



December 2023

Vol. 33, No. 12

Spiritual Principles

I treat the spiritual principles that I've learned in recovery as a guidebook to life. I realize now that my addict brain operates in the exact opposite way my Higher Power suggests. In a way, my Higher Power and my addict are like a cartoon, an angel on one shoulder with a devil on the other. I don't have to turn to marijuana when I am baffled with life now. All I have to do is follow the spiritual principles.

Honesty – Much of my energy before recovery was spent keeping my story straight and deceiving my spouse. This left me mentally tired and emotionally guilt stricken. Eventually, the lying impacted my lower back, and I suffered from regular pain. Spiritually, I was completely bankrupt, relying on my best thinking, which led me to the bottom. Turns out, it's a lot easier to simply tell the truth. Additionally, I don't have to deal with all the consequences of trying to cover my tracks.

Hope – I used to assume there was nothing to look forward to. Past experiences had led me to believe that in the end nothing really matters. This type of thinking is great fuel for self-pity. It justifies regular and continued use. It's dismal and awful. Someone once said in a meeting, "Who wants to live this way?" I don't anymore. I prefer to think life is going to work out the way it's supposed to. I also know life is going to be ok no matter what happens.

Faith – Recovery has taught me that not only can life get better; it will get better. I tried to control my hopeless outlook of the future as best I could with continued marijuana use. It worked pretty well – I didn't care

about much of anything. What a relief it finally was to give up trying to control everything. Especially those things that were simply out of my control. It became obvious my way of life wasn't sustainable, so I had to trust my life's care to a Higher Power. This was a huge load taken off my shoulders!

"Without... these principles, I had very little chance of living my life happy, joyous and free."

Courage – I feared my emotions and feelings. I believed apathy was the best practice. Marijuana was happy to accommodate this belief. It accommodated so well that I almost didn't care when it was apparent I was going to lose my marriage over my use. Fortunately, I had learned to feel enough love that I knew I couldn't choose a drug over another person, although this decision was reluctant. Pure and unfiltered joy feels pretty darn good. It's hard to believe I was depriving myself of positive emotions and running away from negative ones.

Integrity – For years I didn't really know who I was. I was drifting through the world like fog on a cool fall morning. I was wispy, disconnected, and incomplete. Now I know who I am. I know why I think and behave certain ways. Most importantly, I know where my life can be improved.

Willingness – I never used to ask for help. I always thought I only had to rely on myself. Yet I couldn't figure out why I couldn't quit using. Once I became willing to accept help, I was able to successfully treat my addiction. A little willingness goes a long way. Not only did it get me sober but I also apply willingness to get rid of unwanted character traits.

Humility – The irony of addiction is it always told me that I was the #1 Top Dog and at the same time it sought to kill me. The more I learn in recovery, the more I realize how little I know. The people I sponsor I do so without a sense of superiority. I'm not an ultimate authority on sobriety but I can tell people what has worked for me and suggest it might work for them. Humility is the spiritual foundation to recovery because ego is the primary driver for the addict.

Justice – As an active addict, I used to get away with things. It was a sick and twisted game. I'd sneak around, get what I wanted by manipulating others, and take advantage of institutions. If these were such achievements, why did I always have a bad feeling that lingered inside me about these past harms? I had to be held accountable for my deeds not because I deserved to be punished, but because I had to let go of the trouble I caused. Past harms were extra weight that I didn't need to carry anymore. By holding on to them, I put my future sobriety at risk.

Forgiveness – Holding grudges against people, places, and institutions takes a lot of continual effort

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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 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.

ANLP Liaisons

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: Liaisons@anlp12.org

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that detracts from a healthy life. Whether intentional or coincidental, everyone makes mistakes. Not only did I make a lot of mistakes toward other people, I made the most mistakes toward myself. The most important person I had to forgive was myself. While I am responsible for my days of using, I am not at fault. I did the best I could with the tools I had. I try to apply this same idea in all other areas in my life now.

Awareness – When I used to act out against people and get that crappy feeling inside my gut, I'd get loaded and numb it away. Today, that feeling is an indicator to promptly make things right. I can't afford to let that feeling fester any more. Even better, I don't let that feeling materialize because I have learned to practice restraint and bite my tongue. When something bothers me about someone else, I try to look at myself. Then I ask, "What's wrong with me? How can I do better?"

Perseverance – I never used to pray or meditate. I try to pray or meditate as I am falling asleep, but for the most part I don't set aside a specific time to. I simply do it on-demand, when I need to. Prayer and meditation are ways I let Higher Power in my life. When I connect with Higher Power, I can calm down and let love fill me. A warm fuzzy-tingling always feels better than a cold icy stiffness.

Service – I used to only help people when I knew I'd get something in return. The people I had this relationship with aren't even associating with me now that I am in recovery. Whenever I help someone or help MA, I forget about my problems. Afterwards I feel much better. The things that were worrying me seem smaller. Even though I help freely, "the joke's on me" because I still do get something out of it – continued sobriety.

I feel blessed that I am an addict. After a few months into recovery I was able to comprehend why people

say, "I am a grateful addict." I may have never learned to live my life with spiritual principles otherwise. Using the principles to cope with life is much healthier for me than using marijuana. Without the knowledge and practice of these principles, I had very little chance of living my life happy, joyous, and free.

~ Chris C.

