



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

July 2013

Vol. 23, No. 7

## The Slave and His Mistress

When I first met her I never suspected that she had a devious plan to enslave me body, mind, and soul and to eventually take away all my freedoms and make me entirely powerless to escape her total control. She sent a beguiling agent, in the guise of a friend, who promised me that she was not like all the other slave owners; that she was a gentle and kind Mistress who treated all her slaves with compassion and dignity. He told me that her estate was a lush paradise where all my needs would be met, where the suffering of feelings and emotions would be walled out, where I would experience tender love and the warm sense of belonging like I had never felt before, and where all the mysteries of the Cosmos would be revealed to me over time. I believed him wholeheartedly, and having been purchased for a pittance, I was overjoyed that my wretched state in this life and my fate were about to be irrevocably changed for the better.

So at the tender age of twenty, on the night I graduated from the school of my profession, where I had labored for the past three years at the grueling tasks of study and training, her agent brought me to her palace of delights to meet her for the first time. She was everything that he had promised she would be; and her name was Mary Jane. She greeted me with warmth and charm in a hazy aura of release. I immediately felt affection for her that in a short time grew to be a deep love and

a total devotion. In the early days of my captivity, as was part of her pernicious plan, she treated me very well. I loved being in her presence because she brought me soothing balms for my pain. She taught me to release my inhibitions and to have fun. She augmented my experience of the finer things in life such as music, theater, poetry, and friendship. She helped me to conquer difficult tasks and always rewarded me generously

*Inspired by the story "A Slave to Marijuana" on page 115, from Life with Hope, with enormous gratitude to the author for making me see the true relationship I had with marijuana for forty years.*

for my accomplishments. She encouraged me to step outside my comfort zones and try new things, but always gave me a sense of safety and refuge. She even introduced me to other slave owners, her comrades Cocaine, Benzodiazepines, Mushrooms, Ecstasy and Sex; allowing me to court them for brief periods, but she

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## A New Plan for Life

Though I grew up in a small coastal California town with a reputation for pot, I didn't smoke, drink, or take anything to change the way I felt until I had moved away to go to college, at 18 years old. The first time I smoked pot, I absolutely loved the way it made me feel. Everything became so incredibly interesting: music sounded better, food tasted great, and "doing nothing" with friends had never been so captivating.

Since smoking pot was so much fun, I figured out quickly I wanted to stay high as much as possible. I tried smoking before eating, playing music, watching TV, going to concerts, and after a little while got in to the habit of getting high before any of the preceding activities in an attempt to "enhance" everything in my life.

Slowly but surely I dropped some of the less immediately-rewarding activities from my life, such as working out, doing homework, going to class, karate, and so on. I left the house less and less, spent less effort trying to maintain relationships with my family and friends, and became increasingly anxious and depressed. I relied on pot to make me feel okay.

After a year and a half of smoking pot, my average day looked like waking up around 10AM, going back to bed again and again until I couldn't sleep anymore, finally getting out of bed sometime in the early afternoon. I told myself I would at the very least not smoke until nighttime. Shortly

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# 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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### 🌀 IN SPIRIT OF SERVICE 🌀

*Service to A New Leaf is an incredibly satisfying way to bring Tradition Nine alive in your life as well as give back to the very thing that helped give your life back to you.*

### **The Slave and His Mistress** cont'd from pg. 1

knew I would always come running back for her comfort and security. And I relished the fellowship of her other slaves who worshiped her with the same zeal that I did. I would not broach any criticism of her motives and I shunned anyone who spoke badly of her or warned me of the perils I would face if I continued to be blind to her evil. I considered myself the luckiest man alive because she had bought me and I was entirely hers.

