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A NEW LEAF

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Step 10: My "Walking Around" Step

by Mike C, District 7

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

What the literature says, and what I have learned from my experience, tells me that working the first nine Steps prepares me for the adventure of a new life. I commence to put my new way of living to practical use, day by day, in fair weather or foul.

Continued is the keyword of the 10th Step. After working the first nine Steps, I have everything I need to continue what I have already done. I have learned that my personality change (growth) has come through the action steps, Steps four through nine. Step 10 is a continuous practice of those steps on a daily basis, throughout the day. The literature tells me to continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear.

There is a design to my life. Some literature I have read talks about the three dimensions of my life. The first dimension of my life, the spiritual life, resides in my heart, the center. This is Steps 1, 2, and 3. The second dimension of my life resides in the mind, the mental. These are Steps 4, 5, 6, and 7. My mental health is based on my spiritual health. The third dimension of my life is the physical world. These are Steps 8 and 9 and deals with others and my relationships with them in the physical world. My life starts from the inside out, from the spiritual to the mental to the physical. My recovery in Marijuana Anonymous is an inside job. It works from the inside to the outside. These steps correct anything that has gone astray with my living, and the Promises come to me after these three dimensions have put my life back in order.

Then come Steps 10, 11, and 12. The literature talks about a "fourth dimension" of existence, which I did not really understand, but I can truly say that I have found a way of life that I never conceived existed. As I grow spiritually and mentally and in the right relationship with the physical world, I can thrive in this "fourth dimension" of living. Step 10

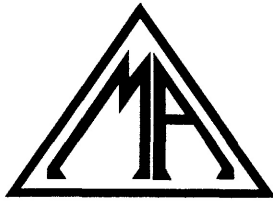
is the "gateway to the fourth dimension." Once again, as my spirit grows, my mental aspect will grow. As my mental aspect grows, my relationships with other people and the rest of the physical world will grow, also. Steps 10, 11, and 12 have been called the *maintenance* steps. I am more fond of calling them the *continuous* growth steps. This growth never ends, as Step 10 is the beginning of *continuous* growth in my life.

My understanding of Steps 4 through 9 determine how well I can work a Step 10. Steps 4 through 9 are built-in tools of Step 10. Step 10 tells me to use these tools to detect discomfort (emotional pain) early, analyze it right away, and work my way right out of it. The more I use these tools, the more skilled I get with them.

The literature tells me that Step 10 has a new set of promises. I have experienced a restoration of my sanity towards marijuana. I have ceased fighting anything and anyone, including marijuana. Marijuana still exists, but I have a different attitude about it. God has reached in my head and plucked out the obsession to smoke marijuana, and it has never returned so long as I stay in fit spiritual condition.

Step 10 is not something I do before I go to bed at night (the literature tells me these instructions are in Step 11). Step 10 is something I do all through the day. I call it my "walking around" step. Every day, if it be God's will, I am given the strength and courage and knowledge to deal with things on a daily basis; not falling into the old habit of overloading my day with the problems of yesterday and tomorrow.

The excitement of my recovery is that it goes on forever, one day at a time, day after day. Every so often I can reflect on the fact that I am living in a world I did not live in even a year before. As always I can truly thank God and all of you for the blessings I have received and sleep in good conscience.



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

I Feel at Home in MA

By Julian

My name is Julian, and I am a nicotine addict, marijuana addict and alcoholic – in that order. I took up marijuana smoking in about 1969, about four years after it became readily available in society.

I started smoking it as a result of pressure from my then husband, who liked it. It took several tries before I finally was able to get high, and I can remember the exact moment when I first realized I was high. I had my head bent over, and I was brushing my hair. During these days, it was "Panama Red" and "Acapulco Gold" that were favored.

During the 70s I was making a living as a horn player in an orchestra, and I waited until after rehearsals or performances to get stoned. During the 80s I lost all control over my marijuana habit and played both rehearsals and performances stoned. I got into trouble doing that – playing key parts at the wrong time during performances. I guess I "froze" under the pressure of performances, being stoned, and lost my concentration. I got fired from my position as a result of it. This was the only time I ever had overt trouble as a result of using marijuana. Later on, I made a living playing piano for ballet classes; I was always stoned at that job and never got into trouble for it.

