



A NEW LEAF

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MA NEWSLETTER
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SEPTEMBER 1993
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LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE

It was a hot night as I drove out of the valley. I was headed to a place I had never been before, to an experience I had never had. I knew most of the people who had assembled at Mt. Pinos for this gathering of men, but I was still frightened of the unknown. Being vulnerable is hard. If I had known just how much of that I was about to do I would have turned around at the foot of the mountain. As I drove up the winding mountain road the sky opened up and filled with stars, and as the temperature began to change so did I.

I began to sense God's presence in the trees, the sky, and the wind. By the time I reached the campground and saw faces of my friends huddled around the fire, I had left my life in the city far behind. I was surrendered to my HP, I was humbled by the awesomeness of this vast place which had gotten along so perfectly without me for thousands of years. I WAS HUMBLE AND AGAIN TEACHABLE!

Our agenda was not designed with faint of soul in mind. We had discussions from our hearts on: Fathers, Mothers, Spirituality, Sex and Relationships, Heros & Goddesses, Men as Friends, and other very intimate, but often avoided topics. I learned a lot from listening, and risking to share. I would like to have you feel the feelings I shared with the people I bonded with that weekend; however, words are not powerful enough to recount the events we 20 experienced.

On that mountain top we dug a grave and in that grave I left behind a lot of pain, doubt, and resentment, as did my brothers. As we worked together to bury those burdens it was very obvious that something beyond human power had happened here. As I wept openly in the arms of my best, but previously distant friend, I KNEW I had changed and I would never be quite the same again. I think someone present said it best when he retold an old poem, it goes like this:

I SOUGHT MY SOUL
BUT MY SOUL ELUDED ME.

I SOUGHT MY GOD
BUT MY GOD ELUDED ME.

I SOUGHT MY BROTHERS
AND I FOUND ALL THREE.

I thank my God, my brothers and my sobriety for the gift of true love.

Terry M.



Happy Birthday!!

DON O.	AUGUST 14	2 YEARS
AL E.	SEPTEMBER 1	4 YEARS
TAMAR I.	SEPTEMBER 1	1 YEAR
LYNN W.	SEPTEMBER 2	1 YEAR
HEATHER K.	SEPTEMBER 4	1 YEAR
JIM L.	SEPTEMBER 5	4 YEARS
STACEY S.	SEPTEMBER 8	1 YEAR
PATRICK P.	SEPTEMBER 8	1 YEAR
TOM S.	SEPTEMBER 10	4 YEARS
WENDY C.	SEPTEMBER 11	6 YEARS
BRIAN A.	SEPTEMBER 11	2 YEARS
ROGER W.	SEPTEMBER 13	7 YEARS
KRISTINE C.	SEPTEMBER 15	1 YEAR
DEAN	SEPTEMBER 24	2 YEARS
DEREK S.	SEPTEMBER 25	7 YEARS
MICHELLE E.	SEPTEMBER 26	4 YEARS
AZ A.	SEPTEMBER 30	7 YEARS

NOTE:

If you're having an M.A. birthday and would like to be listed here, please contact one of the New Leaf Co-Editors.

A NEW LEAF PRAYER

*GOD, grant us knowledge
that we may write according to Your will.
Instill in us a sense of Your purpose
Your power, Your love, Your way of life.
Grant us a bond of selflessness,
that this may truly be Your work not ours,
so that no addict, anywhere,
need die from the horrors of addiction.*

A NEW LEAF 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 marijuana addicts and their stories that we can find experience, strength and hope. Articles submitted should reflect recovery, unity, and service.

DISTRICT SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

DISTRICT 5

2nd Monday of Month, 7:30 pm
REA Community Center, Room 640
661 Hamilton, Costa Mesa

DISTRICT 6

1st Thursday of Month, 7:30 pm
Ask your GSR for meeting location

DISTRICT 7

2nd Wednesday of Month, 7:30 pm
Call Peri A. for Information
(310) 823-3446

QUOTE OF THE MONTH



**WE ARE NOT HERE TO SEE THROUGH EACH OTHER,
BUT TO SEE EACH OTHER THROUGH.**



THE ROVING REPORTER

A COLLECTION OF VIEWS FROM AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP.

This Month's question: Why do you know you're an addict?

RANDY F. 5 yrs. 10 mos.
I can no longer control and enjoy my drug use. When I get loaded, I must keep getting loaded for days and days. Sober feels better.

BRIAN A. 1 yr. 11 mos.
I used to think whether I was or not when I first got into this program. After I entered the program I started to realize all the insanity that I practiced regularly as a result of self will run riot, and I started to see my addict behavior clearly. At that point I knew I was an addict. A moment of clarity!

