



The Insane “At least it doesn’t black me out” Thinking

Editor’s Note:

This story submitted by RIK H. is a continuation from the Dec 2018 issue.

“
Instead of
finishing college...
I delivered pizza
for ten years.
”

...Instead of finishing college and starting a career, I delivered pizza for ten years.

I smoked weed and drank every day, was a mediocre husband and father, I had a mortgage and two car payments. I worked, paid bills, and fed my addictions. This went on for seven years.

I smoked one to two grams a day and never drank anything non-alcoholic at home. Every two to four hours, I needed to ingest some amount of marijuana and alcohol to keep the withdrawal at bay.

A typical day for me began by waking up around four in the morning to go to the bathroom then I would have a shot and a few hits to back to sleep for a few more hours. I woke up in a panic every morning which is how I felt after four hours without a dose of weed and alcohol. I had to smoke first thing in the morning. Then two hours before lunch, I was having an anxiety attack, feeling nauseous, feverish, clammy, and had sharp pains in my bowels. I’d hit the bowl ten times and be all better again for another two to four hours depending on how much I exerted myself doing whatever I was doing.

I would skip lunch because that would rapidly diminish the high, and the withdrawal came right back on full blast. I had to smoke before eating and definitely after eating, so I had to smoke in order to eat at all. I definitely couldn’t sleep without weed. My brain would not shut off. I wasn’t sleeping normally with marijuana. I never had

dreams, but I needed weed to sleep at all. I had to pay extra to eat and sleep.

Until one day my dealer for the past year and a half decided to join the Marines. At this point I was two weeks shy of turning thirty. He asked me if I wanted one more before he shipped out. For the past like eighteen months I went from getting one ounce to two ounces every month for like a year. I was married for seven years, had four kids, and had been just barely managing the unmanageable. I said no thanks good luck with the Marines.

I’m going to be thirty in a few weeks, and I need to quit all this anyway. So the plan was to quit marijuana cold turkey and taper myself off the alcohol dropping one beer per day every week starting at ten beers a day. I didn’t sleep for five days in a row, so I switched to bourbon, had a bad blackout in my home, and came to in a psychiatric ward. This is when I started to go to meetings.

I stayed sober for one day shy of two months out of fear, but I was in and out for two years after that. The blackouts kept me coming back after very nearly getting into trouble again. I just couldn’t make enough meetings, my work schedule, family, bills to pay, really I just wasn’t making enough meetings. Finally the wife and kids moved out. Within a year, I lost my mind, job, and everything else I had.

I was so addicted to forty to fifty percent alcohol at this time, I was drinking much more than I was smoking. I became homeless, had a bad blackout at my ex-wife’s home, came to in the emergency room, snuck out, got a motel room, had a bad blackout two days later there, came out of the blackout forty hours later in a psychiatric hospital again, two and half years after the first time it happened.

I detoxed there for eleven days and went to rehab for a month. Now I really had nothing, and I was sleeping on my parent’s couch which was blessedly a three minute walk away from an AA clubhouse. Now I had all the time in the world to go to meetings, and I did like three meetings a day. I stayed completely sober for six months until I started smoking marijuana again because, “at least it doesn’t black me out.”

Sure it’s addictive and makes my life totally unmanageable. I can’t eat, sleep, or feel remotely well without it, but if I’m going to get intoxicated on something it’s going to be that because, “it doesn’t black me out.” One month less than three years after my wife left with kids, she lost custody of them, and they were put in foster care. A social worker demanded that I take a urinalysis, and I failed.

She said that I had to go to outpatient drug and alcohol treatment; and while I was going there, I asked my counselor if she thought there was an AA for marijuana smokers. She searched for something on her computer. Marijuana Anonymous came up, and I was like awesome!

Where are all the meetings? I was saddened that there were only two meetings in my whole state, but glad that they are both local to where live. One meeting meets in the city, and the other one meets twenty minutes away from me. I went to those meetings as much as I could in the very beginning, but I’m not very good with driving in, or getting to the big city, and the closer meeting was having some consistency issues at the time.

I need at least one meeting I can absolutely count on and attend consistently, so I thought why don’t I see if I can start an MA meeting at

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.

District Bureau Chiefs

We are reaching out to districts to update the District Bureau Chief and birthday lists. Additionally, district representatives, including but not limited to those serving as Bureau Chief, are encouraged to stay in touch by emailing:
chiefs@anewleafpublications.org

ANLP Staff

Chairperson:	Rick V.
Treasurer:	John L.
Secretary:	Maurice R.
ANLP Admin:	Thor H.
Managing Editor:	Thor H.
Publishing Editor:	*volunteer

Contact ANLP

Send articles/stories:
stories@anewleafpublications.org

*To work with ANLP, please send a note to board@anewleafpublications.org

The Insane ... Thinking

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the AA clubhouse that I've been going to for years now. This was five years ago. We have been on average a five person meeting, but over one hundred different people have passed through helping me get another day. This is the deterrent I need to keep me from going back to the insane "at least it doesn't black me out thinking."