After I got fired as a horn player in the early 80s, I gave up the instrument out of humiliation, because I didn't seem to have a future in it, as a result of difficulties playing stoned, and I could not stop using marijuana.

A couple of years ago I started having some "bad trips" on marijuana. It may have been because I was no longer a regular user. The last time I used marijuana (a little over a year ago) I became paranoid, delusional and thought of suicide. This bad trip lasted many days. I basically went right into mental illness, and I know what that is about, because I am bi-polar. That experience scared me so much that I haven't used since. That was my bottom.

About two and a half weeks ago I bought a new horn and am working on getting in some kind of shape to play as a volunteer in a community orchestra. It seems ironic that my "path" has involved a horn, which involves breathing in so intimate a way. I say "ironic" because smoking has been a part of my life for so long, both cigarettes and marijuana, I am very grateful to God that I have been clean from both for over a year now and just recently started attending Marijuana Anonymous in Seattle.

I feel so at home in the meetings – much more than I do at other 12-step meetings. I have never had control over marijuana. Thank you, Marijuana Anonymous!

POEM

"God's Hands"

by Do All Dave, District 6

I sit on my steps,
And smoke my cigar,
Look up to the heavens,
And stare at the stars.

I think about life,
And all the choices I made,
Some good, some bad,
Some totally insane.

Today I thank God,
For having a clean life,
For a precious daughter,
And a beautiful wife.

So, I have to stay focused,
And try not to slip,
Keep praying to God,
That he keeps a tight grip.

District News & Events



District 4 (Western Washington)

First Annual MA Campout and Retreat!

Oct. 3rd, 2p.m until Oct 5th, 1p.m, 2003

Denny Creek Campground, 1-90 Exit 47.

There are no dues or fees for your participation. Donations accepted at the event. If you can only come part of the time, come anyways! Please bring all of the typical car-camping equipment: Food, water, stove, tent, sleeping bag, warm clothes, chair, flashlight, etc. **Directions:** I-90 east to Exit 47. Left at the stop sign. Right at "T" intersection. Go one-quarter mile, then left on Denny Creek Road No. 58. Go 2 miles to campground on the left. **Questions?** Contact Thor at (206) 361-0454 or Tristan at (206) 898-2850. If you need, or can offer a ride please call Brad at (206) 365-9951. See you there!

Do you live in a District area of MA and have an event scheduled? If so, ask your Bureau Chief to let us know about it.

The Roving Reporter

The Roving Reporter asks, "What was the first thing you liked about MA?" And MA answers:

"My first MA Meeting was online, because there aren't any land meetings in my area. When I went into the chat room I was smoking a joint. I was ready to stop using, otherwise I wouldn't have got up from the TV and taken the time and effort to find that meeting, but I still felt I needed a joint to give me the courage to talk online with these strangers.

But I found they weren't strangers. They were all potheads, just like me. I even told them right off the bat I was smoking a joint. They didn't get all righteous and tell me to leave and come back when I was straight. They didn't tell me I was doing a bad thing, or that I was ruining my health. They didn't tell me I was a screw-up, or that it was pretty stupid to attend an MA meeting while smoking marijuana.

They told me I was welcome there. I was in the right place, where I needed to be. They said I was among friends, with other people who had done the same thing I was doing right that minute. I felt like I needed to say some things so they let me talk and talk. Finally I said, "Doesn't somebody else have something to say?" And they told me I was the most important person in the room. They said I could talk all night if I wanted to.

People gave me their e-mail addresses and said to contact them anytime and they'd talk with me. The addresses came faster than I could write them down.