MARK K. 1 yr.
Because my life was defined and measured by my drug use: 3 joints for drive time to work, 1 ounce for a week's vacation, I could not fathom a life without drugs before this program.

DAVE K. 4 yrs. 7 mos.
Well, since I was a child I often felt "different" from others. By the time I entered high school and began using drugs and alcohol, I started having particular feelings of obsession, which led into feelings of addiction. Along with my actions of consistent using, and my life revolving around drugs (marijuana in particular), I became convinced and aware that I was an addict. I know how difficult it was for me to leave drugs and that also expresses the fact that I am an addict.

PAUL F. 6 mos.
My inability to say no when my mind tells me I should say yes, and vice versa. It's as if my mind and tongue had no previous relationship with each other. **TOTAL STRANGERS.** I have an intense desire to obsess on the negative.

LANE K. 72 days
I know I'm an addict because I couldn't maintain a normal livelihood while using. Although outside I may have appeared normal, I was clearly tormented inside. It has truly taken my sobriety to show me my addiction is a disease that can be conquered daily with the help of my Higher Power.

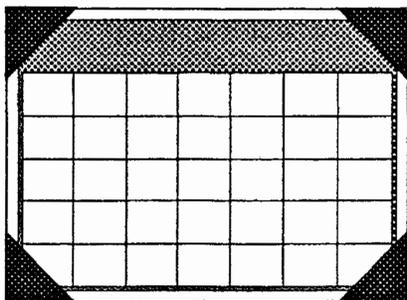
ROB M. 15 mos.
The fact that I would be asked this question (good indication). But seriously, I knew for a long time that I was an addict. Years before I got clean I knew that pot was the most important factor in my life. I freely admitted it. I told friends & lovers frankly that if it ever came to a decision between them & pot, they would lose. At the time I took pride in the fact that I had the courage to make the admission. I didn't have a problem as long as I had pot.

MARK H. 4.5 mos.
I think about, breathe, smell, and taste pot during all my waking hours.

ANONYMOUS 2.5 yrs.
The sense of identification I feel when someone shares something I experienced when I used to use.

JOHN C. 3 wks.
I'm here. I love getting high. I've never gotten as high as I wanted to be, or where mentally I wanted to be. I stole money for drugs. I have never tried to curb my use. I either had to stop getting high completely, or be completely high. I love getting high. I feel guilty about using.

UPCOMING MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS EVENTS



SOBER POOL PARTY
509 W. JONQUIL RD., SANTA ANNA

SEPTEMBER 18 - 2:00PM TO ?
POT LUCK - MEAT PROVIDED

MEETING, SWIMMING, & DANCE
9231 ENCINO AVE., NORTHRIDGE

OCTOBER 2 - 2:00PM TO ?
POT LUCK

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN PLANNING EVENTS, OR IF YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA FOR AN EVENT, TALK TO YOUR MEETING'S GSR

WHAT'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME?

I began smoking pot in 1970 while in high school. Nothing happened the first few times but about the fifth or sixth time I smoked I got stoned and the love affair began. I immediately became part of the "peace movement." I wanted to turn everybody on.

By 1972 I was smoking everyday and was proving to myself and the world that anything a person could do straight they could do while high. I smoked pot before work, at work at lunchtime, after work, before parties, at parties etc. By 1973 I was also taking uppers and occasional psychedelic trips, LSD, mescaline, peyote and the like. I nearly flipped out on an LSD trip in 1974, and haven't touched anything like it since. By 1975 the uppers had taken their toll, I was very thin, so I stopped doing that too. However, I was still part of the marijuana movement and continued to smoke it like there was no tomorrow.

I began selling pot in 1975 and that was also the year I turned 21, although I didn't see it then, drinking became a big problem. I was going to the bars all the time. I really felt grown up. By then I was married, had a daughter and a pretty good job.

In 1978 I got divorced but my true love, smoking pot, was still there with me. I was making nearly as much money selling pot as I did in my job and I always had pot and lots of "friends." I also began snorting cocaine that year. By 1980 I began selling cocaine instead of pot. In 1981 I made my first attempt at quitting marijuana. I went weeks at a time. However, I was doing coke all the time by then. By 1982 I had lost my home, my job, my business, my girlfriend, and my self respect. I had burned a lot of bridges.

While feeling sorry for myself one day in 1982 an old friend came by with some good weed. I immediately felt at home again. I immediately told myself I would not do anymore cocaine or other drugs including alcohol. Marijuana was where it was at. As I write this I have not done cocaine or any hard drugs since shortly after then.

