



A NEW LEAF

September 1995
Volume 5 - No. 9

A Publication of Marijuana Anonymous

Learning Lessons in the Worst of Times

by Tamar, District 6

Tonight ends the last night of the worst vacation I've ever had. It started with learning that I may be losing something I had worked incredibly hard for - something extremely dear and important to me. (Loss equals a 10 on my fear Richter scale.) Everything I hoped, planned and expected to do was cancelled. I was devastated. I thought all I could do was to wait impatiently for the dreaded loss to come and torture myself with not knowing when.

It was terrifying! The thought of having ten days of unscheduled, unplanned time, in the worst possible place - my head! What would happen? Would I just give up? Would I run and hide? Would I use? Or would I just die? Of course not! It's just body-crushing pain; it's another chance to use the tools I've been given, and see if they really work. Here's some of what I learned:

Lesson #1 The degree of pain I feel is directly proportional to the amount of resistance I put up to the situation.

Lesson #2 The only way to get help is to ask for help.

Lesson #3 Put the focus on myself - me and my attitude are the only things I can change.

Lesson #4 Help somebody or do something for somebody else. It takes

up the time I would spend obsessing on myself, and makes me feel good that I've made somebody else feel good and have been useful.

"It was terrifying! The thought of having ten days of unscheduled, unplanned time, in the worst possible place - my head!"

Lesson #5 It's ok to let somebody help me feel better - it's ok to accept it, be grateful for it, and feel worthy of being helped.

Lesson #6 Other people don't always know what is best for me and can let me down. However, God

knows and won't let me down. Pray for the answers and listen for them.

Lesson #7 Meetings help, friends help, therapy helps, talking and writing help. Not doing it alone is the biggest help.

Lesson #8 The Big Book has answers; search for them or search out people who can help me find them.

Lesson #9 Look for the lessons. Nothing in God's world happens by mistake.

Ask myself what it is I need to learn rather than why is this happening to me.

Lesson #10 The Steps work if I work them: I admitted I was powerless. I believed God could restore my sanity. I decided to turn

Continued on Page 3

A Spiritual Being on a Human Path

by Terri R., District 6

They say when you least want to, you should "be of service". I was just reading over the July issue of *A NEW LEAF*, and thinking how grateful I am for being a sober member of Marijuana Anonymous. I often get caught up in the day-to-day trials and tribulations of this human existence and I lose touch with who I really am and what my purpose is. Being of service is a way to get out of myself and give something back.

So I decided to write an article for *A NEW LEAF*!

I find that when I get crazy, it's usually because my ego and self-will are getting a little out of control. I need to reconnect with God and with reality. (As the saying goes - Reality: I don't live in that neighborhood!) I also need to remember where I came from. And I need to center myself in today, not

Continued on Page 2



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.

Editors
Rob M.
Ilene M.

District 1 Bureau Chief: Joanne A.
District 2 Bureau Chief: Sheila F.
District 3 Bureau Chief: Pat Mc.
District 4 Bureau Chief: George T.
District 5 Bureau Chiefs: Az A.
District 6 Bureau Chief: Joellen J.
District 7 Bureau Chief: Teri A.
District 8 Bureau Chief: Richard B.
District 9 Bureau Chief: Bernie G.
District 10 Bureau Chief: Bill H.

Published by
A New Leaf Editorial Board

Patricia G., chairman
Loren N., treasurer
George B.

Send all articles, inquiries and
correspondence to:

A NEW LEAF
P.O. Box 4314
North Hollywood, CA 91607

E-mail: ANuLeaf@aol.com

Fax No.
(818) 990-2980

Editorial Phone Nos.
(818) 505-1408
(818) 763-4767

Copyright 1995 • Marijuana Anonymous

A Spiritual Being on a Human Path

Continued from Page 1

project into the future.

Years of daily marijuana use is where I came from. Caught up in the "drug life-style"; never really owning anything nice; moving from place to place so my wreckage could never catch up with me; daily compromising of my health, well being, and best judgment; years of feeling hopeless; unable to escape the never-ending cycle of "scoring, dealing, and finding ways to stay high". That's where I come from. All too often, as I sit in my comfy apartment today, I forget where I've been and the things I've seen. Remembering the horror stories is a reality check for me.