I don't have the sanity on my own to stay off of marijuana for long. Going to AA meetings is a deterrent for me to abstain from drinking but not in abstaining from marijuana or tobacco use. I have crossed the sanity line, going against my better judgement and desire for self preservation too many times where marijuana is concerned for me to have the ability to help myself. I need a power greater than myself.

One Marijuana Addict helping another Marijuana Addict is without parallel. At our meeting we read the "We identified with the insanity of addiction as described by the members of the fellowship" part of Step Two from *Life with Hope*, after reading *Who Is A Marijuana Addict*. "We could now see that our marijuana abuse had continued long after we realized that we had a problem. We had continued using even as we became ever more resentful, isolated, paranoid, slothful, and desperate. No matter how great the need or the wish to stop, the

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thought of using eventually pushed aside all the reasons why we should. We always had to have a supply on hand and felt horribly guilty that we couldn't stop using. Our insanity was evident as we repeated the same behavior over and over, yet somehow expected different results. Some of us even had bad experiences each time we smoked but managed to suppress them somehow...before we used again."

This statement is true for me as it is for many others, but it is inoperative on its own without the experience, strength, and hope of one marijuana addict identifying with another. I can't help myself, but we can help each other. I also couldn't do this without the love and support from my girlfriend, Jen, who makes it possible for me to be where I need to be every Monday night. Last year a brand new rehab opened in my area, and I called them to ask if I could bring in an MA speaker meeting once a month. Every third Friday for ten months now, I get an extra meeting a month. ▲

~by RIK H.

ANLP Board – 2018 Summary Update

For several years ANLP has had difficulties with timely fulfillment of orders for books and newsletters, and communications with our customers and subscribers.

Our efforts this past year have been to update our fulfillment, tracking, and accounting processes, and we have made strides in each of these areas.

This year ANLP has been honored to have a new Chair, Secretary, Managing Editor, and Treasurer, as well as a new ANLP Office Administrator. They are collectively lending their talents and areas of expertise towards the ideal of being of maximum service to members of the fellowship, and beyond.

The ANLP Board is comprised of five members. The three executive ANLP Board members include Rick V. (Chair), Maurice R. (Secretary), and John L. (Treasurer). We also have Thor H. serving as Managing Editor, and are still seeking the help of someone with Adobe InDesign

skills to be a part of the team as Publishing Editor (*see help wanted ad on page 4*). The term of service for each of the aforementioned members officially began at the end of the World Services Conference, May 28, 2018. Executive Board members serve a two-year term, and others serve one year, with optional second.

Our service body also includes an ANLP Administrator (*a paid special worker*). In December 2018 the Board unanimously accepted Thor's offer to serve in that capacity for an interim period of six months, after which we will revisit the question of how best to have the admin's duties fulfilled. Thor will also maintain his role as Managing Editor, presumably for the full term.

The Administrator fulfills literature orders as well as supports the efforts of the five Board members. Responsibilities include monitoring and responding to ANLP's mail/email, processing orders, and assisting various Board members: the Chair with day-to-day operations, the Treasurer with bookkeeping, the Secretary with maintaining a digital literature archive, and more.

We are grateful for the service that Alan B. provided during his tenure both as the outgoing Chair and ANLP Administrator for the time in which he served in those capacities (*two years as Chair and roughly two and a half as Administrator*). ANLP continues to operate with a spirit of teamwork and unity thanks in great part to Alan B.'s and Keith G.'s participation these last few years, and we were able to complete a number of important projects, e.g. updates to the fellowship's basic text, *Life with Hope*, the pamphlets, the ANLP website functionality and content, as well as accounting functionality. Thank you, Alan, Keith, Chrysanthemum, and Rick, *all* for your contributions to those efforts!

Thor's stepping into the Managing Editor role was perfectly timed as we were in need of someone who would maintain responsibility over communications with the fellowship at large, specifically but not limited to district Bureau Chiefs or other district/meeting members who will ideally continue to liaise with ANLP. He chose to help out

with fulfillment of the newsletters beginning July 2018, and with the exception of this January 2019 issue (*which was delayed in production*), we hope that our subscribers noticed the increased efficiency in which the *A New Leaf* newsletter orders were being delivered since July.

