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### **DRUG ABUSE AND ITS EFFECT.**

Drug abuse is a widespread problem that makes individual drug users the prime victims. But drugs also affect all of us, where we live and what we do. Drug abuse can cause serious physical and mental deterioration. It is also known as substance abuse or chemical abuse.

Before I go into defining the term “drug abuse”, I would like us to know what the term “drugs” refer to, types of drugs, how they can be abused and also what it means to abuse a drug.

A drug is any substance that causes a change in an organism’s physiology or psychology when consumed. Drugs are typically distinguished from food and substances that provide nutritional support. Drugs can be consumed via inhalation, injection, smoking, ingestion, absorption or dissolution under the tongue. Now, we have pharmaceutical and psychoactive drugs. Pharmaceutical drugs also referred to as medication, is a chemical substance used to treat, cure, prevent or diagnose a disease or to promote well-being where as psychoactive drugs are chemical substances that affect the function of the central nervous system, altering perception, mood, or consciousness.

Now that we are familiar with the term ‘drug’ I would like to define Drug abuse. Drug abuse, substance abuse or chemical abuse, is the use of illegal drugs or use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in large amounts.

According to the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and control, drug abuse is the excessive and persistent self-administration of drugs without regards to medically and culturally accepted pattern in a sense, it could mean the use of drug to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of an individual. Drug abuse can also be said to be the non-medical use of drugs that can alter the mood or perception, produce euphoria and have the ability to make the user want to use the drug regardless of the health, social and physical impairment.

Drugs can be said to be abused when taken without proper prescription by a medical practitioner, when taken indiscriminately, taking beyond prescription doses and the usage of drugs in ways that are medically and culturally unacceptable.

Personally, I think everyone can abuse drugs. I say this because sometimes, when we are sick, we tend to self-prescribe, take overdoses of some drugs. But I am going to base my essay on the abuse of psychoactive drugs and not pharmaceutical drugs. These psychoactive drugs are divided into groups like stimulants, depressants, antidepressants and hallucinogens.

Psychoactive drugs have been proven to be useful in treating a wide range of medical conditions including mental disorders around the world. The most widely used drugs include caffeine, nicotine and alcohol, which are considered as recreational drugs, since they are used for pleasure rather than medicinal purposes.

There are several reasons why teenagers and youths from all parts of the world are involved in drug abuse. To deal with drug abuse effectively, it is important to learn about the causes that lead to it. The biggest reason behind drug abuse among youths and teenagers is stress. Stress can be due to various reasons; it can be due to stress from school, stress from family problems and also stress of working for jobs around the country. Stress can come in any form. It can even come in form of a particular illness and these youths and teenagers may not have the mental capacity to carry such.

Also, another important cause behind drug abuse is peer pressure. As we are living in an extremely competitive age, it becomes very essential to grow in the world. Due to peer pressure, a lot of teenagers and young people feel the need to consume drugs, alcohol and smoke. For young people, it is difficult to ignore this pressure otherwise they will feel neglected and isolated in the group. To prevent such happenings, they get into forming a habit of consuming drugs.

Another major reason to use drugs is to prevent mental health of a person. People who are weaker on emotional levels, have the tendency to feel depressed. They search for means that sets them free and live life as per their choice. In that situation, they begin consuming drugs and slowly it becomes addiction.

A lot of drug abusers hold psychological trauma as the cause behind substance abuse. Around 75% of people who suffer from psychological shock, use drugs to get cured. It is perceived as a self-medicating strategy to deal with self-destructive behaviour.

Drug abuse can have a long-term influence on life. It can lead to drug addiction. It can develop acute symptoms like trembling, fatigue, anxiety, depression, insomnia, headache, sweating, chills, changes in behaviour, paranoia, poor coordination issues, nausea and dilated pupils. There are several negative consequences of abusing drugs. Most of them are seen on physical, mental and psychological levels. The impact of drugs on a person are profound and wide.

The psychological influence of drug abuse comprises of craving of the drug. Some of the emotional impacts of drug abuse are depression, mood swings, anxiety, violence, reduction in day to day activities, confusion, hallucinations and psychological tolerance towards drug effects.

It causes a lot of physical effect on the person. It includes irregular heartbeat, heart attack, respiratory issues, lung cancer, kidney damage, abdominal pain, brain damage, liver problem, changes in appetite, seizures and stroke. The influence of drug abuse does not remain limited to specific body organs but affects various organs of the body. Excessive use of drugs weakens one's immune system and enhances the possibility of getting infected.

Drug abuse can be prevented. Parents can prevent drug abuse! Parents are the best protections youngsters can have against drug abuse. Prevention is the process, which builds into children a resistance to abusing drugs, so that drug use never begins. Prevention is a positive process. It is a process which cannot be started too soon.

Also, sensitization of teenagers and youths concerning the harmful effects of drug abuse on an individual and the society by their parents, teachers and religious leaders will help curb this societal issue. Parents, can also teach their children at home to learn how to deal with peer pressure so as to prevent this. They can also play a role by knowing the kind of friends their youngster keeps; this will help in knowing whether or not their child is affected positively or negatively by the friendship.

Conclusively, drug abuse is a societal problem that has caused more harm than good. It is better we try our possible best to educate one another of the dangers of it so as to prevent its ugly effects. We can only do this if we are able to strictly adhere to prescriptions and know the dangers of taking hard drugs which have dangerous side effect on our physical, mental and social health.