



APRIL 1995

Volume 9 - No. 4

A NEW LEAF

A Publication of Marijuana Anonymous

\$12.00 -Year Subscription

Recovering in Cyberspace... by Anonymous

For a long time, I was a member of the on-line committee that responds to the e-mail sent to the MA web site. I recently heard from an old "pen pal" who is (one more time) in that same place so many of us found ourselves over and over and over again. At least it's where I was for almost ten years. She said I could share this with you. (A few changes were made to protect her anonymity.)

I ask:

Have you thought about doing a new Step One on Maryjane? Are you powerless over it? How powerless? Why?

She answers:

Yes - definitely powerless. Especially since, more often than not now, I prefer not to be high. And then - bingo - I order some from my connection. It's sent it in the mail so there is usually a 2-3 week waiting period during which I regret having ordered it. I tell myself that THIS

TIME, I will use it sensibly - maybe smoke up before doing my workout (I love the effect that pot has on my body awareness.) Or that I'll just use it in the evening. Or that I'll just use on the weekends. Then it arrives in the mail (usually in mid-afternoon) and I race home and smoke up immediately, regardless of the activities that I have scheduled, and I stay smoked up until the bag is gone. This time I only had a little bit so I smoked morning, noon and night for two weeks. Last time, I bought two bags (\$600) and ended up flushing it down the toilet in a moment of supreme paranoia about being found out. This is truly madness ...insanity.

For the first week, my mind is racing with ideas and I work with discipline and creativity. Then, after one week, I begin to disintegrate into smoking, sitting on the couch and staring into space drugged dreams. Good ideas flow, but get

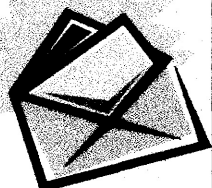
lost in the fog. And I HATE the stress of deception. Hiding the smell is quite a challenge: breath fresheners, air fresheners. And then the layer of fog that remains in my mind. Even today, on day two of withdrawal, I feel a clarity of mind returning, and a joy at living that is dependent on no external conditions.

I ask:

WHY are you doing it? When I think about using it's because I want some mental Novocain. Are you "feeling" too much? Too up? Too down? Too what? Think about it.

She answers:

Why am I trying to do what? Quit? Stay quit? I'm quitting because I ran out. I suppose I could just order more, but I really don't like being high that much anymore. I especially don't like being high in a setting where I have to figure out ways to hide my use. I don't like wondering if I'm making a rational deci-



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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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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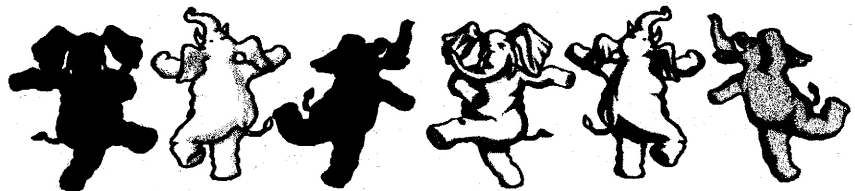
Recovering in Cyberspace (continued)

sion or if I'm just drug affected. I don't like being on this merry-go-round. I don't like deceiving my friends about my drug use. I don't like deceiving my co-workers about my drug use. The euphoria, the intensified body awareness, the floods of creativity are all available to me if I use my spiritual tools. I know that. But I'm a lazy type so it seems so much easier to light up a joint than it does to meditate, discipline myself to exercise, take the dive into the depths of my being to open the flood-gates of creativity. I feel incredibly guilty when I'm using ...like I have failed at something really important and like I am really a "fuck-up" who is pretending to have her shit together.

Why am I reaching out to you again with hopes that dialoguing with you will help change a very deep psychic structure? I want to

be joyous, happy and free from this addiction. I think that apathy and fear are the emotional/psychic elements in me that dissolve in THC. I usually start thinking about scoring when I can't get myself motivated to do what I need to do and so end up watching a lot of movies and eating a lot of crappy food. Or I play games on the computer. Also, I think I'm afraid of people. For example, I had wanted to begin to make a new friend for some time, but kept putting it off. As soon as I smoked up, I had a bath and put all my smell masks on and then went over to her house and we had a visit. I somehow needed the THC to get me over the hump of making that first contact.

So - there you have it. My attempts to honestly answer your questions. Please keep asking them.



A Special Thank You!

Thank You's are in order to some dedicated members on the team of A New Leaf. Tom M. is stepping down as co-editor and Ilene M. is also stepping down after serving M.A. as secretary of

A New Leaf's executive board. All of us at A New Leaf would like to extend a warm Thank You to both of them for their service and committed participation.

THE ROVING REPORTER

What Service commitments do you have and how have they been an essential part of your recovery?

Rachel W, District 7, 23 months sober

1) M.A. Hotline - Talking to new comers, imparting meeting and other info. It helps me to remember that it doesn't get any better out there and it makes me grateful for my sobriety. To have what these callers desperately want. and 2) Meeting Treasurer - It gets me to the meeting!

Debra R., District 6, 15 months sober

Secretary, District Events Chair, Co-distribution coordinator for A New Leaf. My service commitments are essential to my recovery because I want to try and give back a portion of what I have gained in M.A. Being involved also helps me feel like I am a part of the M.A. family.

Robin H, District 6, 4 years sober

I have commitments at the meetings that I attend every week. I am GSR at one and the meeting treasurer at the other one. I am also one of our districts delegates and am also the co-distribution coordinator for A New Leaf. I have also enjoyed working on the MA convention committee to help make this (1999) convention an informative and fun experience for all! These commitments help me to keep me focused on today and out of my head. Being of service has been a rewarding experience for me.

Hilary, District 2, 6 months sober

I do phone service and am secretary at my home meeting. My meeting took a group conscience and bent the rules to vote me secretary after only two months clean. It's kept me coming back. Some people were worried that I didn't have enough time to be secretary, but I really treasure the people

who had faith in me.

Steve S., North SF Bay, 35 months sober

Co-secretary and Chip person- Help me to feel connected and I'm responsible for more than my own stuff!



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