how far you've gone, no matter how many times you've relapsed, there is always a path forward. Sobriety is possible. You're not broken. And you are not alone.

Making it to Dry Land

Written by, Lee N.

A way to stay afloat. That's what marijuana was for me. My therapist (cringing at myself for being a living, breathing queer, Jewish stereotype by starting a sentence this way but...if the shoe fits) recently shared with me a parable in which someone had compared their addiction to a life raft. Something to cling to while out at sea — to keep one safe from drowning in deep and turbulent inner depths. The waters of emotion, trauma, self-loathing.

It was early 2020. My former husband and I had split up in December of 2019 and I was, figuratively speaking, being asphyxiated by my feelings. Grief, anxiety, existential despair, lots and lots of good old shame. While I'd never been a big drinker (chalk that up to body chemistry and personal preference), I'd smoked weed casually for years. Mostly with friends, mostly evenings and weekends. In one of the many internet holes in which I often spent my evenings, I came across a clip of Jenny Slate, a favorite comedian and fellow sassy Jewess. In said clip, she referred to having developed an abusive relationship with marijuana as a coping mechanism while getting through her divorce. I feel quite sure now that this is not how most people start to overuse substances—but for me, a lightbulb went off. I made an intentional choice. I am going to start smoking a crap-ton of weed to deal with this pain. In keeping with my nerdy, over-achieving ways, I decided to become an excellent, Grade A, no-holds-barred pothead. It truly seemed like the best option at the time.

A couple of months later, the pandemic hit, and with it the opportunity to spiral even further into isolation and addiction. I had never been good at rolling joints but took on the task of improving said skill with the fervor of an origami master. As the quarantine stretched from weeks into months, I spent my evenings smoking impeccably-crafted cigarettes on the stoop, communing with the small brown rabbit who appeared in my overgrown backyard at dusk each day (in the gender roles of my painfully heteronormative marriage, my ex had obviously been in charge of lawncare).

To stretch the metaphor a bit further—what happens when we are no longer adrift but continue to cling to our raft? We end up lugging around an immensely weighted, wet and stinky piece of wood. What previously appeared as salvation is now nothing but a burden. And cling I did. My habit did not fade as the initial stages of the pandemic began to wane, as we returned to jobs and social lives and being in close proximity once again. If anything, I doubled down on my addiction, which had now become an integrated part of my personality.

I smoked my way through the selling of the New England Victorian we had renovated, several solitary months residing in my architect grandfather's modern, echo-y home, moving into a new apartment in the town next door. I numbed out through my first post-divorce relationship, the constant sexual harassment of a corporate sales job, and later, before my serving shifts at an upscale chicken spot. It went on. I rid myself of all my belongings, saved what fit into three large suitcases, and moved abroad. I made new friends, improved my Spanish, and started a small culinary business. I did it all stoned.

I'm no longer interested in shaming or judging this version of myself. I know she was doing the best she could at the time—in her messy, drugged-out, forgetful, and often inconsiderate way. If you ask me what finally pushed me to make a change, I'm not sure I could give you an exact answer. Failed attempts at moderation had made it clear to me that I had a problem. The aforementioned therapist gently suggested I may want to cut back. A psychic reported to me that my spirit guides weren't able to get me the messages they desired to due to my constantly altered state.

The truth is, once I opened myself up to the idea of quitting, the universe swooped in swiftly with support. My father's cousin, a fellow food-obsessed chef, visited Mexico City around this time. With decades of sobriety under his belt, he candidly shared with me his stories. I even helped him navigate his way to a meeting during his visit. When I griped to a dear friend that I had an inkling that a recovery community would be helpful but AA just didn't feel right for me, she was the one who told me about MA, which I had not been aware existed.

I signed on to my first meeting (quite stoned) on a Tuesday evening in late November. It was an LGBTQ+ inclusive group, and minutes after it began I watched the pages of participants grow and grow—there were dozens of folks. I saw a stunning range of diversity among the little squares—in age, gender, race and ethnicity. Yet we all had one essential thing in common—the desire to stop using marijuana.

