



## Stronger Without You

Our first encounter was in my childhood best friend's backyard when I was 15. We were so eager to meet you for the first time. We didn't click right then and there, but we came across each other again when I was 17 and had moved to California. I thought you could help me cope with moving to a new school and having anxiety about making new friends. We soon decided that going to school wasn't for me. Maybe I should try online schooling, so we could be closer, and you'd be right there to help me if needed. Then, you helped me find friends in your crowd. Finally, I felt like I belonged somewhere. Through you, I found all types of jobs. Trimming, selling weed, babysitting other pot smokers' kids, and working at a smoke shop in town. That's where you introduced me to all your besties: whippits, mushrooms, acid, DMT, and coke.

Later, I decided I definitely didn't need to go back to school. Who needs school if you're going to be a ganja farmer? Besides, everyone in my family grew, so I better start taking it seriously now. Then, I went through my first raid at 19. It was one of the scariest moments of my life. Getting woken up by my dad screaming "RAID!" and then hearing him tell my mom to "run!" So many thoughts went racing through my mind: "Why?" "What happened?" "What did we do wrong?" "Please don't hurt my brother!" "Please don't shoot my dog!" In reality, we were just the victims of a warning to other growers. We all knew deep down inside this could happen to us. Growing weed isn't 100% legal, but we risked it anyway.

Now, not only have you harmed me, but you harmed my family.

Apparently seeing my mom being carried out of the woods by my brother, with torn up, bloody feet wasn't enough for me to say goodbye to you. I had convinced myself that you weren't the problem. It was everyone else.

In 2019, I got married and moved to southern California, and you flipped on me. I found myself consumed with anxiety – not wanting to leave my apartment. You had me convinced people were scary. I was better off hiding with you in my bathroom.

In 2020, I found out my son had autism, and I leaned on you more than I leaned on my husband for support. That year, COVID hit. I honestly loved knowing we couldn't leave our houses. Then, you and I could become closer than ever. I decided you were more important to me than my husband. I refused to let him get between us, even if it took violence. You made me turn on the one man who would never turn on me. I hate you for that. I'll forever be haunted by all the violence, the blood, and the wounds I caused for you.

Finally I hit rock bottom with my mental health. Where were you?! Why weren't you helping me be happy?! Maybe I need more help than just you. I admitted myself into a crisis center/chemical dependency program for 2 weeks. I received help with my mental health. I was told weed wasn't a problem. I just need help with my suicidal ideation. I got released, found a therapist, and again was told weed wasn't a problem. It's just my mental health. Well, six months into sobriety, I decided I was too fat. And the best and easiest way I knew how to suppress my appetite

was with weed. So, I found you again, Mary. What a mistake that was. Back down the rabbit hole we went. But this time shit hit the fan...and this is all I have left to say to you, Mary Jane.

Hey ... it's only been 7 months, and it feels like it has been forever...

I woke up late today, and I still feel the sting of the pain, but I brushed my teeth anyway. I got dressed through the mess and put a smile on my face. I got a little bit stronger. Out driving around on this earth, and I wanted to ignore the hurt, so I turned on the radio. The stupid song made me think of you. I listened to it for a minute, but then I changed it.

I'm getting a little bit stronger, and I'm done hoping that we could work it out. I'm done with how it feels, spinning my wheels, letting you drag my heart around. And I'm done thinking that you could change. I know my heart will never be the same, but I'm telling myself I'll be okay.

Even on my weakest days, I get a little bit stronger. It doesn't happen overnight, but I turned around and a month's gone by, and I realize I haven't had cravings. I'm not giving you an hour, a second, or another minute longer. I'm busy getting stronger. I'm getting along without you, Mary! I'm better off without you, Mary! How does it feel without me, Mary? I'm getting stronger without you, Mary!

~Monica H.

## 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](mailto:chiefs@anewleafpublications.org)

### ANLP Staff

Chairperson: Amy F.  
Treasurer: Graham S.  
Secretary: Marcy E.  
Content Editor: OPEN  
Design Editor: Justin W.  
ANLP Admin: Beth F.

### Contact ANLP

Send articles/stories:  
[stories@anewleafpublications.org](mailto:stories@anewleafpublications.org)

Other inquiries and correspondence:  
[info@anewleafpublications.org](mailto:info@anewleafpublications.org)

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## The Gifts and Teachings of My Addiction to Marijuana

As it's been said, sometimes the Brightest days come after the Darkest nights!

My last relapse on Marijuana led me to a darker place than any previous addiction ever has, including opiates. I had become self abusive verbally, psychologically and physically. I hated everything about myself, because of the lies I was telling myself and everyone around me. I eventually became psychotic and in my darkest moment suicidal.

Herein lies my first and greatest gift, the fact that my Higher Power/Creator never left me. I know now that my Higher Power (HP) loves me "No Matter What"! Sending a beam of light on that dark cloudy gray day, through the half drawn shades, highlighting a picture of my granddaughter, who is a real gift, on my desk, and giving me the reason I needed to put down the gun, and LIVE!

