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CONVERSATIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS
**SUBSTANCE
MISUSE &
ADOLESCENTS**

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CREDITS PAGE

We thank and salute all these friends who helped us
create these books.

Dr. Jaya, Geeta and Nalini, UNFPA

Veena Shivpuri or Bahanji

Jaya Sharma

The Jagori Rural Team, specially Mast Ram

Suneeta Thakur

Nidhi Gupta

Vinay Aditya

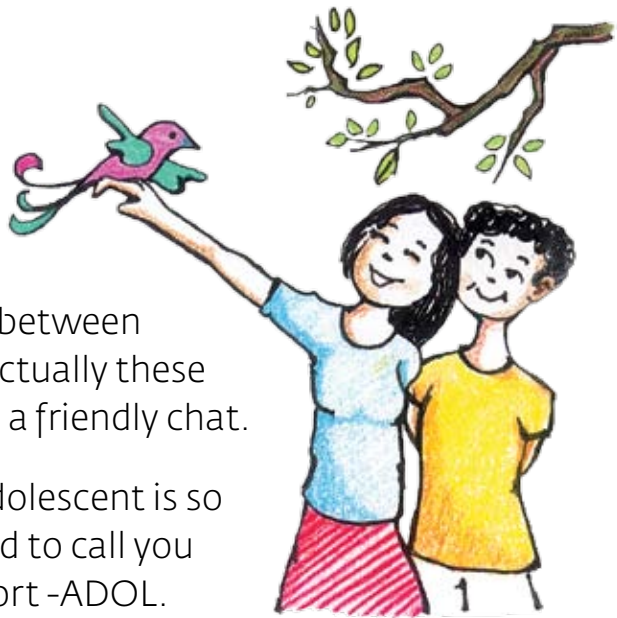




FOREWORD


We have written four books for adolescents ON adolescence, that special phase in our life when we are between 10 and 19 years old. Actually these books are like a chat, a friendly chat.


Because this word adolescent is so long, we have decided to call you ADOL, sweet and short -ADOL.





Hello adole !!


You adols may want to ask why we would like to have these friendly conversations with you since you have not invited us for this chat. Why are we running after you? The honest and only answer is, that when we think of our own adolescence, we feel our problems and worries would have been much less, if we had someone to talk to, someone who would listen to us and understand us.


 There were many adults ready to lecture us, tell us our faults, discourage us, but there was hardly anyone who would talk to us openly, lovingly and respectfully.

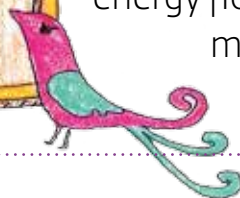
 We had to find the answers to all our questions and worries, either ourselves or with the help of others of our own age. How could those, who had

 no experience themselves, show us the way? We had many bitter experiences

 only because we did not have proper information and understanding. This is

 why we thought we should chat to you adols. Tell us; is there anything wrong in us taking the initiative to start this dialogue?

 Years ago, we too were adols. We too experienced what you are experiencing now. We had this energy flowing in our body and mind. We had dreams



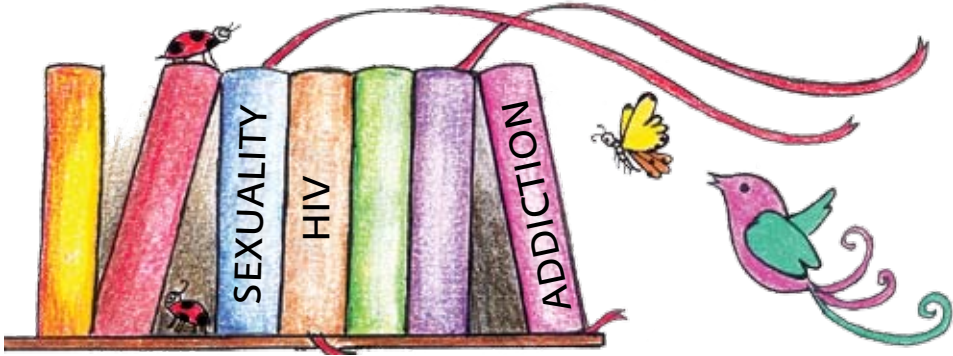
and the desire to do new things. We craved to have our own identity. Along with these feelings there was so much confusion and bewilderment. We felt wronged by our elders. We were filled with questions. We had so much to say, but everything remained inside,



unspoken. Now at this age we feel that silence was unfortunate, not good for us. Talking to someone more experienced would have helped.



Adolescence is the age of enquiry, questioning, an age to check out everything and everyone. There are so many questions about our changing bodies and feelings. There is so much curiosity about friendship and love, about sexuality and reproduction. It is important that all your questions be discussed openly and deeply, all your doubts be addressed thoroughly. We feel that information and comprehensive understanding will enable you to take well thought out and responsible decisions.



There is another reason for talking to you through these books. Many surveys have revealed that adols have limited information and understanding about important issues like gender, sexuality, HIV, alcohol and drugs. Many adols also said that they want more information and frank discussions on these issues.

So, here is an effort to reach out to you, to contribute towards making a positive difference to your experience of adolescence! Let us see if we succeed. You will be the judge. Let us wait and see what you think about these books and what grades you give us.

We will get good grades only if you are with us and will reach out to us. This way we will learn from each other.



So friends, these books are an invitation to talk with open hearts, to learn with open minds. These four books are about some important concerns and challenges of adolescence. To understand adolescence well, you should read all the four books, reflect, investigate your inner selves and have open conversations with friends and mentors.



The first book is “**LIFE SKILLS: THE ART OF LIVING**” In this we have talked about some principles of life and living together and about LIFE SKILLS



The second book is “**UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENTS AND SEXUALITY**” In this book we have detailed conversations about all the changes that take place during adolescence, gender and gendering, sex and sexuality.

The third book is "HIV/AIDS AND ADOLESCENTS" In this book we have discussed many important aspects of HIV/AIDS and ways to prevent it.



The fourth book is on "SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADOLESCENTS" This book discusses substance abuse in detail and suggests ways to challenge this problem which many adols are dealing with.



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SUBSTANCE MISUSE, ADDICTION AND ADOLESCENTS

Adolescence is that stage of our life when we wish to try out everything. In this age we are very curious; there is immense courage and little fear; it is exciting and fun to take risks; we want to do especially that what elders tell us not to do. While adolescence is a life stage that has immense potential, some of the traits mentioned above also make adolescents more vulnerable to substance misuse.



The abuse of addictive substances like alcohol, tobacco, drugs etc. is nothing new. Some people have always been addicted to intoxicants, but today the number of substance misusers is very large and continues to increase making it into a big social problem. Substance misuse is dangerous for everyone, but much more so for adolescents.

The business of drugs a 500 billion dollar (Kamla Di – rather than giving a figure, should we say multi billion dollars – as the figures are likely to change)business today. In this business there is dishonesty, black marketeering, crime and violence. To make quick money and lot of it ,even innocent adols are lured in to this business. Once in to it, it is extremely difficult to get out of it.



Because intoxicating substances are dangerous and addiction to them can destroy nations, in some countries there is death penalty for people carrying drugs.



In 2004, 7.3 crore (73 millions) people in India were abusing substances and 1.3 crore (13 million) (data) people out of theses were addicted. Today the number of substance misusers is much higher. We can imagine the social and economic problems of a country in which 1.3 crore people are addicted to intoxicants.

