



a new leaf

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Volatile

I'm glad I am a pothead. The first time I heard somebody say something like that - "I'm grateful I am an alcoholic" - was in October 1984. It was my first trip through rehab. I thought the guy

*Why would
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Today it
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to me.*

was nuts. Why would someone be grateful to be an alcoholic? Today it makes sense to me.

That first rehab didn't work out. My fault. I white-knuckled it for fifteen months, going to few meetings. I figured since I'd

Made a Decision

I've been using marijuana since I was 9 years old. I was very conscious of marijuana because my dad was an everyday user. I knew where the tray was. I knew it was illegal. I also knew that my dad was never violent on it or abusive or neglectful, if anything it made him more playful.

The first time I smoked, my parents went to work and my big brother pulled out the tray. He rolled one and let me hit it. I didn't have a great childhood. So this escape, for the first time... this feeling of power it gave me, to say the least, I continued smoking. I smoked through high school. I got good grades, graduated and started working.

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quit smoking weed and drinking, everything would be fine. Wrong. I found a joint under the dresser belonging to one of my sons and I was off to the races again. This relapse lasted for 20 years. I finally got to the point where the pain of addiction became greater than the pain, or anticipated pain, of sobriety and I quit smoking marijuana-again.

I'd quit drinking about ten years earlier and just smoked more weed. I had to pass a urine test before being admitted to the same VA rehab facility I had attended two decades earlier. To this day I don't know how I was able to do it, but I think I had some help. Hell, I know I had some help. This time I stayed clean, but not sober, for seven years until I failed to make abstinence the #1 priority in my life. I had no friends and was bored with retirement. Then I got the bright idea of getting a marijuana medical card and controlling my use. Ha ha. Control? Right. I went right back to smoking like I did in the past; staying stoned during every hour I was awake. This relapse lasted

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10 Minutes at a Time

I was not one of those blessed to have the obsession and compulsion removed immediately. In fact, it took months of fits and starts. Major fits and multiple starts. I must have collected at least 40 newcomer chips. Now, please know this is not to brag... far from it. I was sick and tired of being "sick and tired."

*I was doing
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I came into "the program" in late 2005. I got my first 30 days of continuous sobriety on August 21, 2006. It doesn't take a math whiz to figure out there was some struggle. My apologies to Star Wars' Darth Vader, "the addiction is strong in this one." During my early days I was doing good to go a couple of hours without smoking, or craving, or thinking, planning, and scheming. I knew I was hooked.

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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 reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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Send all articles, inquiries and correspondence to:

stories@anewleafpublications.org

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A New Leaf
340 S. Lemon Ave. #9420
Walnut, CA 91789-2706

Volatile

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about three months until I became so depressed I was experiencing suicidal ideation.

I knew from past experience two things: abstinence wasn't all that difficult and I had never felt accepted or comfortable at AA or NA meetings. This time around I wanted more than just abstinence. I joined the MA District 13 group. I am online every day.

I'm glad I am a pothead. I see addiction as a finger pointing at the "dis-ease" of living as a human being. I believe most people are not satisfied with their lives; I wasn't with mine. I wasn't willing to accept what IS, whether it be feeling, job, neighbors, traffic, the weather. I think this dissatisfaction pushed me into addiction where I tried to hide from life through substances or behavior. To keep hiding I had to have more, and more and more....

The 12 Steps of Marijuana Anonymous and the spiritual concepts they represent give me the means to accept, to some degree, the dissatisfaction I have with life.

Randle

Made a Decision

cont'd from pg. 1

I'm now 24 years old and I use everyday – 5 to 6 times a day. I decided to go after custody of my daughter and quit last night. It's only been 14 hours since the last

*... the feeling
is
overwhelming...*

time I smoked and it is already getting hard. I am constantly pacing and every worry or problem I've ever known seems to come back to haunt me.

I am committed to my daughter, so I know that I will not smoke again but the feeling is almost overwhelming. I want to curl up in a ball and cry but I'm trying to stay strong.

People joke that marijuana is not addictive but it's played such a long important roll in my life that it's almost hard to handle not smoking. I hope I'm not alone in this but I will continue to fight as hard as I can.

Stacy

But Then I Got High

I was just wondering what's so bad about marijuana

But then I got high

I was just wondering what this 800-number was

But then I got high

I was going to stop smoking marijuana

But then I got high

Anonymous Caller

10 Minutes at a Time

cont'd from pg. 1

So, I went to meetings. I took commitments. I made calls. I ate pie late at night. Yet I could only string together a few days at best, occasionally a week, maybe two.