In 1989 marijuana was still an all-day-every-day occurrence and alcohol was a substitute or back up. I really began to feel that life had passed me by. I stopped smoking for up to 3 months at a time but found myself drinking a lot so I would stop drinking and start smoking. In 1992 I made my first serious attempt at quitting everything. I even stopped drinking coffee. Stopping was fairly easy but the feeling of isolation, guilt and remorse always drove me back to getting high on pot or by drinking or both.

In February 1993, while extremely hung over, I again said "That's it" and quit for good. This lasted until March 21st. By then every time I took a hit the guilt was killing me. I really felt like a failure.

On May 10th of this year I tried to score one last time and couldn't. That night while wide awake at 1:00 a.m., because of insomnia due to no pot I reached out for help. I had heard about Marijuana Anonymous but couldn't find it. I did find a Narcotics Anonymous meeting in the phone book, and went to my first two meetings two days later.

At my second meeting, somebody handed me a copy of "A New Leaf" which listed meetings of M.A. on the back. I knew I had found what I was looking for. I now attend meetings daily, either N.A. and M.A. Today I've been clean for 4 months of complete abstinence, and I owe it all to the 12 steps of recovery.

I no longer feel alone. I have a sponsor, I've made friends in the fellowship and I have God in my life today. I am reestablishing a relationship with my 19 year old daughter, whose respect I lost years ago. I also have a son who is almost two years old and I'm fully experiencing being a daddy for the first time in my life. My relationship with his mother is rocky but real. There is hope for us as well. If I was using there would be no hope. I am currently working the fourth step and taking life one day at a time.

Bob L.

BOUND BY FEAR; RELEASED BY GOD

I have been a slave to many masters. Now I believe it is a single master, but one with many faces. It is fear — an artifact from my childhood and a wellspring of my unfulfilled desires — and the secret source that fuels the negative thoughts of the adult I have become.

Fear shields me and denies me; it cuts me off from the joy of living and reveals all my weaknesses and frailties to every set of probing eyes. I used marijuana to control this fear; I used drugs and drank alcohol in a vain attempt to destroy it.

Today, thanks to the principles of Marijuana Anonymous and the Grace of God as I understand God, I no longer have to use drugs and alcohol to quiet my fears and ease the pain they bring. The Big Book says that on completion of Step 4, "we commence to outgrow fear," and that "fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us."

On my own path this has been true. But it has taken time. Dealing with any person in a face-to-face situation can be a paralyzing experience for me. I prefer to be in a group. I find comfort with an audience and can perform confidently as an actor. I fear intimacy, conflict and authority. Being afraid of people is tragic. It means lost opportunities; love and friendships may never form.

Before, when I came into conflict with another person, I lied to quickly escape the situation, or else I surrendered even before making an attempt to defend myself. At other times, I would go on the offense and attack, and my undoing would be intensified by a desire for blood.

After years of struggling, I quit. First spiritually, then emotionally. I wanted no life that included feelings. My dark secret — that I was not who I made myself out to be — I would hold onto as if it were a life raft. But that life raft sank and I was forced to swim or drown.

What I found was this: a safe shore. A program in which I could learn to be my true self, directed by people who shared a common concern. They were also fearful, angry and resentful. They too suffered from low self-esteem, an exaggerated self-importance and they felt the pain of a bitter loneliness. The difference was they were taking actions to recover from their own fears.

Since joining others on the program, taking the steps, and finding a spiritual power to remove my shortcomings, I have found much strength. Today I no longer use drugs or alcohol. I do not cheat or steal, and I am learning to be honest with myself and others.

Marijuana Anonymous has given me a new life. I now face conflicts with confidence and can gratefully acknowledge that my fears are being removed.

And I have reached a new level of serenity. I feel it in many ways. Sometimes it is a rush, a crescendo of emotion, a sudden surprise. More often, it is that shy tenderness felt when a person realizes a love for their own self. The feeling is sweet, soft and as exciting as a sexy and passionate kiss.

Brian K.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Thursday Northridge women's stagg will not meet at its normal location on: September 16th & 30th; October 7th; or November 25th. Call Melissa for meeting location 1 week before, (818) 718-2716.

The articles contained in the New Leaf are the opinions of the writers of the articles and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of MA as a whole.



