

# A NEW LEAF

A PUBLICATION OF MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS

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## Living Life with Hope by Dr. Jon P.

The facts of my life are good. I am clean and sober, healthy, prosperous enough, well loved and with much to be grateful for. I am struck however by my acute inability to nurture myself with greater ease. When I reach a moment of despair, which I do almost daily, I fall ever more deeply into the pit.

I am reminded now, however, of a wonderful sermon that was delivered recently at my church. The pastor told the story of Joseph, whom as you may recall was taken first out to the desert to be killed by his envious brothers. You may recall also that Joseph was favored by his father who had made him a special coat. Well, as it turns out, the brothers decided that perhaps it might be more profitable to sell Joseph into slavery to the Egyptians. Thus they would thereby avoid the sin of fratricide and perhaps turn a good sum for their handsome brother in the bargain.

The focus of the sermon however was upon Joseph and his deep, personal and trusting relationship in the All Mighty. There he was at death's door, alone and abandoned in a pit into which he had been thrown by his faithless brothers. Without water, food, or means of escape he lay prisoner to await the long and terrible death

that comes to all of us in the heat of the open desert.

But we remember Joseph for his steady hope and faith in his Creator. "There" reminded our pastor, "stood Joseph, in quiet and blessed assurance in the awesomely hopeful eyes of God." This thought has not left me. Sometimes I can hear my pastor words in the darkest moments:

"I stand in blessed assurance in the awesomely hopeful eyes of God."

But imperfect sinner that I remain, how far from these consoling words my soul does drift. But I am contained when the love of God fails me, as it so often does, by the love of others. "None of us is complete," I am also reminded by a Deacon friend of mine who shares in our Recovery.

When God is far and has turned his face away from his unworthy servant, it is to you, my friends, my sponsor, the program that I turn in my imperfections which no doubt shall continue so long as I remain in this finite life. Unlike Joseph, my faith is weak and my hope falters. It is at times like these that the fellowship of community and our collective struggle sustain me.

Thank you for continuing

with me down the ever more narrow road of Recovery. The further I go, the clearer it becomes, that it is also from the illusions of this life that I must recover. It is from my false expectations and anxiety ridden anticipations that I must continue to heal. But alas, I am still found wanting in both acceptance and surrender.

The Buddha was right to teach us that the cause of all human suffering is indeed desire. But the greater lesson that lay beneath this truth is the lesson of Joseph: that we are none of us alone; that we are each of us connected; and that God's eyes, do indeed remain upon the sparrow as they looked that awful day upon Joseph. It is the same all seeing eyes of God, I am convinced, that do on this day watch over you and look upon me. ▲

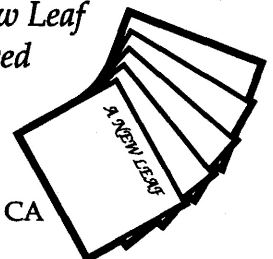
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## A NEW LEAF

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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## The Not-So Terrible Twos by Richard H.

They say you never forget your first high. I still remember mine even after 20 years. October 8th, 1997 is another date in my life that I'll never forget. I came home to find my wife in handcuffs. The police weren't there for her though; they were waiting for me. At that moment, I had never felt so ashamed or embarrassed in my life. The lies, deception, and half-truths were staring me in the face. I was arrested and put into jail. That's where and when I hit my bottom. I prayed for the first time in months for forgiveness and a way out of my "privately defined world"...my addiction. I was released on my own recognizance and instructed to attend a 12 Step program.

It doesn't seem that long ago when I walked into an MA meeting. I had tried other programs that weren't for me before I heard about MA. I was still in denial about having a problem with marijuana and resentful that I was instructed

to attend. I immediately felt at home though and silently answered yes to the 12 Questions. That night I also met Victor K. who planted the seed in me. We talked after the meeting and I felt welcomed. With two simple phrases he got me hooked. He told me to "Keep Coming Back" and to "Take It One Day at a Time". So I kept coming back and began to do what was suggested. I got a sponsor and worked the 12 steps. Before completing my 4th step, I was in service. Currently I'm our District Events Coordinator and Convention 2000 Events Coordinator. It hasn't been easy, but it has been simple. Doing what others have done before me, I've put together a couple of years. Finding my "Higher Power", spirituality, peace and serenity has been one hell of a ride.

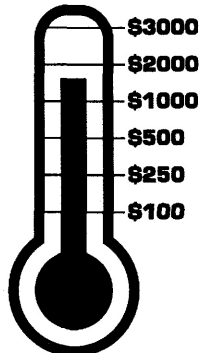
So what do I do for fun? When coming home to my beautiful wife and 13 month old son isn't enough, I'll go to a meeting. Read some recovery



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January 14, 15, 16 2000  
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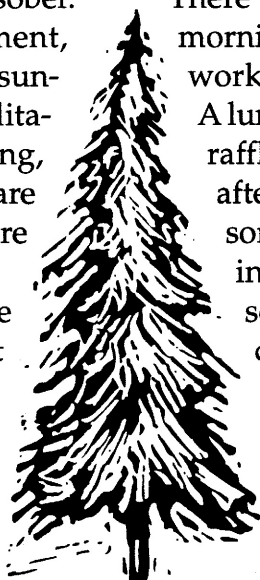
for more information about the convention visit our web site at: <http://members.aol.com/shir9763/MA2000.htm>