Challenges / Opportunities to address in the coming months

○ Marijuana Anonymous & A New Leaf Publications websites

- As many members may be aware, our fellowship's primary website has had certain loss of functionality since early 2018. Issues related but not limited to the meeting finder, forms for submitting birthdays, meditations, and stories, the accessibility of ANLP's back issues, were among those needing to be fixed.
- A joint effort between the MA World Services Public Information and Internet Committees is underway to reinstate these functions in the newly-launched primary site—www.marijuana-anonymous.org. However, when such functionality will be fully implemented is as-yet unknown. In the meantime, please see the bottom left of [page 2](#) of this newsletter for how to submit stories, and [page 4](#) for birthdays. ANLP's primary site remains unchanged: www.anewleafpublications.org

○ ANLP accounting, budgeting and reporting

- Our Treasurer as of May 2018, John L. (from San Jose, District 3), with the help of paid special workers, Kate Mc. (our World Services Accountant), and Chrysanthemum H. (our Assistant Accountant) has on his docket the intention to normalize ANLP's reporting functionality using the tools implemented by Keith and Chrysanthemum several years ago (namely QuickBooks Online and Pinnacle Cart).
- The desired outcome includes regular monthly reporting to the ANLP Board, quarterly reporting to MA World Services in conjunction with its own quarterly accounting statements, and **annual ANLP budgets**. Specifically, we intend to produce a back-dated budget

for fiscal year 2017-2018, the current 2018-2019 budget, and a projected for the next fiscal year. While our business has in fact been financially stable and transparent with regard to annual Conference reporting, in light of the fact that we will hopefully soon be off-loading the fulfillment activity to Hazelden, the ANLP Board would like to be able to present a few year-over-year budgets at the 2019 World Conference so that we will readily be able to report on differences in our finances *before and after* Hazelden presumably takes on the global distribution of our books (*which will far exceed the reach we would ever become capable of on our own*). There will be more reported on the Hazelden process in the coming months.

○ Billing monthly subscribers

- ANLP offers annual subscriptions to individuals and to groups wanting 5 or 10 copies per month. Additionally, monthly subscriptions are available to groups wanting 25–200 copies per month. Annual subscribers pay in advance for a year, while monthly subscribers would typically be billed each month.
- ANLP has not billed monthly subscribers since early 2017.** Thor and John are actively working toward validating our list of monthly subscribers and will be implementing billing and other process improvements over the next several months.
- Sales of the newsletter effectively cover costs, plus generate a modicum of revenue for operating expenses and a portion of ANLP's 7th Tradition contributions to MA World Services each year. When a member or group purchases ANLP literature (*books, newsletters, etc.*) they are participating in the spirit of the **Seventh Tradition**, by helping the fellowship maintain itself financially.

We'd like to thank our subscribers that continue to purchase literature to support the purpose of ANLP as well as that of our fellowship, to carry the message of recovery.

In Service,
Your ANLP Board

Marijuana Anonymous Worldwide

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

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WANTED: Designer, with InDesign chops to join the team!

We are in need of a volunteer

Publishing Editor. The role requires InDesign CC, a grasp of Character and Paragraph Styles, e.g. how they're used in layout, and willingness to be of service on a team. Per our charter, it's a 1-year commitment, optional second year, by a member ideally 2 yrs clean+sober. We've found that the best way to elicit

support is asking directly, and we hope our readers will do just that. Specifically, we encourage you to not **only** announce this in meetings, but to learn who in your area might have design skills and discuss this service opportunity with them directly. Thank You! ~ANLP Board
board@anewleafpublications.org



From Life with Hope

Step One

We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on MA unity.



Celebrating 290 Years of Sobriety!

District 2	Larry C. 11/28/1999 19 yrs	Louis R. 12/3/1998 20 yrs
John L. 12/15/1984 34 yrs	Lisa S. 12/7/1993 25 yrs	Mike D. 12/15/1997 21 yrs
Reese H. 12/7/2017 1 yr	Ray M. 11/19/2013 5 yrs	Nikhil K. 12/13/2012 6 yrs
District 4	District 7	Ralph D. 11/27/2017 1 yr
Bryan C. 12/8/2016 2 yrs	Joemar 12/10/2015 3 yrs	District 21
Chad H. 12/15/2017 1 yr	District 11	Adam Z. 11/27/2017 1 yr
Thor H. 12/6/2000 18 yrs	Andy D. 12/2/2007 11 yrs	Chris B. 11/26/2016 2 yrs
District 5	Bethany D. 12/1/2012 6 yrs	Marcy G. 11/6/2016 3 yrs
Amanda 12/17/2014 4 yrs	Cassi S. 12/9/1997 21 yrs	Nicole E. 11/13/2017 1 yr
Andrew 12/13/2015 3 yrs	Clair H. 12/30/2012 6 yrs	Tresa W. 11/23/2010 8 yrs
Colin 12/3/2011 7 yrs	Issa K. 11/11/2009 9 yrs	Ann Arbor, MI Group
Gary R. 12/10/1990 28 yrs	Jenifer C. 11/12/2012 6 yrs	Christian B. 12/21/2017 1 yr
Joe W. 11/19/2011 7 yrs	Lon M. 11/24/2009 9 yrs	Casey B. 12/14/2017 1 yr

GOT A YEAR? WOULD YOU LIKE ANLP TO PUBLISH YOUR SOBRIETY ANNIVERSARY? Give your sobriety date to your local GSR and it will be forwarded to your Bureau Chief or e-mail chiefs@anewleafpublications.org. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that 1) HAVE occurred, 2) HAVE NOT been published and, 3) ARE NOT OLDER THAN 45 days.

