

## **Drugs- Python for Mankind**

Milton has well said in 'Paradise Lost' that,  
    "The mind is its own place  
    And in itself,  
    Can make a Heaven  
    of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

The above statement is absolutely correct. It makes us ponder over the secrecies and intricacies of human mind. It is really surprising that man is fascinated by vices, not by virtues. He is allured by the negative forces of life. He wants to seek happiness not through sublime means; but through shallow methods like drugs. Today, drugs are affecting every facet of life. The whole world is trapped in the terrible web of drugs.

Drug addicts can be found in each and every country. Though it is impossible to explain the drug phenomenon plainly, yet drug addicts can be differentiated between 'adults' and 'teenagers'. According to the rate of drug consumption another two groups- 'experimenters' and 'permanent users' can be singled out.

Now the question arises: Why do young people take drugs? There may be a lot of reasons for that. Young people often use drugs as a kind of protest against adult world. They want to shock their parents; they want to have their own style; they like taking risks etc. Sometimes they want to escape from the harsh realities of life and are caught in this vicious circle. There is a cut throat competition at every level. The fear of failure tortures the mind-sets of youth. Gradually, they tend to become escapists. No wonder most of the people experimenting with drugs belong to a 14-17 year old age group.

Friends play a considerable role at the very beginning of drug taking. Drugs are most often offered by friends or friends' friends. The first time is usually initiated by others. Gradually, the python of drugs paralyses the potentialities of a person.

As we know, alcohol is the most popular drug among youth and adults in our country. Sadly, alcohol is also one of the most deadly drugs available to our youth today. The leading cause of death among teens in this country is alcohol related traffic accidents. Alcohol causes heart disease, high blood pressure, liver damage, brain damage and many other health problems. Once alcohol is absorbed into the blood-stream, it acts upon the central nervous system like a depressant, affecting speech, vision and co-ordination, staggered walk, blurred vision, bloodshot eyes, slurred speech, dizziness, nausea and vomiting.

There are some other drugs like marijuana, cocaine, heroin, tobacco and inhalants, which are very common among drug addicts. Marijuana, the second most popular drug with youth consists of the leaves, flowers, stems and seeds of the cannabis plant, which are dried and chopped into small amounts. It is usually smoked, but it can be taken orally. Hashish is formed of resin scraped from the flowering top of the cannabis plant.

It, too, can be smoked or eaten, and it is thought to be about five to eight times as potent as marijuana. Kil, Bhang and Ganja are other preparations of cannabis used in various parts of the world.

Cocaine, a popular drug among drug addicts damages nose mucous membrane and strongly affects psychics. Heroin, the most dangerous and addictive narcotic, actively inhibits brain functions and affects organism. Tobacco is another widely used drug in India. This is used in many forms, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco and snuff. Tobacco acts both as stimulant and a depressant. A beginning smoker will experience euphoria, light-headedness, elevated heartbeat and a tingling sensation in the hands and feet. Some of the many health hazards of tobacco are cancer, lung disease, obstructive pulmonary and bronchial disease, gum and jawbone deterioration and allergic reactions.

There is immediate need for community intervention to prevent drug abuse. Treatment of drug abuses depends upon the severity and nature of the addiction, motivation and the availability of services. Some users may come into treatment voluntarily and have the support of family, friends and workplace; others may be sent to treatment by the courts against their will and have no support system.

The problem of drug abuse cannot be eradicated in one day. We will have to join hands in order to wipe off this evil. We will have to start the reform from the home, the family, the school, the college and the neighborhood. The parents should take greater care of their children. It is well said that hate the sin and not the sinner. Hate the drugs, but not the drug addict, who is perhaps a confused, insecure and ignored personality. Basically, a drug addict is not a wicked person. He can be somebody's son, husband, brother or neighbour. We must pay attention to what Swami Vivekananda says. He says,

**“ Anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison.”**

Keeping this golden uttering in view, we must reject all sorts of drugs as poison only then we can dream of living in a drug free world. Let us remember the age-old saying of Kathopnishad-

**“Arise, awake and stop not, till the goal is reached.”**