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# A NEW LEAF

A PUBLICATION OF MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS

## SUGGESTIONS

Posted on the internet 

### Part 1 by Ralph

When I came into recovery I was given eight suggestions as the formula for staying clean. I was promised that if I followed these simple suggestions I was GUARANTEED freedom from active addiction. To me that seemed pretty incredible, yet when I read the suggestions, they looked pretty ridiculous and unrealistic. Needless to say I didn't follow them and almost went and got stoned again. Luckily another recovering pothead helped me. Even so, I still didn't follow the suggestions and came VERY close again to getting high again. This time three people in recovery helped me and I finally saw the light. I knew that if I didn't follow these simple suggestions, I would continue to struggle in one way or another until I would eventually get high again.

I followed them to a T. It wasn't as hard as I thought. What it did for me was incredible. I not only lost the desire to get high, but I was suddenly finding out that there was a whole new way of living that I never imagined. I found out that an addict, any addict, could stop using, lose the desire, and find a new way to live. All it took was a few simple suggestions. So what are the suggestions I was given?

- 1) Avoid people, places and things (you got high with or at)
- 2) Come early and stay late (to meetings)
- 3) Make 90 meetings in 90 days
- 4) Get a home group (one meeting you make consistently every week)
- 5) Get and use a sponsor (someone of the same sex who has what you want)
- 6) Pick up the phone, before you pick up the drug
- 7) Don't use and go to meetings
- 8) Keep coming; it WORKS!

Now, if you are like I was, you are looking at this list and saying that it's impossible to do these

### Part 2 by DD

Hi all, DD here, still (amazingly) clean.

I so relate to this topic of suggestions. I came in once before and thought the suggestions were for them and not me. I didn't stay clean for long, and went back out for over 2 years. Increasingly lonely years. When I came back in I was so defeated that I had no fight left. It was get clean or check out permanently, which I had no courage to do (or so I thought). So I took the suggestions. I work the steps as my sponsor gives them to me. I do service when asked, if possible (chair meetings, greet newcomers, give out chips, bring birthday cakes, and secretary a group), and even when not asked (like picking up chairs after meetings or washing cups). I use the phone, and it is getting lighter every time. I let people love me with their words and kindness.

There was one suggestion which I ignored (rationalized) which almost took me back out, and that was the one about "Don't get romantically involved in your first year." I talked my sponsor down to "until you've finished your 4th and 5th steps." I still ignored it and got involved with a guy in the program. He was back after 7 years clean and a slip, and we had about the same amount of days clean. It was pretty crazy, very push/pull come here/go away on both our parts. I was open and honest about it with my sponsor. She gave me her observations which I didn't like but turned out to be right. The relationship has since ended after 3 tries at it. I got to work my 4th step on my actions. It was a good learning experience, and one that tapped right into my addictive thoughts and behaviors. I sure wish I had taken my sponsor's suggestion, and now I am, but with the help of my sober friends and the steps and HP I did not go out and use or drink over it.

Unfortunately, the guy probably did. For that I am so sad. The suggestion was not just for my sobriety, but his as well, and he is hurting now.



## 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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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North Hollywood, CA 91617

# Balance

by Carol McD

I've got another Clean and Sober birthday coming up. Birthdays, anniversaries, or whatever you want to call them, always make me stop and take stock of where I am. It's that time of year that I'm either amazed that it's been that long or surprised that it's only been that brief. A lot of my concept of the time passed since my last joint depends on how well balanced I am at the moment I think about it.

Balanced? Yeah, balanced. We addicts have a really hard time with this. I live in the US and went to a meeting, of another fellowship, in England, early in my sobriety. I needed a meeting and that was what was available at that time. I was so very surprised. Wow, they're just like me! (Now there's a shocker!) I came away from that meeting with a view that has stayed with me ever since then.

It hadn't started out as a topic meeting, but somehow it just evolved.

