



February 2022

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Loss and Longing

I was adopted from Asia as a baby and raised in a middle-class white family in the midwest. My adopted Dad turned out to be an alcoholic and my Mom divorced him when I was around 6 years old. I moved once a year for the next 5 years, ending up in a different school each time. So not only was I the new kid, I was sometimes the only Asian in the entire school and also the only one in my class. Growing up, I always struggled with a sense of identity because I looked different from everyone else around me.

The first time I used I was 14, and I remember that first hit feeling elated, not a care in the world, and I just wanted more. I started using regularly at age 16. By the end of college, I was spending every day on the pot floor, and then I started dealing.

I learned to overcome my low-self esteem and struggles to fit in and find a sense of belonging. I remember finally feeling popular . . . something that seemed futile throughout high school. Pretty soon my entire world revolved around drugs and partying. I was pretty self-absorbed.

I pulled a couple of geographicals; moving from the Mini-Apple to the Big Apple, where I got busted, then to Los Angeles where I went off the deep end. After another 4 years, I walked into a Monday Newcomers Meeting in Sherman Oaks in District 6.

I cried the entire meeting and related so much to the speaker's share and everyone else that shared.

I felt a profound sense of "arriving home." I cried two weeks straight . . . it was like a floodgate had opened and all the emotions I had stuffed deep down and numbed out from re-emerged at once. . . . I was totally overwhelmed. I kept going to meetings every Monday, but after I had 60 days and a bunch of using dreams I went out again.

When I came back to the rooms soon after, I got a sponsor and started working the steps. I got 3.5 years of sobriety and fellowship during that time. I took commitments, I spoke at H&I panels, I attended an MA Convention, and I peeled the onion through therapy work on myself and nurtured my conscious contact with my HP.

I ended up getting an amazing opportunity to return to the land of my birth as a volunteer. I decided to search for my birth mother. Being away from home, my sponsor, MA, friends, and everything I knew took me out. In a way I knew I had to go back in order to go forward, but this was also returning to the root cause of the pain . . . the abandonment and betrayal issues that cropped up at every turn in every relationship.

I also started attending AA, because that's all there was where I was living. I remember an alcoholic hearing my story and they gave me a nugget of wisdom. He said, "you know the difference between a drunk and a stoner? A drunk regrets what they've done . . . and a stoner regrets what they haven't done." True story. Again, I could relate. Again, my HP worked through others to carry me the message.

Five years of self-work brought me to a place where I was ready for a meaningful relationship . . . ready to value myself to not settle for less than I was worth. I met someone, got engaged, got married, had a couple kids . . . all the promises started to come true . . . and he was a stoner (big surprise). Actually this was no surprise to me . . . I told him that I could be sober and he could use; if his using affected us, I would let him know. I white-knuckled it through two pregnancies and after baby two I joined him, because "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em."

I gained a lot of weight and stopped to try to reset my body and get healthy again. I had a few years where I was sober more than stoned, but really my HP kept whispering in my ear, "this is not what I have planned for you." We had an opportunity to move to Amsterdam and two months after arriving, Corona time. I spent the last year picking it up and putting it down. When my husband would relapse, so would I . . . it became a pattern I'm not proud of. I had now abandoned and betrayed myself. I was isolated, lonely, restless, irritable, and discontent . . . bored, pissed off, the dregs of self-pity.

I finally surrendered after a year, that I couldn't face another year like that . . . I needed help. Fortunately, I found that the rooms had moved online. I am happy to say that today I have over 9 months sober.

I learned from the first time that I cannot maintain the physical sobriety without the emotional sobriety, so I got a sponsor,

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ANL's Purpose

The purpose of **A New Leaf** is to carry the message of recovery from marijuana addiction. It is through the written experiences of recovering addicts and their stories that we may find experience, strength, and hope.

Articles submitted should reflect recovery, unity, and service.

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.