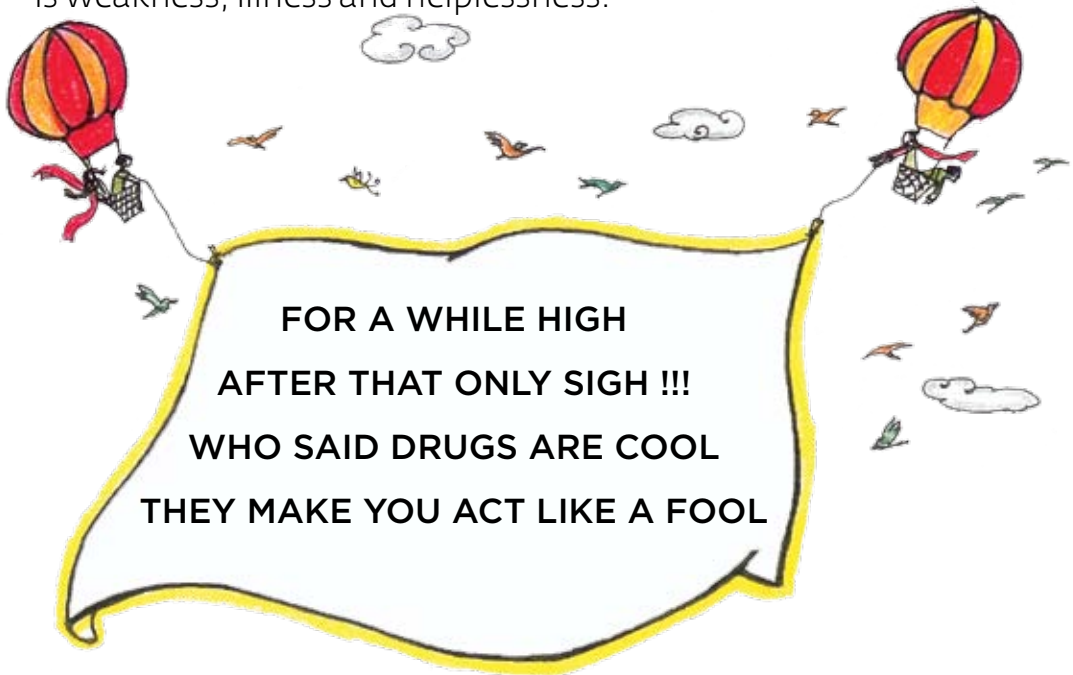
According to the Family Health Survey of 2005-06, 5 percent girls and 40 per cent boys between the age of 15 and 24, were smoking tobacco in India. One per cent girls and 19 percent boys had consumed alcohol. Till now, very few girls were in the trap of substance misuse, but now many more are getting lured in to Substance misuse plagues all segments of the society: the rich and the poor, the urban and rural and both the less educated and highly educated people. Adols start using intoxicants for different reasons; sometimes under peer pressure and misguidance; sometimes just to 'experiment'; at times in search of pleasure and excitement, to decrease their worries or to appear strong and 'macho'. In the beginning they may have some fun, but soon they realize that they have gained nothing.

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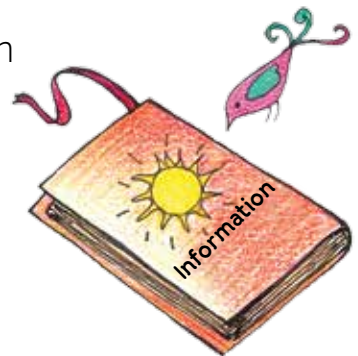


Reading the following books was very helpful while preparing this book – (1) Voices from the shadow: Based on a study of Drug use behaviors In the Maldives. Published by UNICEF, Maldives. (2) Advocacy Manual, Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment, India; UNDOC and Institute of Social Defense. 2009

Instead of pleasure and fun, they get trapped in a vicious cycle of grief and ever increasing problems. They are forced to tell lies and steal in order to buy intoxicating substances. They are completely miserable. Relationships with family members and friends worsen. Instead of strength and machoism, there is weakness, illness and helplessness.

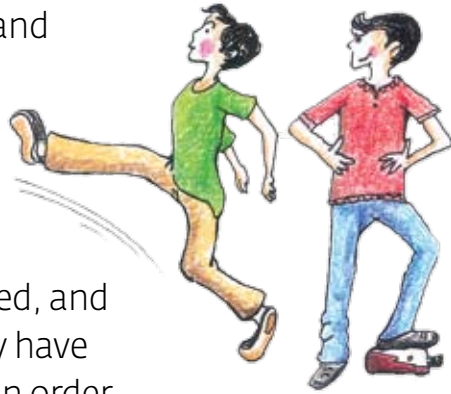


We believe, if adols have enough information about substance misuse and are fully aware of all the dangers and problems that these can create, they will avoid experimenting with addictive substances. Correct information will enable them to understand that substance misuse can lead only to disasters.





Friends, this is definitely not a path of pleasure and enjoyment. You will be horrified to hear the stories of young addicts.



Listen to these stories of young people who were addicted, and later managed to be 'clear'. They have shared their bitter experiences in order to break the silence and start discussions on substance misuse so that other young people do not get trapped. They are brave enough to share their mistakes and problems to help others.

WHY DID WE START SUBSTANCE MISUSE?



"I wanted to be "different" and 'to be noticed'. I wanted to be part of the local 'DON CLUB'."

"We started using intoxicants for experimentation and fun... We were curious."



"Our friends enticed us and taught us. In some cases our boy friend or girl friend misled us. We got together to consume intoxicants and also helped and protected each other."

"My father used drugs. He never spent any time with us. Seeing him fed up of the unhappy family life, I started taking drugs. I thought drugs will reduce my unhappiness and provide some good moments."



Those young people who have given up substance misuse and are now working on prevention, have shared that almost 50 percent of young substance misusers, are those who have suffered violence, mental torture or sexual abuse.



"I remember, my father used to beat me, when I was 7 or 8. Once, when I could not take it anymore, I said something nasty to him. My father lost it completely and he shoved chilies in to my mouth and hurt the soles of my feet with a knife."



"My own brother started abusing me sexually when I was seven. This continued for five years, I started smoking cigarettes and taking heroin. After that I attempted suicide four times."

"My mother used to beat me a lot. I still have a cut mark on my nose. This happened when in response to something I did, my mother pushed me."



Fed up with me, she would lock me up in a dingy, small bathroom. One day when I refused to go to school she shoved me under a "moodha" (a chair made of local reeds) and set it on fire."

"Some of us were from rich families. We had good jobs. Because of our addiction we were thrown out of our jobs. I think any one of us can get in to substance misuse any time."



"My childhood was beautiful. My parents loved me and looked after me very well. When I started taking intoxicants, I avoided my parents and maintained a distance because I did not want them to find out and be unhappy".

"I really wanted to get out of my addiction, but I could not do it on my own. When my parents found out about it, they did everything they could to help me. At times my father was angry with me but that was only because he was very worried about me. Both my parents continued to love me. They sacrificed a lot to get me out of substance misuse".

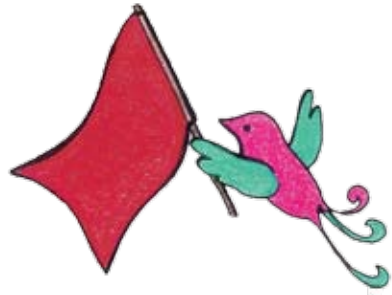


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RISK FACTORS LEADING TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Various reasons and risk factors are responsible for adols getting in to substance misuse.



1. RISK FACTORS RELATED TO ADOLESCENCE



In this phase, adols want to create their own identity. They want freedom. Some time they feel, it is boring and 'not cool' to always be good. Some adols think freedom means to revolt and take risks.

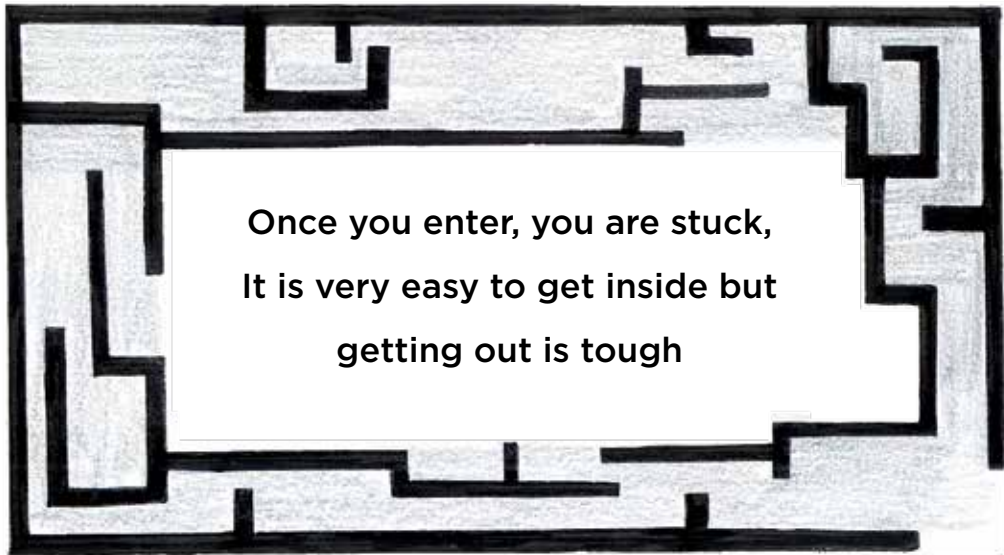


Friendships are important for adols. There is a lot of peer pressure. Adols love being accepted and admired by their friends. If they make friends with people who are consuming intoxicants, it is easy for adols to step in to the world of substance misuse.





It is exciting for adols to experiment with new things and to take risks. They feel that they could try just about anything without coming to any harm. But addiction to intoxicants is totally different.



Adols who are lonely, and have a tendency to be aggressive, face the danger of getting addicted and becoming part of crimes and violence.