However, I was so powerless over my addiction that I still couldn't quit immediately, So a few days later, my HP sent my dog, a furry gift, to sniff out the edibles in my pocket on Christmas Eve 2019, before we were supposed to go to our family holiday. My wife, a wonderful gift, then gave me another gift, she kicked me out of the house, and told me that I couldn't come back until I went to treatment. Now 1,335 days later our relationship is better and stronger than it has been in a long time, a definite gift.

After she kicked me out, I went and lived at my office, and finally found a treatment facility, a blessed Gift, so on January 7, 2020 I went into treatment, I was finally able to stop using and gain back some of my Sanity, a precious Gift. As an added bonus, the naturopathic doctor at the facility, gave me some supplements that helped my colitis, a disease which I had been battling for 36 years, go into remission, which is an amazing gift, plus another gift I received

from treatment is the good friends who I still connect with today.

When I left treatment on March 7, 2020, I came back to MA, I reconnected with my Sponsor and MA friends, the biggest gift here is that I was welcomed back with open arms and Love, which is what MA is all about. I was only able to go to 3 in-person meetings, and then MA and the rest of the world shut down, for some strange reason, and went to Zoom. This was actually an awesome gift for me, being an introvert, because then I could go to a meeting anytime, anywhere in the world, at least the ones that speak the languages that I speak, from the comfort of my kitchen table, and instead of 2-5 people, like with our in person meetings, there were now 15-30 people or more in each meeting, an enlightened gift. In the Zoom rooms I was finally able to admit that I had enough of what I didn't want, being isolated and addicted to cannabis, to realize what I did want, which is sobriety and connection, with those I love and who love me.

I am now able to admit that I am truly powerless and that the Lie of "I can have just one" is truly a LIE! This is a gift of revelation. Now I am able to really work my program. I am able to be of service and lead my local meeting. This is a spectacular gift, and it upped my program 100 fold because it showed me that I can be responsible, and have purpose. Also being able to come through the pandemic newly sober showed me that I can do this if I work it. Which is a gift of gratitude.

I learned that I, and I alone, am 100% responsible for working my program, but that I can't do it without all of you, my Sponsor and HP/Creator because this is a WE Program, a Miraculous Gift. I also learned that my Wife, 3 kids, 4 grandkids, my friends and counseling group, a True Gift, are also there for me, and that their support is an invaluable Gift. I learned that I

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am capable of loving and forgiving myself and others, but I must allow it, which is a gracious Gift. I Learned that I am capable of hearing and seeing all the Gifts of my HP/Creator, if I am only willing to open my eyes, ears, heart, and mind and be grateful. All this is because my addiction broke me open and Humbled me.

In March 2023, I was diagnosed with cancer, I am so grateful for the Doctors who acted swiftly and decisively to do a major surgery that left me cancer free, a life saving gift. I am grateful for my insurance company that allowed it and paid for most of it. I went through chemotherapy and radiation and I am now on chemotherapy pills again, for a few more months, as a precautionary measure, and even though it feels terrible some days I am blessed to be able to do it. To get me healthy again.

Because of my addiction, I am able to be grateful, and open to my HP/Creator, to remember that I am powerless, that I can't do this on my own and that I will not use, no matter what. The truest gift and lesson of addiction and cancer is that I now know that I have this immense support all around me, realizing all the people who love me, that my HP/Creator never stops loving me and showing me the wonderful gifts in my life. I only need to be grateful, humble and willing to accept them. One day at a time.

I truly believe that there are gifts all around us, even from what we judge as the darkness, if we are

only willing to open ourselves up and see them as gifts.

One of the things I am now doing, that really helps me realize my gift, is every day I list 3 things that I am afraid of, 3 things that I accept as true about these fears, 3 things that I can do about them, which I call encouragements, and 3 things that I am grateful for.

Example:  
I fear that this disease of addiction may kill me.

I accept that if I use again, that Marijuana in and of itself might not kill me, but the isolation and depression that it brings might make me kill myself.

I am encouraged that I have a loving program of MA that I can work if I so choose, that I have connections within MA, my sponsor, my HP, and my outside support, who all love me and are there for me, that I no longer need to live in Isolation.

I am Grateful for my willingness to Live a sober life today, and that my HP/Creator, MA and my amazing support team are there for me, and that I can Live life to the fullest everyday, one day at a time.

So, what gifts have you received from your addiction that you are grateful for?

~Michael B.

## My Why

Why did I quit  
when quitters never win?  
But which way went up

higher and higher,  
how low could I go?  
Lower; I kept getting so  
low.

My flow vanished and  
nothing was left to see,  
my dreams said 'poof,

take another hit,  
what's one more next?'  
Maybe tomorrow.

Maybe tomorrow  
I'll quit  
never comes.

