

Many people are quick to say different things when it comes to the issue of drugs. Let us put those claims to the test and take a closer look at three of the most commonly held opinions out on the street so we can separate fact from fiction.

MYTH: “Cannabis is harmless because it’s natural.”

FACT: Here is what most people do not know about cannabis. It alters how your brain works, causes paranoia and drastically reduces your ability to concentrate and remember things. Cannabis abusers can also develop a certain amount of tolerance to the drug, leading to psychological dependence - a lack of motivation to carry out ordinary tasks and an increased risk of lung disease, due to the large amount of smoke inhaled.

MYTH: “Doing drugs make me cool.”

FACT: Nothing could be further from reality. Just because the mainstream media often portrays drugs in a fashionable light doesn't mean you should try them. Drugs like heroin and methamphetamine have caused the deaths of many people and ruined countless lives around the world. Long-term drug abuse also destroys your appearance, making you physically unattractive and even repulsive. If you think that is in any way cool, it is time to think again.

MYTH: “Drug addiction. It won’t happen to me.”

FACT: You are not the one in control. When you take drugs, you are introducing dangerous poisons into your system that mess with your brain. Drugs directly affect your brain's 'reward circuit', causing it to release abnormally large amounts of dopamine - a neurochemical responsible for creating feelings of pleasure. After repeated drug abuse, your brain will start to condition itself to the sheer volume of dopamine and your ability to feel pleasure in normal circumstances will be severely reduced.

This is what causes abusers to seek out more drugs - in greater quantities - even if it means stealing, losing friends, family problems or mental problems brought about by drug abuse. This is the downward spiral of addiction. Addiction happens to you even before you realise it. Thinking that it will not happen to you is simply ignorance or denial.

Research has also confirmed that regular cannabis abusers develop multiple brain abnormalities leading to significantly more attention and memory problems. Once these abilities are lost, they cannot be regained even after stopping cannabis abuse.



**Reality
Check**