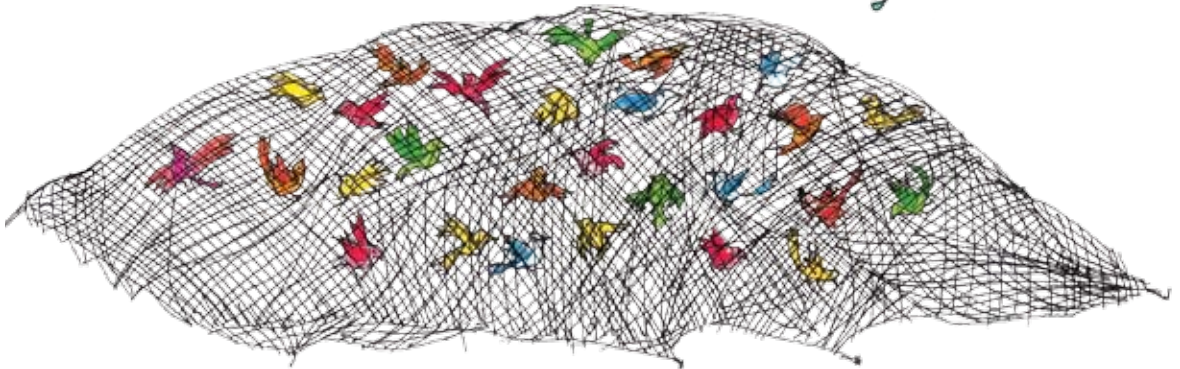



BUT, 'U' TURNS ARE POSSIBLE




However, it is not inevitable that the socio-psychological characteristics of adolescence will lead you astray.

The special features of adolescence can also take you towards genuine HIGHS, which are truly exciting. The HIGH derived from intoxicants is actually a LOW. It is a deep pit in which you could get TRAPPED!



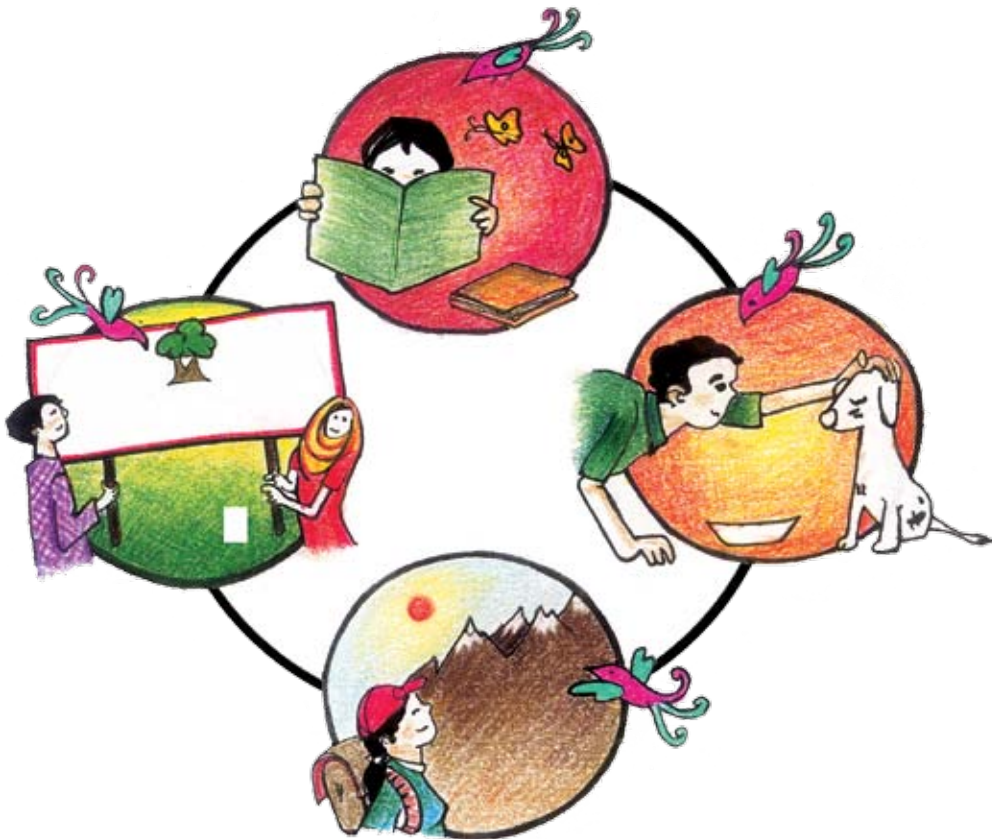
 To be free, have your own identity and take your own decisions, are worthy goals but you do not need to lose yourself to intoxicants to achieve these goals. You can establish a unique and valuable identity by engaging in positive tasks such as participating in sports, singing, dancing, debates, social activism or something else that your heart fancies.

 Friendship is something very beautiful. Good friendships can be life-long. Become friends with people who can inspire you to scale new heights; with whom you can learn something worthwhile and also teach them something valuable. It is dangerous to be friends with people who do not wish well for you and could lead you astray.

It is important to get rid of so-called “friends” as fast as you can, because in reality they are definitely not your friends but more like your enemies.



Trying out new things and taking calculated risks are good qualities. Go mountain climbing, explore forests and get to know them. Take up cycling for a hobby! If you take the risk of raising your voice against injustice on the marginalized; this ability can be helpful to others. These may be some valuable ways to take meaningful risks and perhaps also earn a name for yourself.



2. RISKS RELATED TO SOCIETAL FACTORS

Some realities of our social lives create risks for adols, for example....



EASY ACCESS TO INTOXICANTS

Easy availability of intoxicants increases the chances of adols using them. If tobacco products, alcohol, drugs etc. are available near schools, colleges and homes and if sellers break the rule and sell them to people under 18, then it is easy for adols to get in to substance misuse. It is the responsibility of governments and communities to control the sale of intoxicants and ensure that laws are implemented.



SOCIAL PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES

Why will adols not experiment with alcohol, if there are liquor shops all around in villages and towns, if bars and restaurants serve liquor and if liquor flows freely in

weddings and other parties adols go to with their families.

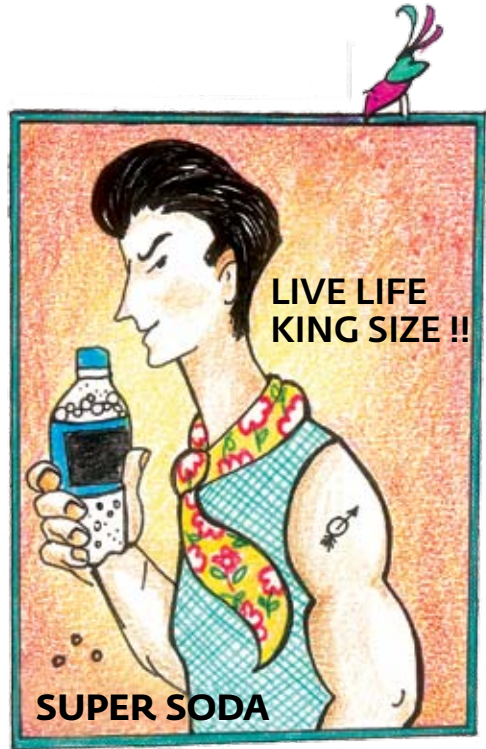
If alcohol consumption is not considered harmful for adults then how and why will adols avoid it? They think they are old enough now.



IMPACT OF MEDIA AND ADVERTISEMENTS

The media influences adols immensely.

Research has shown that children and young people mimic what they see on T.V. and in films. "If my favorite heroes and heroines do it, then I must do it too. They are my role models." Although the Government of India has banned advertisements of cigarettes and alcohol, these products are advertised on a regular basis through false and oftentimes secret mechanisms. Famous cricketers are shown playing on T.V. wearing shirts and caps sporting names and logos of alcoholic drinks. It is truly tragic that the educated and the rich industrialists, famous actors and players, shamelessly entice young people to alcoholism, just to make a profit.





SOCIAL ALIENATION AND ABSENCE OF GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS

Adols are prone to substance misuse in communities where neighbors do not know each other, and a friendly environment is missing. Social cohesion and harmony have a good influence on children and young people. Anonymity and distance produce social alienation and increase the chances of adols going astray, indulging in crime and experimenting with intoxicants.



SOCIETY HAS TO SHOW THE CORRECT PATH TO ADOLS

As we just mentioned, some social practices and irresponsible acts of social institutions (media, films) and popular personalities (like film actors, sportsmen) are harming adols.

Instead of showing adols the right way, they are misleading them. These harmful ways need to be challenged and changed and this can be done through social campaigns and advocacy.



WE WILL BRING THE CHANGE



Adols can lead or join such campaigns, make a name for themselves and have the satisfaction of making positive contributions to the society.



3. POVERTY AND CHILD LABOR

Adols who have very difficult lives, live alone on roads, away from their families or engage in child labor are more prone to fall into the trap of substance misuse.

