

# A NEW LEAF

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## Hoping to Catch a Free One..... NOT!!

by Mike H., District 6

I was recently confronted with a situation that is not uncommon to addicts. I was going into the hospital for surgery and expected myself to be in a lot of post-op pain. And, if there's one thing I've always tried to avoid, it's pain. So the doctor, doing what doctors do, handed me a prescription for Vicodin a week

before surgery. I, as addicts do, took the piece of paper and failed to mention that I was in recovery.

I dropped the prescription off at the pharmacy and told them I wouldn't be picking it up until the day of the surgery. I know myself pretty well and those little pills would've been singing to me from my medicine cabinet, and I'm all too familiar with the tune.

However, circumstances forced me to postpone the surgery for ten days. When I visited the doctor again a few days prior to surgery, he did what doctors do, he handed me a prescription for another forty Vicodin. And once again I did my part, I took it and didn't say a word. And that's when the alarm went off in my head. Why? Why didn't I tell him? What the hell was I doing?

Realizing that I was on exceedingly slippery ground, I spoke to my sponsor and then went to a meeting that night and told on myself. Whew! That was a load and a half off of my mind. Later, many people approached me with excellent suggestions and I took action the very next morning. I did what I should have done in the first place. I called the doctor and told him I was a recovering

addict. He immediately prescribed a non-narcotic painkiller and he also told me to inform the anesthesiologist that I was an addict in recovery.

When I was wheeled into surgery a few days later I told the anesthesiolo-


*"Realizing that I was on exceedingly slippery ground, I spoke to my sponsor....."*

gist just that. But when I asked her why she needed to know that, her answer was surprising. She asked me how long I'd been clean and I told her nearly two years. She said, "Then I have to watch you carefully because this is all gonna happen very quickly. You're body's so clean that everything will happen faster." Well, if I wasn't already lying down you could've knocked me over with a feather. Imagine that, zero tolerance. It sure wasn't that way back when I was using.

Over the course of the week following the operation, I took a sum total of

three pills because these non-narcotic painkillers made me so uncomfortable, so lightheaded and disoriented, I didn't like taking them. So, I didn't. Also, it became apparent to me that my fear of the pain I was going to be in was greater than any I actually experienced. And that's probably been true on more than

one occasion in my life.

I had heard Kathy C. share at a meeting once after she had the misfortune of severely injuring herself. She talked about the anticipation of having a "free one" when it came time for her to use her painkillers. Then she impressed upon me that it was a miserable experience. I am here to echo that, and say that recovery has screwed up my using big time. There wasn't even the slightest bit of pleasure in it for me. I sincerely hope that I never forget that. And, I sincerely hope that you don't either. 

## Defining Power - Less - Ness

by Lance D., District 6

I define Powerlessness as "Less Power Than Necessary." Today, I've come to understand the differences between Fellowship (...the meetings) and the Program (...the Big Book). If I stay abstinent without using the Program, I won't gain the serenity I'm after.

Today I have 1920 hours of not using (or 80 days, if that is easier for you). My multi-substance addiction

sometimes means living on an hourly basis. I know that living in a 24-hour bracket is much easier than trying to plan my life for even one week.

My program, this time around, is much more spiritual. I now have God in my life. I can see the growth in my fellows who came into the Program when I first did, over two years ago. I want what they have.

I have learned that the Program

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## Power - Less

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as well as the Fellowship must come first and foremost if my recovery is to expand on any level. I have a strong sponsor that gives me his wisdom. I try to use it. My life has to become a Program Life. For me, that is using the Tools in as many of my affairs as possible. (Going to meetings, working with newcomers, talking to at least one addict everyday, giving back what has been given to me so freely.)

It hasn't been easy. Living life for me in general has never been easy. I know there will always be those Hills and Valleys. But, there are also Flatlands. That's where I am today. I was told early on in this Fellowship that the only control I have is in the way I choose to look at an issue... not how I can control the outcome.

So, when I'm feeling angry, lonely, or resentful, I keep reminding myself that I am powerless and that everything happens in God's world for a reason. Who am I to ask what His/Her reason is for doing anything?

Living now on this level of consciousness, I'm coming to believe and see that I have grown by leaps and bounds in my recovery.

Keep coming back. It works if you let it. ☺

## Thought for the Month

*"If I feel that my pain has in part been occasioned by others, I try to repeat, 'God grant me the serenity to love their best, and never fear their worst.' This benign healing process of repetition, sometimes necessary to persist with for days, has seldom failed to restore me to at least a workable emotional balance and perspective."*

Bill W.

## Faith, Almost as Easy as It Sounds

by Joellen J., District 6

When I was using, I had no faith; none in myself, none in God, and none in any of my friends. When I got into recovery I was told, "turn your fear into faith".

