



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

November 2011

Vol. 21, No. 11

Face Everything And Recover!

Thanks to everyone for taking part in your recovery today. Please remember that there is always something that you can share with another addict that might help them and yourself at the same time. Even the sharing of negative thoughts can take away the power that they have over us. And sometimes it's just a relief to hear that someone else is also experiencing difficult times.

Fear is a very familiar feeling for me. Before I entered recovery, my life was pretty messed up and I felt like I had no direction. I had just moved from Austin, Texas to Los Angeles with my girlfriend of ten years and I didn't know how it was going to turn out. At the time, my girlfriend and I were having a lot of trouble communicating which caused many fights. I always felt like we could break up at anytime which caused me tons of fear and anxiety. I was even taking Xanax for my "panic attacks" because when they hit, I felt like I would explode. Sometimes I did, resulting in bigger fights, more anxiety and much remorse afterward. (Not to mention the broken hand from punching a wall one night.)

We started going to couples counseling to figure out why we couldn't communicate. After a couple of months of learning tools to communicate and then promptly forgetting them as soon as we got loaded, we finally told our therapist about our alcohol and marijuana use. She then issued her disclaimer, "Nothing that we learn is going to help as long as we continue to use and we are only pissing our money away trying." Whoa! I'm glad she didn't

sugarcoat it, though. It woke us up. She suggested that we try a 12-Step program to which I responded, "I'm not that kind of an addict." She asked me when the last time that I went without anything was. I then, realized that I had never gone without taking something to numb my feelings and maybe I did have a problem. I decided to try to quit and check out some 12-Step programs.

What I've been learning in recovery is that I used mostly out of fear. Fear of dying, rejection, being alone, being broke, getting sick or injured, disappointing others, being dependent on others, moving, arguing, not being accepted. I had a terrible fear of failure. I even had a greater fear of success. You name it, I had a fear of it. So I dealt with my fears in the only way that I knew how, self-medication and escape. Once I started to realize this, it became obvious that I had to face these fears head on without being numbed in any way. Some people in the program offered me insights like, "Feelings are not facts" and "Every feeling has a beginning, a middle and an end. And whatever the feeling is, it will pass eventually." Some said, "Let go and let God" which I had a problem with being I didn't have a Higher Power at that time. Someone else said, "Let go or be dragged" and that made a lot more sense to me.

I slowly began to trust in a Power greater than myself and eventually began praying every day. The things that I feared turned out to not be nearly as bad as I imagined them to be. Life began to open up to me and I started to take more risks. Today, prayer is the

greatest tool that I have in my kit. I'm learning how to deal with problems when they arise by doing what I can about them and then turning the results over to my Higher Power.

Honestly, I've never felt better in my life and I haven't had a single "panic attack" since I stopped using. The day that I admitted to being an Addict was the best day of my life because I realized that finally something could be done about it. Before, I just thought that I was a hopelessly insane piece of dirt but now I know that there is a solution and I've found it by taking part in my recovery and by sharing with others what it was like, what happened and what it's like now. Anon ◀

CONVENTION!
CONVENTION!
CONVENTION!

Details on the back page!



ALERT!

Submission
Deadline for 2012
Conference Agenda
Items

is
12/31/11



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.

District Bureau Chiefs

District 1:	Lori B.
District 2:	Chris M.
District 3:	Mark S.
District 4:	Eric N.
District 5:	John S.
District 6:	Rick
District 7:	Karen S.
District 8:	Al M.
District 10:	Carlos M.
District 11:	Lynne McG.
District 12:	Jim B.
District 13:	OPEN
District 15:	Gary K.

ANLP Staff

Office Manager:	Tom W.
Field Editor:	OPEN
Publishing Editor:	Mark I.
Secretary:	Susan C.
Treasurer:	Terry H.
Chairperson:	John McC.

Send all articles, inquiries and correspondence to:
anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org

A New Leaf
P.O. Box 6482
Torrance, CA 90504

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

Personal Prayers

It has been said that much of the work of our program deals with defining a higher power that can work in our lives. This has certainly been true for myself, but equally (if not more important) has been determining how I connect with that power. Meditation and prayer are, of course, the primary tools that most of us use to connect with our notion of a greater power.

In order to however continue to expand spiritually, it has been necessary (for this addict) to deepen my practice through exploration of these tools. This has resulted in not just sitting still in meditation, but also practicing mindfulness in my daily activities, doing guided meditation, walking meditation, and actively practicing compassion towards myself and others.

In relationship to prayers, I have sought out prayers from various religions, other programs, as well as the tried and true prayers that we hear at all of our meetings. I have slowed them down, concentrating on the meaning of each word, each phrase, and thought hard about what it was that I was really asking for while praying, in order to avoid a mechanical spirituality more akin to brushing my teeth than seeking spiritual healing.

Spurred on by my sponsors suggestions to write my own third step prayer, I began to see the benefits of putting prayers into my own words. It was as if through translating the meanings of the spiritual principles and goals of the steps, I was actually defining my relationship with a higher power; personal prayers for a personal God.

With that preamble, I wish to share these prayers with my fellowship in the hopes that my "translation" may help to provide

further insight towards how we work this spiritual path. Perhaps, if you are reading this, you could write a prayer of your own and submit it to the new leaf (I hear they need things to publish)!

Surrender Prayer:

As I am, I offer myself to you as you are. Today I pray to live in acceptance - with or without knowing. I pray to release my history - with or without fear. I pray to love with all my heart - with or without expectation and fill myself with the nameless nature of the world. Meaning and purpose are your domain. As I am, I offer myself to you as you are.

