

CONFLICTS WITHIN & CONFLICTS WITHOUT 3

Parents, elders, educators, social workers as well as law enforcement personal should be armed with information on drugs and substances that are commonly used by those who abuse them to be in a state of heedlessness. Tobacco and tobacco products are included in the list. They are addictive and a danger to health. Here is a short list of commonly abused drugs and substances:-

Alcohol
Cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products
Cocaine
Ecstasy
Heroin
LSD
Marijuana/ cannabis/ hashish
Methamphetamines
Substances containing opium
GHB [date rape drug
PCP [angel dust]
Sniffing of chemicals [glue, spray paint, cleaning fluids, gasoline, hair spry etc.]

It is very useful for those concerned to have an idea of the symptoms generated by the consumption of drugs and other mind changing substances.

The use and abuse of drugs affect not only the individuals concerned, their families and their communities but also their nations and their international relations. At the individual and family level, drug abuse leads to ill health, delinquency and financial burdens. The lives of parents and other elders doing drugs affect the lives of their offspring and other young people. If the younger ones do drugs, the elders would feel the effects not only emotionally and socially, but also financially as well.

One disturbing trend recently observed is the increase in teen pregnancies. In the overwhelming majority of the cases, the pregnancies have occurred subsequent to knowingly doing drugs or becoming victims of date-rape.

Drugs affect the community as well as its nation. There is a clear co-relation between the amount of drugs consumed in a particular community and its volume of crime. The crimes may range from pilfering, stealing and those of a violent nature. The community and its national government have to bear the cost of crime prevention, rehabilitation, the liability on its health services and the relatively lost man-hours of production.

Internationally, countries are concerned with the controlling of the sources of production and distribution of contraband drugs. Investments on the supervision of transport of contraband substances have to be done. Money laundering goes hand in hand with drug trafficking. Terrorism in many countries is funded from the gains of drug trafficking. Funds earned through the disposal of drugs are converted to international currencies and electronically transferred to the desired destination in apparent legal modes.

In financial terms, countries invest about \$85 billion to control the trafficking of only three drugs: cocaine, heroin and cannabis. This amount is higher than the individual Gross National Product of many nations of the world community. So far, they are fighting a losing battle.

Awareness programs, of its wide ranging dangers, for individuals in their formative years could be the most effective way of keeping them off drug abuse. We could envisage a world free of drug abuse only when individuals voluntarily undertake to refrain from substances that lead to heedlessness. However, each individual taken off the abuse of drugs is, in itself, a battle won.

The Dhamma Way Group.