Talking With My Addiction

*Do I want to?
Yes I do*

*Will it hurt me?
Likely so*

*Will it help me?
A little, little bit*

*A little you say
A little I say*

*And then each day
Less and less*

*What's the harm?
You know the facts*

*Been to hell
And back*

*Again and
Again*

*Still the Call
To ease it all*

*Reverberates
Within*

*The road to hell
You know it well*

*Paved with pain
And loss*

*Some joy I say
To rally the day*

*But the tears, they
Choke the phrase*

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Still the Call
To ease it all

Reverberates
Within

Escape lies there
This I swear

It's worked before
Yes, and where did that lead you

To hell and back
Harder with each journey

Still the Call
To ease it all

Reverberates
Within

~ Cheryl B.

The Still of Night

The still of night
My beating heart
The cadence of breath
Wandering thoughts
And being alive
In this moment
Aware of connection
Although I am alone

Clarity open to the expansiveness
Gifts, all gifts
Since I split from my marijuana mistress
She is out there somewhere
No need to wait for me
There are many to intoxicate
To lure and deceive

I meet them, me, in the fellowship
Because splitting from this demon
Our demon, can require all from us
And help in breaking these shackles
Doesn't come easily to the addict

But as we come to know
It may not be easy
But it is simple
And we know that we cannot sacrifice
The good for perfection
We are people
Imperfect and unique

We meet in fellowship and remember
That with our will of the intangible power
From within and beyond
We can and we do
Shatter the shackles of our
addictedness
And rise to meet another morn
Free to rejoice
In the still of night

~ Dean A.

Self Love

Life's journey is short
It goes so fast
Choices and changes that do not
always last

We make decisions day to day
On what we do and
What role we will play

To love ourselves means being true
To your soul, in all you do

Honor yourself
Have integrity
It's an honest, self-loving way to be

When we diminish ourselves
It makes us feel small
We isolate, get resentments and put
up walls.

Embrace the real you,
Love every little bit
You show others how to treat you

And JUST DON'T QUIT

~Philly F.

Please Get Involved – MA World Services Committees Need You!

Newcomer Support: (minimum of 6 months of clean time required) General committee work of responding to support requests; Subcommittee for drafting training materials on responding to support requests; Subcommittee for facilitating future workshops for newcomers and sponsors

Literature: Subcommittee to work on member stories for use in various projects; Subcommittee for revising the pamphlet on Detoxing from Marijuana to include brief introduction to CHS & CIP

Public Information: Social media subcommittee needs help managing content for Instagram and Facebook; Website Redesign Subcommittee

Hospitals and Institutions: General committee work of sending materials and providing support to individuals and meetings within hospitals and institutions

Conferences and Conventions: Convention handbook; Conference Agenda Committee; 2023 Convention Planning Committee

Policy and Procedures: Special Worker Review Process Subcommittee; writing Conference Agenda items

Outreach: General outreach work; Subcommittee re-writing the New Meeting Starter Kit; Representation and Accessibility

Finance: Finance handbook for Districts; Milestone Chips Subcommittee

Internet: General internet work to maintain the website and work with the PI website redesign committee; new App development

Correspondence: Communications subcommittee for the *Carry the Message* newsletter

If you are interested in any of these committees, please contact the Trustee of that committee. You can find their contact information on the MA Website at:

marijuana-anonymous.org/contact-us

MA Book and Workbook Prices Increases and Discounts

Life with Hope (LwH) MSRP Price Increases. The manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) of the following MA literature titles currently sold through the Hazelden Publishing bookstore, www.hazelden.org/store, will increase on January 1, 2024, as follows:

Life with Hope text: \$16.95 to \$18.95
Life with Hope text eBook: \$11.95 to \$13.95
Life with Hope Workbook: \$9.95 to \$12.95

The above prices may be lower now and after January 1, 2024 for online purchases.

Hazelden-Only Book Purchase Discounts Independent of MA's contract, Hazelden Publishing offers discount incentives to all 12-step members, designed to encourage individuals to join groups and for groups to join districts, as follows:

Online purchases by individual members, 10%
Group purchases over \$200, 20%
District purchases (no minimum or limit), 40%

Note: Group, district, and individual purchasers should contact Hazelden Publishing Customer Service at (800) 328-9000 or customersupport@hazeldenbettyford.org before making a purchase.

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

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

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		DIST. 28 MA Phone Meetings www.ma-phone.org	

Step and Tradition of the Month

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 206 Years of Sobriety!

District 5

Carly	11/09/2020	3 yrs
Dennis D.	10/28/2011	12 yrs
James V.	10/29/1998	25 yrs
Joe W.	11/19/2011	12 yrs
John G.	1/5/2011	12 yrs

- In Loving Memory

Kathy D.L.	11/4/2003	20 yrs
Lauren G.	10/30/2022	1 yr
Michael L.	10/29/1990	33 yrs
Nathan	11/1/2020	3 yrs
Ron L.	11/5/1995	28 yrs
Shelby	11/15/2015	8 yrs
Tina	11/6/2007	16 yrs

District 11

Charles G.	11/6/2018	5 yrs
Laura R.	11/18/2018	5 yrs
Matt H.	10/30/2022	1 yr
Nathan N.	10/31/2022	1 yr
Thomas B.	11/25/2018	5 yrs

District 22

Jason F.	10/31/2007	16 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 by the 16th of the month. You may tell your local GSR, ANLP liaison, or e-mail to: Birthdays@ANLP12.org