

A NEW LEAF

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N.O.T.M.E. by Don A.

As a child I went to church every Sunday and at least twice during the week. I went to a Baptist Christian school until the seventh grade. In my teens I taught 8,9, & 10 year olds in Sunday School, sang in the choir, memorized and recited chapters of the bible in front of the whole church, helped my mom with the children's church during the main Sunday morning sermon, was an assistant leader in the boys group and even directed a few Christmas plays. I was on my way to being a good Christian, except I did it stoned! Growing up I saw many things in church and organized religion that bothered me. There were, in my mind, many contradictions in the bible that I didn't understand and no one could explain it to me in a way that made sense. These experiences have lead me to not believe in organized religion or the bible as a foundation for my faith and God. So, you can understand why I am having some problems with this whole "Higher Power" theory. Working with my sponsor, I have come to the understanding that I don't know what my higher power is or what to call it, but I do know that there is something in this universe more powerful than me. He says that is progress. I can't call my higher power God

because I am having problems separating God from organized religion. I have come to understand that spirituality is different than religion, so I am working to find my spiritual higher power.

A strange incident happened to me this weekend that helped to convince me that there is something working in my sober life. I steam clean carpets in office buildings on Saturdays. The offices are empty and I work alone with a very noisy truck mounted machine. This gives me a lot of time with me and my head, which has been known to be a very bad combination. I had been going over the religion vs. spirituality debate in my head and started questioning my motivation for sobriety. I firmly believe that why you do something is just as important as what you do. I will have 2 years on August 19 and I am proud of the changes that I have seen in my life, but is it worth what I gave up? Am I doing what I should be doing? Can I stay clean and sober for the rest of my life? Can I stay clean and sober for the rest of today? This debate had gone on for a few hours when I pulled up to an office in Hawthorne. While I was cleaning, I noticed a man sitting on the brick planter outside the front win-

dow. I thought this was strange since it was 100 degrees outside and he was 5 feet from a very loud and very hot machine. Since he wasn't bothering anything, I just kept on working. As I was finishing up, I saw him stand up, stagger a bit, and fall face first on the sidewalk. He didn't move or get up. I went out to check on him and noticed that he had a 3"- 4" opening on his head that was bleeding bad and his elbow was bleeding. I ran inside and called 911. They told me to keep him on the ground and not to touch him. I tried to keep him down and calm while we waited for the paramedics. His name was Neal, he was in his mid 50's and was completely drunk. The paramedics, fire department, and police showed up, cleaned him up, and took (continued on next page.)

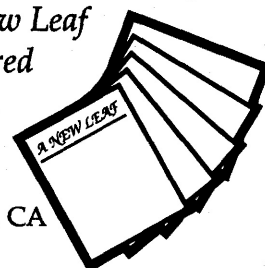
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A NEW LEAF

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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N.O.T.M.E. continued

him to the hospital. The whole time this was going on, I was thinking I have work to do and I don't need this to delay my day. While driving to my next appointment, it dawned on me how twisted my thinking was. How could I think the ordeal messed up my day when Neal was the one with a concussion and on his way to the hospital? I felt bad for my way of thinking. Something had sent Neal my way that afternoon. Something had showed me in a very blunt way how I could turn out. Just when I needed to be reminded, I was. My motivation for my sobriety took on a new face. I didn't want to be the drunk falling down on the

sidewalk and cracking my head open. I didn't want to be stoned and alone on the street. Nothing On This Material Earth could have saved me from my disease. Nothing On This Material Earth could have showed what I needed to see when I needed to see it. Nothing On This Material Earth is more powerful over me when it comes to controlling me. A higher power does exist in my life. It is not the God that the bible speaks of or the group of druggies that I lovingly see every week. My higher power is Nothing On This Material Earth or N.O.T.M.E. for short.



One More Day by Anonymous

I don't how it happened, we certainly didn't think it over, nor did we have to go very far to find it, in fact it seemed to magically appear, in a bong, in my hand, against my mouth, expanding in my lungs, blowing out 16 months of sobriety in a cloud of smoke. How could this have happened? Wasn't it just my last meeting, I walked a friend to her car who was having a hard time. I told her about a dream I had the night before that had this incredible stage show in it that was so professionally done and so entertaining that I woke to the realization that, 1) it was only due to the fact that I was sober that I could have such an elaborate dream. When I was

using I rarely remembered any dreams and, 2) That I actually wrote the dialogue, I wrote the music & the song that was in it, I did the choreography, the staging, the lighting. It really hit me hard that with sobriety so many things are possible, that I really need to take a look at the small way in which I viewed my talents and ability. I really came to realize that we all are truly amazing, our mind is truly capable (without drugs and alcohol) to do the lighting and the music and, and, and so I said to my friend " imagine what long term sobriety could bring!" Well I could forget about all that now, not only did I blow away 16 months, as I sit here now in shame waiting to

One More Day continued

I take my newcomer chip I've realized that old familiar feeling of hopelessness has made it's way back into my consciousness and I can't see myself staying sober. My mind is right now racing out the door to jump in my car to get a hit of

that medicine I need just to help me feel "normal". I hear the call for newcomers to take a chip and I see myself walk up to take one, I reluctantly take the hug and tell my home group" if it were only a dream, like so many I've had before

and I could wake up right now, but not this time." As I turn to go back to my seat I wake up, in my bed, at home, to a huge breath of relief and a renewed even deeper appreciation for sobriety thank you God for one more day!