This is the part that really felt like a moment of divine intervention, if you ask me. One of the first people to share at the meeting was someone I knew. Not like knew, knew—but knew from the internet. Someone in the food world I was familiar with—who I had followed for years. Someone I held as a role model, to whom I related.

Now, I can't tell you the chances of this happening, but to me they seem pretty damn slim. If this person could be such a badass, someone I admired so greatly, and also be struggling with addiction to weed—maybe I wasn't such a disaster after all. Maybe I was just a sensitive, creative person who had gone through a really hard few years. Maybe there was still potential for me to have the life and career and relationships that I dreamed of, to be successful, while also admitting that I needed help.

It's been close to two months now since that first meeting, and I haven't had a desire to get high since. Many refer to the "pink cloud" of early sobriety, that in some ways it's easier in the beginning—with the haze finally lifted, the possibilities seem endless. This might be true, but to be honest, it's also been hell. Detox from marijuana abuse is real and it sucks. I spent much of the first month sober weeping, trembling, snapping at loved ones, running on little-to-no sleep. Now that my system has started to level out, there's more to deal with. Emotions I previously numbed, relationships whose foundations are in need of repair, a physical body that requires some TLC. But overall, what I feel most is relief. To be fully awake. To be attuned to myself, my needs and my senses. To be back on dry land once again, alive and unencumbered.

Breath of Fresh Air:

A Guided Practice of Breathing and Meditation

Written by, Jules M.

While meditating one day, I had a realization... I wasn't craving cannabis, I was really craving a deep breath and the relief that accompanies it. In active using, I was constantly doing breathing practices. I would take the biggest inhale I could, hold in my breath, take a couple more sips of air, retain the breath as long as I could, and all the worries would slip away on the exhale.

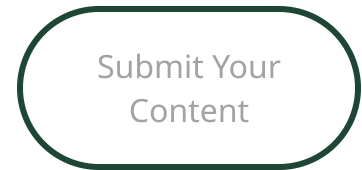
I understand the value of intentional breathing practices as a yoga teacher and student of yoga therapy. As a person in recovery, I deeply honor our 11th Step practices of conscious contact with powers greater than ourselves along with prayer and meditation. I made a recording of the sound bath with meditation that I offer. Please feel free to bookmark and use it any time! The

SHARE

Your contributions to MA literature, and sharing of experience, strength, and hope through submissions to *A New Leaf* and all other MA publications, serve as an inspiration.

A New Leaf celebrates creativity and invites members to share recovery-focused stories, poems, song lyrics, prayers, meditations, break up letters to “Mary Jane,” inspirational quotes heard in a meeting, artwork, comics, illustrations, photos, and crosswords or puzzles. We seek to publish the message of hope in your journey.

For a list of suggested prompts visit: MA12.org/Prompts



Want to share *A New Leaf* with others?

Provide this link to sign-up:
MA12.org/New-Leaf

ART

A NEW LEAF PUBLICATIONS CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS

We gather monthly to
ignite our creativity,
write together,
discuss how creativity
and recovery intersect,
share our work and
support one another
as we use writing as
a part of our
recovery toolbox!