Southern California Marijuana Anonymous Schedule of Meetings

Updated 9-1-93



SUNDAY

- 10:00 AM** Redondo Beach
Participation
2000 Artesia Blvd., at Green St.
(David Hayward Comm. Center)
- 11:00** Chatsworth
Men's Stag
9861 Andora (The Eagle's Nest)
Fireside Chat & Brunch
- 5:30 PM** Glendale
Discussion
225-D N. Maryland Ave., Upstairs
(PositiveDirections Activity Ctr)

MONDAY

- 7:30 PM** Orange H/A
Participation
1200 W. Palmyra
(Sister Elizabeth Building)
- 8:00 PM** North Hollywood
Participation - Newcomers
11960 Victory Blvd.
(Trinity Pres. Church)
- 8:30 PM** West Hollywood
"Rastaman Vibrations"
8939 1/2 Santa Monica Bl., Upstairs
(W. Hollywood Drug & Alcohol Ctr)

TUESDAY

- 7:45 PM** Orange H/A
"Roach Motel" (NEW TIME)
As Bill See's It
401 S. Tustin Ave., Conf. Rm.
(Orange County Comm. Hospital)
- 8:00 PM** Mar Vista
Participation
3590 Grandview Boulevard
(St. Bede's Episcopal Church)
- 8:00 PM** Tarzana
Participation
19616 Ventura Blvd.
(Above Corbin Bowl)

LEGEND: H/A - Handicapped Accessible
C - Closed, Addicts Only
B - Babysitter Available

WEDNESDAY

- 7:00 PM** Pasadena
2900 East Del Mar Boulevard
(Las Encinas Hospital)
- 7:30 PM** Culver City
Beginner's Meeting
3853 Dunn Drive
(1blk E. Clarington-N. Washington)
(Cornerstone House)
- 8:00 PM** Costa Mesa H/A
A.A. Big Book Study
661 Hamilton, Room 640
(REA Community Center)
- 8:00 PM** Canoga Park C
Participation (1 yr. to share)
22021 Sherman Way
(Serenity West - Back Door)
- 8:15 PM** Van Nuys H/A
Big Book & Step Study
15220 Vanowen Boulevard
(Van Nuys Hospital, Room C)
- 8:15 PM** Hollywood
Participation (ALL WELCOME!)
1625 N. Hudson - Parking in Rear
Gay & Lesbian Comm. Serv. Center

THURSDAY

- 7:00 PM** Lancaster H/A
Step Study/Participation
725 East Avenue J
(Lutheran Church)
- 7:30 PM** Van Nuys H/A
15220 Vanowen Boulevard
(Van Nuys Hospital, Room C)
- 7:30 PM** Northridge H/A, B
Women's Stag
17655 Devonshire St.
(Temple Ramat Zion Rms. 5 & 6)
- 8:00 PM** Mar Vista
3590 Grandview Boulevard
(St. Bede's Episcopal Church)
- 8:00 PM** Mission Viejo H/A
"Last Connection" - Step Study
23228 Madero, Conference Room
Mission Viejo Charter Hospital

FRIDAY

- 6:30 PM** Pasadena H/A
131 N. El Molino, Suite 320
(Council on Alcohol/Drug Dep.)
- 7:30 PM** Orange H/A
"TGIF" Participation
812 Town and Country
(Ground Floor, Room 13)
- 8:00 PM** Northridge H/A
Participation
18420 Roscoe (at Reseda Blvd)
(Pavilion Plaza)
- 8:30 PM** West Hollywood
"Resin Resisters"-Step Study
8939 1/2 Santa Monica Bl., Upstairs
(W. Hollywood Drug & Alcohol Ctr)
- 8:30 PM** Alhambra/Rosemead
Participation
Ingleside Hosp (Adolescent Unit)
7500 Hellman Avenue

SATURDAY

- 10:30 AM** Hollywood
Speaker Meeting (ALL WELCOME!)
1625 N. Hudson - Parking in Rear
Gay & Lesbian Comm. Serv. Center
- 10:30 AM** Woodland Hills
"Saturday Morning Live" Spkr Mtg
21338 Dumetz Avenue, Room 202
(Woodland Hills Community Church)
- 12 Noon** Whittier
Participation
12200 Washington Blvd. Room #N
- 12 Noon** Covina (Starting 8/28/93)
210 W. San Bernardino Rd.
Inter Community Medical Center
(Classroom A, in basement)
- 6:00 PM** San Diego H/A
"Weed Whackers"
9184 Gramercy Drive
(Von's Shopping Center:
Serenity Shop - Back Door)
- 6:00 PM** Fountain Valley H/A
N.A. Book Study
16533 Brookhurst
(Elaine's Gifts - Back Door)

For Information on Meetings
in Other Areas, Call
1-800-766-6779

Marijuana Anonymous
P.O. BOX 2912
VAN NUYS, CA 91404

(818)-566-3678
(213)-964-2370
(714)-999-9409