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A NEW LEAF

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An Interview with an Addict

ANL: Thank you for your time Brad. What is your sobriety date?

BM: June 3rd, 1997

ANL: 7 years! Did you ever think you'd get that far?

BM: No way.

ANL: Why not?

BM: I couldn't see my life without pot, without being loaded. If I didn't really practice the "one day at a time" principle, I wouldn't be here right now.

ANL: Out of the 12 Questions, which one do you most identify with?

BM: #10—When your stash is nearly empty do you feel anxious or worried about how to get more.

ANL: How is that you?

BM: I wasn't aware of it at the time, but the panic and anxiety that would set in once I ran out of weed was the tell tale sign to me I had a problem. If I didn't have weed I couldn't function. Everything else was put on the back burner. I did anything necessary to get high—beg, borrow or steal.

ANL: What was the worst thing you did to get high?

BM: I stole thousands of dollars from my uncle and when he caught on to me skimming bills, he hid the money, but then I started stealing blank checks and his statements.

ANL: How long did that go on for?

BM: Three years.

ANL: Have you ever relapsed in sobriety?

BM: Twice, but not in M.A., but with marijuana in another 12 step program.

ANL: How did you relapse?

BM: My girlfriend went away for the weekend and I got a bag of weed for my brother for Christmas. He offered me a hit on the joint and after a few minutes, I rationalized it and thought I could get away with it. But once I started I couldn't stop. And I hid it from my girlfriend for six months. I didn't come clean at my 12 step meetings and shortly before I was to get 1 year chip, my girlfriend until went out one day and I started to get ripped, but to my surprise she came back right away and I was busted. She broke up with me on the spot, so I joined M.A. to get the heat off.

ANL: And you've been sober ever since?

BM: Yep.

ANL: Whatever happened to your girlfriend?

BM: We got married.

ANL: In the M.A. triangle: Unity, Recovery and Service—which do you feel is the most important to staying sober?

BM: Unity and Service combined.

ANL: What about recovery?

BM: Recovery happened to me as a result of the unity and service.

ANL: Which of the three do you practice the most?

BM: Recovery

ANL: Have you ever completed the 12 steps?

BM: Yes

ANL: How did you do it?

BM: With a sponsor.

ANL: Out of the 12 Steps, which is the most important to you?

BM: The fifth step. If I hadn't done the fifth step, change wouldn't have been possible for me.

ANL: Is your sponsor a major factor in your life and sobriety?

BM: Yes. We are two totally different people from different backgrounds and different cultures, but the example that he sets and the person he's become from the person he was is inspirational to me. We may not talk to each other all the time, but I know he's always there for me.

ANL: What is your favorite cliché, words of wisdom or phrase you've heard in the program?

BM: You can't get high if you don't pick up.

ANL: What is the most tired cliché?

BM: Easy does it and Dump the Chumps.

ANL: What is the greatest miracle you've experienced in sobriety that you feel never would've happened?

BM: Being married and the birth of my daughter.

ANL: Do you have any suggestions for newcomers?

BM: Don't give up before the miracle happens. If you stick it out your life will change. Give it time. I did and it worked for me.



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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We send approximately 681 copies of *A New Leaf* each month to subscribers in 31 states



Dr. Know, M.D. (The Marijuana Doctor)

Did you know a recent study indicated that a user's risk of heart attack more than quadruples in the first hour after smoking marijuana? The researchers suggest that such an effect might occur from marijuana's effects on blood pressure and heart rate and reduced oxygen-carrying capacity of blood.

Marijuana use also has the potential to promote cancer of the lungs and other parts of the respiratory tract because it contains irritants and carcinogens. In fact, marijuana smoke contains 50 to 70 percent more carcinogenic hydrocarbons than does tobacco smoke. Puff for puff, smoking marijuana increases the risk of cancer more than smoking tobacco.

M.A. WORD SEARCH

SERENITY POT MARIJUANA UNITY RECOVERY TRADITIONS
 WORK POT WEED SPONSOR PRAYER MAWS MEETINGS
 STEPS CLEAN NEWCOMER TWELVE LIFE WITH HOPE SOBER

M	A	R	I	J	U	A	N	A	S	P	E
E	A	U	D	N	E	A	F	O	L	T	P
E	N	W	I	D	E	V	B	H	X	R	O
T	Z	T	S	L	T	E	L	D	D	A	H
I	Y	N	C	L	R	R	B	E	R	D	H
N	D	E	E	W	O	R	K	E	W	I	T
G	L	W	A	S	U	S	Y	M	A	T	I
S	U	C	N	Q	R	A	P	A	L	I	W
N	B	O	L	U	R	R	M	E	G	O	E
E	P	M	P	P	P	I	H	C	T	N	F
S	S	E	R	E	N	I	T	Y	O	S	I
A	Y	R	E	V	O	C	E	R	P	K	L