As the years past, she slowly and steadily allowed her plans for me to unfold. She no longer treated me tenderly and began methodically to withdraw her comfort and security. She taunted me with my failures and inadequacies, she berated my hopes and dreams, and she skillfully planted seeds of self-doubt and brutally crushed the flowers of confidence, strengths, self worth, and hope. She repeatedly told me that I was worthless and ineffectual, not worth anybody's care or concern, a total waste of a human life. She called me a fool for my belief and relationship with a Higher Power and insisted that I deny its very existence and have no further faith in such an absurd concept. She told me that she was the only higher power in my life. She instilled in me a rank hatred of God, the world and everyone in it, and most of all an intense hatred of myself. She demanded that I spend every waking minute of my life with her and kept me pinned constantly under her boot. She demanded that I shun loved ones and friends, and even when my last and best friend was dying of cancer, she would not allow me to be there to provide care and comfort, because she, Marijuana, was still more important to me than a dear and dying friend. She reminded me

how ineffectual I had been at relieving any of the suffering that attended my own mother as she lay dying some years earlier. She did not allow me to think for myself or make any decisions on my own; she kept me in a constant state of confusion and befuddlement. Eventually, she shackled me to a rocking chair in a darkened tomb that resembled my living room; with only Zig-Zags, a lighter, roach clip, and an ashtray for companions and a pack of cigarettes my only comfort. She would not let me eat,

*“...even when my last and best friend was dying of cancer, she would not allow me to be there to provide care and comfort...”*

kept me exhausted and racked with physical ailments. She did let me out 3 days a week to work, only so that I could make the money necessary to procure more of her mistreatment. She even insisted on accompanying me as I drove to work (or anywhere for that matter) and was waiting for me in the car so that she would be there the minute my shift ended. I longed for a fatal heart attack or a stroke to release me from this imprisonment, but she hissed that only she could be the one to hand me over to Death. She would only allow crippling Guilt, Shame, Despair, Depression and Hopelessness to accompany me until the day I died.

**The Slave and...**cont'd from pg. 2

And finally she robbed me of the last vestige of my self worth, which was the pride and satisfaction I had enjoyed over the forty years in my profession of caring for the sick. On October 8, 2012 I crossed a line that could never be crossed in that profession, exposing my patients and colleagues to the potential for great harm. At home chained once again to my chair, my Mistress taunted me with shame and humiliation and the certainty that my career had ended that morning. In the panting breaths between my sobs I called out in desperation, "PLEASE, Please, please...Oh PLEASE help me."

And in that utter darkness, a still and gentle voice replied, "I am here...I have always been here...I have been waiting...and I will help you, because I love you my child. Only abandon your willfulness, arrogance, ignorance and denial and accept, in humility and faith, that I, your Higher Power, can and will restore you to life and sanity." And in that moment I decided to turn my life and my will over to my God and to do all that He/She asked of me. And after God led me to the physicians and therapists to stabilize and restore my mental and physical health, He/She ushered me into the Fellowship of former slaves to the same Nefarious Mistress. Together we support and encourage each other to practice the 12 simple steps to restore our relationship with our Higher Powers and to recover from our years of enslavement to The Mistress. We have been ransomed and we have been given the sure hope that if we remain on the Spiritual Path, however rocky and steep, we will be healed and given a New Life blessed with Serenity and Gratitude.

**Christopher S.****A New Plan for Life** cont'd from pg. 1

after making the promise to not get high till the night, I would tell myself I could get just a little high right now, and that's just what I did- except I ignored my promises to stop after a few hits or one bowl. After getting high, I decided I could drink a little, cause I sure wasn't going to get any work done until I came down a bit.

And all of a sudden it was night- my promises to myself once again went unfulfilled. I wondered why despite my desire and efforts I just could not stop smoking after I started, or avoid taking that first hit! I sat alone in my room, crying, hating everything about myself, and wanting desperately to get out of the vicious cycle my life had become.

