



April 1997
Volume 7 - No. 4

A NEW LEAF

A Publication of Marijuana Anonymous

The Terrible Twos

by Bill D., District 10

I attended an MA meeting recently, and I witnessed someone celebrating their sobriety birthdate by taking a cake and a two-year chip. After this person blew out the candles and got a hug, they began to share about "how they did it." One thing this person said was that they were grateful to have reached the "terrible twos." Something about that phrase stuck in my mind. I have heard of the second year of sobriety referred to in this way before, but this time I wanted to explore what the term terrible twos could possibly mean.

I have a child and I remember when he reached age two. I remember that it was a trying experience. I enjoyed every minute of it, but it was a lot of work. Could this person who was taking a two-year chip actually have been comparing themselves to a toddler? At first I couldn't see the resemblance, but then I looked a little further.

Two-year olds, toddlers I mean, have a tough time. It is a period in their lives when they are trying to grasp some very basic skills that will help them develop first into children, then adolescents, and ultimately into adults. How does that relate to someone taking a two-year chip? In most cases toddlers have

learned to walk, but they still bump into things. They fall over. They get bruised. Some, fortunately very few, really hurt themselves. Still how does that compare to an addict celebrating two years of sobriety? I thought about it some more, and what I

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began to realize is that there are some striking similarities. Toddlers are at a stage in their development when they are no longer just an extension of a parent. They have begun to

realize that they are individuals in their own right.

I remember my first two years in sobriety. I was fully involved in learning about program, being of service, and learning "How It Works." I remember how much I treasured

taking those chips, first the newcomer, then 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months, and so on. Those chips kept coming at a

fairly regular rate until age two. From that point on, if I remained sober, I would get one of those prized chips only once a year. I also remember that I felt that

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Post-Convention Gladness

by Mike LB., District 5

We did it! The 3rd Annual Marijuana Anonymous Convention in San Diego was a great success thanks to all of you who attended. We had a great turnout. From 90-plus people hearing Az's heartfelt talk at the opening meeting and rolling in the aisles at the comedy show, through excellent attendance at the workshops, to over 110 at the dinner banquet and Rocky's

funny and insightful speech, to 100 marijuana addicts enthralled with Libby's uplifting share at the closing meeting, the place was packed!

Thanks for showing up, for staying the entire weekend, and for attending all the events—and for not just popping in and out. My biggest fear was that there was going to be me and about

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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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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Published by
A NEW LEAF Editorial Board

Rob M., chairman
Loren N., treasurer
Ilene M., secretary

Send all articles, inquiries, and
correspondence to:

A NEW LEAF

P.O. Box 4314
North Hollywood, CA 91617

Email #1: ANewLeaf97@aol.com
Email #2: ANuLeaf@aol.com

Editorial Phone No.
(818) 353-5537

Fax No.
(818) 990-2980

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Goodbye & Hello

After two stints as publishing editor of "A New Leaf," Rob M. changes hats to become editorial board chairman of A New Leaf Publications, the publication arm of MA (which includes "Life With Hope" and other materials). So this goodbye is much more of a hello. A big thanks and a huge hug to Rob for all he has done to keep "A New Leaf" going when the going got tough.

At the same time, we also thank Patricia G., the outgoing editorial board chairman, for her exemplary service. In another change, let's welcome the new editorial board secretary, Ilene M.—who is also the office manager for MA World Services—as we say "see you later" to Carol Mc., the departing secretary. Much thanks and love to you three, for all you've done and all you're willing to do.

Several new Bureau Chiefs also join us this month: Say hello to Kevin G. (District 3), Mary M. (District 4), Richard D. (District 7), Joe D. (District 8), and Lee R. (Delaware Valley). Finally, we—David H. and Jennifer S. (former Bureau Chief for District 8)—are delighted to make our debut as publishing editors.

Thank you everyone. Your service keeps MA healthy and alive.

MA World Service Conference

The theme for this year's MA World Service Conference is "The MA Way." Hosted by District 7, L.A. South, this important event will be held Memorial Day weekend, May 24 to May 26, in Santa Monica, California.

The MAWS Conference is the forum at which group conscience throughout MA is expressed, and decisions are made that affect MA as a whole. While each District sends two delegates, any MA member can attend. For more info, contact:

- Jim M., (310) 645-4654 - EZmavrick@aol.com
- Todd E., (818) 980-0670 - GemDot@aol.com

Congratulations to our members celebrating their sober birthdays!



District 1

Jan M. Mar 31 5 yrs.

District 2

Tim V. Mar 1 3 yrs.

District 3

Roger W. Feb 22 5 yrs.

Kevin G. Feb 23 3 yrs.

Dave V. Mar 2 5 yrs.

Tim A. Mar 4 1 yr.!

Ed B. Mar 15 1 yr.!

