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Psycho-Social Effects of Drugs and Alcohol on the Muslim Community



What is a Drug?

Any substance or product that affects people's

- Feelings
- Thoughts
- Behaviours
- Mood
- Senses – vision, taste, smell, hearing

What is Tolerance?

When a person requires a higher dose to produce the same original affect of the drug that was taken in smaller amounts originally

What is intoxication?

“State of being under the influence of one or more substances” (World Health Organisation)

Effects of intoxication on person changes their:

- Alertness
- Thinking
- Perceptions
- Decision-making
- Emotions
- Behaviour

Withdrawal

Physical and Psychological symptoms associated with cessation or reduction of a substance

Examples of withdrawal symptoms include:

nausea, weakness, anxiety, perspiration, headaches, cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea, hallucinations, confusion, disorientation, loss of appetite, watery eyes, runny nose, dizziness, agitation, physical shock, sleeplessness, or "the shakes".

Band-Aid Solutions

- Breath testing
- Graphic portrayals or fear campaigns
- Abstinence is not a major goal

The Islamic Response

Three Stage Process

Setting the stage for prohibition:

- *Taqwa* – God-consciousness
- *Iman* – Faith
- Emphasis on Family & Community

Stage One – Appeal to Reason

"And from the fruits of date-palm and grapes you derive sakaraa (intoxicating liquor) as well as wholesome sustenance. Lo! Therein is indeed a sign for people who have wisdom."

(Quran 16:67)

Stage Two – Demonising Alcohol

Oh you who believe! Approach not salat with a mind befogged, until you can understand that which you speak....

(Quran 4: 43)

Stage Three – prohibition of consumption of alcohol

Oh you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, and (erecting) stone (pillars for worship), and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Shaytan, so avoid it that you may be successful. Shaytan only wants to excite enmity and hatred between you with khamr (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from salaah. Will you not then abstain?"

(Quran 5: 90-91)

Important lessons from the experience in Medina

Abstinence cannot be achieved by issuing laws of prohibition before a person's underlying psychological, social, and economic motivating cause for drug use has been dealt with.

Harsh judgments, avoidance, etc may aggravate the situation and may actually increase drug and alcohol consumption

Aisha (ra) said about the Quranic method: "If the Quran first told the Arabs not to drink *khamr* and not to gamble or perform fornication or adultery they would have said: 'No, we cannot.' The Quran kept putting in their hearts the fear and love of Allah. The description of the life hereafter with its Paradise and Gardens of Eden for those who obey and Hell and its Fire for those who rebel, until their hearts softened. Then they were commanded to stop *khamr*, adultery and gambling, and they complied." (Bukhari)

How to help a drug user or alcoholic in the family and community

- Family and Community Re-Integration
- Use community professionals in the areas of psychology, drugs and alcohol, doctors and psychiatrists, to help in the rehabilitation of the addict
- Send them to a Muslim Support Group for their problem in order to express themselves in a group with others with similar conditions
- Encourage them to use the Salvation Army Bridge Program when they are ready to totally

DO

- Offer support
- Listen to their concerns and open dialogue
- Be honest about prejudices
- Seek expert advice
- Consult others for recovery
- Assist with chosen treatment
- Encourage them to attend a support group
- Encourage them to join their local sports or youth centre
- Encourage brothers to go to the mosque for good company and spiritual therapy
- Help them seek good company
- With love, sympathy and psychological support, you can pass this problematic period

Do Not

- panic
- pity
- judge
- set unrealistic goals
- cut off dialogue/communication
- influence treatment type
- give money to the addict
- kick them out of the house

Mission of Hope – Support Group for Addicts

- Goal is to meet two hours a week where Muslims who are on drugs, alcohol, or gamble can get together and discuss their issues revolving around their addiction, to support each other
- Group will be facilitated by drug and alcohol workers
- Community re-integration encouraged
- Harm minimisation will be initially encouraged, where abstinence is the ultimate goal
- Introduce them into the Salvation Army, Bridge program for abstinent-driven rehabilitation

Mission of Hope

www.missionofhope.org.au