



Kicked to Death By a Bunny

I've heard it said in MA meetings that marijuana is the slowest way to kill yourself. It's like being kicked to death by a bunny. It's not likely that you will overdose on marijuana; it is just one little kick after another until you wind up bruised, battered and broken.

It's funny that after 30 years of smoking marijuana I wound up living with my pet rabbit in a tent in my drug dealer's backyard. How did I end up here? How did the slow spiral of my addiction lead me to this place, to my bottom?

I grew up in a middle class family in Ontario, Canada, in which I was loved and looked after. I was not abused or beaten, but if you asked any in my family how we were doing the answer was "fine," which I have come to understand as Frightened, Insecure, Neurotic and Emotional (or Emotionless). In our family we never shared our feelings; we didn't talk about our problems. We were expected to suck it up, smile, and pretend that everything was okay.

I was 12 years old when a friend asked if I wanted to smoke a joint, and from the very first toke I loved it. We laughed hysterically, we rolled down the hill and I had more fun than I can ever remember having. I felt light, joyous and free. From that point on I wanted to get high every chance I could. I don't know if I ever got that high again or enjoyed it that much, but I chased that feeling for the remainder of my using days.

When I was in high school I had a girlfriend and she wasn't big on getting high. I remember one Saturday day night we went out

on a date. Her parents said she was to be home by 11 pm, but I made sure I got her home by 10 o'clock so that I could meet up with my buddies, because I was more interested in getting high with them than hanging out with her.

"Stop worrying about trying to find the right woman, and become the right man."

After college I had a few relationships, but I was never able to maintain them. I would sabotage them and they would break up with me. I was unable to end a relationship, I would rather just ignore it, get high and hope it went away. I eventually got married to a lovely woman. I was afraid to tell her or anyone how I truly felt. I didn't know how to express my feelings. All I knew how to do was to numb the anxiety by smoking pot. As long as I was high I was ok. I didn't know how to deal with conflict and as a result my marriage failed.

For the first time in my life I was living by myself. It was here that my addiction took off. I spent my days working doing rock videos. It was exciting and there was always weed around. I could get high and do my work and as long as it got done, no one cared. At night I would go out to the bars and chase the dawn. I was looking for something and I didn't know where to find it. One

relationship after the other failed. I felt abandoned, and was living in this pit of despair and self pity.

Eventually it came to a tipping point in my life. I made a decision to walk away from it all. I sold everything I owned and decided I would walk out to the edge of the world and back. Not what most people would choose to do. Some people thought I was brave, others thought I was mad, most likely it was a bit of both. I walked out to the Atlantic Ocean and along the way stopped in some sweat lodges, restaurants, taverns and churches and met some amazing people. I was looking for God and I wanted God to tell me the answers to all the big questions—the ones I had stayed up late at night pondering. There were times that I saw the glimpses of a Higher Power, but I could never put my finger on it. After eight months of walking the road I returned back home and I was still a marijuana addict.

I found myself in another relationship and took another hostage, and when this relationship ended, I was distraught and being the self-centred, grandiose, egotist that I was, I decided that I would walk out to the Pacific Ocean. I packed my bag and set out on a new adventure. Let me tell you that walking the road in Northern Ontario is a very lonely place to go. There was joy followed by moments of isolation. It ran the gamut of every emotion. One moment I would be crying, the next smiling. I didn't understand how to process these emotions. The only thing I knew was that getting high was the answer to my problems. You

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

ANLP Staff

Chairperson:	Thor H.
Treasurer:	Beth F.
Secretary:	Aurelie E.
Managing Editor:	Michael O.
Publishing Editor:	Ron H.

Contact ANLP

Send articles/stories:
stories@anewleafpublications.org

Other inquiries and correspondence:
info@anewleafpublications.org

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Kicked to Death By a Bunny continued

would think it would be difficult for someone walking across the country to find something to smoke, but after this many years I was as skilled as a Bedouin finding water in the desert. I knew whom to ask, and where I could find marijuana. It was my super power.

After 180 days of walking I came to the other ocean, and not much about me had changed, except that I was 40 pounds lighter and my legs hurt. I was still the self absorbed, self centred scared little man child who didn't know how to express his feelings and I was afraid of what people thought about me. I took the train back home and decided I would spend the next few months living on a sailboat in a marina.