The Roving Reporter

Hello gang, I've been off traveling the world searching for Truth and the meaning of life. My first stop was Hawaii where I planned to climb to the top of Mt. Haleakala to speak to Pele, the God of Fire, but I got sidetracked on the beach sipping virgin Mai Tai's and working on my tan. From there I sailed to Asia and trekked to Kathmandu in Nepal. Reaching the peak of Mt. Everest would bring me closer to God and possibly the answer to truth and life, but all the Sherpa's were on vacation in the French Riviera sipping on Mai Tai's and getting tans. From there I rode on the back of a donkey to Tibet to speak with the Dali Lama, but no one told me he was back in America touring our fine universities spreading the word of humanity and peace. But I got to wear one of those red robes and walk around chanting for a few days. The last leg of my journey was to go to the Vatican and visit the Pope, but before I could see him I got sick from eating too many gelatos (lactose intolerant) and I decided to just come back home early. It turned out to be a good thing because I was able to reorganize my 8-track collection. I am refreshed and ready to serve the M.A. community once again. While searching for Truth I realized that M.A. has many words of wisdom we share with each other every day. "One Day at a Time", "Easy Does it", "Progress not perfection."

For next month, I want to hear some words of wisdoms, profound truths, daily affirmations that make your sobriety possible. Even the most cliché mantras are useful ones. Remember your first meeting? Remember the phrases other members shared with you that stayed in your head? Share these with all newcomers who read this publication for the first time, or old timers who need to hear them again.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

"...I need to hear other recovering marijuana addicts share their experience, strength and hope. I need to relate with other human beings, who, like me, became hopelessly addicted to what most people say is a harmless, non-addictive herb. I need to hear newcomers share how it is still bad out there for marijuana addicts who continue to smoke. I need Marijuana Anonymous to stay clean and sober and I'm not afraid to admit it. I need to hear MA wisdom over and over again, because my disease is patient and tricky..."

Life with Hope, pg 131

This is Abe, Abe Norml. Abe has a problem. He loves to smoke weed all day and hang out with his dog Sparky. His girlfriend is Mary Jane and his best friend is Bud. Follow Abe's trials and tribulations along the slow, winding path to recovery.

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF ABE NORML		STRIP #1
These stems and seeds taste like carpet fibers. Where is my dealer when I need him?	I have to score some weed for The Dead show tonight. Let me page him again. I've driven by his house three times already and his mom doesn't know where he is. Damn!	Sparky, go steal me some weed from Bud next door. Mary Jane's gonna be pissed. I'm going to call a few other dudes and see if they have some.

MA WORLDWIDE

For Land and Online Meeting Schedules Go To: <http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>
email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

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DISTRICT NEWS

Hello members, maybe you aren't aware, but many districts have their own websites.

They are great tool to stay caught up on local M.A. news, upcoming events and fundraisers, convention and conference info and lots of information on Marijuana Anonymous. Below are the websites we have record of. Check them out. If your district has a website, please contact anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org and we'll publish it. Thank you.

District 1 — www.sf-ma.org

District 5 — www.madistrict5.org

District 6 — www.madistrict6.org

District 7 — www.madistrict7.org

District 8 — www.ma-newyork.org

District 11 — www.madistrict11.org

District 13 — www.ma-online.org

BIRTHDAYS

Are you celebrating a birthday in the next few months? Or have you celebrated one in the last 30 days and not seen it in A New Leaf? If you live in a District area of MA, let your Bureau Chief know about it. If not, tell us! For contact information, see the box on page 2.

District 5

Az	9/30/86	18 years
Terry H.	9/07/96	8 years
Samara T.	7/30/01	3 years
Neal T.	8/17/01	3 years
Tres	9/20/02	2 years
Mel	9/21/03	3 years

District 2

Kris K.	8/12/96	3 years
Kathleen	8/28/01	3 years

District 6

Tamar	9/12/92	12 years
Laurie Rae	9/09/96	8 years
Ellie F.	9/24/97	7 years

District 3

Chuck F.	9/03/98	5 years
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District 8

Gary B.	1/01/98	6 years
Jen D.	2/03/03	1 year!
Vicki A.	4/07/02	2 years
Sheryl W.	7/03/03	1 year!

Celebrating 85 Years of Sobriety in This Issue!

DEAR MEMBERS, A NEW LEAF REALLY NEEDS YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT. WE ARE DESTITUTE FOR YOUR STORIES AND SHARES. THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER AND IT'S THE ONLY FORM OF MARIJUANA RECOVERY MANY PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TOO. GAMES, COMIC STRIPS AND FEATURES ARE FUN, BUT THE BACKBONE OF THIS PUBLICATION IS THE STORIES AND SHARES. PLEASE TAKE FIFTEEN MINUTES AND HELP CONTRIBUTE. THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE IS THE FIRST WORD. THANK YOU.

ANLP STAFF