



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

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## Central O-High-O Potheads Getting Sober!

Hi, my name is Eileen C. and I am a marijuana addict from Columbus, Ohio.

I struggled with marijuana addiction for 14 years before getting help from another fellowship. For many years before that, I sought help specifically for marijuana addiction and couldn't find any. My counselors didn't understand marijuana addiction and didn't know how to help me.

My doctor didn't think weed was any big deal. I read lots of books on addiction and would be lucky to find a paragraph on marijuana. Everywhere I was hearing things like, "Marijuana is all natural", "Marijuana is non-addictive", and "Marijuana is good for you and the planet". If all this was true, why couldn't I stop using it? And why did I feel so bad when I used it?

In 2004 I hit a bottom and at the advice of my therapist I started going to meetings in another fellowship. I met some friends in there and we would hit other meetings as well. In there I felt like a real lightweight for being addicted to "just marijuana". I felt like I wasn't much of a drinker. I finally decided that I didn't have a problem with alcohol, I was sick of this whole deal, and I was going to quit meetings and have a beer. I started drinking and within 2 weeks I was smoking weed every day again.

It was several years before I made my way back into meetings and finally surrendered. I was lucky to find understanding people who didn't judge me for my particular addiction. I found a great sponsor who helped me to see that I was a "good enough"

drinker to be in that fellowship. I learned to substitute marijuana for the word alcohol when I read the Big Book, and I learned that I belonged in there because of the 3rd tradition. "I had a desire to stop drinking alcohol," because alcohol lowered my defenses and would eventually lead me to smoking pot everyday. Now that I felt I belonged, I was able to jump into the steps and the fellowship. I talked openly about my marijuana use and nobody kicked me out. People laughed sometimes, but I tried to ignore them. I was an addict and I needed help. No one was going to take away my help!

In my third year of recovery I decided to look into starting a meeting for The Marijuana Addict. What's really funny is that when I was getting high all the time, I used to fantasize about starting a support group for weed heads! I knew that my need to identify was never fully met in the other fellowships and I thought there might be others I could help, too.

I looked up Marijuana Anonymous online and asked for a meeting packet. It took me a while to actually get the meeting started (I'm a pothead after all!), but I did finally start the only MA meeting in Columbus, Ohio in January of 2010.

People have come and gone, but I know each one of them received a seed of MA recovery. My husband has joined me there almost every week. There have been times that it was just me, and times that we have had 14 people, but no matter what, I find it worthwhile. It keeps me clean, and we have two guys that have

really gotten it! One has 6 months and the other has 4 months. We all love the MA literature because it speaks directly to the weed head.

We also love sharing our stories because we know what it's like to be addicted to marijuana - cute, sweet, natural little marijuana - insidious marijuana - supposedly non-addictive, good-for-you-and-the-planet marijuana! What a deceptive drug, and so difficult to kick!

I know there is no limit to the amount of weed that comes into Columbus, Ohio, and I know that there are potentially thousands of potheads who may enjoy a moment of clarity and decide they would like to recover from marijuana addiction. Our little fellowship will be there when they are ready. I look forward to more and more Central Ohio potheads getting clean and forming a strong fellowship of recovery and service! I know eventually it will happen, and I'm not going to give up on the MA miracle! If you happen to be in Columbus on a Sunday evening, come see us at 5:30pm at the Township Hall in Worthington.

Thanks for listening, Eileen C. ◀

New Meetings Start-Up  
All The Time.  
Check your local districts  
website for updated  
information!

or  
Get listed on the MAWS  
website for details contact:  
office@marijuana-anonymous.  
org

# 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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or submit online:  
www.marijuana-anonymous.org  
and click on the newsletter tab.

## **Powerless by Paula B.**

So many people have asked why I started smoking marijuana. Years ago, when I was young, it was just a pleasurable satisfaction. When I first smelled weed, I was only seven. I was walking to school and passed a couple smoking. I didn't even know what it was. They offered but I declined and told them "I'm too young to smoke." It smelled like flowers.

