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Acceptance

Recovery isn't about expecting all my problems to disappear. At least, that's not what it's about for me this time, my fourth go-round in the rooms of the 12 steps. Today, recovery is about learning to live life on life's terms, and right now, acceptance is the key for me.

"Goddess, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change..." I have heard in the rooms that the things I cannot change are EVERYTHING outside of me.

The things I can change are within me: my beliefs, perceptions, choices, attitudes. Recovery has helped me quite a bit with those internal things. The steps help me to see myself more clearly - to get out of denial about my own dysfunctional/unskillful thinking and to be willing and open to trying new, less familiar, more uncomfortable (for now) ways of doing things.

I'm pretty okay at that part. I've been practicing looking at my shadow since I was a kid. I first started seeking help on my own when I was 19, and that was half a lifetime ago. I've been in therapy fairly consistently since then, and I have had about 8 and a half years in and out of the rooms in that time - 4 and a half this time around, the longest stint yet. I credit Marijuana Anonymous, the program and fellowship, and my Higher Powers 100 percent.

So, back to acceptance. Yeah, I'm not so good at that - or at least, historically, that's been a struggle for me. I've had a habit of looking at things the way I think they should be rather than how they are, which

means I'm never quite happy with the world. Situations are not as they should be, people don't act how I think they should...I'm not where I should be in life. It's really not the best light in which to view things.

*I have heard
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that the things
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outside of me.*

So, recovery is really helping me to take off the rose- but really blue-colored glasses and start seeing the world as it is - the messy, imperfect, wonderful way of the world and to release the constant longing for something different.

Nothing has helped me settle into my own skin and my own life the way acceptance has. Recovery hasn't been a cakewalk for me. When I first got in (2016), I made a series of decisions that really caused a bit more chaos in my life, but seemed like the right thing at the time. And, I don't regret going to an outpatient program for PTSD, but I do see how my attachment to that led to my son and me having to crash at a friend's

house when we lost our housing in part because I wasn't working.

I accepted that leaving Austin to come back to North Texas where I grew up might not be what I wanted, but it seemed like it was in my son's best interest because my parents could help me more. After much struggle and resistance, I accepted that my parents wouldn't help me in the ways I wanted them to (like in helping around the house) - that they are flawed human beings doing their best, which doesn't mean meeting my expectations. My attachment to what I wanted from them was causing me just as much pain, if not more, than the fact that they refused to help me in the ways I thought I needed.

I have really worked on accepting myself, which for me means lowering my expectations. I am not going to be rendered perfect. Although I understand that intellectually, I still tend to condemn myself when I make a mistake, for example yelling at my son. I believe it is in both of our best interests for me not to yell, and I can continue practicing that, but it may not be realistic for me to expect myself to NEVER yell right now. If I can accept that, then I can come up with a solution for when I do yell.

In this instance, I have explained to my son that I am not okay with yelling at him, and that when I do, it says more about how well I am (or rather, am not) taking care of myself, which impacts how well I cope with and regulate my emotions. My yelling has nothing to do with

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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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Acceptance (continued from page 1)

him as a person or my feelings about him. The fact that I am able to say this to him shows that I have let go of the shame-based thinking that would cause me to deny and justify. I can face the problem when I ACCEPT the problem.

When I do yell, I tell him that I am sorry I yelled, that I don't want to hurt him emotionally, and that I will keep trying to do better. This shows him that although I make mistakes, I won't give up on doing the right thing. It is not All or Nothing thinking that says f- it, I yelled, I'm a terrible mother, I might as well give up, which then starts the cycle of yelling more, punishing us both.

How does all this relate to my marijuana addiction? Because none of this would be possible if I was still getting high. I would do the thing I'm ashamed of (in this case, yelling, but there were SO MANY MORE bottom line behaviors when I was getting stoned), feel so ashamed that I had to numb out, feel ashamed that I was numbing out, pass out, and start the whole thing over the next day. It was constant shame, numb, shame, numb with hardly any time or energy for anything else in between.

Being in the program has allowed me to give myself space and grace, and what I give to myself, I give to everyone around me. I am better able to accept people being people and being perfectly human (again, my acceptance is not perfect, but progressive). I am learning how to take care of myself, understanding everything happens in my Higher Powers' timeline, not mine. I've come so far, and I see I still have so far to go. I pray for the willingness to let go of my willfulness against His/Her/Their wills. I am grateful I have made it to this mountaintop, and I'm not going to quit climbing.