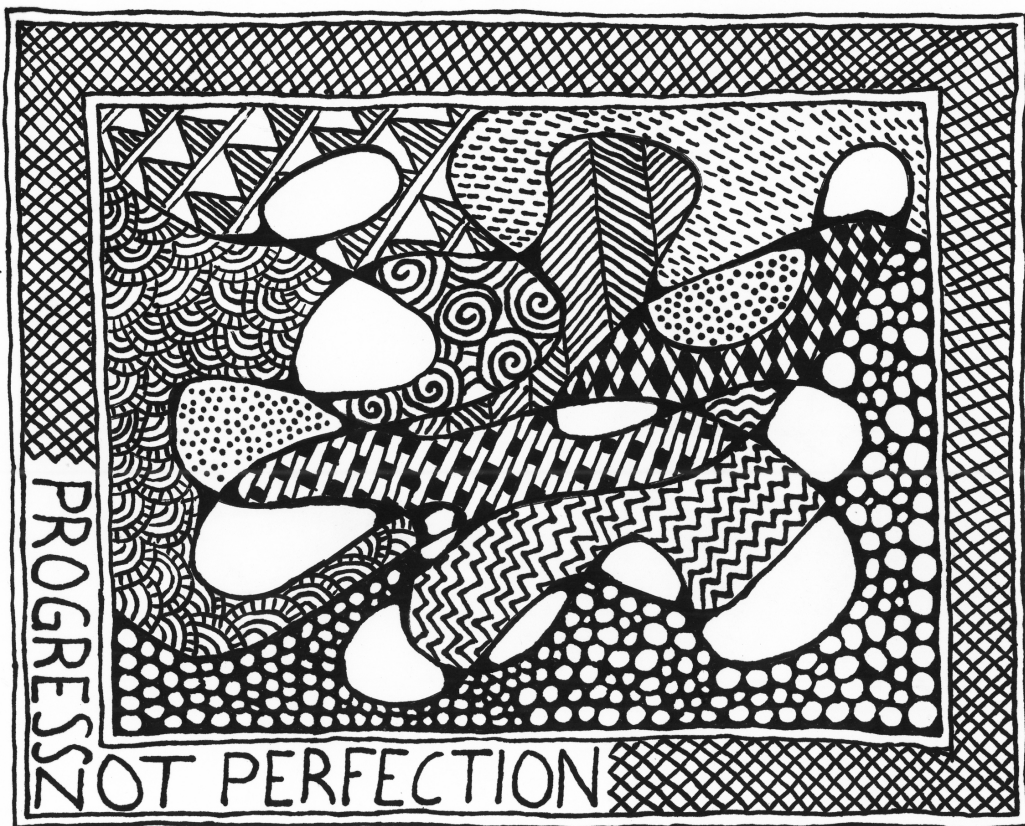


**1ST SATURDAY
EACH MONTH**

**10 - 11:30 AM PACIFIC
1 - 2:30 PM EASTERN
5 - 6:30 PM UTC**

ZOOM LINK: [MA12.ORG/ANLP/WORKSHOP](https://ma12.org/anlp/workshop)

Progress Not Perfection
Artist: Chris P.



Heard in a Meeting



**Even if I don't get this, I
may still get something.**

INSPIRE

*Sharing program slogans,
quotes, and words of wisdom
heard in a meeting!*

We honor "what you see here, let it stay here,"
and anything included in this section of A New
Leaf will always be shared anonymously.

Share your Favorite Sayings

POETRY

Marijuana
Written by, Dannie H.

My heart ached for so long.

And you told me it was alright.
Realizing to smoke is pain,
I thought about you all night.
July of my last trip,
Ugly, boring, and a shame.
A newfound freedom
Never fiending for you again.
A new leaf I have turned, fake friend!

Acrostic Poem

Written by, Jessyka

Pulling ourselves through
Reeling from all we've done
One day at a time, we
Get over this illness
Regain our lives
Expect bumps in the road
Support we receive from fellowship is unmatched
Sometimes we long to go back
Not doing so
Only further instils in us
The hope that we can continue
People are there who care
Even if nobody in your day to day life
Realises what this addiction is like
Fellows do, they
Echo all that we've endured
Continuing on this road is something I know I need to do
To have half a chance of succeeding
I need my meetings
Only now do I see, the importance of that phrase, to
Never go back again is the aim, but 'progress' is my friend

Solve It Again

Written by, Aurelie E.

Life isn't a puzzle with edges that stay,
nor a riddle that's answered in only one day.
It bends and it shifts, like the tide or the rain—
you wake every morning, and solve it again.

The pieces don't fit the same as before,
new doors may appear where there once was no door.
The map keeps on changing, the path twists and bends,
yet each step reminds you: beginnings are friends.

