



Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake

On August 25, 2020, two months short of my 24th sober birthday, I dosed on 10mg of THC. I did not know I took it. A bit later, I recognized STONED. Funny how being stoned was completely familiar. No doubt I was high. It wasn't one of those funky, using-dreams. It was Tuesday afternoon, and I was home with my wife. I started feeling stoned. Really stoned. After several minutes, I realized what happened. "Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake." But, but, but, but...

I have been clean, and committed to my recovery since 1996. On October 26, 2020, I passed the milestone of 24 years from my clean date. I have consistently worked steps, attended meetings, actively sponsored, and been sponsored throughout. Recovery has been fulfilling for me in surprising ways. Stunningly fulfilling!!!

So what happened? Briefly, I am the full-time care-partner for my spouse of 40 years. She began losing weight, quickly...too quickly. She went from 160 to 99 lbs. Her primary care physician agreed that THC could be useful in promoting appetite. This very well-respected, main-stream, experienced, western doctor, green-lighted THC for her.

I was gleeful. I went to the Pot Shop. My stoner-persona got a lot of titillation at the procurement process. Pot wasn't something you got at the rec-store. In my 28 years of active use, it was seriously illegal. Copping rituals were a reality/surreality of being a stoner. So, the legitimate use of pot for good purposes opened that "forbidden,"

now-legal world with hip art and super-cool packaging. Kid in a candy store. Since COVID I had not been to any store, or much outside my home. THIS WAS EXCITING!!!!

I bought Pot for my wife. I asked for CBD for me. I explained to the budtender that I was a 12-stepper and that I wanted CBD with no THC. She said that they had it with trace amounts of THC which would never get me stoned. OK. I'm no purist. I thought, I'll try that. CBD with no THC was already working for me, for arthritis. So, WTF.

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There was no high from the CBD gummies. I got pain relief. I bought them again. I was sold the identical bag of gummies. Except, the small sticker on an obscure tag, labelled it 10/10, rather than 1/25. It looked exactly the same as what I had used before. Days later, at home, I opened one, thought it was the same as before, and ate it.

I had no intent to get high. I got high. And the next ten hours was an intense experience of being stoned, liking it a lot, not liking it, and being confused.

The next day, I called my sponsors, a few sponcees, one by one, and laid it all bare. I went to a meeting at noon on Zoom and told the group what had happened. I went to a home group meeting the next day. I signed up to chair some meetings and committed to write an article for *A New Leaf*. Was this a relapse? Where was it going? Except that one gummy, I used nothing.

I now take it one day at a time working a program, not easy, but simple. Today, I won't use anything to get high. Thoughts come like it would be fun to start using again. (Maybe just some mushrooms and a little grass just to keep that edge honed.)

But if I start again, I cannot kid myself it would be casual or occasional. I would be stoned most of the time. On August 25, that fact became clear. I liked it! I wanted it! Yet, I know that it would drain my energy and fog my thoughts. I recall what I was like using for 28 years. No doubt.

My life is not easy, but it is simple. Our principles are guides to progress. I claim spiritual progress, rather than spiritual perfection. What happened to me was not a mistake. It was not an accident. I was caught unaware. I found myself high on marijuana. No excuses. It was only a dedicated program with regular meetings, fellowship, and surrender to higher power that kept my dosing from becoming a full-blown relapse. It got close. So I got closer to my program, one day at a time. ▲

~by David H.

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

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A Lack of Control

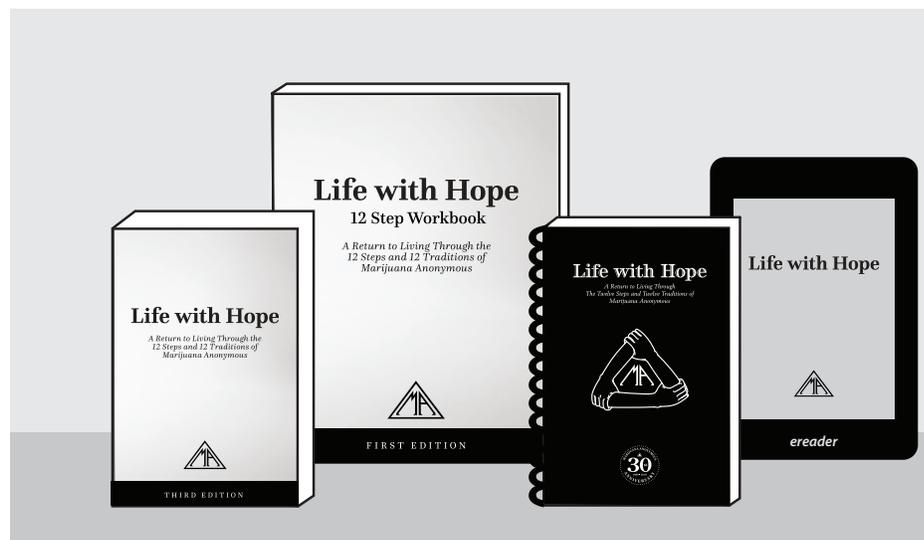
Growing up, I didn't have a belief in god. When I was in pre-kindergarten, I got sent home from school because I kept telling my classmates that god was a myth. While this may seem cute because as a child I didn't understand anything more than what I soaked in from my surroundings, the belief that there was no god and that I was in control was a lifelong theme. I just didn't realize it yet!