Of all the steps I was taking to get sober, there was one I had not taken; Step One - Admitted we were powerless over marijuana and that our lives had become unmanageable. I belonged. I had desire, so I could keep coming to meetings. I had no willingness. I was still trying to do things my way. Willpower was my Higher Power. I felt powerless. I saw the unmanageability. So I made the admission. I found a sponsor and started taking The Steps.

Becoming ready to experience how the 12 Steps worked, I got honest. I opened my mind. I became willing. And life started getting better. Yet the cravings and obsession could still grab me and divert my attention. A little voice kept whispering, "Come back... it'll be different this time."

One day, a fellow in my "God Squad" gifted me with a special piece of plastic. It wasn't purple. I had plenty of those. I was black with gold letters on it... "10 minutes." A ten minute chip! OMG! Really. Wait, yes really. Ten minutes. I remember staring at it

and thinking, "I get it. If I can get past the 10 minutes of craving that led to that next buzz, I might make it." There was something kinda magical about that 10 minute chip. It worked in a way I would have never imagined. I was inspired to create a 10 minute checklist. Ten of things I could do to divert my mind from the cravings and obsession.

1. *write*
2. *meditate*
3. *pray*
4. *call*
5. *read*
6. *walk*
7. *nap*
8. *eat*
9. *hit a meeting*
10. *eat the chip*

The first three items on my list I learned from my sponsor. To this day, 9 years later, I can still hear his voice from those early calls. "Hello, it's me again. I'm spinning..." His response, "Did you write about

it? Did you meditate? Did you pray on it?" I still refer to those suggestions as the Magic 3. They work almost every time, no matter the rollercoaster ride on which I found myself.

On those rare occasions Mary's voice rose above a whisper and the craving continued, I turned to the phone, "Hey, how are you? How's your day?" Calling to be of service to a fellow addict had magical powers too. More often than not the voice on the other end would say something to the effect of "This call was just what I needed."

There were times when Mary Jane was still there after hanging up the phone, "Hey, baby... let's play." So, I'd move down the list... reading recovery oriented texts quieted her down. Exercise turned out to be another helpful tool. Napping proved beneficial for achieving serenity. And my penultimate solution was to go to a meeting. I am so happy #9 never failed me. I never wanted to try #10.

Steve

MA To Go

Do you have our fellowship's recovery app; MA Mobile. The smartphone-tablet app is free and is available for Android in the Google Play Store and for iOS at the App Store. It is easily found by searching for "Marijuana Anonymous." The app features GPS-enabled meeting search, all MA literature, access to our online forum and MA Online (District 13) meetings, and a marijuana sobriety counter. Visit your preferred apps vendor to read about additional features.



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A New Leaf Publications (ANLP) is looking for a new Secretary. The Secretary serves as one of five ANLP Board members.

The ANLP Secretary must be clean and sober from marijuana, alcohol and all other mind-altering substances for at least two years, and must have experience either as 1) a MAWS Delegate for at least one year; or 2) has been a MAWS Trustee for at least one year; or 3) has been a Managing Director of ANLP for at least one year. The position requires approval by the MA World Services Board.

If you are interested in taking your service to a new level in the ANLP Secretary's position, or have any questions, please contact chair@anewleafpublications.org or Alan B. at (310) 892-2149.

marijuana anonymous worldwide

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email info@madistrict10.org or call 626.869.6210

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PO Box 1088 Penngrove, CA 94951 415.419.3555 or 707.583.2326

District 13 MA Online
www.ma-online.org

District 14 London, England
<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk> 24hr Helpline 07940.503438

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24HR. info 0403 945 083 from overseas +61 403 945 083

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Mike W.	8/12/86	19 yrs.
<i>District 13</i>		
Sparkless	6/25/10	5 yrs.

**KEEP
COMING
BACK!**



ANL wants to publish your sobriety anniversary. Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANLP contact information on page 2. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that, a) HAVE occurred, b) HAVE NOT been published and, c) are not older than 45 days.

*ANL depends on you
to submit anniversaries*

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

How has your Higher
Power changed your
life?

(Submit by October 21st, your
answers will be published in the
November 2015 issue.)

STEP NINE

Made direct amends to
such people wherever
possible, except when to
do so would injure them
or others.



TRADITION NINE

MA, as such, ought never
be organized, but we may
create service boards
or committees directly
responsible to those they
serve.

ROVING REPORTER ASKED AND YOU RESPONDED

“How do you
experience the 12
Steps in your daily
life?”

I experience the 12 Steps in my daily life in so many ways. I think the most important is how by working the steps, I build a deeper understanding of my place in this world; not as big as I would imagine and not as small as I was taught. The skills learned and the tools practiced help reign in my ego, pride and frustrations as I interact with the world at large. The Steps remind me daily that I do not have to do anything alone for I've got a relationship with my Higher Power and friends in recovery to turn to for help.

Drift M.