4. RISKS CREATED BY FAMILIES

Some families themselves create conditions and environment that pushes adols to get into substance misuse, for example-



- **PRESENCE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSERS IN THE FAMILY**

There is a bigger risk for adols to get into substance misuse if their father or mother, older brother or sister, or some other relatives use intoxicants.

- **DISCORD AND CONFLICTS IN THE FAMILY**

Adols are more likely to get in to substance misuse if there is no closeness and affection in the family and there are conflicts and violence.



- **DISORGANISED FAMILIES**



Families in which children are raised without any expectations from them to do well, where they are not encouraged to achieve and are not counselled run greater risk of children going astray in many different ways including experimentation with intoxicants.

- **ATTITUDE OF PARENTS TOWARDS INTOXICANTS**

Adols are more likely to get in to substance misuse if their father or mother smokes or drinks and asks his/her children to fetch or buy cigarettes/alcohol for them or if parents do not stop young children from having an occasional puff or drink



- **BUSY AND ABSENT PARENTS**

Parents who work, spend a lot of time away from home, who are not able to give any time to their children sometimes develop a sense of guilt. To compensate for this guilt they spoil their children and do not stop them from doing anything wrong. Children who grow up in this kind



of atmosphere are more likely to get into substance misuse.

5. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHOOLS

Adols who are not doing well at studies or other activities and have low achievement, who are pulled up at home and in schools and who have poor self-esteem and little interest in studies , are more likely to get astray. The presence of substance misusers in the school who try and get others hooked, increases the chances of adols using intoxicants.

It is important to be aware of all these risk factors. Families and societies have the main responsibility to deal with these risks in a timely and effective manner in order to protect adols.



**It has been proven that the earlier
the children try intoxicants,
higher are the chances for them to
get addicted**





It is true that no one wants to be addicted. When you start consuming intoxicants you think that –



You will not get addicted. You can stop when you want



There is no harm in 'trying'.



You will appear mature and cool.



Your friends will be impressed



At least for some time you will be rid of your problems and worries.

You will look like a film hero or heroine with a glass of alcohol or cigarette in your hand.

But friends, all these are MYTHS. The truth is exactly the opposite. It is immature to think you can become an adult by smoking or drinking. This is similar to a child soaping his face and pretending to shave like an adult!



DRUG USE IS LIFE ABUSE
So, please know that
INTOXICATION FREE- IS THE WAY TO BE

Talking to adols has shown that among those who 'tried' intoxicants even once, several got addicted.

One does not get addicted immediately. Without getting to know, you slowly get trapped. A person may get addicted in two days, and another person may take two months. Only when you want to get out of it, do you realize that neither your body nor your mind is in your control. They are addicted and need intoxicants. You have become a slave of intoxicants.

The downhill slide starts at this point of time.. You might not be able to come out of it on your own. You will need help. It is both brave and wise to seek help. It is in difficult circumstances that one needs good friends and relations



**IT IS YOUR TURN NOW
TO THINK AND SPEAK**



Why does the writer consider the 'high' of intoxication actually a 'low'?



Which special characteristics of adolescence can take adols on a wrong path?



Can these special characteristics only mislead you?
Please explain your answer with examples.



Why has the writer written "drug use is life abuse"?

3



DIFFERENT KINDS OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Substance misuse and intoxicants are of many different kinds, for example –

TOBACCO

Tobacco is the most used intoxicant when compared to all others. Right from six to seven year old children to really old people can be and are addicted to tobacco.

Tobacco contains nicotine, a substance which is very addictive.

Because tobacco products are easily available at any street corner, people most often get addicted through this means before abusing other substances.

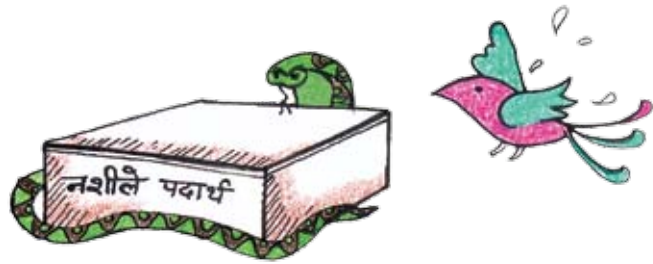
Tobacco is consumed by chewing, smoking or by sniffing.

People who chew tobacco either keep it between their lip and gums or eat it in paan (beetle leaf), thereby retaining it longer in the mouth and slowly releasing it into the body.

IMPACT

- You might be surprised to know that nicotine in tobacco smoke reaches the brain within eight seconds.
- Nicotine produces a sense of relaxation, satisfaction and pleasure.
- Its effect remains from five minutes to two hours. Therefore, those addicted to nicotine are compelled to take it repeatedly to feel good
- Those addicted to chewing tobacco get diseases that affect teeth and mouth, including cancer of the mouth.
- Continuous use of tobacco reduces the capacity to taste and smell and the mouth too begins to smell.
- Smoking tobacco can lead to upper respiratory diseases, lung cancer and heart problems.

INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES



These are those substances which have a negative impact on our routine mental and bodily functions. A grave fact is that intoxicants do not affect everyone in the same way. Nobody can predict what effect the use of a particular substance will have on him/her. Intoxicating substances can be divided into three categories based on their effect.

First are those which slow down the functioning of our nervous system

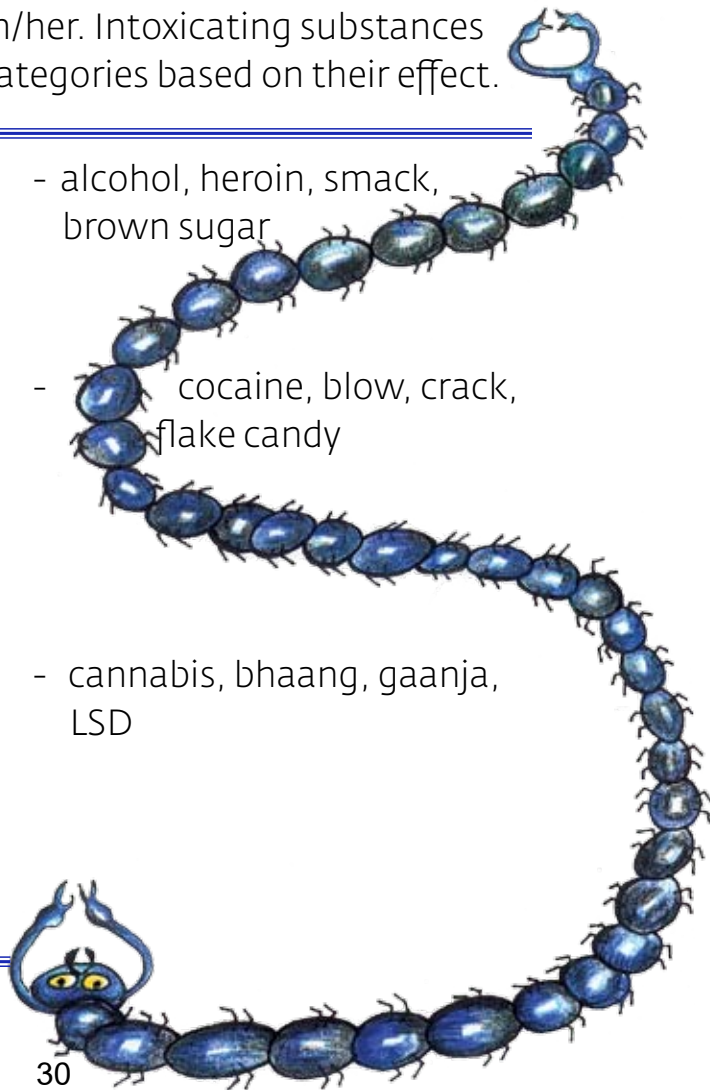
- alcohol, heroin, smack, brown sugar

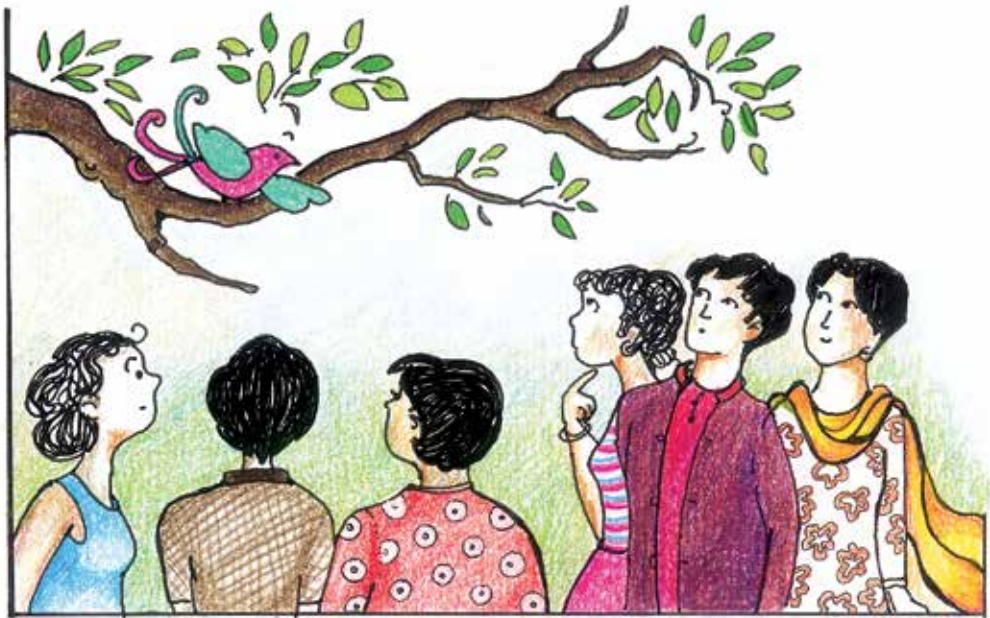
Second are those which produce excitement and escalates the functioning of our nervous system

- cocaine, blow, crack, flake candy

Third are those which affect our brain and create total mental confusion. People hallucinate or see things which are not there

- cannabis, bhaang, gaanja, LSD





EFFECTS



These substances have a negative effect on our four senses which we use to see, hear, smell and taste.



