



It Works, If You Work It. by Kathy B.

I am Kathy and I am a marijuana addict. My identity for almost 20 years was that I was a stoner, a hippie born too late, but trying desperately to catch up. My desire was to fit in and be a part of, not realizing that I was building a fortress of smoke around my heart and my feelings so no one could get in. When I first entered recovery, that coping mechanism – keeping others at a distance – worked to protect me from my low self-esteem, but it also kept me from experiencing what others had. I slowly embraced the program, my sponsor and the fellowship. “...sometimes slowly...” I was eight months sober before I asked someone to be my sponsor. I worked the 12 steps over three years. I took commitments because I wanted to feel special, like if I weren’t there to do it, it wouldn’t get done. I was a secretary, a coffee chick, and the District 5 events chair (this position was perfect at the time; I was the organizer, I made the decisions and I got the pat on the back). This worked for a while, until I was told, gently, that the meetings and the events would happen whether I was there or not... the commitment was to keep me coming back, to provide a sense of purpose and service where one did not exist before. I slowly lost the desire to be the center of attention, the one with the quick wit and the need for the

pat on the back.

During the past year, I have made a real connection on my spiritual path with my Higher Power, and yet, I still have that committee in my head – offering me opportunities to feel insecure and worthless, to doubt the direction my Higher Power is taking me, to be fearful of the unknown.

As a newcomer, I did not know what “it works, when you work it” meant. What was “it” and how was I supposed to work “it”? Up until this past Sunday, I still didn’t really understand that phrase.

And then I attended the 2010 MA Convention in Portland. Over six years sober, working a program to the best of my ability, and I was frightened when I arrived at the hotel. Committee was screaming: “No one will recognize you”, “you don’t know anyone here”, “you should just cut and run before anyone notices you” and “you’re just going to embarrass yourself.” Right there at the check-in counter, I saw a familiar face that looked back and saw my familiar face, and smiled. I was still feeling out of place, but now I had a connection. During the convention I had several moments when I felt very “fish out of water”, very alone, and each time someone would come up to me to say hello and talked to me for a while, some who remembered me from last year, a

few who only knew me through email and some brand new folks, too.

Over the next 48 hours I attended the Meet and Greet, the Friday and Saturday speaker meetings, the Saturday women’s meeting and a late open meeting, a Steps 6 & 7 workshop and an 11th Step workshop. While I ate breakfast Saturday morning, a woman I’d met the evening before sat with me, and talked. While I was manning a table of *Life With Hope* books, a friend I’d made during last year’s convention and two new friends chatted with me about program, life and experiences. At the beginning of the banquet, I had an unpleasant moment that turned into a God shot when I was seated next to a really nice fellow who used to live down near me. We knew many of the same people and had a very nice time. I also got a front row seat to hear the Saturday evening speaker.

I learned so many helpful things during the workshops and in the meetings that helped me to clarify my program and my connection to my Higher Power. Every time I was faced with a seemingly uncomfortable situation, I applied contrary action and was happily surprised.

On Sunday morning, I had to leave the convention before the

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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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www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on publications

A Life Altering Moment.

Hi, my story is long but I just want to share the incident that made me search for recovery. All my life I wanted and wished for death. I was not happy with the life I had and didn't know how to change it. I started smoking occasionally when I was 16 and then at 17 it became an everyday thing.

About a year and a half ago, I met the man of my dreams. He changed life to something I enjoyed. He showed me love and cared for me. He made sacrifices and compromises that I as an addict never saw. Our life was happy, or so I thought. Everything we did, I now see, was all around the use or acquisition of Marijuana. I ignored his attempts to show me his love and trust and ignored his pain that I was causing. I treated him just like my previous relationship partners treated me, as an object, a piece of property. He tried many times to help me see the error of my ways until one day, the worst thing I had

done while with him came out. I had shared him and again used him as a property. I had shared personal information to another person who I thought was a friend. Due to my addiction, the choices of friends I had made were based on the fact of them smoking. This 'friend' divulged the information I had shared at the New Years Eve party.

At that point my partner lost all trust in me. The promises I had made to keep it sacred (the information) was broken, and along with that promise, the person he thought I was also died. I am now struggling to find who I am. I don't want to hurt another person in this manner. I know how painful it is to be put second to an addiction.

Today, I am learning to change my character and addictive personality. I want to make amends and I hope for the day that he will forgive me. I do this for my future. My life was bleak even when I smoked. I hold promise of a better life through recovery and new friends and connections made with people

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It Works, If You Work It.

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final speaker, and for a while I was bummed about that – another opportunity to kick myself for poor planning (my mind is not a pretty place sometimes) – and instead I reflected on my experiences during the convention and I realized that I finally get that phrase “It Works, If You Work It.” I’d heard it shared by so many people, in so many ways – reading the steps, completing the steps, going to meetings – those were a part of it, but the real

work was recognizing that the person I once was and the behaviors I still exhibit that I find objectionable or unpleasant, can be replaced with behaviors I admire in others working their programs. Kindness, understanding, self-care, and restraint of tongue – these are some of the many principles I choose to apply today. Today I can grasp “It works, if you work it” and discover that I have been applying it for quite some time, I just didn’t know it until now. ~Kathy B., District 5



Join, Help, Carry the Message.