Ken G. Mar 18 1 yr.!

Peter M. Mar 24 5 yrs.

District 4

Biaba Mar 10 3 yrs.

District 5

Ernest F. Mar 9 2 yrs.

Janet R. Mar 17 9 yrs.

Carol Ann M. Mar 22 7 yrs.

Becky T. Mar 23 5 yrs.

Mike C. Mar 25 4 yrs.

Steve M. Mar 27 8 yrs.

Diana M. Mar 28 2 yrs.

District 6

Terry H. Mar ?? 2 yrs.

Danny G. Mar ?? 7 yrs.

Alan L. Mar 9 4 yrs.

Karie M. Mar 15 7 yrs.

Dean H. Mar 18 2 yrs.

Aaron G. Mar 26 1 yr.!

Keith G. Mar 27 2 yrs.

District 7

Richard D. Mar 1 1 yr.!

Mike S. Mar 15 2 yrs.

District 8

El Dee Feb 11 1 yr.!

David H. Feb 14 3 yrs.

Gary B. Feb 26 3 yrs.

Rob D. Feb 28 3 yrs.

Lori F. Mar 18 2 yrs.

District 10

Bill D. Feb 9 7 yrs.

Other

Eugene A. Mar 17 3 yrs.

Post-Convention Gladness

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Many other people sitting around muttering "Why did I come here?"

With such great support from all of you in MA, we were able to realize a profit of \$2,000, which has been sent to World Services to help pay the bills for another year.

If you don't like Oscar speeches, skip the next two paragraphs because there are some people I must publicly thank, without whom there never would have been a convention.

First off, I have to acknowledge our Treasurer and Registration person, Meri K., who put in many long hours before, during, and after the convention. Next, there are two addicts from District 7 who were invaluable. Debra found our speakers and talent for the comedy show, and Jim L. was in charge of selecting the workshops and organizing the raffle, including soliciting donations. They both worked their butts off. And Aleta did all our graphics at no cost, including the registration form and the agenda pamphlet. Thank you Aleta!

Then there were the people who were an immense help at the convention itself. In addition to those persons stated above, who continued to work throughout the convention, Steve was in charge of security and helped sell merchandise; Dean and Karen sold T-shirts; Richard was a maniac selling raffle tickets; Richard and Allison were the ones responsible for our fantastic balloon and banquet table decorations; Todd, Steve, and Jonathan selflessly gave of their experience from last year's convention; Bruce drove all the way from L.A. to give his wise input at our pre-convention meetings; Papa Joe obtained our great T-shirts; Coleman and Ivan helped set everything up Friday; Tammy got our birthday cake and organized the Sunday night beach meeting; and my son David actually did what I asked him without arguing, and helped everywhere from setting up, to registration, to selling merchandise. My second biggest fear was that three or four of us would have to do everything at the convention. Thank you all for being of service.

I am so very grateful to God for having been given this opportunity to be a part of something that touched myself and so many others on an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual level. I will never forget the spontaneous standing ovation we gave those recovering MA members celebrating their first birthdays. The remembrance of the outpouring of love for each other I felt still brings a tear to my eye.

And it was also a heck of a lot of fun. See you next year in the San Francisco Bay area! God bless you all. R

The Terrible Twos

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this was a point in my sobriety where things would also change in my recovery. Toddlers get frustrated because they want to express themselves, but haven't quite developed all the tools needed to do so effectively. They want their independence. They begin to display an I can do it by myself attitude. I guess two-year olds in program can begin to feel that way. I mean, after all, I² has been two whole years since they got high. Surely, as some might think, I must be cured...

Whenever my son would attempt to do more than he was able to handle, he would run back to Papa, tears streaming down his face, lots of weeping

and wailing. Sometimes there was pain, but I was there as any good parent would be. You know the routine, "here let me kiss it and make it better." Oh, and let's not forget about potty training. Talk about difficult! It can be quite a job teaching someone not to shit on themselves who doesn't know any better. Does that sound like the place someone who is taking a two-year chip might be?

It wasn't all bad. I enjoyed watching his change. I loved witnessing my toddler become his own person. I wonder if my Higher Power feels that way about me. I wonder if my fellow addicts who knew me when I first walked in the door noticed my search for my own identity in program. They seemed to. They seemed to understand that I had to figure some things out for myself. My sponsor knew that too. She was there for me during some pretty rough periods of my own personal discovery, but she knew that ultimately I had to work it out. For a toddler there is always ready assistance, or should be, from their parents or other caregivers. For me it was and still continues to be my "Higher Power." My son is now nine and he has changed in many ways. He truly is his own person, but he still needs me (truth be known I need him, too). I have several years of sobriety under my belt—hell I even have a couple of years of serenity under my belt as well—but I still need this program, I still need my sponsors, and I still rely completely on my Higher Power.

