



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

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The New Leaf Needs Your Support!

Over the last couple of months it's been a struggle to get stories and birthday submissions for our newsletter. We provide several ways to submit your stories, see the instructions on page 2. Submissions are due by the 17th of every month. Stories should reflect recovery, fun in recovery, unity and service. Thanks for letting me be of service. Mark I.

Smoking and Drinking

I recently celebrated my first birthday and find myself reflecting quite a bit over my program from the past year.

Prior to getting into the program I was a binge smoker and drinker.... very rarely mixing the two, but bouncing between excesses. If there was no weed, there was always a bottle or two of Jack Daniels in the cabinet....which I drained with a full low ball or two (or three) every night. When there was weed, the Jack went untouched, but those quarter bags would never last more than a few days. I could stop using either substance at any time, as long as I could switch back and forth between the two. The truth of the matter was that I was lying to myself and everyone around me.... including my wife, children, friends and extended family, to justify my addiction.

No one really knew the extent of my addictions except me. I was beginning to realize that "wake and bake" every morning before the rest of the house was awake, was not normal behavior. It took getting caught one last time by my family, and an ultimatum to get me into the doors of MA.

The past year has not been easy. The everyday challenges of raising children, maintaining a marriage, and a demanding job keep me very busy. When everyday life stresses me out and drugs and alcohol are no longer an option, I try to step up my program.

My sponsor has helped me tremendously this first year by working with me through the 12 steps.

Through these efforts I realized that there are a lot of underlying issues that led me to my addiction. Ego, lack of empathy, irritability and a perception of inadequacy.... to name a few, were all part of what made me who I am. Although I have made it through all 12 steps and have a year of being clean and sober, those character defects still rear their ugly head on a regular basis.

I'm not the best at daily prayer and meditation, or promptly admitting when I'm wrong, but I am staying connected to the program. I attend one meeting on a regular basis, have taken a commitment

*I was a
binge smoker
and drinker...*

and am currently looking to take on a sponsee. Other than that, I carry a phone list in my car, make phone calls on a regular basis, and stop into new meetings whenever possible.

I find that the single most important aspect of recovery, is to take each day one at a time. When my "normal" friends ask me if I'm quitting for life, I can't answer them....because I really don't know myself. What I do know is that for today, I'm going to stay connected to my higher power and use whatever tools of the program that are available to hit the pillow with one more day of sobriety. Today this includes submitting my new leaf story.

Anon

Prayer Of The 3rd Step

As March is the 3rd month of the year, I offer the fellowship this prayer from one of my spiritual guides, Ernest H. It is a form of 3rd Step Prayer that resonates with me. It goes like this:

I hand my life and affairs over to Divine Intelligence, to the Power that knows how to do everything. I do this in the complete conviction that I receive only Good into my experience.

I know that there is nothing in me that can doubt either the Divine Goodness or the operation of Its law in my affairs.

I believe that everything necessary to the fulfillment of every good desire is now in full operation; that all the circumstances in my life are tending to bring it about.

If there is anything I ought to do about this I accept the action and know that I receive guidance and I am compelled to act intelligently. Therefore, I have a complete sense of ease and assurance.

I look forward joyfully as I anticipate the good that is to come into my life.

I believe that all who are now praying with me will receive the answers to their desires from the same source.

My faith goes out to them as their faith reaches back to me for I believe that out of the Great Good in the universe that we live in there will surely come to all of us an answer to our particular need.

Steve R.

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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or

submit online:
www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on the newsletter tab.

A New Leaf
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Torrance, CA 90504

2012 Convention Questionnaire with Response

1. What fears or expectations did you bring to the convention, and did they materialize?

- No fears coming in. Expected camaraderie and transformation, both definitely happened.
- My first convention, no real fears or expectations.
- Feeling ostracized. No, it didn't happen.
- I was worried about sitting next to a crying baby on the flight.
- Trouble socializing. I had none.
- Yes, seeing old friends, workshops, new friends. No, tie dye t-shirts.
- Thought I would have fun seeing people I know from other meetings. I usually have a fear of meeting new people, but everyone was very friendly. It felt like we were a community.
- Fear of fitting in.
- Not meeting anyone.
- Basic fear of socializing with people I don't know. That went away after the second day of meeting so many cool and open people.
- I expected to have a good time due to going to a lot of the other wonderful conventions.
- Meeting some good people from the left coast.
- Weird people. Yes.
- My fear came before the convention: should I go? Expectations? Remembering the names of my annual connections. Thank goodness for name badges.
- I feared that I wouldn't know anybody there. And no, it did not materialize.
- Fear and expectation that my heart would be cracked wide open with gratitude and joy and it was.
- That I would have a hard time letting my sponsee have her own experience of her first convention. It took me a while to let go and not manage her experience. But I was able to at some extent.
- None. Good fellowship, old friends, dancing, opportunities for growth.
- 4 men, 2 beds... after a 16 hour road trip. What could go wrong? Thank God, nothing.
- That some of the meetings would suck.
- It was much more enjoyable than I expected.
- To be with people to love and

encourage my recovery, which I did find.

