



Choosing Faith Over Fear in Uncertain Times

As a recovering marijuana addict with almost 2 years of sobriety in 2020, I am more grateful than ever for the gifts of the program, for the support and friendship of my fellow addicts, and the care and guidance of my higher power. My disease wants me dead, and now it has help — a virus that attacks the lungs and has forced many to socially distance in their homes. How could anyone imagine a more perfect accomplice to take down a struggling marijuana addict?

Now more than ever, I am reminded that I am powerless over my addiction and powerless over other people, places, and things. All I can do is control my reaction to the circumstances around me, surrender my fears and insecurities to the care of a loving god, and be willing to do the next right thing. This is a time of great uncertainty, and we're all in this together.

Getting high to numb myself to emotional pain and fear is a luxury that I cannot afford and was never much of a luxury to begin with. It was fun for a while, but progressively, I came to rely on marijuana to fill a god shaped hole. It wasn't until I was entirely willing to accept a spiritual solution to my problem that I could start to flip the script on my addiction.

We're granted a daily reprieve, and with each day, have the opportunity to grow spiritually. For me, it's like taking my medicine each day in the same way I take medicine for other health conditions. When I'm feeling angry, lonely, tired, fearful, or overwhelmed, I need to use the tools of the program, including

prayer and meditation, connecting with my sponsor and fellow addicts, working my steps, and attending meetings. Even doing just the first two (prayer and meditation) give me a tremendous boost in terms of my ability to remain present, be more patient and compassionate with myself and others, and be less focused on myself.



In difficult moments, I find gratitude lists to be very powerful, praying for loved ones, connecting with family and friends (including other addicts), and humbly asking for god's help to remove my defects of character. Other than not using, I do this all very imperfectly — it's progress not perfection.

Sometimes when I'm feeling extra stressed, I remind myself of the fact that there was no progress being made in my disease. For better or worse, I now get to live my life instead of watching it pass me by.

Today, I'm exceedingly gratefully for modern technology and the outstanding service of our district and Marijuana Anonymous members who have made a near seamless transition to video meetings and the phone lines so that there is always a meeting available. In fact, the accessibility to meetings for all with an internet connection is better than ever from what I've observed in our district.

Corona virus or no corona virus, I will always remain powerless over marijuana. I miss the in person meetings and the fellowship as it used to be, but am also inspired and encouraged by the diligence and enthusiasm of other addicts to embrace an online forum. I'm grateful to be clean and sober and to be working on Step Eleven, which helps me to choose faith over fear during these challenging and uncertain times. Never before has the power of the program been so evident than in a time when we're literally mandated to socially distance and isolate from others, left wondering if/when our lives can return to some form of new normal. In the meantime, we all have a great opportunity to strengthen our programs, be kind to each other and ourselves, let live and let god. Be well. ▲

~ James W. District 3

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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Shelter From the Storm

A year or so ago, a friend in the program asked me if I would write something for A New Leaf. I agreed, and then promptly forgot about my commitment. Until now, now that I am quarantined by the coronavirus, and battling the boredom and worry this pandemic stirs in me. This is a trying time for all of us, and for those of us in recovery as well. Staying clean and sober can be difficult, when this would have otherwise been a time to sit around the house, watch Netflix, munch out, and get stoned out of my gourd. Turning it over, letting it go, and being present is more of a task than usual. I worry for my mom across the country in a nursing home, and my older brother also across the country. I worry for all the loves in my life. I worry for my own health, being an older individual.

However, because I quit smoking weed, I was able to quit smoking cigarettes a year later and this time, it stuck. It's been many years now since I've smoked anything, so my lungs are in better shape than they were 20 years ago when I loved smoking both marijuana and cigarettes.

Because of this program, I am able to be present for those in my life. I can call my mom and really listen to her, even offer some of

my own experience, strength and hope when she's feeling badly. I can contact the people in my life and let them know that I love them. I can see how they are doing through this trying time. I use the tools provided by the 12 steps, including prayer and meditation, to stay present and keep worry at bay.

Meetings are a sanctuary, and Zoom meetings are a boon, getting me out of myself and reminding me that the world, and my Higher Power, are a lot bigger than me. Recovery is a shelter from the storm.

