

A NEW LEAF

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Just Stop Saying No by Jeff M.

I came into this program kicking and screaming, and I caught the disease of addiction in the meetings of MA. When I first got here I didn't have a drug problem, I just put my very well paying job, the well being of my family, my responsibilities, everything I had worked for, for the last 30 years on the line. For what, for a temporary short lived escape from reality? That sure sounds like a rational person to me. NOT!

It was not easy giving up my best friend, and as I have heard many people say, my lover. Even after a couple of years, it is not easy; simple yes, easy no. I had thought about quitting smoking pot even before I failed that drug test, because my life was spiraling out of control, but I didn't know how. Consequently, when I was forced into the program the first thing I did was shut-up and listen, because anything would be better than the mess my life had become. But remember I was still not an addict, I just wanted my life back, and under control.

After going to several meetings mandated by my hospital program, it happened. I heard someone leading a meeting tell my story. Sure there were differences, he had used a lot more

drugs than I had, he had fallen harder than I had, but it was the similarities that caught my attention. He had felt he wasn't an addict when he first got into the program. When he was forced into the program all he wanted to do was get his life back and under control. He laughed and said that his life still wasn't under control, but now he accepts the fact that he is an addict. He accepts his life as is it today, because this is exactly where he is supposed to be. He went on to say that all of this, all of his serenity is because he learned to "Just Stop Saying No!" I just stopped saying No I am not an addict, because maybe, just maybe I was. I didn't say yes, I just stopped saying no. Just stop saying, "No there isn't a Higher Power," because maybe, just maybe, there is. You don't have to say yes there is, just stop saying no there isn't. You don't have to start having faith, you just have to stop having no faith.

All these thoughts and more were going through my head during the meeting. I was so distracted I didn't realize a birthday celebration was going on until the leader walked up to me and gave me his 2-year chip. Because of that chip, I made a

point to talk to him after the meeting to thank him. Because I thanked him we started talking, and we talked, and we talked. To this day, several years later, we continue to talk every day as any good sponsor and sponsee should.

Because I decided to shut up and listen, because I decided to just stop saying no, I wasn't an addict, no there wasn't a Higher Power. Because I decided that maybe, just maybe, I didn't have all the answers. Because I decided to have a little faith in myself and stop saying NO, my life has blossomed beyond my wildest dreams. The promises on page 84 and 85 of the big book have happened in my life seven fold, and ALL I had to do was just stop saying NO! ▲

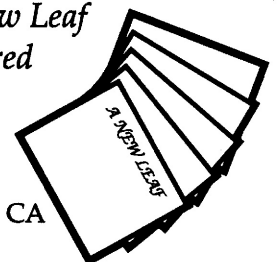
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A NEW LEAF

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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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Recovering from Shame by Matt C.

When I look in the mirror today I see a man trying hard to be O.K. I fix my hair, squeeze my pimples, brush my yellowed teeth and smile at myself in my best "pudgy-boy needs love too" smile. I'm O.K. today but it's still a struggle. I get to the gym sometimes but not as often as I need too. I look at my body in the mirror trying to find something to like. It's better today than it has been. I've lost a fair amount of weight in recovering from the munchies. Pot is not on the Weight Watchers™ program, for very good reasons. I still think I'm too heavy and I've noticed jowls beginning to form in the last couple of years. Now I get to become a middle-aged man. Whoopee. Still, it's better than it was. When I was using and in the years before I came to this, my favorite of addictions, I studied self-loathing in the manner of a politician in a race. I bathed in self-loathing and had no sense that it was an entity unto itself. I assumed, fully, that my disgust with myself was accurate, justified and proper. I had no idea that I was a murderer, killing myself a little each day. I held anyone who echoed this view in high esteem and I would follow these people around in my life, seeking their advice and being happy to eat their table scraps. My family's belittlement and neglect of me

was right. I must be a horrid little worm unworthy of their love and attention. Leaving home was easy. The only problem was that home is wherever you set up camp for the night and I found unappreciative people wherever I went. I also, in all fairness, made sure that if someone thought I was cool, I either ignored them or proved that I was a jerk by over-reacting to circumstances, being overly sensitive to minor criticism or just having some kind of fit. It takes two to tango and I am multitudes. A veritable dance studio of mayhem and vitriol.

