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Insanity of Addiction

First, I can say beyond a shadow of a doubt your story isn't mine, and your story isn't anyone else's either. You may hear the simple message I'm trying to reiterate here, sooner or later, or most sadly even if you are suffering... never.

I am diagnosed with what psychiatry calls a "dual-diagnosis" disorder and cannabis dependency. In my experience, it means as many things as the number of people diagnosed with it. This is about recovery from marijuana, but it's very much tied together for me. You may have experienced this yourself, or heard someone say, "I had a bad experience and marijuana was never the same, so I couldn't smoke it anymore." Something like that happened to me early on in my addiction, unfortunately I was already hooked. I kept smoking for more than a decade, a completely different drug. It made me anxious, guilty, paranoid, sometimes literally psychotic. I wanted to stop, I was delusional about it. I had a spark of a dream, a delusion that one day I would wake up, not smoke pot, and go into a good job with a great life. I didn't know what to do about it or how to get there, and it was my last delusional dream for a very long time.

Years ago in therapy, I got a glimmer of the value of honesty. My therapist said, "everyone should have at least one person they're honest with," so I made a halfhearted attempt to be honest. She was horrified, and suggested rehab. Before I gave in to this idea and got into rehab, I snapped again. I had been in and out of psych wards for years at that point. I was at my worst yet, it

was my first major rock bottom. I had a job, but I was making about a quarter of my expenses. Most of the time I lay in bed feeling hopeless, even hallucinating, and would get up only to drag myself to work or smoke pot I couldn't nearly afford. I was insane beyond the definition of addiction.

Everyone should have at least one person they're honest with.

At the psych ward, I was put on a new medication. As a child I needed glasses, and the treatment was similar. It was like seeing again, to be sane. I was past that rock bottom. So I started smoking pot again soon after. On the new medication I could almost handle weed again, for a while. My life continued to get worse. Shortly after that, I made it to rehab. I had the time of my life clean for a few months after a very emotionally difficult detox. Really, I had too much fun there and wasn't serious enough. People called me out on it, too. No one gave me trouble for being "just a marijuana addict." Maybe I was just lucky enough to be in there with enough people serious about recovery. I remember something else. There was a lot of talk about the twelve steps, and one night the most helpful staff member

to me there was giving me the meds. I said, "So now I take my meds that make me not believe in a higher power." He was more troubled by that than anything else I said there, and told me so, but probably very reluctant to get into such a touchy subject. Other people I will always remember from rehab were the clients most serious about recovery, and the twelve step people who came in to do a meeting with us. When I got out, I started going to meetings.

Around the time I first started going to meetings, I had to drive a pretty long way to go to a meeting. It happened to be near my dealer, but I wanted to quit. So I would sneak around, convinced a town of thousands was onto me. I would sneak to a meeting, I don't remember what I said if anything, I'm sure it was a lie. I certainly wasn't listening to the same message I hear at every meeting I go to. The same message I heard at rehab. "Addicts who can stay clean are working a program." Finally, just by going to enough meetings and hiding, full of guilt, from my dealer who I was sure didn't even know? He really never cared one bit, or probably even noticed if I did somehow drive past him. Finally, I got a few days clean. I tried to be honest in a meeting after waiting my turn, again without hearing the same message, saying I had come a long way from the days I was combining trips into town. An old-timer looked at me and said, "You're in the right place. We're all addicts." That was an epiphany for me. A room full of addicts!? I'm sure

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ANL's Purpose

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. MA is not affiliated with—and does not endorse or accept contributions from—any outside enterprise.

We are reaching out to districts to update the ANLP Liaisons and birthday lists. Additionally, district/group service representatives, including but not limited to those serving as ANLP Liaisons, are encouraged to stay in touch: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org

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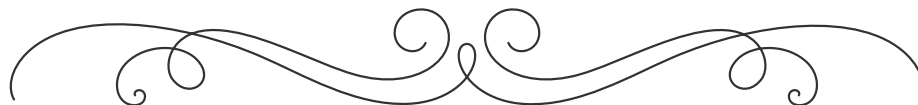
I relapsed for months to ponder that one. Years passed that way.

Finally, I hit another horrible rock bottom. It was much different, but just as bad. I was going to school, doing ok somehow, and had started drinking too, after some horrible things happening in my life. I was dealing with a lot of it with a good therapist, but I was insane again, now on the meds. He wasn't even specifically an addiction counselor, but I managed to do ok in school, make progress sorting out my life, and talk frankly about a lot of things including what I now call my "God-shaped hole." I'm still sorting myself out, and I don't even want or expect to ever be done. Where's the fun in that? Somewhere in there I had learned to at least try to listen, and went back to the meetings. I made it a while, but the world around me had its own rock bottom. I wasn't strong enough

in my recovery and my working of my program, and eventually in quarantine from the pandemic, I started to falter. I get what happened this time. I know it can happen, and MA is there for me, unconditionally. I became complacent, I stopped working my program.