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## *In order for us to be Healthy Recovering Addicts, we need to be balanced*

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The topic became Balance. Balance in all the areas of our recovering lives. Areas? Well, there's program, meetings, family, work, and body. We compulsive people (well, we are, or we wouldn't be addicts!) have a tendency to lean too far one way or the other. We work so hard on our program that our other relationships suffer. Or, we work so hard on our relationships that our program suffers. We either work obsessively on our bodies, or totally ignore them until health matters make us take notice. We have so many commitments that we have no other life. Or, we have so much other "life" that we forget we won't have one if we don't take care of our program. We get so involved in our work or job that we don't pay attention to what else is happening around us.

In order for us to be Healthy Recovering Addicts, we need to be balanced. We cannot afford to lean so far in one direction that we aren't taking care of the rest of our lives. We can't totally ignore parts of our lives without it costing us our recovery in the long run. Recovery isn't just about not using. It's about learning how to be a "fully" functioning human being. It's about learning how to care for ourselves as well as others. It's about giving back as well as receiving. It's about learning how to adjust our attitudes and trying to be calm in the worst of circumstances and grateful in the best. It's about learning to be balanced on this tightrope of life. We don't want to fall - back into using.



# THE NEWS FROM MAWS

## Thanks to District 7!

**MA World Services** would like to extend their gratitude to **District 7** for hosting this year's **MAWS** conference. Your district's hospitality was both commendable and admirable. The facilities at **Loyola Marymount** were an excellent setting and provided the perfect atmosphere for work, fellowship and service. Great job!

## Summary of Minutes from MAWS Trustee Meeting, February 16, 2002

- The Trustees ratified the appointment of Debra C. as Executive Secretary of A New Leaf Publications (ANLP).
- The Trustees agreed to create a list of the types of emails that each Trustee position is responsible for replying to.
- The Trustees ratified the appointment of Alternate Trustee Rockin' Rob H. to the Trustees, to fill the vacancy in the New Meeting Outreach/800 Line Trustee position.
- It was noted that Paul G. was appointed to the position of Managing Editor of ANLP.
- Webmaster Trustee, Bean L., reported that he had three literature masters in PDF format ready for posting to the web site, once a final edit by ANLP is completed. Bean noted that they will be contained in a subsection of literature, and will be indexed by "print & read" and "read via web".
- The Trustees approved the allocation of \$250 for the MAWS Office Manager to purchase a Microsoft Office operating system and related licenses for the office computer.
- The Trustees approved adding the ANLP paid Office Manager to the previously approved MAWS payroll service, and for the future, the ANLP paid Office Manager and MAWS Office Manager will be paid through the same payroll service.
- The Trustees approved adding the MAWS Office Manager as a signer on the MAWS checking account, that there be two (2) signatures on all outgoing MAWS checks, and that the following positions be named as signers on MAWS bank accounts: President, Treasurer, Office Manager.

## As of Conference 2002, Your MAWS Trustees Are ...

**President:** Lisa T.; **Secretary:** Alan B.; **Treasurer:** Brandon R.; **Literature:** Charlotte M.;  
**Policies & Procedures:** David V.B.; **New Meetings/800 Line:** Rockin' Bob; **Online Services:** Eric R.  
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*Thanks to all for your service!*

To get in touch with any of the **MAWS** Trustees, contact the **MAWS** Office by phone (800-766-6779) or email ([office@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:office@marijuana-anonymous.org)).

# SUGGESTIONS

concluded from page 1

## Part 1 by Ralph

SIMPLE suggestions. Let me tell you, it's easier than you might think. If I broke it down to my first day, here are all the suggestions again:

Go to a meeting, get there a little early and stay a little late. Find someone there who seems to have it all together and ask them to sponsor me. Ask this person what I should do. Stay away from anything or anyone I got high with.