Initially we may feel that our senses have got sharper and feel good, but continuous use of the drugs slows them down completely.



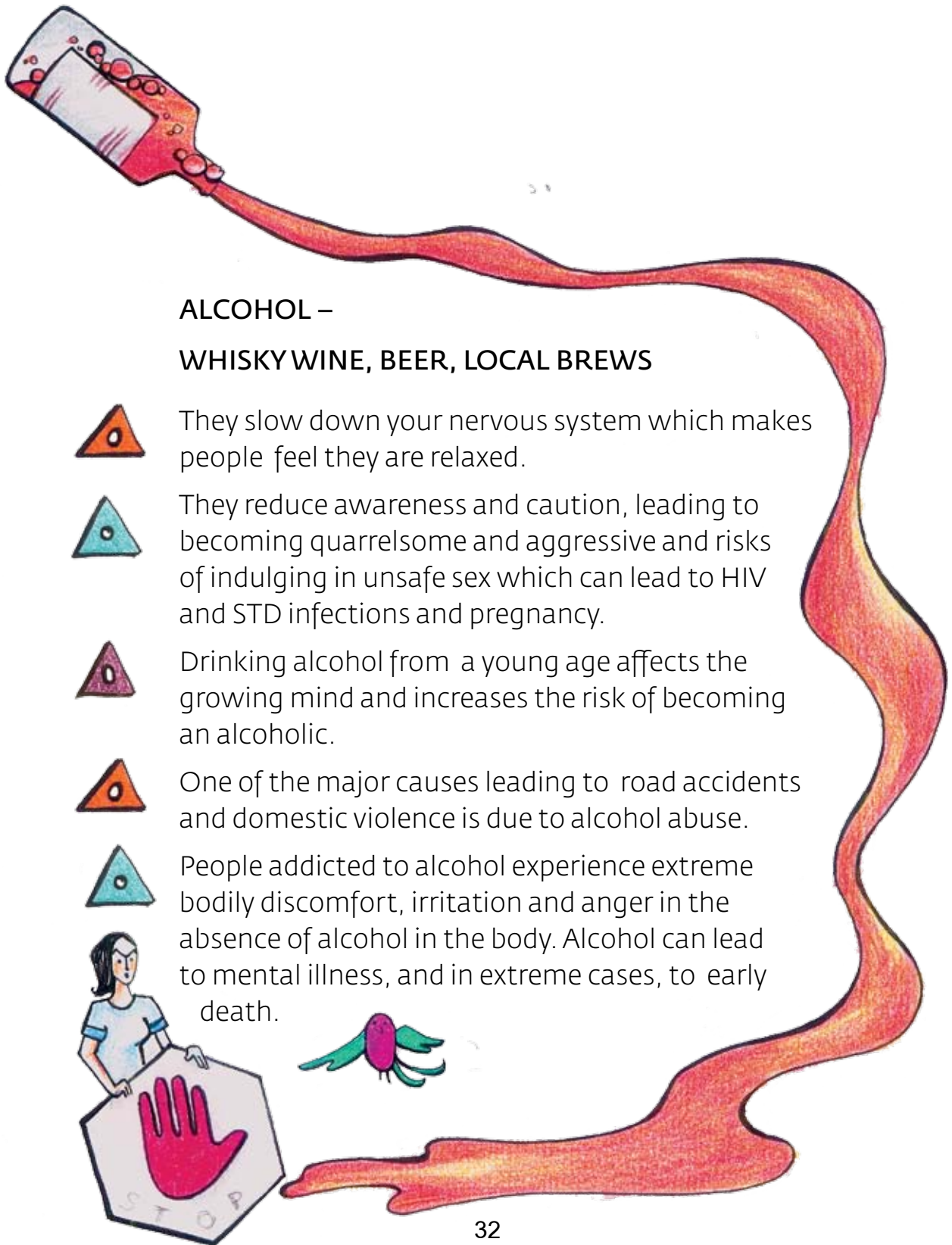
Cannabis has cancer producing substances. Its effects remain in the body for up to 30 days after use.



These drugs can have a negative effect on sexuality, sexual functions and also memory. They can reduce our capacity to concentrate on studies. .



Long term use of these drugs can cause mental disorders.



ALCOHOL – WHISKY WINE, BEER, LOCAL BREWS



They slow down your nervous system which makes people feel they are relaxed.



They reduce awareness and caution, leading to becoming quarrelsome and aggressive and risks of indulging in unsafe sex which can lead to HIV and STD infections and pregnancy.



Drinking alcohol from a young age affects the growing mind and increases the risk of becoming an alcoholic.



One of the major causes leading to road accidents and domestic violence is due to alcohol abuse.



People addicted to alcohol experience extreme bodily discomfort, irritation and anger in the absence of alcohol in the body. Alcohol can lead to mental illness, and in extreme cases, to early death.



INHALANTS OR SUBSTANCES WHICH ARE INHALED

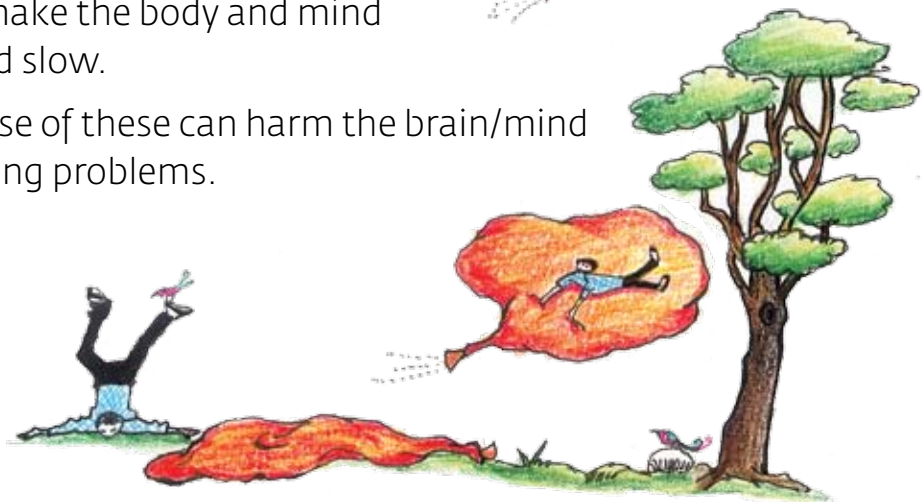
These are considered poor people's intoxicants and they are easily available everywhere.. Even children have access to them. Examples of these are –

- Powdered tobacco snuff
- Thinners (used for paints), glue, gasoline or petrol, correction inks etc
- Some medicines prescribed by doctors
- Gases like butane

EFFECTS

These also make the body and mind lethargic and slow.

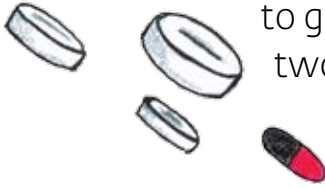
Long term use of these can harm the brain/mind and cause lung problems.



MEDICINES WHICH ARE ABUSED



Some medicines which are prescribed by the doctor for illnesses and can be purchased easily are being abused for intoxication. Sometimes alcoholics take extra doses of these medicines to get an additional punch. Sometimes two or more medicines are combined and consumed which can be quite dangerous.



Examples of these are – Cough syrups, pain killers, sleeping pills.

EFFECTS



Once addicted, non availability of these can cause nausea, vomiting, sweating, watery nose, cramps etc.



Nerves can be adversely affected .



Over dose can damage the liver and brain and can also be fatal.



Easily available medicines, drugs, alcohol and tobacco products are dangerous for adols, because

They are easily accessible



Starting with these substances, adols can start consuming more harmful ones.