Step Eleven tells me to "improve my conscious contact". This is a sometimes difficult proposition. I can connect easily when I am in church, or sitting listening to music that touches my soul, or those rare times that I meditate. However, when I am sitting on the freeway in a traffic jam in 90° heat, or struggling with a tough class at school, or arguing with a family member - it's difficult to maintain that contact. In other words, when I'm out in the world,

it's tough to maintain contact with God.

I think the difficulty lies in "being a spiritual being on a human path". To walk around in the world today (much less in L.A!) is trying and painful. It's no wonder so many are anesthetizing themselves daily. So, I need to remember that I am a spiritual being that has been put here for a reason, that God has a purpose for me.

The program of MA tells me to align myself with God's will for me. That entails constant effort to rise above the human traits of self-centeredness, ego, pettiness, greed, self-righteousness, insecurity, and resentments, and to keep my eyes on the ultimate goal: carrying out God's will. The way I have found to do that is to surrender to my illness, turn my will and my life over to a power greater than me, clear away the wreckage that I could never seem to outrun, identify and pray for the removal of my human flaws, repair damage I have done to others, and continue the spiritual work needed to get closer to God and the person God wants me to be. That includes helping others. And that includes writing this article. *R*

Congratulations to our members celebrating their sober birthdays!



Todd E.	Aug. 31	2 years	Wendy C.	Sept. 11	8 years
Al E.	Sept. 01	6 years	Tamar	Sept. 12	3 years
Jen S.	Sept. 02	1 year!	BW L.	Sept. 13	7 years
Lynn S.	Sept. 02	3 years	Jim L.	Sept. 25	6 years
Stacey S.	Sept. 08	3 years	Michelle E.	Sept. 26	6 years
Brian A.	Sept. 11	4 years	Az A.	Sept. 30	9 years

Happy Birthday to Marijuana Anonymous - Los Angeles County
September 11th 8 years!

(Is YOUR area having a birthday? Let us know and we'll publish it!)

A Call for Recovery

by Van W., District 6

We are a group of concerned, hopeful addicts who want to be of service. MA will hold its second annual convention this January. In order to ensure the best possible program, we are asking the whole fellowship to contribute input. The Program/Agenda Committee is already meeting. What we need from you is ideas for seminars, speakers, workshops, panels or other presentations that you would like to see included.

Our goal is to inspire recovery and provide opportunities for growth and enjoyment. Every group in every district is invited to make suggestions. For example, do you know a marijuana addict whose shared experience would benefit the program as a whole? Do you have a great idea for a workshop? Suggestions can be sent to Van W. via *A NEW LEAF*. Our deadline is October 1st.

We work on a unity consciousness basis. Remember... "I cannot, but by God's grace, WE can." Thank you for letting us be of service. ♪

Thank you, Carol !

from the Staff

We would like to acknowledge the tireless and devoted work of Carol Mc. as Co-editor of *A NEW LEAF*. For well over a year, she has been working closely with Rob M. to turn out a publication we can all be proud of: collecting and editing articles, and figuring out how to fit them all in an issue! She has also handled the difficult job of circulating the newsletter.

Carol, you have contributed enormously to MA as a whole and have always provided "service with a smile".

The Board of Directors of *A NEW LEAF* would like to thank you for a job extremely well done. ♪

Learning Lessons in the Worst of Times

Continued from page 1

it over to God. I looked for my part. I shared it with God and someone else. I became ready to give it to God and asked him to take it. I found out who I hurt and said I was sorry. I continued to do that and prayed and listened to get closer to God, to know what to do and have strength to do it. and in sharing my experience as the result of taking these steps, I am doing Step 12!

It worked! Two years, nine months and twenty days later, I am still clean and sober! Every time I go through a situation experiencing intense feelings

- whether it is anger, happiness, despair or frustration - and I don't use, it's like opening a door and crossing over to the other side. It becomes one less thing to have to use over. When it happens again I look back and think "I've been through that and stayed sober, I can do this the same way". One day at a time, and occasionally one hour at a time.