The annual MAWS Conference is an important business function of our fellowship and ensures that Marijuana Anonymous is well supported in its ongoing effort to carry the message of recovery. Over the past several years some MAWS Conferences were very expensive. In 2008 it was decided that a permanent Conference location be sought to help control costs. Although no decision has been made, Southern California seems the best choice since 10 of the 12 Districts in the US are on the West Coast, 8 are in California and 4 of those are in Southern CA within driving distance of one another. The logic is that the greatest Conference expense, travel, would be reduced.

PLEASE JOIN THE COMMITTEE to help research and find a Conference venue that will enable us to do the service work of MA without breaking the bank. The 2010 Conference is already scheduled to be in Oakland, CA. Ideally, the 2011 Conference will be held in our new permanent location. We need to get to work as soon as possible researching venues, making calls, and casting a wide net in order to make a good choice!

PLEASE JOIN IN THE EFFORT to find a cost effective Conference location! This is a great opportunity to give back to the Program that has given all of us so very, very much. You may contact the Conference and Convention Trustee through your local MAWS Delegate or by sending an Email to LB, Convention and Conference Trustee at MAWSConference@gmail.com.

District 5 and MA WORLD Yahoo Groups Site

As Marijuana Anonymous grows it's as if we are becoming further apart. Marijuana Anonymous meetings are now in 38 States and 9 different Countries (and who knows how many orphans or orphan meetings there are). There seems to be very little contact between the individual Groups or Districts.

In District 5, we are able to communicate online via a Yahoo Groups site that was set up for use by our District members. All of the members of our District are welcome to join; in fact we have many members from neighboring Districts as a part of our Group site. We use the group site to post our monthly DSC minutes and quorum counts, various District business, as well as our District's and neighboring District's events.

I know almost everyone in my District but really very few people in the neighboring Districts. And I'd be willing to bet that's true throughout most of the Fellowship. So this is where MA World comes in. This is a group site open to the entire Fellowship of Marijuana Anonymous; where ALL members from ALL Districts of the Marijuana Anonymous Fellowship world-wide can come together and meet one another, get to know one another and to share about themselves, their Districts and Meetings and, above all, their recovery.

MA World is a place where members can all reach out to one another, post information regarding events from the various MA Districts and Meetings, post photos from those events held by the Groups, and where member can discuss interests. MA World is a place where members can begin to get to know one another.

MA World is also a place where members can discuss the goings-on at Marijuana Anonymous World Services and A New Leaf Publications. A New Leaf is always looking for articles and stories. This might be a place where members of the Fellowship from opposite sides of the planet can work together on a story of recovery. Issues concerning the Fellowship of Marijuana Anonymous can be discussed year-round; ideas for Conference agenda items can be hatched and worked on prior to Conferences. The idea is to create a forum for ALL members of Marijuana Anonymous, worldwide, to have a place to share and to be heard.

This Group Site is in no way affiliated with MAWS or ANLP but with the Fellowship of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole, started by a member of the Fellowship of Marijuana Anonymous. This Group Site is open to ALL MA members. Anyone heckling, advocating drug or alcohol use or violating the intent of this site will be removed from the site at the founder's discretion.

Here's the link: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/maworld/>
Please pass this site along to all of your Fellow MA Members.
Enjoy the day! ~ Ron L., District 5

EXTRA!! EXTRA!!

Effective April 1, 2010

The price of Life With Hope will be increased to \$9.50 each.

This increase is the result of a new superglue binding, selected to provide you with a more durable book.

marijuana anonymous worldwide

MA World Services

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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

A Life Altering Moment.

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and not objects or substances. I pray that I am successful in this venture. I know God is on my side and I have a loving family that is very supportive and cares for me greatly. I am surrounded by people that support me and want to help in any way they can...for those that still smoke, I pray for them. Some day they will lose everything like I did when I lost the man of my life. I

believe that there comes a time when the willingness to quit is triggered by a life altering moment. My moment was when I died in the eyes of the man I love. I will always regret the pain and hurt I caused him and I pray that when I try to make amends, he is able to accept my apology. Today, I take things one day at a time, knowing that with a clear mind and strong spirit, I will overcome what life throws at me. ~ Rigoberto V.

ROVING REPORTER Question for April

How do you get out of isolation?

Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Fourth Tradition

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or M.A. as a whole.

birthdays - Celebrating 219 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

Lewis B. 1/20/07 3 yrs.

District 2

Charlie R. 1/26/05 5 yrs.
Analisa S. 2/06/07 3 yrs.
Moiria R. 2/14/07 3 yrs.
Larry R. 2/14/07 3 yrs.

District 4

Ed B. 1/22/02 8 yrs.
Andy 1/26/81 28 yrs.
Jared B. 1/27/06 4 yrs.
Steve M. 1/29/07 3 yrs.
Dow 2/02/02 8 yrs.

District 4 (cont'd)

Will H. 2/04/08 2 yrs.
Rosie S. 2/08/02 8 yrs.
Jason K. 2/13/06 4 yrs.
Connie P. 2/14/98 12 yrs.

District 5

Papa Joe 2/01/93 17 yrs.
Bea 2/04/00 10 yrs.

District 6

Lawren C. 1/28/93 17 yrs.
Genevieve 2/05/07 3 yrs.

District 10

Suzy P. 2/14/05 5 yrs.

District 11

Trisa A. 1/01/96 14 yrs.
Su S. 1/26/05 5 yrs.
Harry H. 2/04/87 23 yrs.
Rick V. 2/08/03 7 yrs.
David C. 2/22/02 8 yrs.

District 13

Scott A. (San Leandro) 2/09/02 8 yrs.

Other Locations—Washington, D.C.

Jan H. 1/01/02 8 yrs.