- The fears I expressed so far in my 4th Step came along. Some did materialize, others were lifted.
- I travel with no expectations so as not to have disappointments. However, this was an overall excellent convention.
- Expected to be spiritually filled. Yes. Expected to head-butt about certain issues regarding MA politics. Didn't happen.
- I was afraid that having to go to work on Saturday would interfere with my place of belonging. Yes, it did. I didn't have the meetings to bring me in so it wasn't until Sunday that I was really here. My thought is that some kind of "ice breaker" on the first night would help bring us socially anxious potheads together.
- I wasn't going to know how to talk to anyone. I'd be depressed. I'd sit alone in my hotel room. I (being a solo on this voyage) wouldn't belong. None of these came true.
- Expected to see old friends and make new ones. And I did.
- Fear at meeting new people, it went well. Wasn't as bad as I thought.
- Expected it to be great, but it exceeded them a lot.
- Fear of isolation and not fitting.
- I feared I wouldn't relate to others, I was wrong. I feared I'd be bored, I was wrong. I expected to enjoy overall, I had my expectations materialize.
- Afraid I wouldn't do enough. Did not materialize.
- That I wouldn't meet people or make new friends – but I did.
- Unfounded fear of being not accepted. Of course not.
- No fears. Expectation: to have a great weekend of recovery, seeing old friends and making new ones. It did materialize.
- No fears. Expectations in meeting others like me. Yes, met loads of people.
- That I wouldn't have fun. That people would be click-ish. That I wouldn't know anybody. No, not really.
- Fears, none. God is in control. Expectations, everything would work out exactly as it should. And yes, they materialized.