At age 10, I was forced to smoke weed by my sister and the very next day, I was forced again by bullies at my school. I didn't continue smoking but when I turned 17, my friend Brett offered me weed again. I said yes because I wasn't popular in school and I always saw the cool kids smoking. I thought smoking would make me more lovable. It didn't work.

I quit when I was 19 in preparation for the police academy physical test. I trained for six weeks then failed by only one second. I got so angry. Brett came to me again and offered me marijuana to calm down. I started hallucinating and I wasn't able to think right. It was like a dream world. My siblings and my friends smoked with me - after work, during lunch or breaks - it was fun and relaxing. And because my friends and family were doing it, I never realized there was anything wrong.

I was addicted to weed for nearly seven years then I stopped. For thirteen years, I was able to resist but then my father died. He was so young and it came as such a shock for me. I was engulfed by sadness and I just wanted the pain to go away. I decided to try weed again and it helped (or so I thought).

Then, there was an accident at work. I was severely injured and I got migraines. I started to smoke more and more believing it helped my headaches. It did but only briefly

and, in reality, everything got much worse. My migraines got worse. I was irritated by the smallest things. And I became distant from the people I care about most.

I thought that marijuana would relieve my stress, that my problems would vanish, and everything might be perfect like some sort of flawless dream. I believed that if I smoked more I'd enter the dream and never have to face grief or rage, that I could just be happy and forget about all the bad stuff. It's like a fantasy of being offered the perfect life for a limited time. But marijuana didn't make my life perfect and is definitely not that dream. More like a nightmare, it never solved any of my problems - it made them all a thousand times worse, turning things into huge dilemmas.

Even after I realized this was a lie, I still continued to smoke because marijuana used to have a hold over me and I was powerless in its grasp. But a day at a time, with the help of Marijuana Anonymous, that's just not true any more. ◀

## **ROVING REPORTER ASKS...**

### **The Question for October...**

**Do people pay  
attention to rules  
in recovery?**

(Please submit answers by  
November 17)

### **Tradition Eleven**

Our public relations policy is based upon attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, t.v., film, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all fellow M.A. members.

**YOUR VOICE MATTERS**

MAWS is conducting an "Effectiveness Survey" to evaluate what the society of MA thinks about MAWS' service to date to: Districts, meetings and members. We hope to collect a society-wide group conscience to give direction to the type of work in which MAWS should be engaged and to help evaluate MAWS' current ability and potential to serve MA's needs as conveyed by that MA group conscience.

**SHARE YOUR OPINION.** This month we would like you, your groups, and/or your Districts answers to the following questions:

1. *Do the members of MAWS, Delegates, Trustees and Paid Workers, have a working understanding, as it pertains to MAWS participation, of the Principles outlined by our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service?*

2. *(Tradition 10) Does MAWS do anything that publicly states an opinion or takes sides on any issues or controversy that are outside of MA?*

For more details, please go to the website **forum.marijuana-anonymous.org**. To submit your ideas and share your thoughts on these questions email us at **mes@marijuana-anonymous.org**.

**Step Eleven**

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

**...not pass judgement on it.**

Today I celebrated three years of living clean and sober. I'd considered rounding some friends up to go shoot pool or something, but finally decided an easy day around home was what I really needed. That's kind of how it goes, being an introvert.

I do have a sobriety-birthday routine of a sort, though. I once heard someone share about making a phone call to her sponsor, complaining that she hadn't called to wish her a happy birthday. Her sponsor replied that she had been taught that, on your birthday, you should be the one to call your sponsor and thank them for helping you to stay clean/sober. And any sponsees, too, if you have them. It's a good story about showing gratitude, and one I've taken to heart. My sponsor--by no small coincidence--has the same policy. "I called my sponsor earlier today. I called both my sponsees as well." Birthday milestones are huge, and can be rough patches. I haven't been too nutty this year, and I'm hoping that's a testament to my continuing to work a strong program.

