



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

July 2011

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The Prison I Call My Brain

Yesterday I celebrated my 6 month birthday of sorts. Six months of sobriety, what a day! I woke up a little early as if it were Christmas, guess I'm still addicted to the attention I get from these 12 Steppers. Got in the car to go pick up some donuts. I got Jim to lead the meeting I secretary on Friday mornings. After making what I deemed an excellent choice of donuts, I drove home to pick up my dog Ollie.

On my way out to the car, I pulled the sunglasses from the top of my head back over my eyes. The water in my hair from the shower I took fogged up the glasses and in the crisp morning air was holding firm over the lenses. I instinctively reached up to grab my sunglasses to wipe the condensation off of the lenses. I paused-- as my eyes adjusted to the blurriness of everything, I put two and two together and drove back home watching the condensation slowly fade away in the cold morning air back to clear vision, I am only six months sober after all.

I dropped off the car, picked up my dog and skateboard and headed off to Pathfinders. As Ollie pulled me on my skateboard to the meeting my Ipod blasted Beethoven's Grosse Fugue. That particular piece of music has a relentless rhythm which to me speaks of the directness, the precision of the Germanic nature. The same trait one has to have to follow the Steps, to be a work-dog, a musician, put more simply-obsessed. As the music

trudged along the road of happy destiny, dah-da dah -- dah- da dah -- dah-da dah da deee dah, Ollie galloped to the beat, drool falling from tongue and chin, here I am the apocalyptic picture of sobriety, dog and leash in one hand, box of donuts in the other with Beethoven rounding out the theme; laughable really.

There was a profound sense of gratitude in the air, the calm sense of appreciation one only finds in being aware and living in the moment. When I was stoned all the time, I would have noticed the feeling but not been able to piece together why I was feeling it, chalked it up to how deep I was.

I had a rehearsal later with great friends, wrote a letter to my dear friend, got my bass and headed over to the M.A. talent show. We had great fun over there before I ended up at my Friday night gig. There I endured what may have been the most degrading evening performance I have ever had the misfortune of being a part .

I could go on and on bitching about that evening, but who wants to hear me complain, least of all me. Progress right? While I am still a newcomer, six months ago, last night would have been a completely different story as far as my reactions were concerned. Nothing like the power of morning meetings! Thank you program for helping me see things more clearly and helping me get myself out of this prison I call my brain.

Matt C ▲

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

MAWS is conducting an "Effectiveness Survey" to evaluate what the society of MA thinks about MAWS' service to date to: Districts, meetings and members. We hope to collect a society-wide group conscience to give direction to the type of work in which MAWS should be engaged and to help evaluate MAWS' current ability and potential to serve MA's needs as conveyed by that MA group conscience.

SHARE YOUR OPINION. This month we would like you, your groups, and/or your Districts answers to the following questions:

1. Are there any factors that prohibit equal or fair attendance and participation in MAWS by MA Districts and independent meetings?
2. (Tradition 7) Does MAWS receive donations from anyone other than MA Groups or members?

For more details, please go to the website forum.marijuana-anonymous.org. To submit your ideas and share your thoughts on these questions email us at mes@marijuana-anonymous.org.

a new leaf

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.

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A New Leaf
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or submit online:
www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on the newsletter tab.

LIFE AT 9 YEARS

Alright, first I should say that I feel pretty darn good with nine years of sobriety! I am proud of the good work that I have done in changing my behavior and my life! And there's no doubt, I would have lost the better part of myself if not my entire life, had I not quit the drugs and alcohol.

Having said that, I can tell you with complete confidence that this would never have been accomplished without the help of Marijuana Anonymous and all my fellows who gave of their time and love to help me!

It's true, on a rare occasion I still romanticize the thought of getting drunk or stoned, or having "a glass of wine" with dinner (ha ha). However, it takes but a second to remember just who I really am! I am a drug addict and alcoholic! I came to that conclusion a little over nine years ago and it was the best thing that ever happened to me in my life. I don't feel any shame or regret when I admit that, and in a strange way, I am actually really grateful that I can speak openly about that part of my life!