- The convention events and workshops meet my expectations.
 - Expectation: meeting new members of fellowship – realized. Expectation: deeper understanding of step workshops.
 - I expected more people. No, they never did.
 - It was my first convention and I didn't have any expectations. The food exceeded my expectations.
 - Overeating, yes.
- 2. Is there anything you would like to see more of less of in future conventions? Anything from a past convention you feel could benefit future conventions?**
- Don't know, this is my first one. Outdoor activities; hiking, museum, beach excursion, parks.
 - There were a couple of hours between events where nothing was scheduled. For me that was wasted time and I did not have a hotel room to go to. Perhaps a meeting for those who would like to attend.
 - Dr. Calloway and professionals of his sort.
 - Beatles sing-a-long or another alternative to live or DJ music. Movie or speech about history of MA.
 - More dance time with band. It was off after 1.5 hours with a full happy dance floor of people. Coffee, tea and sodas offered 24 hours or more often.
 - No 7th Tradition at any meetings and MA convention should read MA literature (not AA, how it works), mixed messages to newcomers.
 - Maybe an old timers meeting. Coffee in the hospitality room.
 - More meetings in the future. Cheaper merchandise.
 - More fellowship opportunities. More variety in workshops, less "book study" type workshops and more recovery topics and focus on recovery.
 - Maybe more time between meetings and workshops to discuss and trade insight. This was my first convention.
 - I would like to see host committees use conference-approved literature in meetings.
 - Options on Saturday night, other than band. Maybe a movie screening. Something to do with recovery.
 - Topic workshops, more variety
 - The balance of the events, workshops and such was good. I would recommend ending workshops/meetings 30 minutes BEFORE check out.
 - I'd like to see pretty much what was, i.e. No suggestion to change.
 - More vegetarian options. Kristen Andrea, Seth, Craig, Maryann, Robert, Margi, Missy (all musicians) and district 3 rock!
 - Another same gender meeting on Friday night.
 - I didn't care for the consistent application of the speaker/discussion format. How topic/meditation/newcomer/step specific/etc.
 - More structured 12-Step workshops (i.e., 1,2,3,4,5,6, etc)
 - Sharing of good experiences.
 - There seemed to be too many choices of workshops at the same time. I was sad to have missed some of them. What a problem to have!
 - I am not a fan of the "how it works" passage read that says people who can't succeed have mental disorders. Would like to use different district reading.
 - More board games. I would like a meeting with chronic relapse as a topic. A second woman's meeting.
 - It was my first convention and beautiful.
 - Some kind of getting to know you exercise to create opportunities for meeting with other districts.
 - More contact like what Dr. Calloway shared- medical/neurobiology. He was really cool to meet. Add other specialist who is also in recovery.
 - More time between activities, it was a little rushed between some events/raffles.
 - 12-Step meetings with all participants in a large room.
 - More "get to know". Introduce activities on first and second day.
 - I heard two excellent suggestions.
 1. Have a limited number of workshops so everyone can attend.
 2. Hold the women's and men's only meetings on Saturday to help foster these budding relationships.
 - Bowling, nature hike, amusement park, Frisbee game. An outside activity. Group fellowship thing. A late night activity.
 - Panels for Step discussion instead of single speakers.
 - More dancing and mixers.
 - Meditation times in AM would be great (apart from yoga, ½ hr)
 - Marathon meetings, taking a meeting into local community. Someone taking newcomers through all 12 Steps.
 - Some "get to know you" exercises to help introduce people to each other. Either at the tables that people eat at or at group level.
 - More time in between workshops.
 - More workshops. Proper seating accommodations for select workshops.
 - Workshops should not be more than 25% talk by leader. 75% or more should be interactive. No sermons.
 - More meetings, morning, late night, etc.
 - More available seating.
 - The Mar-Anon meeting was incredible and I think it was a great place for families to go for those of us friends and families still using. I would like to see less 7th collections at the meetings.
 - I like the format. More medical professionals talking about our disease would be great.
 - GBLT meeting.
- 3. Which workshops did you enjoy and why?**
- Vision board. Women's meeting – should have more.
 - H & I panel, very informative, good example for other districts. Speaker meeting, Pam L and Kathy B – great shares. Dr. Calloway was outstanding. Step workshops I attended were also good.
 - Andrea's, meetings, people!
 - Sponsorship as I'm involved at district level. Men's meeting.
 - Art, meditative doodling. Speakers at the beginning of each meeting was nice. I love to hear other's stories.
 - Zen doodling, I enjoyed it because I didn't want to do it (not crafty) but I liked it.
 - Meditative doodling was very helpful to me. I plan on continuing this new skill to help me relax at home. Dr. Calloway was amazing. I learned so much and I felt fortunate to hear him to speak to us.
 - PI, H&I, service sponsorship. I got good ideas from District 3 and others to bring back to my district.