One of my sponsees recently made a request for a blog topic, actually. He was wondering what the difference is between calling a spade a spade and not being judgmental. The question reminds me of how we're not supposed to take others' inventories, and yet always end up doing so anyway. So dude, this one's for you. I guess I'd start with the reminder that our perceptions aren't always accurate. There's a compassion angle in there, too. We don't always know the full story behind someone else's behavior or the words they say. There's boundary stuff here as well. It's not up to us to decide

what's right or wrong for someone else, only ourselves.

I have a little problem with the terms themselves, now that I think about it. So many people say they're 'just telling it like it is' or 'calling a spade a spade' when what they're really doing IS being judgmental. Pick your favorite stereotype about a stereotyped group. "They're just like that." As if all people in the category weren't individuals with their own individual traits and characteristics.

So often, people claim a judgmental remark as the 'truth', and they somehow think because they're speaking the truth, it's not judgmental or that it's okay to be so because it's true and something everybody supposedly knows. Shall I make a list of all the things that humanity has thought were 'true' over the years? The earth is flat. Humans will never fly. Native peoples are savages. I'll go ahead and stop there.

We need to be careful about certainty. We need to be wary of thinking we know 'the truth'. Even the Big Book cautions against this, saying that we have not found 'The' way, merely 'a' way to live without getting intoxicated. Never forget: even the things we think we do know for certain, we just might be wrong about.

As for what counts as being judgmental, well I don't know any other way to say it than to say it's when we pass judgment--we decide something is good or bad, or right or wrong. We don't get to decide those things for other people, only ourselves. If we don't like how other people live, we get to choose to not live that way. If we discover another person isn't trustworthy, or is someone we don't want to be around, we get to

(continued on page four)

# marijuana anonymous worldwide

## MA World Services

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www.marijuana-anonymous.org  
email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

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www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

### District 2 East Bay

PO Box 20484 Oakland, CA 94620 510.287.8873

### District 3 South SF Bay Area

PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

### District 4 Western Washington

PO Box 17452 Seattle, WA 98107 206.414.9270

### District 5 Orange County

1439 W. Chapman Av. PMB#215 Orange, CA 92868 714.999.9409

### District 6 LA County No.

PO Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 818.759.9194

### District 7 LA County So.

PO Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231 323.943.9228

### District 8 New York

PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

### District 10 LA County East

PO Box 94400 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.583.9582

### District 11 Portland

PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.221.7007

### District 12 North Bay, CA

PO Box 2842 Petaluma, CA 94952 415.419.3555 707.583.2326

### District 13 MA Online

www.ma-online.org

### District 14 London, England

07940.503438

### District 15 Long Island, NY

www.ma-longisland.org 516-568-5883

### District 16 Melbourne, Australia

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

### District 17 Denmark

info@ma-kbh.dk

For a complete listing of all meetings visit [www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)

## ...not pass judgement on it.

choose to not place our trust in them or to not have them in our life. What we don't get to do is label them.

Recovery is about changing ourselves, learning to let go of the things we can't control--and other people is one of those that takes a lot of work to learn how to let go. And that's okay; it's a process, not an event.

The best thing we can do is to strive for a Zen-like state, where we're at peace with ourselves and with the world around us. We see what goes on around us, and we think "hmm.. interesting." We can see the world, accept it for what it is, and not pass judgment on it. Zach ◀

## HELP WANTED

FIELD EDITOR NEEDED

INTERESTED ADDICTS

EMAIL

THE ANLP BOARD.

[anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org)

## birthdays

### Celebrating 70 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sobriety date published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANL 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.

#### District 1

Jeff M. 7/24/10 1YEAR!

#### District 2

John B. 9/3/10 1YEAR!

Ruby 9/17/09 2yrs

Sally W. 9/17/04 7yrs

#### District 5

Dave D. 8/22/09 2yrs

Terry H. 9/7/96 15yrs

Cassie 9/13/09 2yrs

Trés 9/20/02 9yrs

Bill 9/16/08 3yrs

#### District 13 - MA Online

Jacinda M. 7/24/10 1YEAR!

KEEP  
COMING  
BACK!



## ALERT!

Submission  
Deadline  
for 2012  
Conference  
Agenda Items  
is  
12/31/11