At one year of sobriety and recovery I had a little faith in my God. I had a little faith in my friends, but not in myself. Then I met someone who had an amazing amount of faith. Suddenly my faith grew just by being around this person. This person taught me that faith is much better than fear and that faith without works is dead. Funny how my sponsor would tell me that but I just didn't get it.

At 22 months of recovery my faith in myself is amazing! But, my faith in God today is indescribable! When ever a bad situation arises in my life, I turn

my fear into faith. And you know what? It is almost as easy as it sounds. Its not so easy when I let my committee take over. My faith goes out the window. But, I can then snap out of it by praying and (one more time...) I turn my fear into faith. Faith that God will do for me what I can't do for myself:

Sometimes I don't like the things God puts in front of me. Some of the lessons or some of "His will" hurts like Hell. But it's these times I need to turn fear into faith. I know God wants what is best for me. I know that He hasn't brought me this far just to let me down. There's a reason for everything.

One last thing, Sober = "Son of a B--, Everything's Real". This is the best cliché I've heard. Life is in session. I'm living one day at a time. ☺

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DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK  
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NEW ZEALAND  
(no info at this time)

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, P.O.Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404  
(800) 766-6779

**BE A PART OF HISTORY IN THE MAKING !  
THE FIRST MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS CONVENTION IS COMING !  
January 13, 14, and 15, 1995  
Overlooking the Ocean in Santa Cruz, California**

**Schedule:**

Friday, January 13

5:30pm: Convention & Registration Opens  
7:00-9:00pm: MA Meeting (Open)

3:00-4:30pm: 2 Simultaneous Workshops  
4:45-6:00pm: 2 Simultaneous Workshops  
6:00-7:00pm: Free Period  
7:00-11:00pm: Dinner/Murder Mystery Party!  
(by Pre-registration Only !!!)

Saturday, January 14

8:00-9:00am: Continental Breakfast at Hotel  
9:00-10:00am: MA Meeting (Open)  
10:30-Noon: Key-Note Speaker Meeting  
Noon-1:30pm: Lunch Break (not served at hotel)  
1:45-2:45pm: 2 Simultaneous Workshops

Sunday, Jan 15

8:00-9:00am: Continental Breakfast at Hotel  
9:00-10:30am: 3 Simultaneous Workshops  
10:30-11:30am: 3 Simultaneous Workshops  
11:30-12:30pm: Closing Meeting-End of Convention

**Here's the Deal...Weekend Package: \$65.00 (room not included) You get...**

ALL workshops and meetings for the entire weekend  
\$3.00 off on Convention T-shirt

Two Continental Breakfasts at the hotel on Saturday and Sunday, plus coffee-tea-soda for entire weekend.

One Dinner (and Saturday night Murder Mystery Party) Indicate on Order Form your choice of:

- A. Spinach Lasagna, salad, bread, veggie, tea, coffee, soda
- B. Chicken Dish, salad bread, veggie, tea, coffee, soda

**OR...**

You can purchase a Day pass for the Convention. \$25.00 for Saturday and/or \$20.00 for Sunday. Tickets for the Murder Mystery Party and Dinner only, can be purchased for \$25.00. Remember, in order to attend the Murder Mystery Dinner you must pre-register by December 12th. For seating and theatrical purposes, everyone attending should be registered by name and gender.

**All pre-registration\* takes place through BW L. in San Francisco**

Make all checks payable to M.A. and mail to:

BW L., 2915 California St. #6, San Francisco, CA 94115, with the order form below.

\*We would appreciate as much pre-registration as possible to help us place the deposit on the hotel.

Gift Certificates Available. Indicate on Order Form the name and address of the recipient.

Cut off date for pre-registration is December 12, 1994. All envelopes must be postmarked by December 12, 1994.

**Hotel Information:**

Dream Inn (Convention Site, ocean side of street)

175 West Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 (800)662-3838 from CA, and (408)426-4330 from outside CA.

Rooms are \$69.00 per night, plus tax. (Must say that you are with MA Convention for group rate.)

Seaway Motel, (Across the street from Dream Inn) - Same phone numbers.

Rooms are \$39.00 per night plus tax. (Must say that you are with MA Convention for group rate.)

**ROOM RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY DECEMBER 20, 1994**

(MAKE A COPY OF THIS ORDER FORM IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO CUT UP YOUR NEWSLETTER)

ORDER FORM FOR CONVENTION ONLY..... (Hotel must be booked separately):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Cert. - Recipient's info. above, Giver below: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Package Choice (\$65) \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Only (no dinner) (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday Only (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner/Murder Mystery Only (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken Dinner \_\_\_\_\_ Lasagna Dinner \_\_\_\_\_