



Growing Up in the Rooms

Recovery while in adversity has probably taught me the most about living in emotional sobriety while managing to live without weed to numb my feelings, but it's not easy.

I never want to see it this way as I'm going through something, one-hundred percent aghast that my problems could possibly be "good." People will say "*be thankful for your pain*" and this is exactly how it's supposed to be, and they point to the opportunities for growth and the process of maturing with the changes of recovery. Well, c'mon! *Really?* And yet, how often in retrospect does that turn out to be true?

To be honest, I am not an excessively patient, goody-goody angel of obedience and instant spiritual awakening in my journey of recovery, and I am not sure that leaning into pain will ever become desirable. However, I am coming to see that feelings are not the end of the world. Everything is not just happening **to** me. It is not all about me. This too shall pass, and everything will be okay. This is *life on life's terms*.

There is a big part of me that fights pretty much all difficult emotions, like a can of bug spray on the painful stings that life dares to present. My attitude on a grumpy day can be entitled as if sobriety is meant only to lavish the rewards and pleasures of life because I "deserve" this for

giving up the so-called fun of drugs and alcohol (which wasn't fun, but on a grumpy day I forget this).

Getting a resentment will eventually turn into negative, sulking self-pity and righteousness, which then becomes nothing can work out my way, and I might as well get high again. This is exactly the time to work a program. This is why it seems to me that simply not smoking, vaping, dabbing, eating, or absorbing cannabis in all of its many formats is not enough to help my life. I have to do more than abstain, especially during adversity and pain.

Other than normal life stuff, I have to admit that some of the greatest pains in my recovery have come about due to conflict in the rooms. When I first came in, there was a fellow who I had gotten close to and trusted. Then as time went on, his character challenges showed up. I can see that now. I have seen shortcomings in many fellows since then, but I was a newcomer and thought old-timers were Gods. They are, in fact, not.

Back then, I saw a person making a cutting remark that, to me, felt insensitive to the trust of our private disclosures. I felt betrayed and caught off-guard, unaware that recovering

stoners can be dopes sometimes. Because I smoked pot for more than half my life, I didn't have the communication skills to push back, stand up for myself, or question this, and instead burst into tears.

I held an enormous resentment against this person and refused to attend meetings after our falling out. That eventually led to me going back out, and I blamed Marijuana Anonymous for having mean jerks in the rooms who obviously aren't getting better, so how could this help me?

"It'd be nice to say that was the end of my conflicts with folks in the rooms, but of course that wouldn't be rigorous honesty."

Thankfully, I got over that with the help of the 12th Tradition, and it wasn't the last time I had to remember "principles before personalities," and to prioritize the well-being of other recovering marijuana addicts (including myself) with contributions of service and unity. I had to look at the big picture.

It'd be nice to say that was the end of my conflicts with folks in the rooms, but of course that wouldn't be rigorous honesty. I grew up in a household of violence and dysfunction, and natural expressions of feelings in any form weren't tolerated.

Shutting down as a pothead seemed to replicate this pattern, and in getting sober, I felt hopelessly clunky,

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.

District Bureau Chiefs

Please get in touch with our ANLP's Managing Editor to collaborate on continuing to breathe life into our fellowship's newsletter. Your ideas and service are welcome, wanted and needed. Contact Thor H. at editor@anewleafpublications.org

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Send articles/stories:
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Or they may be submitted online:
www.marijuana-anonymous.org/story

Poetry of Reason

By: Gordon M.

*Days smoking weed,
Blitz of stimulation
Topping my gaze
Into the blue*

*Flying inside clouds
Touching sun
The only one
Inside my glass globe*

*Shattering
Catching my eye
So I must see again,
See with reason*

*A will to love
Clean voice
Speaking poetry
Of reason.*

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Growing Up...

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awkward, and inadequate, like I could never say or communicate the right thing. It felt embarrassing not to be a master of humanity and all of our interactions, and when it comes to other potheads who probably struggle with a very similar problem, how often does it happen that signals get crossed? It happens. The main thing is to not let resentment get in the way.

The recovery part of me will say, 'Now, don't take them personally, it's not about you, and you can work your own program without taking their inventory,' and the pothead in me will be like, 'Nah-I'm going to say a vague, passive-aggressive, secretly cutting remark right back to their crosstalk, obviously directed at me, how dare they say that, I hate their stupid ass, everything is going up in flames in 1...2...3...'

The recovery part of me goes, 'Hold up, call your sponsor and leave a message,' or 'Let's do some reading and Stepwork,' or 'Let's say the Serenity Prayer,' or 'Why not make an outreach call?' 'Hit a meeting,' 'Pray,' 'Meditate,' 'Listen to a podcast or speaker tape on YouTube,' 'Journal about it,' 'Write about your experience for *A New Leaf* newsletter,' annnnnnd, 'Hey! How about *not* doing the next wrong thing, which only leads to an amends later anyway?' I have a very helpful recovery voice that sits pretty close to my ear and for the most part, not always, I do listen.

So, I am learning not to kick up drama as much and to keep in my own lane and pray on others. If someone comes at me with anger, fear, aggression, or negativity, I remind myself of the 5th Step Prayer that my sponsor

*To engage with ANLP send a note to board@anewleafpublications.org

is keen on, and that addiction is a brain disease, we are sick people, and none of this is personal.

I get triggered and I project onto others, so why wouldn't they be doing that to me? How could I possibly understand what is going on with someone else, and furthermore, it is not my business. I have my own work to do.