So, I would like to tell you about the struggle that I have these days with being a sober person of nine years. **HOLY CRAP, I HAVE MY LIFE BACK!** And that means I can't check out on my responsibilities to all the people and things in that life. I have to pay my mortgage, the bills, take care of the home and pets, go to work every day and be responsible for the maintenance of 11 buildings and the safety of 100-plus employees! I also cook almost all the meals in my home! (Sorry, my love, for throwing you under the bus.) Yes, there is a lot to do in life when you get your life back. But that is a good thing when you have the courage (spiritual

principle!) to ask for help when it is needed! These are challenges that will make you stronger when you do them without regret, and there's a sense of growth that comes with meeting these challenges head-on, even when you fail!

I guess the current struggle I need to work on is scheduling the time to get to a meeting perhaps once a week! I feel in myself the pull of responsibility to give back to MA for the help that it gave to me (Step 12). I know that when I was new to meetings, it meant a lot to see a person with some time and I got a lot of encouragement from them! Keep Coming Back! That's what they told me, and it worked! I will always be grateful for that!

So I will continue to work on that scheduling thing, and I will try my best to be of service when I can. Keep a chair ready for old Sam, because he just might be there sooner rather than later! Thank you God and the people of MA for helping me get my life back!
Love, Sam S. ▲

**YOUR
STORY
HERE**

New Meetings Start-Up
All The Time.
Check your local districts
website for updated
information!
Get listed on the MAWS
website
contact:
office@marijuana_anonymous.
org

TO MY DEAR FAMILY

Hello, my dear, dear family.

This week marks my 25th year in sobriety. In recent years I have needed to attend other fellowships. Take away one addiction and--surprise, surprise!--new ones pop up and need to be addressed, even many years into recovery. However, my heart and my gratitude will always be with my very, very special friends in MA.

The past 25 years have been very joyful, but also VERY challenging. Being in recovery doesn't guarantee that shit won't happen, but it does give us tools and friends in fellowship with whom to work through it. There has been divorce, death, both physical and mental health problems--nothing normies don't go through in their lives. But the difference is that we have each other and our sobriety and the steps. I've walked into more than one meeting a complete mess and just sat there holding onto the chair and staring at the floor. Understandably, newcomers tended to view an old timer in that state with a bit of trepidation. ("Is that what it's like at 17 years clean?")

But without fail, there was always someone in each meeting who understood and hugged me and soothed away my tears, sharing from their own experience that "this too will pass." It has been because of all of you that I have reached this milestone. You have helped me process the issues and work through the pain. My friends in MA have sustained and loved me through thick and thin. (Getting weepy with gratitude now!) Thank you all for being there for me over the years. I look forward to the next time we hug!

Erin O. ▲

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Greetings from the nations capitol. Seven of us from the D.C. area made the trip up to NYC for the international convention. The consensus was that it was an excellent convention and that a good time was had by all.

Ron J. of the Sunday night Dupont Circle meeting, who has been in MA for eight years said, District 8 did a wonderful job, if no one told me, I would have thought they were doing these conventions for a while! All of us wanted to thank District 8 for such a successful convention and for the long hours they put into preparation and execution.

Dave H. of the Monday night Arlington meeting comments, "There was comfort knowing that everyone I had contact with knew exactly what I was feeling." These three days were filled with great emotional moments and growth for me. "I can't wait for next year's."

Jan H. of Washington remarked, "It was great meeting other MA'ers and fellow-shiping. I had the honor of presenting a workshop on the 12 traditions and I enjoyed giving back what was so freely given to me. Also, I learned a lot from the attendees. All and all, I had a wonderful time."

Lou P. who chairs the Monday night meeting echoed what most of us felt; that it was good to have the convention on the east coast because we would not have made the trip to the west coast. But now that I know how much fun it is, I am definitely going to try to make it to San Jose 2012. The thing he enjoyed most about the convention was seeing potheads from around the country and seeing how much bigger this thing is then our groups in D.C. I also liked meeting all the stoners with long term sobriety.

Dave K. of Friday night Bethesda MD, agreed that that was one of the highlights for me as well. The MA fellowship is only 20 some years old and it was a real inspiration to be in a room with literally hundreds of people with our common problem who are years into their respective recoveries. One last thing, as a salesperson for almost thirty years, I have heard a lot of professional speakers and none could hold a candle to Portia of NYC who told her story Saturday night. Over three hundred MA'ers were in rapt silent attention which if you know our group is saying quite a lot! If you have the chance, do yourself a favor and go to **San Jose 2012**.