The weight of tomorrow is lighter than fear,
for meaning is made in the now, and right here.
There's beauty in struggle, in loss, and in gain—
to rise with the dawn, and solve it again.

So cherish the questions, let wonder remain,
the answers will come, but never the same.
Life's not a straight line, but a dance without end—
each morning's a chance to solve it again.

This Month's Step, Tradition, Question, and Concept for Service

First Step

We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable.

In working the 1st Step, we had at last found the courage to face the truth and tell it; we were practicing the principle of HONESTY.

First Tradition

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon MA unity.

First Question

Has using marijuana stopped being fun?

First Concept for Service

The Marijuana Anonymous Service Structure was created to give the groups the freedom to carry out our society's primary purpose of carrying the message to marijuana addicts.

CONGRATS
CELEBRATING 270 YEARS OF SOBRIETY

District	Name	Date	Years
DISTRICT 2 - SAN FRANCISCO & EAST BAY, CA	JOHN L.	12/15/1984	41 YEARS
DISTRICT 4 - WASHINGTON STATE	THOR H.	12/6/2000	25 YEARS
DISTRICT 5 - ORANGE COUNTY, CA	AMANDA	12/17/2014	11 YEARS
	BILL G.	12/7/1993	32 YEARS
	COLIN	12/3/2011	14 YEARS
	GARY R.	12/10/1990	35 YEARS
	HOLLI R.	12/20/2023	2 YEARS
	LAUREN G.	12/30/2023	2 YEARS
	MICKEY	12/13/2024	1 YEAR!
	MIKE MCK.	12/19/2001	24 YEARS
	NATALIE O.	12/23/2021	4 YEARS
	REBECCA W.	12/28/2023	2 YEARS
DISTRICT 7 - S. LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA	JEFF M.	12/6/1996	29 YEARS
DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK METRO	TIFFANY A.	12/12/2018	7 YEARS
	JOHN L.	12/12/2018	7 YEARS
DISTRICT 11 - OREGON, CA	SARAH S.	11/27/2022	3 YEARS
DISTRICT 20 - SAN DIEGO, CA	MIKE D.	12/16/2006	19 YEARS
DISTRICT 22 - NEW ENGLAND STATE	JANICE O.	01/02/2023	3 YEARS
DISTRICT 27 - INDEPENDENT MA MEETINGS	JOEL R.	01/05/2021	5 YEARS
GROVER BEACH, CA	BRYAN R.	12/20/2023	2 YEARS
DETROIT MICHIGAN	DEBRA W.	01/08/2024	2 YEARS

Share your Sobriety Anniversary in *A New Leaf*

We want to celebrate your year(s) of recovery! If your sobriety birthday has occurred within the last two months, please submit it by the 1st of the month you would like it published, with your

Name, District or Location, Sobriety Date, and Number of Years, to

anewleafpublications.org/birthday

Self-Supporting through our own Contributions...

A New Leaf Publications provides these emails as a free and complimentary service. However, we do incur a monthly cost of \$115 for the email distribution service MailChimp (\$1,380/year) plus the additional time paid to our Special Workers.

Click to make a contribution

If you enjoy these emails and our others, including [Carry the Message](#) and the [Daily Dose](#) please consider setting up a recurring contribution on our website today to support our efforts.

Marijuana Anonymous Resources

Meeting Finder

Marijuana Anonymous has 300+ weekly meetings that can be attended all over the world virtually and by phone, with in-person meetings available in some areas as well.

Need support? [Contact us.](#)

[Find a Meeting](#) →

Speaker Tapes Podcast

Experience, strength, and hope on the go! Anywhere... Anytime... Available wherever you listen to podcasts...

Any opinions expressed within these recordings are only those of the individuals sharing.

[Listen](#) →

MA's App 2.0

Find meetings easily with the Meeting Finder, track your sobriety with virtual tokens, read MA literature in e-book format, enjoy daily meditations, explore pamphlets and more.

[Download the App](#) →

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