



# A NEW LEAF

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## What You See (What I See)

By Anonymous, District 8

**Y**our life is good. You can feel again, and you can see again. And if you can see, you can see a good life for yourself—and what you see is what you're going to get.

If you look into time, you will see that your simplest move echoes out your whole destiny. When you go somewhere, the first step you take determines the next step and the next and the next. Seeing where you want to go is the first step.

28 years ago I could see myself as an old man smoking pot every day of my life. 26 years later I was an old man smoking pot every day of my life. It worked out that way because that is what I saw for myself.

Two years ago my vision had pretty much failed, and I could not see much of a future for myself, much less for my two daughters. At that time a friend brought me to this room. I came here blindly, seeing only enough to know that I was sick and tired and running out of time.

As I came back more and more to this room, my vision returned; and I began to see myself as aging in reverse, and I became a young man once again. I've regained my health and dignity, and I'm no longer tired of living. I'm a much better father, and I'm now hopeful,

with certainty, of a future that will keep getting better instead of worse.

This is what I see for myself now.

There are three things that have helped me to renew and improve my vision.

*I came here blindly, seeing  
only enough to know that  
I was sick and tired and  
running out of time.*

One, talking and listening to people in this room and others. It's really all one big room.

Two, turning the problems in my life over to God and trusting that they will be resolved. This trust is

another way of seeing in itself. I can see an end to these problems—and what I see is what I'm going to get.

Three, gratitude for what I have regained: my health, my sanity, my dignity, and my hope. And gratitude now for what I see coming up in the future.

Of these three things, gratitude has been the most visual. I am thankful for what I have now and thankful

beforehand for what I want, because if I can't see it, I can't reach for it—and what I see is what I'm going to get. And where I see is where I will go, one step at a time.

Your life is good. ☸

## Sidewalk Cracks

By Anonymous, District 1

**S**ometimes I seem to have problems with my program. Small incidents will turn into major items if I don't take care of them immediately. Like when I walk into the meeting room and my friends don't drop everything and come over to say hello, or maybe when I get a new shirt and no one says "gee, that's a nice shirt," or whatever. It's things like that, which don't amount to spit in

a good wind, that will grab me and just screw up the whole day, my life, and just about everything else that has to do with sane living. I can very quickly get into a personal-ity thing and then that becomes "nobody cares—so what difference does it make."

These attitudes will kill me if I let them.

It's things like this that I call

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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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Published by  
**A NEW LEAF Editorial Board**  
**Rob M.**, chairman  
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Send all articles, inquiries, and  
correspondence to:  
**A NEW LEAF**  
P.O. Box 4314  
North Hollywood, CA 91617

Email #1: **ANewLeaf97@aol.com**  
Email #2: **ANuLeaf@aol.com**

Editorial Phone No.  
**(818) 353-5537**

Fax No.  
**(818) 990-2980**

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## Workshop Leaders, Secretaries, Speakers, Entertainment Needed for 1998 Convention in Oakland, California

**T**he 1998 Convention will be take place in Oakland, California, on January 16 through 18 (see the last page for more information and the registration form). We hope you can participate in the workshops, meetings, and entertainment.

**Workshops.** Our Convention theme is Stepping Out of the Fog: Recovery for Mind, Body, and Spirit. We are particularly interested in creative formats to express this theme. Some examples could be art, dance, or Tai Chi. Whatever kind of workshop you are inspired to do, we want to hear from you. Please contact John L. at (510) 524-5442 or mail Annemarie c/o P.O. Box 8354, Berkeley, CA 94707 by November 15, 1997. Most workshop time slots are 90 minutes, but we have a few that are one and two hours. The application form will be mailed to you, if requested by phone at the number above. We will also mail more information to each of the districts, in order to be circulated. The application form lets us know your experience, objectives, needs, and so on.

**Meetings.** We are also planning marathon meetings at the Convention. The topics will be each of the 12 steps, recovery topics (such as resentments or gratitude), and speaker/discussion. If you are interested in being a secretary or speaker for one of these meetings, we will fill the time slots on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please contact Bob H. at (510) 532-4342 by December 15, 1997.

**Entertainment.** If you have an entertaining talent, we may have a place for you in our Saturday entertainment lineup. Send information or tape to Entertainment, PO Box 8354, Berkeley, CA 94707 by November 15, 1997. ☺

## Congratulations to our members celebrating their sober birthdays!



### District 2

Ginny L.	Aug 22	9 yrs
Howard K.	Sep 1	2 yrs
Ed K.	Sep 7	5 yrs
Doug	Sep 27	1 yrl

### District 3

Melissa	Aug 16	1 yrl
Ellis L.	Aug 17	1 yrl
Bill T.	Sep 1	1 yrl
Chris	Sep 3	1 yrl
David F.	Sep 3	1 yrl

### District 4

Joan H.	Sep 1	1 yrl
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### District 5

Eric R.	Aug 8	1 yrl
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Kelly G.	Aug 8	4 yrs
Coleman G.	Aug 13	5 yrs
Dave	Aug 20	6 yrs
Lisa T.	Aug 21	7 yrs
Vicki H.	Aug 28	8 yrs

### District 6

Al E.	Sep 1	8 yrs
Michelle E.	Sep 26	8 yrs
Mariska O.	Sep 30	10 yrs
Mike S.	Sep ??	2 yrs

## Sidewalk Cracks

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“cracks in the sidewalk.” For example, walking around construction projects is no problem, but while I figure out how to get around them and I’m not paying attention, I stub my toe on a crack in the sidewalk. These little things hurt like hell, and sometimes I blast off at whoever or whatever gets in my way. Now that’s intelligent, mature living!