DID YOU KNOW

The Roving Reporter section is included to give folks a topic to write about.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS?

Question for July

What was your favorite Cheech & Chong movie and would you watch one now that you're sober?

(Please submit answers by August 17)

Step Eight

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition Eight

Marijuana Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

marijuana anonymous worldwide

MA World Services

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 www.marijuana-anonymous.org
 email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

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www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

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PO Box 20484 Oakland, CA 94620 510.287.8873

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PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

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District 6 LA County No.

PO Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 818.759.9194

District 7 LA County So.

PO Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231 323.964.2370

District 8 New York

PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

District 10 LA County East

PO Box 94400 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.583.9582

District 11 Portland

PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.221.7007

District 12 North Bay, CA

PO Box 2842 Petaluma, CA 94952 415.419.3555 707.583.2326

District 13 MA Online

www.ma-online.org

District 14 London, England

07940.503438

District 15 Long Island, NY

www.ma-longisland.org 516-568-5883

District 16 Melbourne, Australia

24HR. info 0403 945 083 from overseas +61 403 945 083

District 17 Denmark

info@ma-kbh.dk

For a complete listing of all meetings visit www.marijuana-anonymous.org

SPECIAL NOTICE!

This is to inform everyone that the OFFICIAL ADDRESS of MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS has changed as of DECEMBER 7, 2010.

Every effort has been made to account for all the business names that can be used for our address; but please be careful in future to use the address below as the address for ALL official correspondence, including 7th Traditions:

**MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICES
 PO BOX 7807
 TORRANCE, CA 90504**

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD! Tell your local meetings, tell your DSC meetings, and especially tell your Treasury and Literature chairs!

This notice will appear on the website, and will be carried in the New Leaf, for a period of a year. Thanks in advance for helping to make the transition a smooth one!

HELP WANTED

FIELD EDITOR NEEDED

INTERESTED ADDICTS

SHOULD EMAIL

THE ANLP BOARD.

anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org



birthdays

Celebrating 230 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sobriety date published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANL contact information on page 2. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that, a) HAVE occurred, b) HAVE NOT been published and, c) are not older than 45 days.

District 1

Chrysanthemum 5/6/01 10 yrs
 Jeff K. 5/13/09 2 yrs
 Dawn L. 6/1/09 2 yrs
 John Sc. 6/1/08 3 yrs
 Erin O. 6/1/86 25 yrs

District 2

Doug S. 6/4/09 2 yrs
 Kathy L. 6/14/97 14 yrs
 Becky G. 6/18/06 5 yrs
 Amy C. 6/21/10 1 Year!
 Walter O. 6/21/10 1 Year!

District 4

Michael S. 3/14/09 2 yrs

District 5

Brad M. 6/3/97 14 yrs

Trudie 6/1/98 13 yrs
 Rachael F. 6/12/10 1 Year!
 Pearl 6/21/10 1 Year!

District 6

Erin W. 6/2/07 4 yrs
 Ben R. 6/1/06 5 yrs
 Carol McD. 6/23/88 23 yrs
 Mark I. 6/21/99 12 yrs

District 7

Terry D. 6/2/10 1 Year!
 Victoria 5/16/03 8 yrs

District 8

Erica I. 3/21/10 1 Year!
 Ann R. 5/21/10 1 Year!
 Elizabeth R. 5/21/10 1 Year!
 Larry S. 5/23/04 7 yrs

Larry L. 5/28/05 6 yrs
 Libby G. 6/6/90 21 yrs
 Pamila M. 6/14/10 1 Year!
 Gee P. 6/16/09 2 yrs
 Andrew T. 6/18/07 4 yrs

District 10

Jamie S. 6/6/10 1 Year!
 Evan S. 6/11/10 1 Year!
 Glen H. 6/16/10 1 Year!

District 11

Scott B. 5/16/07 4 yrs
 Craig S. 5/26/87 24 yrs!
 Ron P. 6/7/08 3 yrs
 Lisa C. 6/8/08 3 yrs