Once they stop getting a kick from small quantities, they start increasing its quantity. .

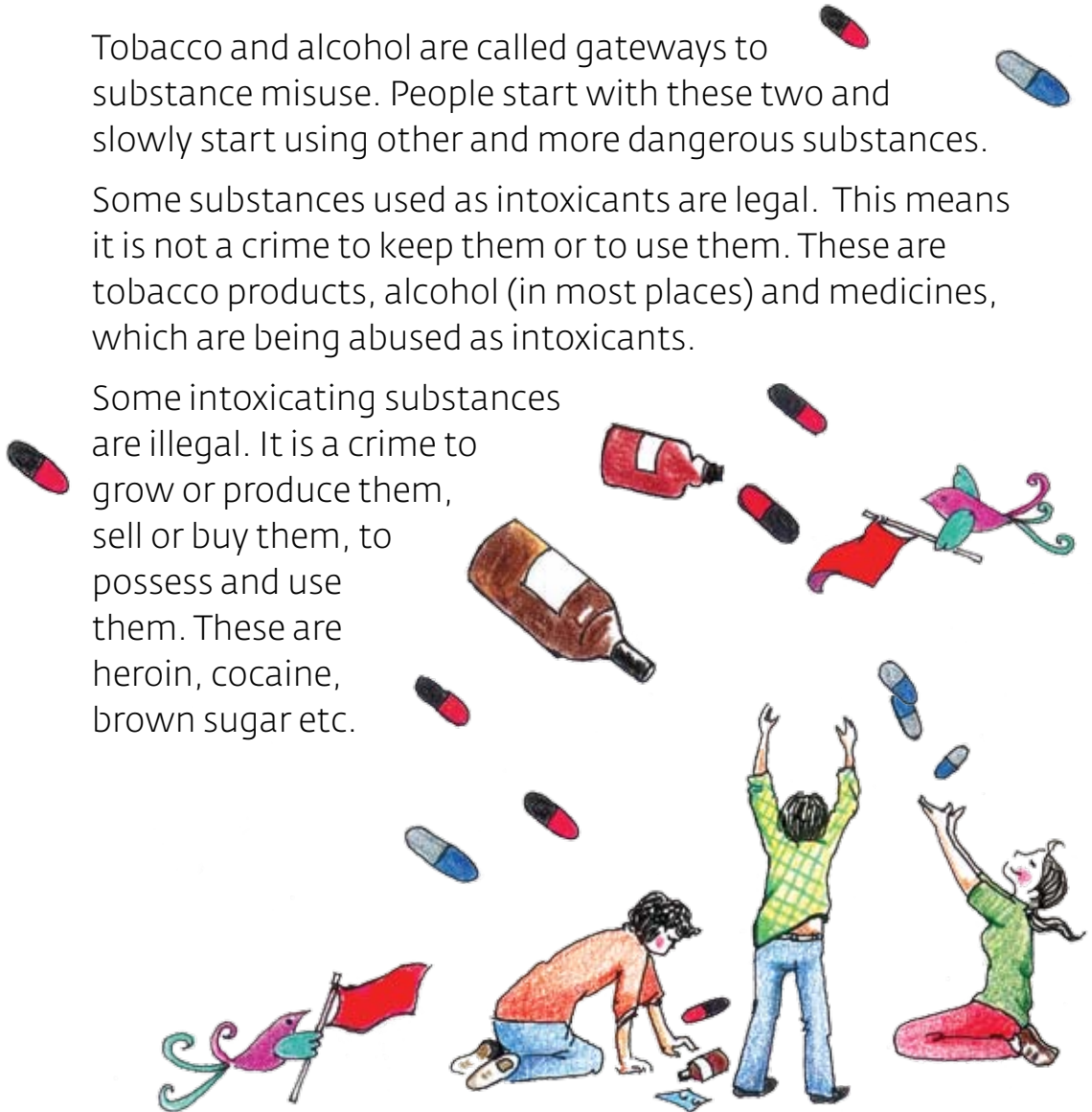


And suddenly they find themselves addicted and stuck.

Tobacco and alcohol are called gateways to substance misuse. People start with these two and slowly start using other and more dangerous substances.

Some substances used as intoxicants are legal. This means it is not a crime to keep them or to use them. These are tobacco products, alcohol (in most places) and medicines, which are being abused as intoxicants.

Some intoxicating substances are illegal. It is a crime to grow or produce them, sell or buy them, to possess and use them. These are heroin, cocaine, brown sugar etc.



4



SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND ADDICTION

SUBSTANCE MISUSE, ADDICTION, WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS AND TOLERANCE

Frequent use of intoxicants leads to addiction. Continuous use of intoxicants affects our body and brain and changes their functioning. Once addicted, both the body and mind demand the substances they are addicted to. If these substances are not available, the body and mind are agitated and they revolt. There is tension and pain in the body. The body may start trembling or become hot. There may be hallucinations and they may start experiencing/seeing things which are not there.



This condition is called withdrawal symptom or syndrome.

In this stage it becomes almost impossible to live without consuming intoxicants.

Because of the unbearable pain, irritation and discomfort experienced in the body and mind, caused by not taking substances, people who are addicted can go to

any extent to avoid this condition. They need substances at any cost and in order to get them they

may steal, rob their mother's jewelry or indulge in prostitution. . They can blackmail

their friends and relations. They can commit any type of crime just to get money to buy substances. .

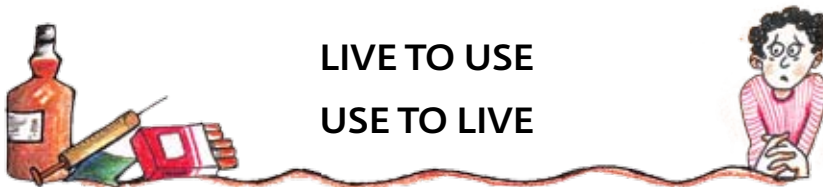
In other words, they are a total slave to intoxicants and this addiction can force them to do anything.



At this stage nothing is more Important



than consuming Intoxicants. This addiction destroys their physical, mental and emotional health and has a negative effect on all aspects of their life. As addicts continue taking drugs, their body and mind develop a tolerance towards these substances. This means the impact of the substances decreases. They need to consume greater quantities to get intoxicated. Their dependence and demand keeps increasing and their situation becomes something like this –



INNUMERABLE PROBLEMS CREATED BY SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Till now we have looked only at the harm substance misuse causes to our body and mind. Let us now look at its impact on other aspects of our life –



For an addicted person, consuming substances becomes more important than food.



Addiction impacts studies and reduces mental capacities. The ability to think carefully and take sensible decisions also gets reduced.



Riding a bicycle, driving a motor cycle or car in an

intoxicated state increases the risk of accidents. It jeopardises one's own life and those of others. .