My plan was to write a memoir of my adventure; the reality was that I sat around the marina bar with my pet rabbit drinking and getting high, pontificating about my exploits. It seemed my rabbit was the only one who really would sit and listen to me tell my stories. After five months my friend who owned the boat kicked me off because I had not maintained the boat like I had promised. So I figured the next best place for me was to move to a tent in my drug dealer's back yard. I could have camped anywhere, but I figured I wanted to be close to what I wanted the most. And that was to get high.

It was here a few days later in my drug dealer's back yard that I decided to attend my first recovery meeting. It was in another fellowship. I struggled for the first few years, getting a few months and then relapsing on weed. Over and over again I would get some time but when faced with any real problem I would turn to my old familiar friend, Marijuana. I was learning a lot about recovery but I wasn't relating to the shares. I remember standing on the subway platform thinking I should just jump and end this pain. It's not that I really wanted to die; I wanted

the pain of living to go away. I guess for the first time in my life I could see who I was, and I didn't like me and I wasn't doing anything about it. If the train isn't moving there's no light at the end of the tunnel!

One night in this other fellowship I heard someone share about having a problem with smoking pot. After the meeting I walked home with them and they mentioned that they knew of a Marijuana Anonymous Meeting in town and we agreed to go. From the first moment I walked into the doors of MA I related to the stories. I've learned that this is a disease of perception and my perception of reality was distorted by the need to get high and stay high. The first few weeks detoxing from Marijuana were terrible. I had the bed sweats and woke in the middle of the night with soaking sheets. I couldn't concentrate on anything. I remember walking down my street and I came upon a mother pushing her child in a baby carriage. The beauty of it made me weep uncontrollably. I continued down the street and at the corner this car came to a screeching halt and almost hit me. I became enraged and started kicking the car threatening to beat up the driver. From crying to anger in a matter of seconds. My emotions were overwhelming and I had no control over them, because I no longer had marijuana to dull the feelings

I kept going to meetings and read the literature and listened to the audio of *Life with Hope* when I was too tired to read. In my early recovery I had problems understanding my will as opposed to God's will. It was explained to me that my will was what I wanted, when I wanted it; to get high, and live in my privately defined world. God's will for me was what I needed to do; to stay active in my recovery and help others. When I finally understood the difference between what I wanted and what I needed my life started to turn for the better.

One day when I was still using, I caused an accident that resulted in my rabbit breaking his leg so severely, it had to be amputated. Now that I am clean and sober; how do you make amends to a bunny? I took my rabbit to a local MA meeting and I shared with those present what had happened. I made a promise to give this rabbit the best life I could. I got him a girlfriend, they share the house like any dog or cat and I give them supervised time out in the backyard to hop around. I can never fix the harm I have done, but I can make it right.

When I was active in my addiction I had a feeling of anxiety in the middle of my chest. The only thing that I could do to alleviate it was to get high. As long as I was high I was okay. But eventually it stopped working and I had to find a different way to cope with life. The truth is I still get these feelings in my chest, the difference is that now I don't have to use marijuana. I have recovery tools that help

me deal with my anxiety. Today, I use the Serenity Prayer or the Third Step Prayer to take away the burdens of my life. At one time my burden was centered around marijuana; now my challenge is learning to live life on life's terms.

Over the years I have come to a greater understanding of the steps, when I first came in the rooms I admitted that I was powerless over Marijuana, and my life had become unmanageable, but that was a selfish way to look at it and it is not what Step One says. What I have accepted is that "We admitted we were powerless over Marijuana." Not only was I powerless; my boss, my family and my partners were powerless over my marijuana addiction. And it is not that they didn't care for me, it is that I made "our lives unmanageable," and they didn't know how to deal with me. So they left me. It is not because I didn't care for them, it was because I was unable to care for them. I was caught in my own little drama of life. I was

unable to see what they needed and wanted and I was unable to communicate with them in an honest and compassionate way.