That's the key however—willingness, humility, and courage. Honesty seems to help, and I can be okay with disliking someone, but it's not okay for that to get in the way of recovery. None of that is yet my automatic “go-to” reaction, and it's almost like I need cue cards to remember some days, but something in me now recognizes that going off is probably not the best move.

Neither is gossiping in a manipulative, back-channel secret takedown coup that is petty and not exactly grown adult behavior. Things like that are my classic character challenges. At least the pause is there, along with an inner voice of program suggestions. Somehow my thick skull came to that. I am also not the only one who feels clumsy with emotional sobriety, and that helps give me saner moments of perspective.

Serenity comes easier if I turn these things over, don't engage, accept my powerlessness, and focus on my own recovery rather than falling back into controlling behaviors around people, places, and things.

I don't have to lose my trust in Marijuana Anonymous during conflicts with members, small or large. It's been said in meetings that resentments are more about your own temperature in recovery

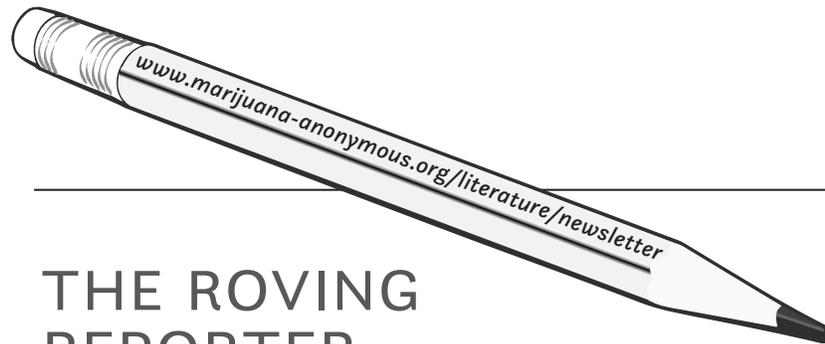
rather than about anyone else, and this has been true for me.

Gradually, I have come to experience the part of the Promises that says, “We will intuitively know how to handle situations, which used to baffle us.”

As it turns out, feelings are a measurement of being human and

they can guide my behavior in all situations, so that shutting down in fear and resentment is no longer the only option. While a tough lesson to learn, there is hope that I can better handle my interactions with others, and for this I am grateful. Positive emotional sobriety is what helps me to feel happy, joyous, and free ▲

~ Anonymous



THE ROVING REPORTER

Every month, our readers have **another opportunity** to reflect on their recovery and to help carry the message to the addict who still suffers. This issue presents certain questions/topics, the responses to which may be published in the **June** issue. In addition to questions/topics, the Step and the Tradition corresponding to the month of publication are offered as topics.



For example, in this **May** issue, we are requesting submissions related to **Step/Tradition Six** for publication in **June**.

The deadline is the 16th of the month. You need not write more than a couple paragraphs, and the exercise may strengthen your own recovery. The action you take will certainly bring to life **Step Twelve** and **Tradition Five**. The Fellowship hopes to hear from you often. One of this month's topics is derived from a line within **Step Six of Life with Hope** (3rd Ed., p. 27, 4th para).

First, to quote: “*To become entirely ready, some of us performed exercises such as writing, sharing, and praying about our defects of character.*”

So for those who have practiced this Step, please give an account of... **actions you've taken to become ready.**

And/or you may wish to respond to a different topic: **Briefly describe the personal growth experience toward humility you now have as a direct result of practicing this Step with regard to a particular character trait that had been previously difficult to see / admit to.**

One final suggested topic, related to Sixth Tradition: **How do you practice this Tradition, personally? How do you encourage it at the meeting level? At District? At MA World Services?**

We look forward to reading *your* story!

Marijuana-Anonymous.org/literature/newsletter/talk-to-the-roving-reporter

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit
WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

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Dave W. 3/8/2003 15 yrs
Melissa 3/27/2017 1 yr

District 4

Michael H. 4/20/2006 12 yrs

District 5

Cory D. 4/24/2014 4 yrs
Eric B. 4/3/2006 12 yrs
Gary W. 4/9/2012 6 yrs
Mike C. 3/25/1993 25 yrs
Paloma 4/8/2012 6 yrs
Reinhard 4/11/2009 9 yrs
Trevor 4/24/2014 4 yrs

District 7

Adam M. 4/1/2015 3 yrs
Carol 4/20/1991 27 yrs
Cheryl 4/21/2014 4 yrs
Cori 2/14/2017 1 yr
Diane 3/17/2004 14 yrs
Louis W. 3/4/2011 7 yrs
Maria R. 4/15/2013 5 yrs
Terri A. 4/19/1992 26 yrs

MA World Phone Meetings (MAWPM)

Marianne M. 4/28/2016 2 yrs



GOT A YEAR? ALLOW US TO PUBLISH YOUR ANNIVERSARY TO CELEBRATE!!!

Provide your sobriety date to your local GSR to be forwarded to your Bureau Chief, or e-mail your details to chiefs@anewleafpublications.org or submit them online at tiny.cc/mabday.

Members / GSRs / Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that **1) HAVE OCCURRED, 2) HAVE NOT been published recently, 3) and ARE NOT OLDER THAN 45 days.**

Please format birthday submissions in this manner: Name <tab> Date <tab> #yrs



From Life with Hope

Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.



Tradition Five

Each group as but one primary purpose, to carry its message to the marijuana addict who still suffers.