- H & I.
 - Step study 1, 2 & 3. Step 6 and 7.
 - H & I panel, I learned a lot to bring back.
 - Yoga, excellent and surprisingly bonded me to the whole convention. Steps 10, 11 and 12, informing and passionate and great insight. Service sponsorship – a concept I had never heard but an unspoken law for MA. Creativity also an area for problems when it is not followed.
 - Zen doodle, great way to doodle. Gratitude scrapbook, nice to do crafty things.
 - Vision – get my head together, good meetings. Men's meeting good.
 - Public info. Step 1,2,3.
 - I enjoyed the doodling workshop and the fundraiser workshop and the H & I panel workshop. H & I: got some good direction. Doodling: got in touch with my happy memories. Fundraiser: got lots of positive input and direction.
 - Women's meeting and H & I workshop and general 12-step meetings, i.e., pretty much everything.
 - Gratitude journal creation, loved it. Laughed so hard. Andrea facilitated with great heart. Steps 6 & 7. Cowboy Steve. Wonderful summary and E.S. H.
 - H & I; strong recovery, inspiration. Vision Board; tactile (but would have liked more event connection to recovery).
 - Did none, not especially attractive to me.
 - Vision boarding
 - Meditative doodling.
 - PI was very stimulating, H & I quite engaging. Women's meeting was powerful!! Have more of those.
 - Vision Board. Gratitude Journal. Workshops, Step 1, 2, 3 (wonderful leader) and 10, 11, 12.
 - Enjoyed women's meeting. Felt it was safer space. Enjoyed the step workshops.
 - Zentangle. Step studies, women's meeting
 - PI, really interesting. Step meetings – a lovely format. Extra time for shares would be nice. Longer time slot.
 - 10, 11, 12 workshop, brought my issues into focus for me. Women's meeting-sisterhood.
 - Women's meeting, vision board.
 - Vision board of gratitude, journal were great for engaging my right brain. Scoratomic meeting helped normalize my experiences and gave me good ideas for handling challenges differently.
 - Service sponsorship and public information because they were topics I haven't heard much of within meetings.
 - H & I Panels.
 - Step study, work shop. Cowboy share was great. More spiritual focus in recovery.
 - All.
 - Vision board positive growth. Encouraging seems to be helpful.
 - Gratitude journal! Let me express my inner child like I rarely get to do these days. Gave me a chance to be social.
 - Art workshops, my interest.
 - Gratitude journal, we laughed and laughed and laughed.
 - Step workshops and they were decent
 - The woman's meeting.
 - All the creative workshops, art vision boards, gratitude journal. Yay!
 - Step meetings. Shares and reinforcement. Men's stag. Meeting camaraderie.
 - Best was Step 1, 2, 3 workshops
 - H & I: great experience from the speakers and information on how to get started.
 - 10, 11, 12. It was the only one I went to.
 - The secretary workshop was very helpful. Yoga was very cool.
 - Meditative doodling, very different.
 - All but especially H & I and service sponsorship.
- 4. Will attending this convention bring any changes to your program?**
- Yes, different approach to doing my steps.
 - It has inspired me to go to work on my program to deepen my recovery. Call my sponsor more often.
 - Will have to give more of my time volunteering.
 - I've got more people to reach out to.
 - Yes, Yoga and meditation will become part of my life.
 - Yes, Zen doodling mediation in a new way.
 - Yes, helped me to look at some of the steps in a new way and reminded me of the power of fellowship.
 - Hopefully with panels and fundraising.
 - Yes, make the leap to sponsoring and more consideration about starting a meeting in my area.
 - Yes, be more involved in doing service and sponsorship.
 - Yes, Thank you, good to be with other MAer's.
 - Not really.
 - Yes, I will read "Life with Hope" more regularly. I will be changing the way I sponsor others and I will have more fun.
 - Yes.
 - Yes, I will now attend MA meetings in District 3.
 - I feel a fire under me to complete the steps for my sake and for sake of working effectively with my sponsee.
 - Has potential to strengthen my sponsorship practice.
 - Gotta get (another) sponsor.
 - There is recovery in numbers.
 - I've picked up a long distance sponsor.
 - Yes, give me the boost I was hoping for.
 - More willingness to go to any length. More inspiration.
 - Let's hope so.
 - Absolutely, make it stronger.
 - Yes, more 10, 11, 12 step work.
 - Yes, I now have a temporary sponsor and the names and numbers of fabulous people.
 - Yes, I plan to use the plan more to keep a gratitude journal and to be more assertive about enlisting others help with filling service positions.
 - Yes, A larger sense of responsibility and service to the group and many good suggestions for action.
 - Yes, I'm going to attend meetings in other SF Bay Area districts and play music by people in MA.
 - Yes, be more willing.
 - Yes, I'm fired up to sponsor.
 - Vision board manifestations. Hopeful to host our own convention.
 - Too soon to say.
 - More outreach.
 - Yes, uplift to my spiritual program.
 - Yes, I will keep up with my meetings.
 - Service is crucial to my program. I will continue to be committed to service.

- More insights and friends in the fellowship.
- More involved in service. Better understanding of sponsorships.
- Yes, going to the H & I panel really made me interested in more service work.
- I will be more active and informed in my service and will contact my sponsor more.
- Yes, more will be revealed.
- Yes, more emphasis on "best practice".

5. What would you say to anyone thinking of attending next year's convention?

- Definitely make the effort to attend. Be of service, even if it's not your district.
- Stay flexible and enjoy.
- It was surprisingly good.
- Come on down.
- Don't think too much and just go.
- As an addict, you'll become addicted to the conventions.
- Welcome to OC District #5.
- Go. It will improve your program and your life and you will have some fun.
- Don't even think about it, just go.
- You got to go and bring a group with you.
- Don't expect to get a chip if it's your birthday or if you are having a milestone.
- This was excellent and bonded me with the world of MA, it stressed how similar and connected we are across the world. Like a huge family, everyone out to help each other, unlike real families. Go and enjoy as many meetings or workshops as possible.
- Beg or borrow, but make sure you go. This is the best recovery experience you can have.
- Go!
- Go, it's fun.
- You can only benefit and you should definitely plan to attend.
- Go, definitely!
- Please go if possible, it's worth it and you're worth it.
- Definitely come. Try to stick close to someone you know at first but then be open because my experience is that everyone (particularly the women) is very friendly.
- Go!
- Come well rested. Bring pick-up (audio) if accompanied by a guitar.
- It is a good experience.