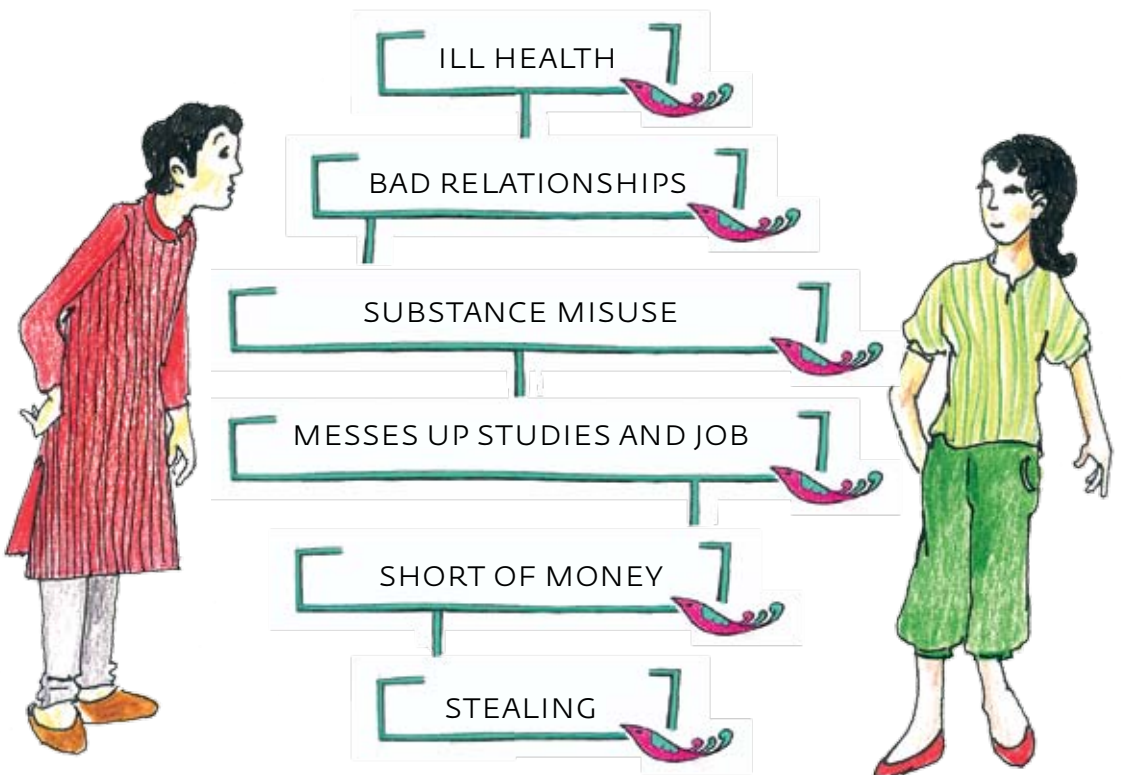


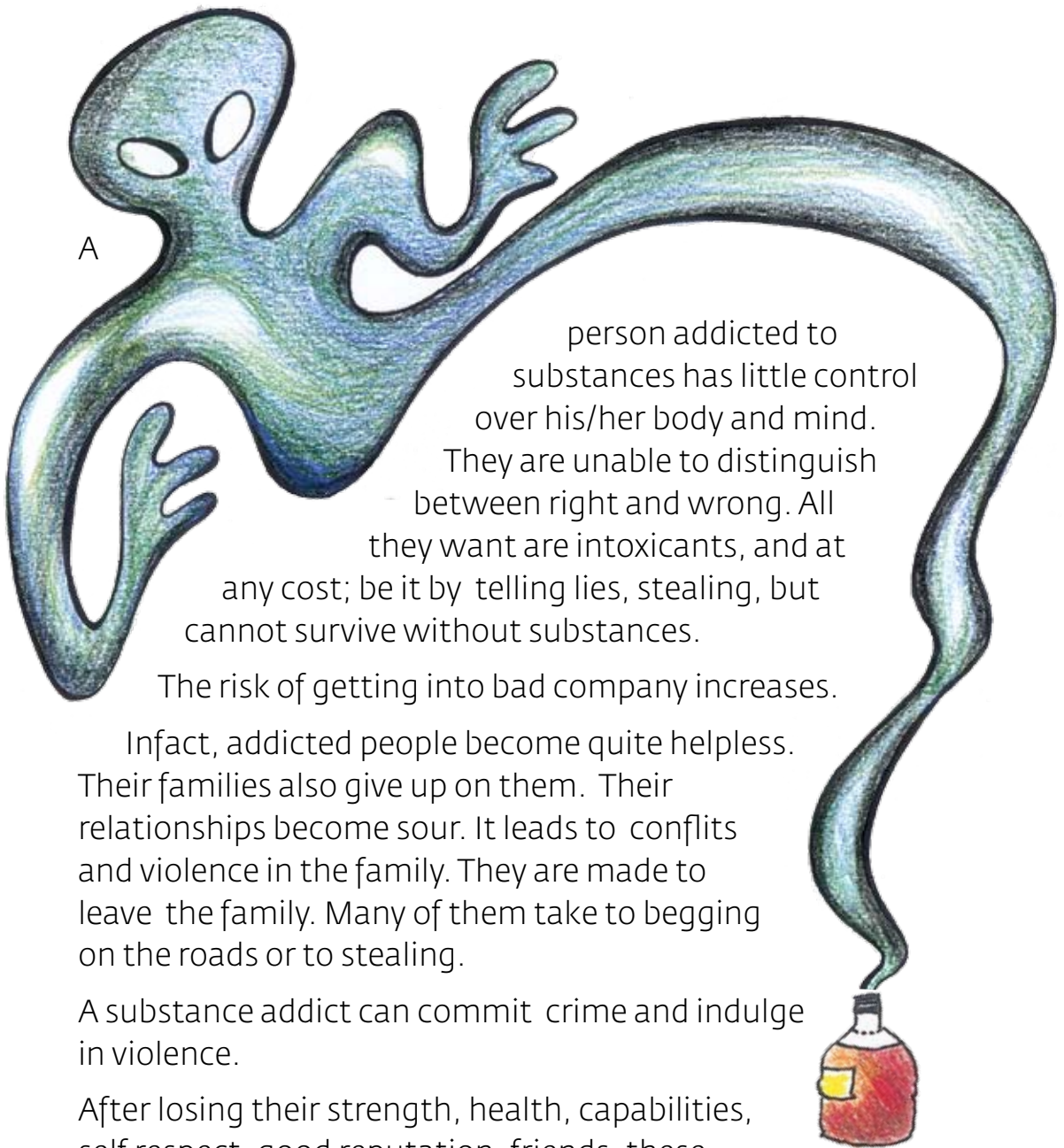
People consuming substances become less sensitive which are likely to adversely affect relationships.



One needs money to buy substances for which a job is necessary. . If one is unhealthy, how can the person retain a job? Where will there be money to pay for health care ?

If people addicted to substances are dependent on their parents, parents are not likely to give money to buy intoxicants. So the next step will be – stealing.





A

person addicted to substances has little control over his/her body and mind. They are unable to distinguish between right and wrong. All they want are intoxicants, and at any cost; be it by telling lies, stealing, but cannot survive without substances.

The risk of getting into bad company increases.

In fact, addicted people become quite helpless. Their families also give up on them. Their relationships become sour. It leads to conflicts and violence in the family. They are made to leave the family. Many of them take to begging on the roads or to stealing.

A substance addict can commit crime and indulge in violence.

After losing their strength, health, capabilities, self respect, good reputation, friends, these people become lonely and helpless.

LINKS BETWEEN SUBSTANCE ABUSE, SEXUAL DISEASES AND HIV

In an intoxicated state people are not able to think properly and act irresponsibly. Intoxication makes them uninhibited. The desire for instant pleasure increases. They can easily get in to intimate sexual relations. and in this condition, they forget about safe sex.

There are risks of getting infected with sexually transmitted diseases and HIV and of getting pregnant.



SUBSTANCE MISUSE MORE DANGEROUS FOR ADOLS

Substance misuse and addiction are more dangerous for adols because



In this period both the body and mind are developing and substance misuse harms development.



They are in an inquisitive and learning mode, hence unable to rid themselves if they fall prey to substance misuse.

This is the time for getting education and acquiring life skills and laying the foundation of a bright future. Therefore committing mistakes at this age can affect one's future.



LEGAL POSITION ON SUBSTANCE MISUSE



In India, under the NDPS (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance) Act, 1985



It is a crime to keep, buy or sell and use heroine, cocaine, hashish, opium etc. The punishment could be both fine and imprisonment.

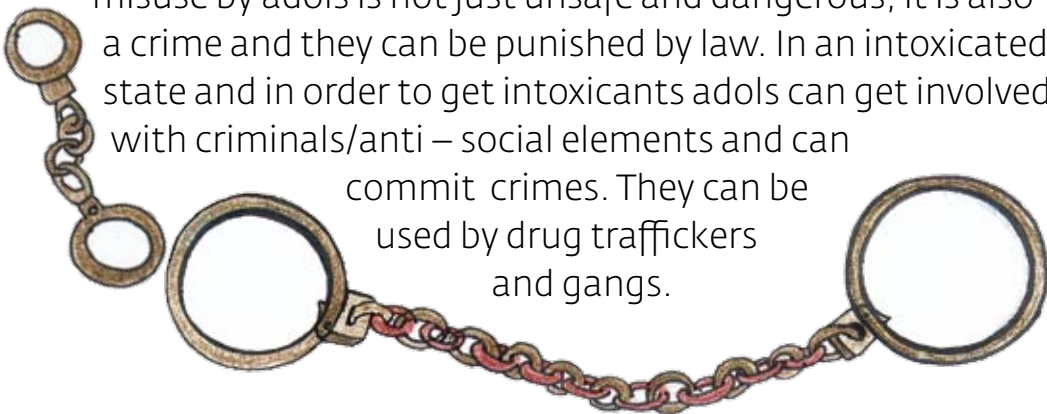


People under 18 are legally not allowed to smoke. It is even a crime to sell tobacco products to children under 18.



The minimum legal age for drinking alcohol is different in different states of India. In Delhi it is 25. Juvenile law is applied for children under 18.