Is it easy? Hell no, it's really f-ing hard. Is it worth it? Absolutely. I will keep coming back; going to meetings; calling my sponsor; reading the literature; working the steps; being of service to my fellows, my group, my district, and World Services; praying my butt off; and even meditating (in acceptance of my resistance and again praying for willingness) - and I hope you do, too. I accept myself and you exactly as we are in this moment, and we are both worthy of being present in our lives. We work it because we are worth it. ▲

~ by Beth F.



Daily Meditations Wanted!

Our MA fellowship is almost done creating a daily reader to add to our body of literature. PLEASE 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



Grace Under Pressure

Every MA meeting touches us in some way. Yesterday, my experience at my home meeting was like no other. Our speaker was preparing to share his experience, strength, and hope for 20 minutes for the first time. He was nervous coming in. He had been pretty quiet at meetings previously and I could detect that he was clearly shouldering some long-held emotional pain.

This fellow addict proceeded to bravely unload a weight that he had carried for a lifetime. Summoning a calm demeanor, he managed to courageously unburden himself with a level of honesty and grace I had never seen before. It was truly touching to witness his public airing of powerfully charged secrets. As his story unfolded it was an emotional flood tide of raw human strength flowing freely. His articulate description of sliding down the social ladder, rung by rung, into absolute isolation and despair showed chilling self-awareness. His pattern of smoking pot every day with the hopeful intention of quitting the following day sounded all too familiar.

It seemed to me that we were all being held in rapt attention by this sensitive soul shedding layer after layer of unlocked defense mechanisms. This profound share set such an openly honest tone that our feedback was as deeply moving as his talk had been. He chose "Moments of Grace" as a topic. His entire share had been separate snippets of pure grace strung together like a necklace. It was a magical gift to himself and to each and every one of us. His ability to transparently sketch out his hard truths with such brutal honesty and eloquence was no less than grace under pressure. I will carry his strength with me and remember that I am not alone. ▲

~ by Tim V. District 2

Moral Dissonance

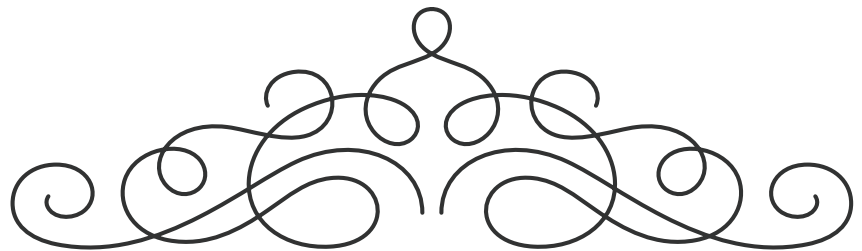
*As the chaos of the clamour fades
And the echoes of the moral dissonance
Ripples like the stone cast*

Soon, the silence emerges ☺ Rest!

*And I can breath again
Slowly, soothing harmonies emanate*

*A new song in the key of life,
which resonates with the sound of*

SERENITY



A Message from A New Leaf Publications:

Thank You MA!

Through your submissions and support, A New Leaf newsletter promotes ideas and inspiration to our recovery community. Through the sale of Life with Hope and other products, ANL also provides vital financial support for MA's primary purpose. Want to know how you can support our mission?

- Contribute a story from your experience, strength, and hope.
- Become a Bureau Chief and make sure anniversaries and stories from your area are represented.
- Start a writing group and support others in expressing their wisdom to the wider fellowship.
- Purchase official books and ebooks through our site to not only ensure you have the latest editions, but to know that you are supporting Marijuana Anonymous World Services through your actions.

Yours, A New Leaf Publications

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit
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PHONE	MA Phone Meetings	
	www.ma-phone.org	

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 278 Years of Sobriety!

District 2

Audrey W.	2/20/2001	20
Jeremy R	3/19/2019	2
Lee K.	3/19/1999	22
Bill B	3/9/1988	33

District 3

Rebecca C	11/27/2019	1
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District 5

David G	4/12/2009	12
Gary W	3/28/1995	26
Holly E	4/20/20	1

Laura	4/20/04	17
Mike C	3/25/1993	28
Marc S	4/10/2011	10
Paloma	04/08/2012	9
Rienhard	4/11/09	12
Sasha	4/12/2013	8
Tom W.	4/12/1991	30

District 21

Leo D.	3/18/2015	6
Lauri M.	3/24/1983	38
Meghean	3/15/2019	2
Annette G	4/29/2016	5

Chicago

Lindsay R.	4/11/2018	3
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Independant Groups

Genera F	4/24/2020	1
Maurice R	4/17/2006	15

See your sobriety date here!

Submit your sobriety date to your local GSR, ANLP Liaison, or e-mail to: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org