I don't know what the future holds. To be honest, it looks terrifying and bleak right now, as I sit in the midst of the lockdown at the beginning of April. I don't know what will have passed between the time that I'm writing this and when this piece is published. Loved ones may get ill. I may get ill. I may get very ill. I may even die, if this is my time. If I had a last wish, I'd want the people in my life to know that I love them. I'm so thankful that I'm clean and sober, here to breathe every breath without smoke, to have a head clear of fog, and a heart clear of guilt.

I wish you all health and wellness, sobriety and love in your lives. Together, we can weather this storm ▲

~Krista D.



Meditations

I Was Going to Have a Life, but Then I Got High

“Our dreams went up in smoke.”
Life with Hope, 3rd ed, xvii.

There is something about being stoned that makes for a lot of wild ideas that don't actually seem to go anywhere. There could be a ton of notes and thoughts, but these half-started projects aren't possible to fully manifest when a pothead. Sure, some things get done, but not to the fullest potential. The brain just isn't all there.

It is easy to get distracted. The grandiosity of imagination is enough, so why take real action to produce real results? It is so much easier to lay on a couch with a bong, play video games or binge watch several TV shows with all of the munchies, but what actually gets done? Subsequently, goals are not met, life slips away, and it hurts to watch peers move ahead.

Back in high school or college, maybe it was a dream to one day own a business, or to have a country house, or to publish a book, or to finish a Ph.D. in environmental biology, or to be a decent parent instead of “checking on something” in the basement, car, or in a walk around the block with a one-hitter. It's not easy to realize certain dreams are falling way short of

true potential, but to see others actually doing it- this hurts. It is easy to wonder what happened?

Today, I can face the consequences of my “wasted” past, and move forward into a new day of recovery with sober choices. I can get myself back on track, and allow the miracle of recovery to gradually change my life for the better.

~ *Anonymous*

Meeting Makers Make it

I've heard a lot of great quotes about why meeting attendance is so important for my recovery. But to experience and really see the results of how it does seem to work is motivating. By going to a meeting, I get out of myself. I relate to others. I get hope. I become part of something bigger than myself and it strengthens me. I am able to gain insight from the valuable experience of others, or I can give it away.

If I'm lucky I get to remember what it was like to be a newcomer, or recall what it was like to be active in my addiction and feel grateful for my recovery. Or sometimes I feel like a newcomer again, and I am the one suffering, and I forget I can show up and be a

part of other people's process by marveling at how they've grown.

Sometimes I cry in a meeting and feel safe doing so, or I can laugh at a shared insight only another recovering addict can appreciate. Quotes I've heard are “bring the body, and the mind will follow”, “suit up and show up”, and “meeting makers make it.” I can forget how important they are.

One quote from an oldtimer went something like “I only need one meeting a week, so I go to one every day because I don't know which meeting it will be.” I also heard this is an “anyway” program. We don't have to like or want to do it, whether it's going to a meeting, making a phone call, being of service, or working the steps, but we do it “anyway” and it works. It really does, but to experience it myself, after I've forgotten, well, it feels like a miracle.

~ *Anonymous*

When I Let Go

When I let my spirit go beyond the bounds of my ego into the care of a Higher Power I can take care of myself. The boundaries of love are never matched as when I let go.

~ *Anonymous*

Daily Meditations Wanted!

Our MA fellowship is interested in creating a daily reader to add to our body of literature. All members are invited to submit daily reflections through an easy, online form. Find it below and thank you for your service.

<http://tiny.cc/MA-daily>

***The Reflections
Daily Meditation Book***



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For a complete listing of all meetings visit
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Step Five

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

Tradition Five

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

Celebrating 194 Years of Sobriety!

District 2

Dave W.	3/8/2003	17 yrs.
Sheldon B.	4/15/1996	24 yrs.

District 5

Aime	3/17/2016	4 yrs.
Eric B.	4/3/2006	14 yrs.
Gary W.	4/9/2012	8 yrs.
Mike C.	3/25/1993	27 yrs.
Paloma	4/8/2012	8 yrs.
Reinhard	4/11/2009	11 yrs.
Mallory	3/9/2018	2 yrs..

Districts 6&7

Carol R.	4/20/1991	29 yrs.
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Birmingham & Ann Arbor MI

Maurice R.	4/17/2006	14 yrs.
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See your sobriety date here!

Allow us to publish your
anniversary to celebrate!
Provide your sobriety date to your
local GSR, ANLP Liaison, or e-mail to:
chiefs@anewleafpublications.org



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