*I wondered why  
despite my desire and  
efforts I just could not  
stop smoking.*

I decided one day I had to quit, at least for a little while, to get my life in order, and slow down my pot smoking and drinking a bit. I took all the drugs I planned to taper with. That was the moment it became overwhelmingly clear to me I had lost the power of choice, and I needed to get help. I went to a treatment center, with the impression that I would stay sober for at least a week, and then I could go back to smoking like a 'normal person'. To my (at the time) disappointment, I learned that I have the disease of addiction, and no matter how long I stayed sober, I would never be able to control my pot smoking (or drinking).

So I gave up. What else was I to do? I decided to try out the program the treatment center recommended. I started going to

12 step meetings. I got a sponsor, started working the steps, and something incredible happened: I lost the overwhelming obsession- that need- to smoke pot.

I feared when I got sober, life would be unbearably boring, because I was so used to smoking pot to "enhance" life. Not the case at all! Sobriety for me has been a process of complete reevaluation. When I was smoking pot, my life was centered on experiencing as much joy as possible, as often as possible. If something wasn't immediately rewarding, it wasn't worth doing. In recovery through the 12 steps, I have come to value relationships with others, progress toward personal goals, and helping others find recovery from addiction. My life has become incredibly rewarding for me; I have found meaning and 'purpose'.

Through working the 12 steps, I have also learned to love myself. When I was smoking, I felt like I was the most pathetic person in the world. I had no confidence, was a failure at everything I set out to do, and always compared myself to others; I was never 'good enough.' I am no longer ashamed of myself. My depression and anxiety have left completely, and I have learned to accept aspects of myself I am powerless to change.

To sum it up, this is how I understand my recovery today: I came to rely on pot, because it made me okay with myself. My own 'plan' for life (smoking pot to 'enhance' life, selfishness, isolation) led me to a point of hopeless despair. Once I realized my 'plan' had failed, I became open to a new 'plan' – the 12 steps of MA. I took the steps, experienced the program working in my life, and have continued to gain faith in the steps, in the program of MA.

**Cameron P.**

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For a complete listing of all meetings visit [www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)

**Step Seven**

Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

**Tradition Seven**

Every MA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

**ROVING REPORTER ASKS...**

**How have you experienced some of the “9th Step promises” in your recovery?**

(Submit by August 17th, answers will be published in the September 2013 issue.)

**A New Leaf Calling You**

Step up your program while being of service to the executive committee of A New Leaf Publications. The search is on for qualified members of Marijuana Anonymous to step into three valuable service positions – ANLP Chair, Treasurer and Executive Director. ANLP oversees and administers the publication; distribution and business of Marijuana Anonymous World Services approved literature.

ANLP and MAWS does not seek to be “organized” yet there is a structure in place that keeps the fellowship working. Join that structure. Volunteer by emailing [anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org). To get details on service prerequisites refer to the MAWS Service Manual, Chapter 28.

*Birthdays*

**Celebrating 164 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 2*

Becky G.	6/18/06	7 yrs.
Jeff C.	6/20/12	1 yr.
Kathy L.	6/14/95	18 yrs.
Lisa G.	5/18/11	2 yrs.
Lucy	5/20/06	7 yrs.
Nina S.	6/21/85	28 yrs.
Noemi	5/19/10	3 yrs.
Steve S.	6/19/10	3 yrs.

*District 4*

Michael S.	3/13/09	4 yrs.
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*District 7*

Alan B.	5/1/97	16 yrs.
Greg S.	6/12/10	3 yrs.
Justin	6/12/12	1 yr.
Keith G.	5/28/94	19 yrs.
Laura	6/6/12	1 yr.

**KEEP COMING BACK!**



*District 8*

Cassidy F.	5/6/11	2 yrs.
Larry S.	5/23/04	9 yrs.
Suzanne R.	5/13/12	1 yr.
Ted K.	3/23/12	1 yr.

*District 11*

Craig S.	5/26/87	26 yrs.
Rachel B.	5/31/12	1 yr.

*District 15*

Adam B.	6/30/03	10 yrs.
Sean	6/30/12	1 yr.