In recovery I dedicated myself to service, got active in the group, took up a service position at the area and world service levels. I not only worked the steps myself, but I work the steps with others. In service to others I have learnt how to have open and honest relationships. My sponsor said, "Stop worrying about trying to find the right woman, and become the right man." I took this advice and five years into recovery the right woman found me. Today I am happily married and I owe it all to working these steps. I tried to ease the pain of my life by walking across the country. I tried the 15 million step program. It didn't work. All I need today are the 12 steps of Marijuana Anonymous. ▲

~ by Michael O

Something to Sing About

Ya ever get the "woe is me's"? When I was deep into my addiction, self-pity was always a nice and tidy excuse for loading another bowl. Putting off "life" for yet one more day.

I'd lost family to booze. I'd lost family to drugs. Others still continue to wallow in denial and self-pity; and everybody knows that "misery loves company." Seemingly DNA-inspired, "substance-abuse-genes", coupled with childhood sexual abuse, felt like the perfect cocktail for excuse...nearly three decades of it. But then came a time when I was sick of being sick.

I had quit hard drugs and cigarettes. Five years later I was able to put away the pipe. My sad joke at the time was, "quitting weed was the easiest thing I ever did...I must have

done it a hundred times!" But this time it stuck. This time I was fully committed. I set a schedule and I stuck to it. I started eating better and sleeping regular hours: a first for me! I began a self-imposed, "out-patient treatment" program, and I attended meetings, lots of meetings.

I began reading again, something I had loved doing as a kid. Now I developed a voracious appetite for recovery literature. I devoured the "Big Book" from AA, several books by Emmet Fox (Sermon on the Mount), and, of course, our own wonderful book "A Life with Hope." I was clean for six weeks before I was able to give away my stash and it was eight weeks before I passed my first "clean" UA, but I did it. Soon I discovered (through painful realization) that once "dear friends" were nothing more

than "drinking" and "smoking" buddies. Never forget, "misery loves company", and I let them go.

MA encourages eventual service work: "It's harder to pick you off when traveling inside the herd." I gratefully heeded this advice, deepening my understanding of prayer and meditation.

When I first heard the words, "For a good life, don't blame or criticize," my jaw dropped. "Hell, that's all I do!" I stammered. But not anymore. Sure, I have my good days and bad days, but I am forever grateful to be finally and truly living a life with hope. I've successfully broken a "family tradition" of abuse. I've even started playing guitar and writing my own songs. I guess you can say I've finally got something to sing about! ▲

~ by Anonymous

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

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

MA World Services

340 S LEMON AVE # 9420, WALNUT, CA 91789-2706 - +1.800.766.6779 WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG - INFO@MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

DIST. 2 San Francisco & East Bay	+1.510.957.8390	DIST. 15 Long Island, NY	+1.631.647.0768
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www.madistrict12.org		DIST. 24 Vancouver, BC, Canada	+1.778.554.8997
DIST. 13 MA Online		PHONE MA Phone Meetings	
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DIST. 14 London, England	+44.300.124.0373		
www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk			

Step Six

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



Tradition Six

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

Celebrating 158 Years of Sobriety!

District 2

Joe A.	5/17/2016	4 yrs.
Mae F.	5/20/2017	3 yrs.
Susan C.	5/21/2006	14 yrs.

District 3

Luann B.	5/28/1987	33 yrs.
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District 5

Ali R.	5/21/2018	2 yrs.
Billy	5/21/2019	1 yr.
Cory D.	4/24/2014	6 yrs.
Gary L.	5/8/2007	13 yrs.
Gus VZ	5/23/2011	9 yrs.

Karen J.	4/12/2018	2 yrs.
Laura	4/20/2004	16 yrs.
Londyn VZ	5/23/2011	9 yrs.
Lyman	4/27/2010	10 yrs.
Marty S.	5/17/2017	3 yrs.
Mary C.	5/10/2010	10 Yrs.
Tom G.	5/17/2010	10 yrs.
Trevor	4/13/2013	7 yrs.w

Districts 6

Emma B.	4/11/2017	3 yrs.
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District 12

Ryan B.	5/17/2017	3 yrs.
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See your sobriety date here!

Allow us to publish your anniversary to celebrate! If your sobriety date has occurred, has not been published, and is not older than 45 days, please submit it in the format you see on the left. You may tell your local GSR, ANLP Liaison, or e-mail to: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org