We are reaching out to districts to update the ANLP Liaisons and birthday lists. Additionally, district/group service representatives, including but not limited to those serving as ANLP Liaisons, are encouraged to stay in touch: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org

ANLP Staff

Chairperson: Thor H.
Treasurer: Beth F.
Secretary: Marcy E.
Managing Editor: Thor H.
Publishing Editor: Amy F.
ANLP Administrator: Mariska P.

Contact ANLP

Send articles/stories:
stories@anewleafpublications.org

Other inquiries and correspondence:
info@anewleafpublications.org

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Loss and Longing (continued from page 1)

wrote gratitude lists, did all the suggestions, attended 3 meetings a week, did outreach to newcomers and grabbed on to this life-line with both hands and my entire heart. I still have control issues, and I still have codependency issues. But I'm getting faster at recognizing slipping back into old behaviors and I still trust that my HP has me where I'm meant to be.

I need to work long and hard on "who am I" in recovery, what is my HP's will for me? Giving it over, giving back, opening myself to the wisdom within, and loving what is ahead by loving what has come before.

~Tiffany P.

Meditation

"Is what you desire in your life already taken up by what you settled for instead?"

For so many years in my life I was filled with pain and misery because I'd settled for drugs and behaviors I felt were wrong for me. I settled for activities that I thought I should do to please other people, parents, teachers, bosses, and lovers. I had been selfish and self-centered and accepted the pain that often results when I got in my way. I blamed other people for my troubles instead of looking for my part.

I've been clean and sober and in recovery for over one decade. I am finally just recently getting an idea

of what a sober life is like. I settle less now for pain and misery, though at times I feel it. I try now to truly do what I feel is God's will for me. Imagine becoming an artist in my 50's. This is something I deprived myself for 50 years and finally I discovered I like creating paintings, and not only looking at the work of other artists.

One way of looking at recovery is quitting that which causes me pain, like drugs and addictive behaviors, and doing what causes me to feel good about myself, like participating in 12-step meetings, being loving, and being of service in spiritually fulfilling ways. I wish each and every one of us love and sobriety and the joy of living in fulfilling ways.

~Anonymous



Speaker
Tapes

The "MA Speaker Tapes" podcast is a collection of recorded leads from Marijuana Anonymous World Phone Meetings (MAWPM) speaker shares, MA Conventions keynote speakers, workshops, and more.

Listen to MA meetings on Podcasts!

Go to: www.ma-phone.org/speaker-tapes

THE ROVING REPORTER WANTS TO KNOW ...



Every month, our readers have another opportunity to reflect on their recovery and to help carry the message to the addict who still suffers. This issue presents certain questions/topics, the responses to which may be published in the March 2022 issue. In addition to questions/topics, the Step and the Tradition corresponding to the month of publication are offered as topics for your meetings. Please consider the following questions, and email your short-answer response(s) to questions 1 or 2 below to:

stories@anewleafpublications.org,
with Subject: "3/2022 Roving Reporter"

1. **Step Three:** How is my Higher Power working in my life?
2. **Tradition Three:** When a newcomer turns up at an MA meeting needing information or help (even if they can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what they do for a living? Where they live? What their domestic arrangements are? Whether they have been to MA before? What their other problems are? How old they are?

We'll print as many of your responses as we can in the March 2022 issue of the *A New Leaf* newsletter.

Step Two

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Tradition Two

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God whose expression may come through in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Help Wanted: Volunteer Publishing Editor

A New Leaf Publications (ANLP), the publishing arm of MA World Services, is actively searching for a volunteer Publishing Editor.

The Publishing Editor's primary role involves working with ANLP's Managing Editor as a lead to publish creative renditions of the monthly *A New Leaf* newsletter, and infrequent assistance with updates to Conference-approved MA literature.

An applicant for this position should have 2+ years sobriety, and Adobe InDesign experience is helpful. The commitment for this position is one year at approximately 4–6 hours per month.