Inventory Prayer:

Great Spirit

Grant me admittance into your infinite peace. Cleanse my perceptions. Remove the hues and shades of my past actions for the possibility of a clearer heart to share your abundance with all whom I meet. Allow me to see the beauty and divinity of all things. Share your capacities with me so that I may love others as you love me. I offer my purpose for you to define to give away everything I have to be made whole, anew, each day.

Prayer for Skillful Behavior:

*God, Lead me when I am willing
And lead me to willingness when I am not. Let me see rightly when my eyes are open and open my eyes when they are not. Fill me with your love when I am in fear. So that I may share that love with others when I am not. I thank you for walking beside me today, as it has always been.*

A Morning Prayer:

God, lead me from questionable thinking, the misgivings of self-concern and the common corruption of reality by my finite mind, Help me past the vagaries of my perception to see rightly with an open heart and serve a purpose better than that which I find alone.

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 elected Trustees and Delegates serve out their terms, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can MAWS do as a group?*

2. *(Tradition 11) At the general public level, does MAWS publicize any individual MA member's name or picture as a self-appointed representative 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.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

How do to stay connected to your Higher Power?

(Please submit answers by December 17)

I Quit After 30 Years of Smoking

I've heard many people call themselves many different things during MA meetings, and I'm happy to say I'm a "grateful recovering marijuana addict." Saying I was a marijuana addict was one of the scariest things I had ever done. But I am so glad I did! I had wanted to quit for most of my life. I always felt I had a greater purpose than how I was living my life.

I always thought the grass was greener (he he he) on the other side, and I finally found out, it was! It was so difficult to finally get clean. I started smoking at 13, and kept on smoking, but for very short periods of time. Those times of brief sobriety were not recovery, and there is a huge difference.

I kept smoking, and finally pot turned on me for good. No longer was it any fun . . . I smoked morning, noon, and night, every hour, every day. I was a paranoid, unhappy wreck with friends who were the same. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't think, I couldn't function in society. I was angry, defiant and spiteful. I had no future.

Some friends of mine were talking about MA, and I said, "What? There is an MA???" Ding! Ding! Ding! The light bulb went off in my head, and while my friends were laughing about the mere existence of MA, I was thinking, "maybe that could work for me?"

I wanted my life to change and I finally made it to my first MA meeting when I was 33 days sober. Entering recovery has been the hardest thing I've ever done, but I have to say, I am a completely different person than I was then. A much better version.

I went through a terrible detox period. Some people have symptoms for 2 weeks, some much longer. I went through withdrawal symptoms for a full 90 days. My

hands would sweat, my eyes leaked, I had a chronic headache that just wouldn't go away. I'd cry or laugh too loud at the drop of a hat. I felt I had to hide away because I wasn't sure how I'd react to someone. Slowly but surely, each one of my detox symptoms went away. I was finally able to listen and absorb all the powerful stories I heard in the meeting rooms, MY stories. I had found my people.

I began working the Steps, comforted by the beautiful people in my fellowship. I would not be the person I am today without these amazing former potheads. I have a connection to my higher power that I so longed for when I was using. Doing service for MA, attending meetings, taking and receiving phone calls, and just LIVING the program keeps me going. I now have tools to cope with the bad times. I've learned emotions are like clouds . . . they drift away and change over time. I can feel my feelings and not have to stuff them down (the bad and the good) with marijuana.

Change is possible and I can't wait to see how my future evolves! Thank you all for being on this journey with me. Lynne M ◀

Tradition Twelve
Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Step Twelve
Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to marijuana addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

marijuana anonymous worldwide

MA World Services

PO Box 7807 Torrance, CA90504 800.766.6779
 www.marijuana-anonymous.org
 email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

District 1 San Francisco

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

HELP WANTED

FIELD EDITOR
NEEDED

INTERESTED

ADDICTS SHOULD
EMAIL

THE ANLP BOARD.

anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org

SAVE THIS DATE!

The MA Convention hosted by District 3.

Presidents' Day weekend

February 17-19, 2012

Biltmore Hotel & Suites

Santa Clara, California

Watch this space for more info

or go to...

www.madistrict3.org

birthdays Celebrating 246 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 2

Noah 10/03/10 1YEAR!
 Judy K. 10/17/10 1YEAR!
 Lucy 10/22/07 4yrs
 Elizabeth 10/27/84 27yrs

District 5

Michael L. 10/29/90 21yrs
 Jason 10/29/93 18yrs
 James V. 10/29/98 13yrs

District 6

Sheila S. 10/6/01 10yrs
 Wes D. 10/16/97 14yrs
 L.B.D. 9/20/05 6yrs
 Jessica P. 9/22/10 1YEAR!
 Gary Z. 10/13/99 12yrs
 Leon H. 9/19/10 1YEAR!

District 7

Kate C. 8/1/00 11yrs
 Rebecca L. 9/9/09 2yrs
 Kevin L. 9/9/08 3yrs
 Spencer L. 9/20/08 3yrs
 Craig J. 9/23/96 15yrs

District 8

Salomon I. 9/19/09 2yrs
 Alexa L. 9/22/09 2yrs
 John M. 9/24/10 1YEAR!

District 10

Mike W. 10/9/09 2yrs
 Dan K. 10/29/10 1YEAR!
 Kristopher T. 10/8/03 8yrs
 Elizabeth P. 10/10/05 6yrs

District 11

Mariska P. 9/18/87 24yrs
 Jim S. 9/24/07 4yrs
 Susan C. 10/9/86 25yrs
 Jan D. 10/13/03 8yrs



**KEEP
COMING
BACK!**