# The Not-So Terrible Twos continued

literature. Work with my sponsors or plan some possible events. We've had picnics, potluck dinners, and tail gate parties, BBQ's, coffee, and fellowship. We've gone to the movies and challenged other districts to softball games. We've had Birthday parties, fundraisers, Step studies. Whatever special interest or hobby you have can be fun clean and sober. Sharing a quiet moment, watching the sunrise or sunset. Taking a walk, meditation, prayer, volunteering, service! The possibilities are endless! Just get out there and do it!

I personally challenge all of you to come out and have some fun at the MA Convention 2000 in Santa Clara, "Millennium of Hope". There are lots of events planned begin-



ning on Friday, January 14th. District 2 "East Bay" will kick it off with the MA Cheerleaders and an ice breaker function. There'll be hors d'oeuvres in the hospitality suite that will be open for everyone coming in from out of town and locally. Mother MA will be our guest speaker. Saturday has a full schedule of events planned. There will be yoga in the morning, 12 Step meetings, workshops, and seminars. A lunch break with our first raffle drawing, a special afternoon guest speaker, some more 12 Step meetings, workshops and seminars. A banquet dinner will be served Saturday night along with a speaker meeting. This will be followed by a comedy show, 12 Step meeting, and a dance

featuring the MA All-star Band. On Sunday, we start with yoga and workshops, followed by seminars. Hotel check out is 11:30 am until noon. Lunch is followed by youth, men's, and women's meetings. A birthday countdown with chips and cake precedes the closing remarks. If you still haven't had enough there's a special dinner planned at the Crows Nest at the Santa Cruz harbor followed by a 12 Step bonfire meeting.

For more information, check out our web site at <http://members.aol.com/shir9763/MA2000.htm> or call me Richard H. at (408) 972-8185. Are you ready to have some fun in recovery? p.s. Don't forget youth are free to all events, seminars, and meetings. ▲



★  
**Congratulations to Our Members**  
 Celebrating their Sober Birthdays! ★

**District 3**

Annette G. 12/28/97 2 yrs.  
 Dave N. 12/28/93 6 yrs.  
 Mike H. 12/9/96 3 yrs.  
 Pat Mc. 12/29/89 10 yrs.  
 Richard A. 12/2/95 4 yrs.  
 Rick R. 12/2/97 2 yrs.  
 Rob E. 12/3/98 1 year!

**District 4**

Marc Mc. 12/12/84 15 yrs.  
 John P. 10/01/88 11 yrs.

**District 6**

Stanton O. 12/2/97 2 yrs.  
 Mike H. 12/7/92 7 yrs.  
 William Gr. 12/24/97 2 yrs.  
 John G. 12/25/91 8 yrs.  
 Richard H. 12/6/98 1 year!

**District 7**

Sharon 10/15/90 9 yrs.  
 Nancy 10/16/93 6 yrs.  
 John M. 10/19/98 1 year!

**District 8**

Carl P. 11/13/90 9 yrs.  
**Bakersfield**  
 Mariska P. 10/30/87 12 yrs.

## Looking Ahead to the 2000 Conference by Susan B.

MAWS guidelines state that agenda items for the May conference should be submitted to the MAWS Trustee President by the end of January. The President then presents the agenda to all of the districts by the end of February. This gives the districts time to discuss the agenda items and get feedback from individual members before sending delegates to the conference to vote on the dis-

trict's behalf.

If you have ideas for change that you think will help MA better reach the still-suffering addicts, or the recovering ones (suffering or not), please submit these to the Jay, President of the Trustees by January 31st. You can send agenda items to him c/o: MA, P.O. Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404 or e-mail him at: jaycMA@msn.com. ▲

## an Affirmation by Michael M.

I am a powerful, bright shining light of love, faith, creativity, and truth.

In my art and in my daily life, I help others by giving my gifts as God's will comes through me. I am in sync with the world around me. People, animals, and the planet itself and I are one in thought, mind, and action.

The power to help and heal others and myself comes to me

through God, and the cycles of that giving brings Him to us all in ways I have only dreamed possible: love, contentment, strength, respect, integrity, honor, joy, and a sense of fulfillment.

I want for nothing. I live in the moment in perfect balance, conquering fears with faith, taking what He has already given, and putting it to it's best possible use. ▲

## The Roving Reporter

### What in your life convinced you it was unmanageable?

Erin O., Dist 5, 13 years

Not being able to refrain from smoking before going to my parents house. They could always tell I was stoned and it hurt and frustrated them deeply. Knowing this and not being able to stop myself from using were some of my most powerless moments.

Jim B., Dist 1, 6 years

I was teaching at a school and getting high on my way to work in the morning. I would go out for a few hits at recess time and again at lunch. I was working with young children and trying to be a good role model. Something felt seriously out of balance. ▲



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