My mother and father separated when I was four. I have three memories of them before that: two angry and one happy. I imagine the ratio played about the same. My mother has mental illness, my father has addiction issues, and his drug of choice was marijuana. Later in life, we talked and when he finally managed to quit, he told me he noticed that he would try to quit, eventually fail and that each time, he had to get high a little earlier in the day. For all of my childhood, I never knew my dad smoked. It wasn't until I started smoking that it finally came out. My entire family currently is or was a daily marijuana user. That may be in part to us being Jewish and having ancestral trauma coursing through us. That is definitely an underdeveloped aspect of psychology!

I probably would have been in shock to find out my family smoked weed had it not been for my constant desire for being high myself. Instead, I thought "How cool is it that we all got high? We have something in common." For most of my life, I felt like the black sheep. After my parents divorced, my dad remarried when I was 12. During those years, I lived with my father and my stepmom. When they married, my stepmom had 1 year clean and sober. She told me later that she decided to be my support because she saw no one else in the family was able to help me. She was the first healthy woman in my life.

When I was 16, I was a mess. I was on 5 different psych meds. The doctor just added another psych med every time I had a problem. For \$350 an hour she had to make her money's worth!

I remember that my stepmom was deeply involved in the beverage program (that's what some 12 step programs call AA to keep in line with the singleness of purpose, but I think it's funny!), and she would help shelter women in early recovery. One of them stayed longer than others and was affectionately referred to as child #4, after my step-sister, myself and my half-brother.



A Lack of Control continued

There is a moment I can recall where I made some self-loathing hateful remark and my stepmom turned to the lady and said “He’s such an alcoholic.” It took me many years to understand what she meant by that.

The first time I smoked pot, I was 18. I got passed an ass bowl and coughed my lungs out for 20 mins. Screw this, I thought. This sucks! But low and behold, a few months go by, and I try it again with the same result. I remember getting angry that I got crap hits and was told to be glad someone shared with me at all. Boy, did my ego feel bruised!

The first time I smoked weed and enjoyed it, I was 19. It was two days after I hung out with someone that I knew in high school. He was a year older than me, and I thought it was cool he had a car and his own space. After hanging out a couple times, he took me back to his place. Turns out he was living with his parents but that was better than my situation. We started talking, and one thing led to another and we exchanged intimate favors, as young people tend to do! However, I was coerced into it with him. If I didn’t, how would I get home? I didn’t want to upset the mood.

Sexual abuse is unfortunately very common in my story.

When I first enjoyed weed, I remember feeling euphoric - colors were brighter, food tasted better. At the end of my using, everything felt monochrome. I thought my life was at its peak living in my grandparents’ renovated garage, smoking weed, and taking care of people who would turn on me if it was convenient. Every person I smoked weed with regularly was using me. Not one of them I talk to today. I cannot live the life I have created for myself today and continue to associate with people who do not genuinely want my success.

When I first got sober, I was a wreck. I was almost a year and half without psych meds and just self medicating. The majority of people in the fellowship didn’t associate with me, or so I thought. The people I thought were pillars of the community mostly had less than 1 year. Having had a year of sobriety, I now understand how fragile we are. However, I always try and make sure newcomers are made welcome. I never want someone to feel that they are not accepted in a place of recovery. Especially newcomers. We exist for them! ▲

~by Stephen S.

A Meditation

How freeing it is to read that it is arrogant to criticize myself. If I know that you are perfect just the way you are, how can I not believe the same about me? Am I suffering under the illusion of terminal uniqueness? Criticizing myself is just another form of self-centered fear. I came to recovery believing I needed to be perfect and never make mistakes. In recovery, I’ve learned that that’s what humans do: make mistakes, and hopefully learn from them. As I learn to care for myself and give myself the nurturing I’ve wanted from others, I feel freer, kinder, and more loving.

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Step Three

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

Tradition Three

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

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