In my program, when I am not living in the present I am not paying attention. How easy it is for me to blame something or someone for all my problems. Future tripping is another really great way for avoiding the here and now. I used to love to write scripts about what I would be doing in the future and with whom. When the characters did not follow the script (which they didn’t know), I would get pissed. That was a perfect excuse for getting drunk or stoned or both.

So what do I try to do today? For one thing I try to live in the present. Someone once told me that yesterday is a canceled check and that tomorrow is a promissory note. Corny maybe, but true. Living in the present is not always easy, but it is possible. I have found that my life becomes a lot easier when I do. Secondly, I try to work the program, which means, for me, working the Steps. (But that’s another story.)

In my condition it is necessary to keep my program simple. I love the sentence in *Life With Hope* that states “Our program is not easy but it is simple.” Keeping my program simple goes like this: Don’t smoke/go to meetings/work the steps (all else will follow and it does).

I wish there was something profound that I could say at this point but there isn’t—so I will just say thanks for being there for me because I need you. ☸

## What Does It Take?

By Steve C., District 6

It seems like a lifetime ago. Well here I am again. Back down here for the third time, with everything just as I left it.

I’m back at the edge, trying to balance myself so I won’t fall all the way down. Reeling back, trying to grab hold of something strong enough to pull me up and show me how to stand and walk out of here and not stumble back to a pit of self-destruction. I want to be in the high country, up in the clean and serene land of God’s love and wisdom, where the only direction, the only horizon, is straight ahead. Never going back, but always remembering what I left behind.

Why was the road taken that lead to nowhere, to self-destruction, when the other road was there, wide open with unlimited possibilities? Why did I always fail when I was so close to success? Was it fear? Fear of what? Fear of succeeding or was it fear of failure? Or maybe I’m just lazy.

I’m still not sure why. I can talk the talk, but I can’t walk the walk. I had what I thought was pleasure at hand. Do a line, take a hit, boom, you’re there. Any problems will take care of themselves. Something will happen at the eleventh hour. Always worked before. Probably will work again.

Right?

Wrong, big fella. Maybe I was saved too many times before, bailed out at the last minute. Please, I promise I’ll take care of it this time, I promise I’ll change...and then nothing. No paybacks, my promise forgotten. It wasn’t that I wasn’t sincere about changing. I just wasn’t able to change and stay that way. Lack of will power, lack of focus, lack of direction. I couldn’t

see light at the end of the tunnel, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

It was too far away. But what about my reputation, my dignity, my self-respect? All gone, gone, gone out the window every time the cravings started. I swear you can hear that shit calling you, grabbing you, pulling at you until you surrender. No matter how hard it was to get my drugs, no matter what I had to do, it was always easier than fighting off the cravings.

What does it take to get this monkey off my back? I know the why, but the how is the problem. “I’ll never use again” is hard to say, hard to comprehend—but comprehending the alternative is easy, because the alternative is death. Maybe 23 years of using and abusing drugs is enough. Maybe it’s just something as simple as burnout, just so damn tired of the same thing day-in, day-out. The lying, the stealing, the hustling.

Maybe this time is the last time. I hope this is the last time.

I need for this to be the last time. ☸

### Hello? Yes, You...

We want your story for the Second Edition of *Life With Hope*. Stories should be 5-8 typed, double-spaced pages. All stories will be reviewed, and 12 will be approved at the 1998 MAWS Conference.

Send stories to Marijuana Anonymous, District 11, P.O. Box 14125, Portland, OR 97293-0125. For more info, contact Susan B. at (503) 771-8662.

# The Fourth Annual MA Convention

*Stepping Out of the Fog: Recovery for Mind, Body & Spirit*

January 16, 17, 18, 1998

Oakland Marriott City Center, Oakland, CA



## Tentative Agenda

*(specific starting times for registration, workshops, and meetings to be announced)*

### Friday, January 16

4 pm registration opens  
dinner on your own  
opening meeting  
entertainment

### Saturday, January 17

breakfast  
workshops and meetings  
banquet dinner  
entertainment

### Sunday, January 18

breakfast  
workshops  
closing meeting

## Hotel Registration

*(Hotel is not included in registration costs; you must book your room separately)*

**Oakland Marriott, 1001 Broadway, Oakland, CA – (800) 228-9290 or (510) 451-4000**

Room rates: \$89 per night plus tax (1-4 persons per room)

Reservations MUST be made by December 16, 1997 to receive Convention rate

After December 16 you will pay the regular room rate of \$99 per night *and* rooms may not be available!

You must say you are with the MA Convention to receive this rate

You *may* stay Sunday night at the special Convention room rate if you wish

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## Convention Registration Order Form

### Individual Events

	Cost	#tickets	Total
Friday meeting, snack bar and entertainment only	20.00	_____	\$_____
Saturday breakfast buffet and workshops only	30.00	_____	_____
Saturday banquet dinner/entertainment only	40.00	_____	_____
Saturday day pass (no food)	20.00	_____	_____
Sunday breakfast buffet/workshops/meeting	30.00	_____	_____
Sunday day pass (no food)	15.00	_____	_____

*(all events include coffee, juices, and ice water — soda available in hospitality suite)*

### Full Packages

	Cost	#tickets	Total
Before December 1 – All events and food (save \$25.00)	95.00	_____	\$_____
After December 1 – All events and food (save \$10.00)	110.00	_____	_____
Before December 1 – Day pass, all days (save \$15.00)	40.00	_____	_____
After December 1 – Day pass, all days (save \$10.00)	45.00	_____	_____

Send order form and check for total amount payable to:

**MA Convention**

**P.O. Box 8354, Berkeley, CA 94707**

**Total Registration Cost \$\_\_\_\_\_**

Name(s)\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_ City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Banquet dinner choice: Chicken (qty)\_\_\_\_Vegetarian (qty)\_\_\_\_

I have special requirements as follows:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_