If interested, please contact ANLP at, or send a cover letter and resume to: office@anewleafpublications.org

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit
WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

MA World Services

340 S LEMON AVE # 9420, WALNUT, CA 91789-2706

+1.800.766.6779

WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

INFO@MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

DIST. 2 San Francisco & East Bay +1.510.957.8390
www.madistrict2.org

DIST. 3 South SF Bay Area +1.408.450.0796
www.madistrict3.org

DIST. 4 Western Washington +1.206.414.9270
www.madistrict4.org

DIST. 5 Orange County +1.714.999.9409
www.madistrict5.org

DIST. 6 LA County North +1.818.759.9194
www.madistrict6.org

DIST. 7 LA County South +1.310.494.0189
www.madistrict7.org

DIST. 8 New York
www.ma-newyork.org

DIST. 11 Oregon +1.503.567.9892
www.madistrict11.org

DIST. 12 North Bay, CA +1.415.419.3555/+1.707.583.2326
www.madistrict12.org

DIST. 13 MA Online
www.ma-online.org

DIST. 14 London, England +44.300.124.0373
www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk

DIST. 15 Long Island, NY +1.631.647.0768
www.ma-longisland.org

DIST. 16 Melbourne, Australia +61.403.945.083
www.marijuana-anonymous.com

DIST. 17 Denmark
www.ma-danmark.dk

DIST. 18 Sacramento, CA +1.916.341.9469
www.sacramentoma.org

DIST. 19 Toronto, ON, Canada +1.416.999.2244
www.matoronto.org

DIST. 20 San Diego, CA
www.ma-sandiego.org

DIST. 21 Colorado State +1.303.607.7516
www.ma-colorado.org

DIST. 22 New England
www.newenglandma.org

DIST. 23 Georgia State +1.770.468.8508

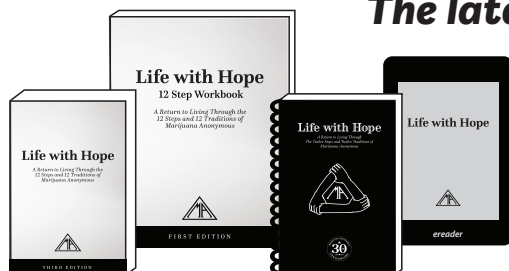
DIST. 24 Vancouver, BC, Canada +1.778.554.8997

DIST. 25 Chicagoland MarijuanaAnonymousChicago@gmail.com

DIST. 26 Iceland
www.maisland.is

DIST. 27 Independent Mtgs. madistrict27@gmail.com

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District 2

John L 12/15/1984 37 yrs
Shane M 12/31/2020 1 yr

District 5

Anthony G 1/29/2015 7 yrs
Andrew L 1/22/2018 4 yrs
Bill H 1/23/2018 4 yrs
Bravo 1/2/2017 5 yrs
Doug C 1/17/2021 1 yr
Hillary 1/1/2009 13 yrs
Jason P 1/3/2021 1 yr
John H 1/10/2013 9 yrs
Layne 1/18/2010 12 yrs
Matt N 1/6/2019 3 yrs
Melody C 1/16/1989 33 yrs
Robert M 1/18/2018 4 yrs

Tony R 1/1/2004 18 yrs

District 7

Donald R 1/1/2019 3 yrs
James E 1/2/2020 2 yrs
Jeb C 11/9/2013 8 yrs
Joemar G 12/10/2015 6 yrs
Jonathan H 1/13/2020 2 yrs
Karen S 12/28/2007 14 yrs
Marcy E 1/5/2013 9 yrs
Ras M 12/27/2018 3 yrs

District 19

David 1/1/2020 2 yrs
Franklin L 12/27/2010 12 yrs
Jesse B 1/5/2019 3 yrs
Maarten V 1/1/2021 1 yr
Mayanna K 1/3/2021 1 yr

Sarah G 12/5/2014 7 yrs

District 27

Susan P 1/5/2019 3 yrs

See your sobriety date here!

If your sobriety date has occurred, has not been published, and is not older than 45 days, please submit it in the format you see on the left. You may tell your local GSR, ANLP Liason, or e-mail to: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org