We like to play  
these fucked up games  
till round and round

we go up;  
but you gotta  
come down, friend.

You gotta exhale  
the smoke stuck

in your lungs,  
your life paused;  
can't rewind,  
can't swim upstream.

I'm treading water  
and my legs hurt.  
Can't hold

the bricks  
over my head;  
sink or swim

and drowning  
is an option;  
we've been there.

So we choose.  
We have to choose.  
Quit or be quit.

I am my why.

~Jeni

## Our Stories!

### The MA Literature Committee seeks story submissions.

Help us to share the experience, strength and hope of marijuana addiction diversity...

Shedding light on stories of recovery that may not always be told, the following are some examples:

- Detoxing, CHS
- Identity (gender, racial, religious, sexual)
- Mental health, psychosis
- Seeking sobriety during different stages of life
- Cross addiction and support from other 12 step fellowships

Submit your stories to [stories@ma12.org](mailto:stories@ma12.org)

The Stories sub-committee seeks your support to review these stories for their implementation in various projects.

Beginning November 15, we will meet on the 3rd Wednesday each month at 4pm PT / 7pm ET.

Email [L@MA12.org](mailto:L@MA12.org) to join

### Open Editor Position

## Fill a Critical Role at ANLP

The Content Editor volunteer position on the ANLP Board is now open! If you have experience with copy editing, publishing, or design, you can be of service in a big way.

Email the ANLP Chair for more information:  
[chair@anewleafpublications.org](mailto:chair@anewleafpublications.org)

# Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

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

## MA World Services

5551 HOLLYWOOD BLVD #1043 HOLLYWOOD, CA, USA 90028-6814 +1.800.766.6779 WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG INFO@MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

<b>DIST. 2 San Francisco &amp; East Bay</b> www.madistrict2.org	+1.510.957.8390	<b>DIST. 16 Melbourne, Australia</b> www.marijuana-anonymous.com	+61.403.945.083
<b>DIST. 3 South SF Bay Area</b> www.madistrict3.org	+1.408.450.0796	<b>DIST. 17 Denmark</b> www.ma-danmark.dk	
<b>DIST. 4 Western Washington</b> www.madistrict4.org	+1.206.414.9270	<b>DIST. 18 Sacramento, CA</b> www.sacramentoma.org	+1.916.341.9469
<b>DIST. 5 Orange County</b> www.madistrict5.org	+1.714.999.9409	<b>DIST. 19 Toronto, ON, Canada</b> www.matoronto.org	+1.416.999.2244
<b>DIST. 6 LA County North</b> www.madistrict6.org	+1.818.759.9194	<b>DIST. 20 San Diego, CA</b> www.ma-sandiego.org	
<b>DIST. 7 LA County South</b> www.madistrict7.org	+1.310.494.0189	<b>DIST. 21 Colorado State</b> www.ma-colorado.org	+1.303.607.7516
<b>DIST. 8 New York</b> www.ma-newyork.org		<b>DIST. 22 New England</b> www.newenglandma.org	
<b>DIST. 11 Oregon</b> www.madistrict11.org	+1.503.567.9892	<b>DIST. 23 Georgia State</b>	+1.770.468.8508
<b>DIST. 12 North Bay, CA</b> +1.415.419.3555/+1.707.583.2326 www.madistrict12.org		<b>DIST. 24 Vancouver, BC, Canada</b>	+1.778.554.8997
<b>DIST. 13 MA Online</b> www.ma-online.org		<b>DIST. 26 Iceland</b> www.maisland.is	
<b>DIST. 14 London, England</b> www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk	+44.300.124.0373	<b>DIST. 27 Independent Mtgs.</b> www.madistrict27.org	madistrict27@gmail.com
		<b>DIST. 28 MA Phone Meetings</b> www.ma-phone.org	

## Step and Tradition of the Month

### Step Eight

*Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*

### Tradition Eight

*Marijuana Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ Special Workers.*

## Celebrating 250 Years of Sobriety!

### District 2

Kevin V	7/21/1985	38 yrs
Chris K	8/12/1996	27 yrs

### District 5

<b>Ally R</b>	<b>6/29/2022</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
Jeff	7/01/2014	9 yrs
Jeremy G	7/15/2003	20 yrs
John Mc	7/02/1991	32 yrs
Manny	7/24/2014	9 yrs
Michael G	7/07/1987	36 yrs
Ryan H	7/07/2007	16 yrs

Sean F 7/04/2002 21 yrs

### District 8

Rich C 7/23/2002 21 yrs

### District 11

Bailey	8/10/2021	2 yrs
Don	8/15/2021	2 yrs
Jacinda M	7/14/2016	7 yrs
Mallory	8/06/2019	4 yrs
Mikayla	8/12/2020	3 yrs

### District 25

Cheryl D 8/02/2021 2 yrs

**See your sobriety date here!**



*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 by the 16th of the month. You may tell your local GSR, ANLP Liason, or e-mail to: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org*