If sober were easy, it would be the "in" thing to do. Everybody would be doing it. But everybody isn't; I am. I'm glad you are too. Thanks for helping me along and thanks for letting me share! ♪

Thought For The Month

"...we know that the pains of smoking marijuana had to come before sobriety, and emotional turmoil before serenity."

adapted from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

MA WORLDWIDE...

DISTRICT 1 - SAN FRANCISCO
P.O.Box 194252
San Francisco, CA 94119
(415) 522-7373

DISTRICT 2 - EAST BAY
P.O.Box 8354
Berkeley, CA 94707
(510) 287-8873

DISTRICT 3 - SOUTH BAY
(408) 450-0796

DISTRICT 4 - SEATTLE
(206) 548-9034

DISTRICT 5 - ORANGE COUNTY
358 S. Main #215
Orange, CA 92668
(714) 999-9409

DISTRICT 6 - L.A. COUNTY (NORTH)
P.O.Box 2433
Van Nuys, CA 91404
(818) 759-9194

DISTRICT 7 - L.A. COUNTY (SOUTH)
P.O.Box 3012
Culver City, CA 90231
(213) 964-2370

DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK
(212) 459-4423

DISTRICT 9 - SANTA CRUZ
P.O.Box 1481
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
(408) 427-4088

DISTRICT 10 - L.A. COUNTY (EAST)
P.O.Box 94400
Pasadena, CA 91109
(818) 583-9582

NEW ZEALAND
(no District addresses at this time)

AUSTRALIA
(no District address at this time)

**WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, P.O. Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404
(800) 766-6779**

Come!
Be a part of
"Life with Hope!"

THE SECOND ANNUAL
MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS CONVENTION
JANUARY 12, 13, AND 14, 1996
SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA

TENTATIVE AGENDA

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

4 pm -Registration opens
Time for dinner on your own...
Opening Ceremonies/Meeting

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

Breakfast
Meetings & Workshops (all day)
Dinner & Festivities (evening)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

Breakfast
More Meetings & Workshops
1:30 pm - Closing Ceremonies conclude

(specific start-times for registration, workshops, and meetings to be announced...)

FULL PACKAGE:

Includes ALL workshops and meetings for the entire weekend, two Continental Breakfasts (Saturday and Sunday), plus refreshments during meetings and workshops, and one dinner---Saturday night.
(REMEMBER: HOTEL NOT INCLUDED! YOU MUST BOOK YOUR ROOM SEPARATELY!)

SPECIAL RATES:

If your registration is postmarked no later than November 15th,
the FULL PACKAGE will cost you \$60. Plan ahead and benefit from this early bird rate!!!

If your registration is postmarked no later than December 15th,
the FULL PACKAGE will cost you \$65.

Deadline for mail-in registration is December 15th.

After that, simply register upon arrival. The cost will be \$70.

Day Passes are also available for attendance at the convention
\$25 for Saturday only, \$20 for Sunday only (no discount for pre-registration)

CONVENTION SITE:

ROOM RATES ARE
\$65 per night, plus tax, for a SINGLE
\$75 per night, plus tax, for a DOUBLE

HOLIDAY INN BAYVIEW PLAZA

530 WEST PICO BOULEVARD
SANTA MONICA, CA
(800) H-O-L-I-D-A-Y OR (310) 399-9344

You MUST say that you are with MA Convention for group rate!

Room Reservations MUST be made by December 20th!

REGISTRATION FORM (FOR CONVENTION ONLY! HOTEL MUST BE BOOKED SEPARATELY.)

Mail pre-registration to:

Marijuana Anonymous Convention Committee
P.O. Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231

Make all checks payable to MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS

NAME: _____
Addr: _____
Phone: () _____ - _____
Chicken Dijon Dinner _____ Veg. Lasagna Dinner _____

PLEASE CONTACT ME: I wish to make myself available as a volunteer. _____ I have special requirements. _____

PACKAGE RATES (pre-Nov.15th \$60 / pre-Dec.15th \$65) \$ _____

MA T-shirts & Tanks (Pre-Convention price \$10 ea. - \$12 at Convention) WHITE ONLY Circle size: M L XL XXL \$ _____

(Merchandise to be picked up at the Convention) TOTAL PAID \$ _____