



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

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INSIDE ANL!

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THE ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

*I knew I was
"entirely ready"
when?*

(Please submit answers by
June 17, 2012)

Tradition Six

M.A. groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend the M.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Step Six

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

What God Is Not

"What God is Not," an assignment by my sponsor for my Third Step, helped me to come to an understanding of what my higher power could be.

God is not the dictator and director of life, but is the flow of love and joy that surrounds us. Ride that wave into peace and acceptance. God is not our earthly fears, prejudices and hatred, and is nowhere to be found in greed and money and defeatism. Our addictions are not God, and placing God in between ourselves and the things that trigger our addictions, which, for me, are stress, anxiety, fear, and loneliness, all of which are not God, can stem those addictions.

Those same fears, greed, prejudices and hatred, can lead to other things that are not God, such as war, violence, control, abuse, and manipulation. Possessions are not God, but the obtainment of possessions can lead to the belief that one's happiness resides in such possessions. This can be caused by the fear of lacking and wanting to anchor oneself to the earth about us.

Pain is not God, but can encompass our lives and distance us from God. Pain can be both physical and emotional, and the desire to rid ourselves of pain can lead to addictions and compulsions that we may believe to be, or lead us to, God. Pain can be a part of our daily lives, and is one of the challenges we face on a day-to-day basis, but it is important to keep our pain in perspective. If

we permit the pain to lead to fear, anxiety, depression, and anger, we give ourselves to our pain, permit it to control us, and lead us aside from God. We must remember that God is not our pain, nor is God our pain reliever. God is above our pain.

God is not in the guilt we feel, but instead can be in the forgiveness we give to ourselves and others. Letting the gentle forgiveness of God surround us can help us find that forgiveness within ourselves and within others. God is not in our resentment and anger over the harm and misbehaviors we may see in others, and God is not in the lies, abuse, corruption, and trash committed by others.

God is no time. Time is a belief and construct in our minds, and can lead to impatience and angst, which are not God. God has infinite patience, and there is not time in God. We are at peace, now, always and together. Anon ▲

**Save The Date!
February 15 - 17**

We Recover



**2013 MA Convention
Orange County, California**

Registration Begins July 1, 2012

Special Rate if you register BY July 31, 2012

www.ma2013convention.org

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 reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on the newsletter tab.

For The Addicts Sake

In 2006, some District 8 officers, who had attended MAWS events, had gotten the bug to host one ourselves. The motion did pass, but short of the requisite supermajority, as well as the spiritual support.

The time did become right in early 2010, when the 2011 Convention Hospitality Committee (CHC) was formed. We didn't let our lack of hands-on support stop us, and rightly so. It's just like planning an office party except that, for the Convention, we had to buy more than a Carvel cake.

We had to raise 20 G's. Whatever the budget, we had to work together for the next 13 months, and get along just as folks do in a co-op board, PTA, car pool, etc. That was even more challenging than scaring up the dough.

As a seasoned District secretary, it was natural for me to serve as the Registration Chair and the CHC's recorder. Convinced that nobody read the minutes, I made note of the people who rolled their eyes when others spoke. It made a dull job interesting, but the concerned parties didn't share my sense of humor.

The Fundraising Chair didn't come on board until June, which is late in the game, but she did a top shelf job. The Entertainment Chair seemed to have entered Witness Protection in late 2010, without signing an act. [Coaches sometimes don't show for Little League games, the babysitter is woefully late. Addicts in recovery are just like "normal" people.] At the last minute, other CHC members stepped up to secure a DJ, and liability insurance to boot. One can say "Let Go and Let God."

In my experience in MA, which is a non-profit organization, the lion's share of work is usually done by the usual suspects, year after year, with newcomers either intimidated or apathetic. This breeds resentment within the ranks of a District. Some of us had even imagined that there

was resentment, from West Coast districts, that the nation's biggest city had never hosted a MAWS event.

Then again, there must have been reverse-resentment, as those Left Coasters now had to cross the country to attend a wintery Convention! "Don't wish for what you want. If we built it, would they come?"

We collected money in coffee cans, peddled raffle tickets, sold brownies, distributed flyers, and held our first MA Felony Friday (I'm joking, of course) up until February 2011. The CHC met in clammy sub-basements, noisy Cosi Cafe's, and half-empty diners in the dead of winter.

We lightened up, in January 2011, when we made that fourth and final installment to the venue. The registration pace quickened after the Christmas/New Year holidays. In order not to lose money, we relied on sales of merchandise at the site. As Reg Chair, I breathed a sigh of relief when there were over 140 committed attendees in early February.

Surely these Fellows had booked flights, we thought. February is usually the cruelest month in windy NYC. But on Friday afternoon, February 18, we were basking in the 60° sun, on the deck of the Jersey City Hyatt, staring at the West Side skyline, praying for chaos at the Registration Table. HP did not disappoint. We had over 75 "local" walk-ins, paid all our bills, and donated a record amount to MAWS.

Forging ahead with a huge event is just like taking the next right action with anything else; if you do so, with rigorous honesty, 95% of the time you get what you need -- at least that's my experience. Not just with this event, but with Life in Recovery in general. Thanks for listening.

John M.

When it comes to weed

After 10+ years of trying to do it my own way, will power, white knuckles, and wondering why I couldn't stay sober, even knowing there were massive negative consequences, I realized that I was a real addict, and that I was powerless. It took courage to admit that, to swallow my pride and submit to the principles of the program. I was the king of denial. I was really, really stubborn. I just would not give up. Self-deception and rationalizing were my talents.