So are there comparisons that can be made between a screaming, testing, stubborn, argumentative, defiant, loving, grateful, exploring, and yes sometimes even cute two-year old toddler and an addict taking a two-year chip?

What do you think? R

A Message From Your Addiction

by Anonymous, District 3

I hate meetings and I hate your higher power. I hate anyone who has a program. To all who come into contact with me, I wish you death and suffering. Allow me to introduce myself, I am "The Disease of Addiction." Cunning, baffling, and powerful, that's me. I have killed millions and I am pleased. I love to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending I am your friend and lover. I have given you comfort, have I not? Wasn't I there when you were lonely? When you wanted to die, didn't you call me? I was there.

I love to make you hurt, and I love to make you cry. Better still, I love when I make you so numb you can neither hurt nor cry. You cannot feel anything at all. This is my true glory. I will give you instant gratification, and all I ask of you is long-term suffering. I have been there for you always and when things were going right in your life, you invited me. You said you didn't deserve these good things and I was the only one who would agree with you. Together we were able to destroy all things good in your life.

People don't take me seriously. They take strokes seriously. They take heart attacks and diabetes seriously. Fools that people are, they don't know that without my help these things would not be as likely. I am such a hated disease, yet I do not come uninvited. You choose to have me.

I hate all of you. Yet so many of you have chosen me over reality and peace. More than you hate me, I hate all of you who have a 12-Step Program. Your program, your higher power all weaken me. I can't function in the manner I am accustomed to. For now I must lie here quietly. You don't see me, but I am here. I may be growing bigger than ever. I am here, and until we meet again I wish you death and suffering.

New Meeting Round-Up

Here is information on several new meetings outside of established districts. To find out about new meetings *within* districts, call the specific district's phone line, listed in the box below.

Lansing, Michigan
Sunday nights, 8:00 pm
Millet School - 5217 Lansing Road

Ypsilanti, Michigan
Tuesday nights, 10:00 pm
Serenity House - 33-B East Cross

Denver, Colorado
Thursday nights, 7:30 pm
3131 E. 4th Avenue (corner of St. Paul),
bottom floor

Boulder, Colorado
Monday nights, 8:30 pm
Boulder One - 3085 Bluff Street

Santa Barbara, California
Thursday nights, 7:30 pm
Alana Club - 235 East Cota Street

Sacramento, California
Friday nights, 7:00 pm
Kaiser Hospital, Cottage Way Bldg.,
Room 141-B - 3120 Cottage Way

Las Vegas, Nevada
Thursday nights, 8:45 pm
Caffee Cappuccino, Serenity Room
3420 S. Jones Blvd.

Houston, Texas
• Monday nights, 6:00 pm
St. John the Divine Church, Room L-05
22450 River Oaks Blvd.
• Wednesday afternoons, Noon
The Right Step, Townhall
902 W. Alabama (off Montrose)

MA WORLDWIDE...

DISTRICT 1 - SAN FRANCISCO

P.O. Box 460024
San Francisco, CA 94146
(415) 522-7373

DISTRICT 2 - EAST BAY

P.O. Box 8354
Berkeley, CA 94707
(510) 287-8873

DISTRICT 3 - SOUTH BAY

P.O. Box 111341
Campbell, CA 95011
(408) 450-0796

DISTRICT 4 - SEATTLE

P.O. Box 1509,539 Queen Anne Ave N
Seattle, WA 98109
(206) 548-9034

DISTRICT 5 - ORANGE COUNTY

358 S. Main #215
Orange, CA 92668
(714) 999-9409

DISTRICT 6 - L.A. COUNTY

(NORTH)
P.O. Box 2433
Van Nuys, CA 91404
(818) 759-9194

DISTRICT 7 - L.A. COUNTY

(SOUTH)
P.O. Box 3012
Culver City, CA 90231
(213) 964-2370

DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK

P.O. Box 507
New York, NY 10276
(212) 459-4423

DISTRICT 9 - SANTA CRUZ

P.O. Box 3196
Santa Cruz, CA 95063
(408) 427-4088

HUMBOLDT, CA AREA

(707) 443-5928

DISTRICT 10

L.A. COUNTY (EAST)
P.O. Box 94400
Pasadena, CA 91109
(909) 787-6020
(818) 583-9582

DELAWARE VALLEY

CHAPTER
P.O. Box 194
Sadsburyville, PA 19362
(610) 622-9243

PORTLAND, OREGON

P.O. Box 14125
Portland, OR 97293
(503) 221-7007

NEW ZEALAND

MA Service Centre
P.O. Box 74-386
Newmarket
Auckland 3, New Zealand
(09) 846-6822

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

P.O. Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404 (800) 766-6779

Marijuana Anonymous World Wide Web

<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>

e-mail address: info@marijuana-anonymous.org