- I was surprised and impressed by the joy I felt the moment I arrived! Fellowship at the level, meeting members from all over the country is fabulous, not to be missed.
- Go for sure.
- Willingness really is the key. You might be freaked out if you are on the fence.
- Yes!
- Come!
- Go with someone you know. It's hard to be alone at these events.
- Do you live to smile and laugh? Then go!
- Go! And attend as many sessions as you can.
- Please, please go. It can bring much growth in your program.
- You have no idea what you'd be missing if you don't go.
- Just do it!
- Oh my God, You have to go!
- Do it! Such a strong program. Booster! Super fun, fellowshipping with so many of us. An experience not to miss.
- Take it easy in the week leading up to it if you can, there's a lot to do late into the night.
- Come!
- Definitely, it supercharges your recovery.
- It's a must see.
- It's worth the time and cost.
- Do it!
- See you in Orange MA 2013. Bring friends, start saving money now.
- Reach out to people you don't know.
- You need to go. It will change your relationship to the fellowship.
- Go, go!!

6. Add anything you feel made an impression on you.

- Thank you District 3 for your work and service to make this happen. Job well done.
- There were no greeters in the hospitality room. Where was the hospitality, literally? No one to tend to the tea kettle. There were no water bottles and no cube fridge. It was not well posted and well promoted.
- I liked that there was a meeting for every workshop to go to.
- I really liked the raffles at different times instead of the end taking up 2 hours. This is a fund raiser and raffles bring in the \$\$.
- I was so impressed by the selfless

people who were of service at this convention. Their dedication is what helped make this an overall success.

- Sorry, I don't do impressions.
- The level of love and time that I know went into the organization and creation of this gathering for recovering potheads.
- The tightness and love among the District 3 convention committee.
- Trust God, clean house and work with others. You are enough!
- Friday...ready - made omelet. Wow!
- Women's meetings.
- A sound person for AV tech. Dedicated sound check time.
- Thank you for your service.
- The stories of others.
- Wonder what it would be like to have women's and men's meetings occur earlier in the weekend? Seems to me that people share in a deeper way in that setting and so might facilitate increased connections. Lets folks who otherwise might not connect or have time to do so at the end of the convention.
- Amazing! I'll be at the MA Convention in 2013.
- So much fun. I look forward to this every year. A late night activity would be awesome! Keep up the great work!
- Every year the conventions get better. Do you think the fact that I've stayed in recovery and have had one more year clean than at the previous convention has anything to do with it?
- Thanks for a great weekend!
- Thank you!
- Quality of the meeting's organizers and support team.
- Hospitality room, attendant.

If you were at the convention and want to comment, send it! We'll print it next month. ◀

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

marijuana anonymous worldwide

MA World Services

PO Box 7807 Torrance, CA90504 800.766.6779
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www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

District 2 East Bay

PO Box 20484 Oakland, CA 94620 510.287.8873

District 3 South SF Bay Area

PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

District 4 Western Washington

PO Box 17452 Seattle, WA 98107 206.414.9270

District 5 Orange County

1439 W. Chapman Av. PMB#215 Orange, CA 92868 714.999.9409

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 323.943.9228

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

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 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 your, your

groups', and/or your Districts' answers to the following questions:

1. Do we take the time to emphasize to all MAWS members, Trustees, Delegates and Paid Workers, the importance of providing the essential services to the society of MA that are assigned by the group conscience, which are part-and-parcel of our job at MAWS? (i.e. implementing and following new and updated policies and procedures, completing

motioned tasks in a timely fashion, detailed progress reporting to the appropriate bodies, etc.)

2. (Tradition 3) Does MAWS exclude anyone with a marijuana problem from feeling welcome?

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.

Birthdays

Celebrating 195 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sobriety date published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANLP 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 5

Lisa L. 2/22/04 8 yrs
Hal N. 2/26/91 21 yrs

District 6

Paul L. 2/8/04 8 yrs
George B. 2/6/88 24 yrs
Dave K. 1/15/89 23 yrs

District 7

Keith G. 1/16/09 3 yrs
Robert S. 1/20/05 7 yrs
Steve B. 1/29/11 1 YEAR!
Sinclair W. 2/3/08 4 yrs

District 8

Portia W. 1/17/83 29 yrs

District 11

Su S. 1/26/05 7 yrs
Rick V. 2/8/03 9 yrs
Dave C. 2/22/02 10 yrs
Trisa A. 2/1/96 16 yrs
Harry H. 2/4/87 25 yrs

**KEEP
COMING
BACK!**

Tradition Three

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using marijuana.

Step Three

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

How do you utilize the strength of your faith? (Please submit answers by April 17, 2012)