This program isn't complicated, but it can be as much work as a part-time job, at least, if you want it. That's actually completely ok with me at this point. I used to smoke pot all day every day compulsively, always miserable, my only dream left being to quit. Today, I worked my program to the best of my ability in a fellowship with other people at least trying to work theirs, and I don't even want to smoke pot. For me, that's the best way I can say the simple message I couldn't hear for years. ▲

~ by Anonymous



Dear Adult Self

Dear Adult Self,

Do you remember you used to sing in the bathtub? The smell of the Play-doh when you would play with it? Do you remember listening and dancing to music as a child and feeling ALIVE? Rolling down a hill on your bike... Remember screaming at the thrill of hide and go seek?

What happened? Why are you pursuing a thrill that is damaging our well-being? Being comfortable with the habit of smoking is like being comfortable with perishing your dreams. Eres CABRONA

(you're a badass)! You do NOT settle for a life set up for failure. Your introspective and intuitive nature will guide you on the right track. PLEASE have hope and trust you CAN LIVE marijuana FREE.

Let the pot go mamas. It's causing more harm than good....

You're a FIGHTER and a BADASS!

Love unconditionally,
Your inner child

~ by Diana M ▲

Technological Detox

"We stay vigilant and continue to identify our obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors..."
Life with Hope 3rd ed. p. 47 (Step 10)

As an addict I tend to detach from reality in the hopes that discomfort I'm feeling will leave me. This is one of the reasons I used marijuana. Thank God the obsession to use weed has been lifted, thanks to the program of MA and the gift of having completed the 12 steps; however, other obsessions occasionally do arise. Furthermore, it is usually difficult to realize when I am acting out of obsession or engaging in some "down time".

As an example, let me take social media; a close friend texts me about a party. The friend asks me to post a dish I will bring to his party page that he made on a popular social media site I use, and so I do. After I fulfill my friend's request, and after I clear all of my notifications, and after I check on my brother's new baby, and I watch a few videos from the long-lost college crew, and looked up a few old lovers and after etc... I realize I have neglected other things—perhaps other things that were intimidating me that I was hoping to have done in the time I just spent.

At what point did I cross the line from casual using into addictive behavior? Is it normal, for example, to go onto a social networking site to accomplish one task and then fall into the rabbit hole of flashy technology, disappearing so long that other planned activities suffer? Perhaps a complete recess from technology will help me focus on things that really matter.

Final thought: For today I will set aside a specific block of time in which I will detach from all technological devices, and more actively engage with that which is physically surrounding me. ▲



A Prayer

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

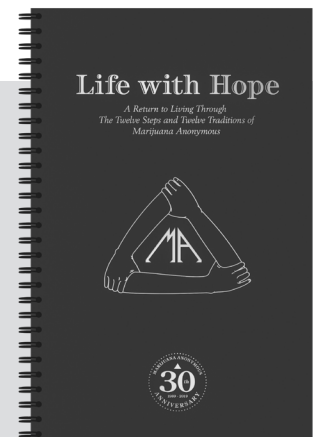
Greater Power
Lead me when I am willing and lead me to willingness when I am not
Let me see rightly when my eyes are open
and open my eyes when they are not
Fill me with your love when I am in fear
So I may share that love with others when I am not
I thank you for walking beside me today as it has always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

Special Edition Reprint of the Original Life with Hope

This spiral bound book was launched at the 2020 Los Angeles Convention. In honor of the 30th anniversary of MA and dedicated to our founding members, and all those in service to carrying the message. Order yours today and your donation will go directly to MA World Services, consider it a 7th tradition! While you are at it, you may want to order your personal copy of A New Leaf newsletter delivered to your home each month.

Get yours today!

anewleafpublications.org or email Mariska P. at office@anewleafpublications.org



Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit
WWW.MARIJUANA-ANONYMOUS.ORG

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YOU are invited to attend the MA World Services Town Hall Meeting

Winter 2020 - Saturday, December 5, 2020 - 10-12 noon PST / 1-3 pm EST

Attend via zoom at: <https://tinyurl.com/y6r4x4uh>



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.

Tradition Twelve

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

Celebrating 98 Years of Sobriety!

District 5

Joe W.	11/19/11	9 Years
Kathy D.	11/4/03	7 Years
Larry C.	11/28/99	21 Years
Ray M.	11/19/13	7 Years
Rich C.	11/2/98	22 Years
Ron L.	11/5/95	25 Years
Shelby	11/15/15	5 Years

District 11

Charles G	11/16/2018	2 yrs.
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See your sobriety date here!

If your sobriety date has occurred, has not been published, and is not older than 45 days, please submit it in the format you see on the left. You may tell your local GSR, ANLP Liaison, or e-mail to: chiefs@anewleafpublications.org