But I had to accept that I am different than 'normal' people and when it comes to weed, I am not in control. I tried over and over again and became sick and tired of being sick and tired. Surrender was easy once I realized I couldn't win this war.

Pot was making me sick, that much was obvious. I get it after crashing and burning, breaking promises, going to jail, getting evicted, multiple stints in rehab, ruined relationships with family and friends...ad nauseum.

I get it and the steps are real. That was my spiritual awakening, Amen. Jeff ▲

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The Toilet, My Friend

Drugs and alcohol have taken me to some weird places. In particular, I've had some interesting experiences in the bathroom. The first time I smoked weed, I was on a high school trip in San Francisco. A group of the "cool" kids were all getting together in one of the hotel rooms to smoke and I was determined to be part of that. I made sure I positioned myself so that I would get a turn with the pipe as it floated through the room.

Finally, it came to me, it was my chance. Someone had to show me how to do it; and victory! "I smoked"! Then I followed the group to the lobby of the hotel, and a few of us went into the bathroom. I was

The Toilet, My Friend

using the urinal when a schoolmate told me that I really shouldn't use the urinal because the urine bounces back and sprays all over you. So, that was the highlight of my first experience smoking weed. Good advice.

As a marijuana addict, I've also had my share of throwing up from smoking too much weed. I learned to make friends with the toilet, hugging it, caressing it, praying to it, staring deep into its basin, thanking it. People would walk in checking to see if I was okay, and the truth is I was very content at that moment, spending some quality time with the toilet, my friend.

I can also relate a drug-induced trip taking place in the bathroom. There, sitting on the toilet, I was mesmerized by the door knobs. They seemed to be shiny drum cymbals pulsating to a rhythm.

Then memories surfaced of my childhood when I used to sit on the toilet and scream for my nanny to come wipe my butt. I don't know how long I was tripping on that thought, trying to make sense of my behaviors in the past.

Having come to MA, staying sober and taking the 12 Steps, I don't have to have shameful experiences in the bathroom anymore. If you're new, and you want to be able to laugh and learn from the past, and in the process become a better person, just keep coming back. Jared N. ▲

Good Ole' Black Market

I am a 49 year old male who first drank beer at age 6. At age 12, I took my first bong load. During my junior and senior high school years, my social life consisted of hanging out with after-school peers who smoked marijuana for fun. Hey I

Good Ole' Black Market

was not the guy in school who got stoned before class I only did it after school and on the weekends.

I never considered myself a hard-core stoner in those days, that was only for the "addicts" who got high before school. I kept on dropping college classes at age 19 so I did what my drinking buddy did at the time and joined the Navy.

During those few years, I only got high all of about 6 times as they had strict drug policies and mandatory urine testing. What was I to do? Ah-ha! drink more alcohol of course. My drinking escalated to having drinks in the morning, after watch and standing when we were in port.

When I got out of the Navy, I started hanging out with a buddy who snorted coke, and I thought that looked like fun. I did that for a while, but always preferred cannabis over everything else. It became my best friend, my lover, my everything.

By the time I was in my early 30's I was smoking up an eighth every 2 days. Someone told me to try "medical marijuana" to save money. What a cruel joke that was! I was spending \$600 or more a month on the stuff. When I finally tore up my medical marijuana card to "quit", I just went back to the "good old black market" to score.

My high paying union job, over the next 13 years, ensured me I could smoke as much as I wanted.

Then my lungs started to give out. I lost that high paying job. I was lethargic, I was coughing up black phlem every day. I felt like crap and that my body was giving out. After turning my life over to MA, I feel a lot better after being sober nearly a few months now. My spirit is stronger and I continue to go to meetings. W.B. ▲

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District 16 Melbourne, Australia

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District 17 Denmark

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For a complete listing of all meetings visit www.marijuana-anonymous.org

Fun In Recovery!

Tell us the story of your journey into MA in 50 words or less.

The only rule is. You must begin by using the following line:

"I had just hung up the phone after talking to my dealer."

Email your submissions to: anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org

Birthdays

Celebrating 147 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sobriety date published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANLP contact information on page 2. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that:

a) HAVE occurred, b) HAVE NOT been published and, c) are not older than 45 days.

District 1

Robyn M.	4/?/08	4 yrs.
Chrysanthemum H.	5/6/01	11 yrs.
Jim J.	5/6/11	1 YEAR!
Chris	5/9/11	1 YEAR!

District 5

Laura B.	4/21/04	8 yrs.
Jamie	4/26/11	1 YEAR!
Lyman	4/27/10	2 yrs.
Mary C.	5/10/10	2 yrs.

District 6

Kevin B.	4/22/02	10yrs.
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District 7

Rosie	5/1/05	7 yrs.
Alan B.	5/1/97	15 yrs.
Tommy J.	5/1/98	14 yrs.
Anastasia	4/9/11	1 YEAR!
Diane O.	3/18/04	8 yrs.
Teri A.	4/19/92	20 yrs.
Jessica P.	4/16/10	2 yrs.

District 8

Marco G.	4/20/09	3 yrs.
Artie G.	4/19/11	1 YEAR!

Other

Mike C.	3/25/93	19 yrs.
(Texas)		
Keith K.	4/7/98	14 yrs.
(Roswell, GA)		
David	4/12/09	3 yrs.
(Chicago, IL)		

Tell us how you celebrated your Sober Birthday!

**KEEP
COMING
BACK!**

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**New Meetings Start-Up
All The Time.**

Check your local districts website for updated information! or Get listed on the MAWS website for details contact: office@marijuana-anonymous.org