The people weren't "aw, poor me, I can't smoke pot anymore." They laughed and kidded around and had a good time talking

District 5 (Orange County)

October 18th: Apple Pickin' at Riley's Farms

Meet at Friday's meeting location at 9:00AM

October 31st: Scary Halloween Party

Party starts at 9:00 PM - 825 Clemensen Ave., Santa Ana
714-532-2714

visit our website @ www.madistrict5.org

District 7: (South Bay)

A Woman's Day in MA, Saturday, November 15, all day. Luncheon, speakers, Askit Baskit, raffle, dinner, and entertainment. Sunrise Best Western Hotel, Redondo Beach. For Saturday night \$99 room rate, you must reserve by October 15

CONTRIBUTE TO A NEW LEAF

Without your words, there's no newsletter, and without the newsletter, many people wouldn't have access to the message. Please contribute!

For the November issue, we're looking for stories, poems, thoughts on Step or Tradition 11, birthdays, and answers to the Roving Reporter question.

Please send your contribution to us (contact info is on Page 2) by October 20. Thanks!

with each other. But they got serious when I asked them serious questions.

They told me to come back to the next meeting, that they'd be there - that they'd always be there. So I did. I went back to the next meeting. And they were there. I didn't smoke a joint that time."

Jesse M. Nashville, Tennessee

"The first things I liked about MA? When in the meetings, I heard others speak about things and situations I thought only I had experienced when using. Also, people listened to each other without interruption." Raquel A. District 2

"The first thing I liked about my MA meeting was the vibe of acceptance. I knew I belonged from the get-go. Each meeting I attend enforces that feeling, and I always get something good out of each meeting I attend." Kathy B

"The very first thing that I heard and loved about MA was that my misery is refundable at the door." Jon District 12

"The first thing that I liked was that the people in the rooms were just like the people that I hung out and got high with, only they talked about not smoking and offered me a big hit of hope instead." Kevin B. District 6

"The first thing I liked about MA was to be in the presence of clean potheads!!" Drea District 11

For the November issue, the Roving Reporter asks, "When your life becomes uncomfortable, what action do you take?"



MA WORLDWIDE

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

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PO Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404
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94146-0025
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Seeking Volunteers for A New Leaf Publishing

A New Leaf Publications, publishers of *A New Leaf* and other MA literature, is seeking trusted servants for two positions:

- Someone to help with bookkeeping one to four hours per month. Experience with Quickbooks and familiarity with California sales tax and tax returns would be ideal, though not required. All serious inquiries considered.
- Someone experienced with digital publishing to help make *A New Leaf* available online.

Please contact us via our information on Page 2.
Thanks!

MA Convention 2004!

Mark February 13-15, 2004, on your calendars for the 10th annual MA Convention in Portland, Oregon.

The Convention Host Committee is looking for workshop ideas, workshop leaders, and donations of raffle items. Details and registration information will appear in *A New Leaf*. Please call MA District 11 at 503-221-7007 if you have questions, ideas or raffle items.

See you in Portland!

Thought for the Month

"Each day we must do something to enhance our spiritual program. Our recovery depends on it."

— *Life With Hope*, pg. 50

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

Tomaso	10/07/91	12 years
Tom G.	10/17/93	10 years
Jason	10/29/93	10 years
James V.	10/9/98	5 years
Aaron	10/12/02	1 year!
Darryl	10/8/02	1 year!

District 6

Brian D.	10/16/87	16 years
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District 11

Mike C	9/18/84	19 years
Susan B	10/9/86	17 years

District 7

Jim L.	8/25/89	14 years
Solaman	8/7/90	13 years
Mike W.	8/16/91	12 years
Chris	8/2/95	8 years
Milo	8/25/96	7 years
Tommy O.	9/12/96	7 years
Eleah	8/11/99	4 years
Dena S.	9/15/99	4 years
Greg M.	6/04/00	3 years

Troy, Alabama

Diana H.	9/8/81	22 years
John L.	10/4/95	8 years
Chuck L.	8/13/00	3 years
Anna Marie H.	8/9/01	2 years

A Note From Dixie:

I am writing to let you know about our first sobriety birthday celebration. We are a new group just started last November. We are an orphan group, and I am proud to say the first in Alabama! We are the Wiregrass Group of MA, located in Troy, Alabama! Y'all come!

Celebrating 198 Years of Sobriety in This Issue!