★
★ **Congratulations to Our Members** ★
★ **Celebrating their Sober Birthdays!** ★

District 2

Hilary	7/5/98	2 yrs
Skip	9/19/98	2 yrs
Tura	9/10/98	2 yrs
Leslie	7/4/96	4 yrs
Chris K.	8/12/96	4 yrs
Jim P.	8/21/92	8 yrs
Sheila	7/19/88	12 yrs
Kevin V.	7/22/85	15 yrs
Jon P.	9/9	1 more

District 3

Kimberly M.	9/11/97	3 yrs
Michelle H.	9/3/97	3 yrs
Susan S.	9/26/97	3 yrs
Bill T.	9/1/96	4 yrs
Chuck	9/3/98	2 yrs
Danny R.	8/11/95	5 yrs
Dave F.	9/3/96	4 yrs

District 4

Mary M-S	5/29/95	5 yrs
Erik K	7/1/95	5 yrs
Stephanie W	6/15/99	1 year!
Brian E.	7/21/99	1 year!
Mary K.	7/20/96	4 yrs

District 5

Tonia	6/1/96	4 yrs
Brian W.	6/2/90	10 yrs
Brad M.	6/3/97	3 yrs
Cinde B.	6/4/94	6 yrs
Jim G.	6/6/94	6 yrs
Amber B.	6/15/92	8 yrs
Barbrara H.	6/16/92	8 yrs
Cindy	6/20/94	6 yrs
Dean W.	6/29/92	8 yrs
John McC	7/2/91	9 yrs
Carol M.	7/7/98	2 yrs
Scott M.	7/9/99	1 year!
Coleman G.	8/13/92	8 yrs
David G.	8/15/99	1 year!
Chris G.	8/21/90	10 yrs
Lisa T.	8/21/90	10 yrs
Steve P.	8/21/93	7 yrs
James J.	8/27/99	1 year!
Matty	9/1/97	3 yrs
Terry H.	9/7/96	4 yrs

District 6

Al E.	9/1/89	11 yrs
Craig J	9/24/96	4 yrs
Ellie	9/24/97	3 yrs

Lynn S	9/2/92	8 yrs
Kurt S	9/2/87	13 yrs
Stacey S	9/8/92	8 yrs
Nicole S	9/8/91	9 yrs
Brian A	9/11/91	9 yrs
Wendy C	9/11/87	13 yrs
Tamar	9/12/92	8 yrs
Michelle E	9/26/89	11 yrs

District 7

Steve C(PK)	6/15/90	10 yrs
Patricia	7/25/90	10 yrs
William	7/18/99	1 year!
Joel	8/1/95	5 yrs
Don A	9/19/98	2 yrs
Debbra A	7/17/99	1 year!
Dan	7/16/99	1 year!
Dena S	9/15/99	1 year!

District 8

David v b	9/22/97	3 yrs
Cliff H.	8/13/99	1 year!

Is your district not represented here?
Ask your bureau chief or become one yourself. It is a great district level service position. You can help make A New Leaf great! email or write ANLP for details.

The Roving Reporter

Do you have any sobriety rituals to keep you centered?

Connie P. District 4,

I read from two daily affirmation books every morning. it reminds me each day is about a new life: a sober one, one filled with gratitude and many, many blessings.

Jenny W. District 4,

I attend two meetings per week, keep in touch with my sponsor and stay aware of potentially dangerous states of being (hungry, angry, lonely, tired), I also pray (even when I was mad at God), chant the serenity prayer when stressed out or frightened, socialize with sober friends and read from daily meditation books.

Stacy K. District 4,

I say the serenity prayer when I need to. I close my eyes and take a deep breath and pray for myself to maintain happiness. Meetings, meetings, meetings.

Mary M. District 4,

Walking, reading program literature, meetings, service positions, MA social activities.

Erin O. District 5,

Saying the serenity prayer over and over again like a mantra. That calms me down like nothing else can. Also breathing deeply a few times.

Terry H. District 5,

Read two meditation books daily. Pray on my knees morning and night.(including 3rd and 7th step prayers from big book). Pray during the day for continued strength and guidance.

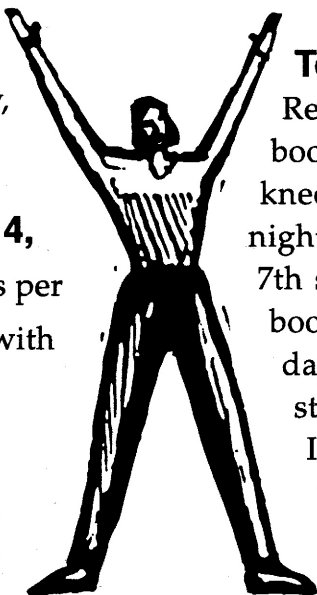
I have a sponsor and I talk to him at least once a week. I go to 3 meetings a week. I read literature regularly. I make regular contact with other MA members on the phone.

Trisha A. District 11,

My favorite is the steam room at the gym where I work. I like to spend at least 10 minutes removing "impurities from my mind as well as my body.

Libby G. District 8,

daily yoga and meditation has become a ritual of transformation. Taking the time to listen to my Higher power keeps the channel open and accessible when i need help.



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