That's all I really have to do the first day. Here's the second day:

Go to a meeting, get there a little early and stay a little late. Call my new sponsor. Stay away from anything or anyone I got high with.

(Repeat these three things again the following day.)

I needed this breakdown because all those suggestions seemed like too much. Yet if I did these three things every day, I was following all eight suggestions, one day at a time.

Guess what? I'm clean and happy today thanks to following those suggestions.

## Part 2 by DD

I learned that the suggestions are for my benefit, yes. They are also for the benefit of those around me, a new concept for me. As long as they keep working to keep me clean and sober I follow them. IT IS WAY EASIER THAN FIGHTING THEM! Happiness and some serenity have been the result. For that I am very grateful.

Stick with the winners. That's the one I am following the closest. Do what they do. And god willing, get what they have: a peaceful and happy sobriety.

# MA WORLDWIDE

For Land and Online Meeting Schedules Go To: <http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>

email: [office@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:office@marijuana-anonymous.org)

### MA World Service Office

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800-766-6779

### San Francisco (Dist. 1)

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### East Bay (District 2)

PO Box 8354  
Berkeley, CA 94707  
510.287.8873

### South Bay (District 3)

408.450.0796

### Seattle (District 4)

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Seattle, WA 98107-1023  
206.548.9034

### Orange County (District 5)

(Includes San Diego)  
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619.685.2808

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Van Nuys, CA 91404  
818.759.9194

### LA County So. (District 7)

PO Box 3012  
Culver City, CA 90231  
323.964.2370

### New York (District 8)

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Cooper Station  
New York, N.Y. 10276  
212.459.4423

### Santa Cruz (District 9)

PO Box 3003  
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### LA County East (District 10)

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**Are you celebrating a birthday in the next few months? Or have you celebrated one in the last 30 days and not seen it in A New Leaf? If you live in a District area of MA, let your Bureau Chief know about it. If not, tell us! For contact information, see the box on page 2.**

### District 3

|          |        |          |
|----------|--------|----------|
| Ken S.   | 7/3/88 | 14 years |
| Mary S.  | 7/1/90 | 12 years |
| David G. | 7/4/97 | 5 years  |
| Tony C.  | 7/4/97 | 5 years  |
| Steve S. | 7/4/97 | 5 years  |

### District 4

|         |        |         |
|---------|--------|---------|
| Eric K. | 7/1/95 | 7 years |
|---------|--------|---------|

### District 5

|           |        |          |
|-----------|--------|----------|
| Trudie    | 6/1/98 | 4 years  |
| John McC. | 7/2/91 | 11 years |

### District 6

|               |         |          |
|---------------|---------|----------|
| Craig H.      | 7/28/89 | 13 years |
| Jim S         | 7/5/95  | 7 years  |
| Morning John, | 7/23/96 | 6 years  |
| Pete G        | 7/21/97 | 5 years  |
| Jean G.       | 7/14/99 | 3 years  |
| Pete B.       | 7/4/01  | 1 year!  |
| Eric E.       | 7/27/01 | 1 year!  |

### District 7

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| Jason P. | 6/12/00 | 2 years |
| Doug G.  | 6/94    | 8 years |

### Texas

|            |         |         |
|------------|---------|---------|
| June       | 6/1/01  | 1 year! |
| Jess       | 6/1/01  | 1 year! |
| Heather B. | 6/25/00 | 2 years |
| Howard R   | 6/21/01 | 1 year! |
| Chris D.   | 7/5/01  | 1 year! |
| Valerie T. | 7/23/93 | 9 years |

### Oregon

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| Marla S. | 7/30/95 | 7 years |
|----------|---------|---------|

### Pennsylvania

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| Ande     | 6/14/96 | 6 years |
| Steve K. | 7/15/00 | 2 years |

### New Zealand

|           |        |         |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| Andrew T. | 6/7/99 | 3 years |
|-----------|--------|---------|

**Celebrating 142 Years of Sobriety in This Issue!**