Today things are different. I show up and talk about who I am. I am clean and sober today so that I can see things more clearly. So that I can see my own behavior more clearly. So that I can not fool myself or allow myself to engage in destructive behavior. I am fostering long lasting friendships by expressing my true feelings and by allowing others to share their feelings without blowing up or turning them away. So, I am learning. Learning from others who I am. Who I am with and in relation to them. Learning that they can love and appreciate me, with all my pimples and pudge, with my pedantic way and my black, nasty humor. I am finding out that I can be very lovable. It's very hard for me to get, but I am getting it, One Day at a Time. ▲



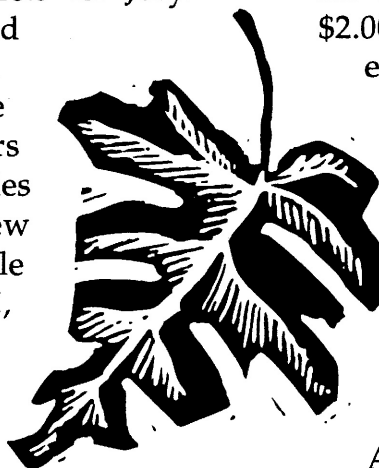
MAWS Service Manual Update

The MAWS Service Manual update is now complete. The updated version includes all Conference approved changes since 1996, a modernized PI Manual, A New Leaf Publications Charter, 800 # commitment guidelines and Convention Guidelines. The new pages will update a Revision 1.1 to a Revision 1.2. As there are many changes since it's initial publication, we are asking all members or groups still using a Revision 1.0 Service Manual to purchase a complete Revision 1.2. Masters of the new pages and an instruction sheet on how to complete the update were

mailed to the Delegates of all the Districts in July. ANLP directed that each District use these masters to make copies of the new pages available to the DSC, groups, and all members who possess a Revision 1.1 of the MAWS Service Manual. If you are in an area that is not serviced by a District Service Committee or unable to attain the pages from a District

or Delegate, we will mail out the new pages to you for \$2.00 to cover the cost of the envelope and postage.

To obtain the update pages, please send \$2.00 for the new pages only or send \$10.00 for a complete Revision 1.2 Service Manual to:



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★
★ **congratulations** ★
★ **celebrating their** ★
★ **to Our Members** ★
★ **Sober Birthdays!** ★

District 3

Kimberly M. 9/11/97 2 years
Michelle H. 9/3/97 2 years
Susan S. 9/26/97 2 years
Bill T. 9/1/96 3 years
Dave F. 9/3/96 3 years

District 4

Matt D. 8/4/97 2 years
Ted 9/29/96 3 years
Sharon L. 8/23/98 1 year!

District 5

Coanna 9/1/94 5 years

Patrick P. 9/8/92 7 years
Ursula 9/8/94 5 years
Terry H. 9/8/96 3 years
Randy F. 9/16/94 5 years

District 6

Al E. 9/1/89 10 yrs
Craig J. 9/24/96 3 years
Lynn S. 9/2/92 7 years
Stacey S. 9/8/92 7 years
Nicole S. 9/8/91 8 years
Brian A. 9/11/91 8 years
Wendy C. 9/11/87 12 yrs
Tamar 9/12/92 7 years

Michelle E. 9/26/89 10 yrs
Rob@PineGrove 8/98 1 year!
Peter 8/97 2 years
Dancin' Tom 8/89 10 yrs
FellowshipMary 8/94 5 years

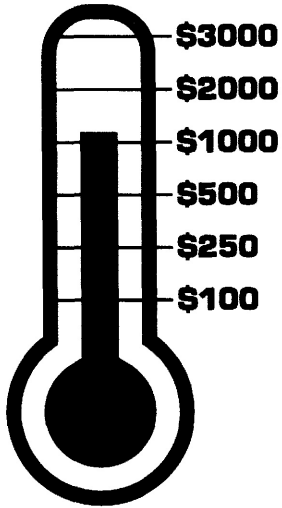
District 11

Carl P. 9/1/91 8 years
Connie L. 9/1/95 4 years
Mike C. 9/18/84 15 yrs
Terry C. 9/17/97 2 years
June C. 9/17/97 2 years
Sam H. 9/29/97 2 years

**2000 Conference in San Francisco
Logo Contest for T-Shirt Art**

2 color design
Deadline
12/31/99

Mail submissions: Dana S.
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To donate your penny jar for
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MA World Convention

District 3 (South Bay) and District 9 (Santa Cruz) will be hosting the sixth annual Marijuana Anonymous World Convention "Millennium of Hope." It will be held January 14th-16th 2000 in Santa Clara, California, at the Santa Clara Biltmore Hotel. The convention committee is working hard to organize a really fun and memorable event. There will be lots of great workshops and speakers as well as 12-step meetings, yoga, a banquet dinner, comedy, and the MA

Allstar Band. Register early to save on registration fees as well as supporting up front costs of the convention. See your local delegate or trustee for full registration forms or use the one printed here. The Biltmore is offering special rates for MA members, contact them at 1-800-255-9925. They provide a free airport shuttle. Call Will at (831) 469-7204 or Kevin at (408) 249-9865 with any questions or concerns. See you at the convention!

Registration Form

Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____
 e-mail _____

Your anonymity will be protected on all materials

Full Package (all events & meals)			#	total	Event Only Package			#	total
	2 meals	3 meals							
Before 11.15.99	\$80	\$100			Before 11.15.99	\$25			
After 11.15.99	\$100	\$125			After 11.15.99	\$35			
Youth under 18	\$25	\$35			Saturday Special	\$15			
					Youth under 18	FREE			

Send registration form and check payable to: MA Y2K Convention PO Box 3196 Santa Cruz, CA 95062

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total amount