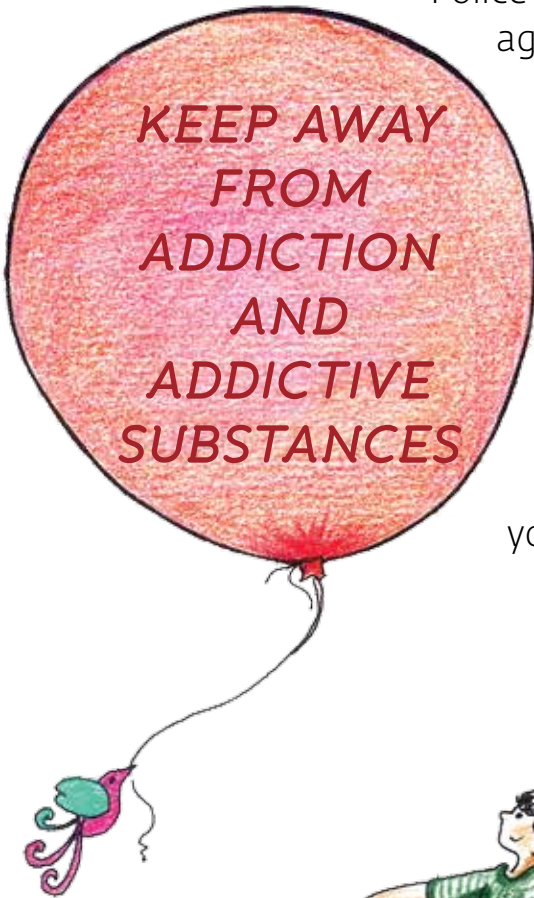
The legal provisions make it quite clear that substance misuse by adols is not just unsafe and dangerous, it is also a crime and they can be punished by law. In an intoxicated state and in order to get intoxicants adols can get involved with criminals/anti – social elements and can commit crimes. They can be used by drug traffickers and gangs.



Drugs and crime are closely linked. It is a legal crime to grow, produce, sell, buy, possess and use several categories of drugs. This entire business is criminal and pertains to black marketing. Those associated with the business are criminals and violence also is a part of it..

Police and law implementing agencies are always on the lookout for apprehending these criminals.. To escape prosecution, drug addicts can also use violence.

Therefore, friends, it is best to keep completely away from substance misuse. This addiction can destroy not just you but also your family.



5



PAINFUL EXPERIENCES OF SUBSTANCE MISUSERS



Let us listen to some more stories about the dreadful results of substance misuse. These stories are of those brave young people



who managed to overcome substance misuse and by sharing their personal experiences, they are now helping others.

BAD FRIENDS AND THEIR FALSE PROMISES



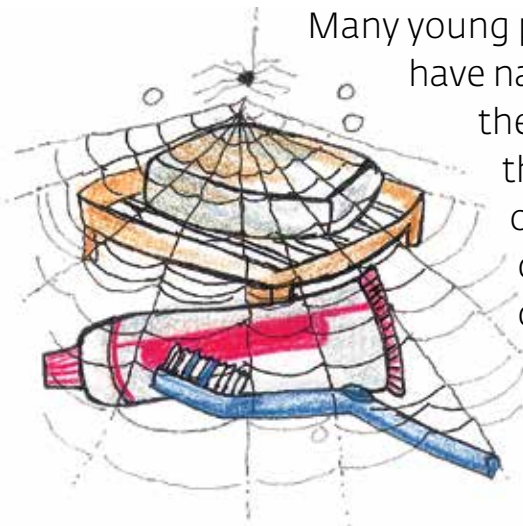
Young people who get hooked to substances have shared that there were many people who gave them free drugs in the beginning, to get them addicted. These people behaved like friends and innocent adols felt they were now part of a nice group and had friends who would always support them. However, as soon as they

got into a situation where they could not live without drugs, those friends disappeared. It was clear that their friendship was a sham and only to get them trapped. In the beginning these friends gave drugs free of charge, but later on getting hooked on to the drugs, they would not give it without paying for it. These trapped adols now had no group, no friends and no money to buy drugs. They were totally alone, helpless and addicted. On being caught, they were either lodged in prisons or in rehabilitation centers.



Adols have shared that some of their friends became almost insane. Some died. Substance misuse had promised friendship, pleasure and freedom; but what they got in return was lost friendship, loneliness and darkness all around them..

RISK OF ILL HEALTH



Many young people who were into drugs have narrated that after addiction they did not pay any attention to their body. They did not bathe or brush their teeth or change clothes for several days. They could not visit a doctor when they were sick, partly because of the fear of being caught

and partly because they had no money.

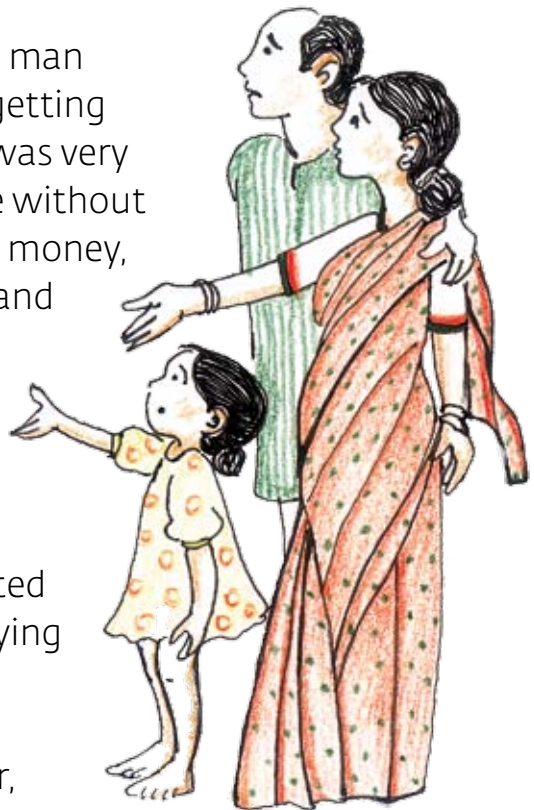
Substance abusers often inject drugs into their body for an instant high. They start sharing needles with others and do not sterilize needles properly. Thus, they face the risk of HIV and Hepatitis C infections. Addicts have no worries and observe no caution. The only thing that they care for is to get the next dose of drugs to escape the physical and mental pain for some time.



Some young men have shared that long term substance misuse made them impotent.

One young man said "After getting addicted it was very painful to be without drugs. To get money,

I used to threaten my parents and say I would commit suicide or set the house on fire if they did not give me money. If they did not give money, I sold household items. All my relationships were being affected adversely. I knew I was destroying my family, but I was totally helpless. I used to feel sad and regret my actions and behavior,



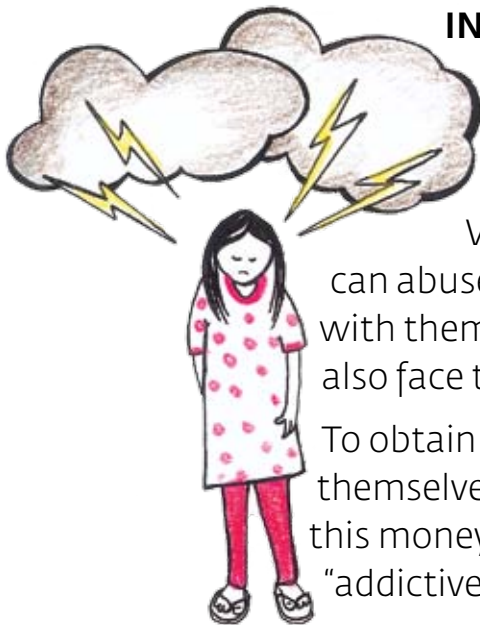
but the solution I sought for this sadness was once again intoxication.”



VIOLENT IMPACT

Another young man has written “Addiction made our thinking and living very irresponsible. We drove motorcycles in an intoxicated state and banged in to people and things. After that we fought and ran away. We were constantly trying to dodge the police. Fights and violence became a part of our life. We had to fight with everyone to get money and drugs. At times we did not even remember the fights. The wounds on our body reminded us when we were sober. We could not seek medical help”.

INTOXICATION MORE HORRIFYING FOR GIRLS



Substance misuse and addiction are more dangerous for girls and women. When girls are intoxicated their friends can abuse them, rape them or have unsafe sex with them. In addition to emotional pain, they also face the risk of pregnancy and infection.

To obtain drugs, their male friends or they themselves may sell their body for sex. With this money they buy drugs. Such are the risks of “addictive” friends.




One adol girl shared, "when I was 15, my friend sold me to a gang of boys just to obtain drugs. There were 10 of them in a room. After sending my friend away, when they closed the room, I realized what was going to happen. When I protested, they told me that my friend had sold me for half a gram of drugs. They harmed me in whatever way they wanted. I was beaten when I resisted. I fainted and when I regained consciousness I found myself in immense pain."

"During my pregnancy I was totally addicted to substances. After the birth of our child, both my husband and I writhed in pain if we did not have drugs. Our child also was in pain without drugs because it had got addicted to drugs in the womb".



The fetus of a pregnant woman who is addicted to drugs, also gets addicted. After birth the child needs and demands drugs and suffers immense pain in the absence of drugs. Sometimes, such children die or develop some illnesses or deformities. This is an awful truth about being pregnant while addicted to drugs.

After giving up drugs or becoming 'clean', some adols shared their painful experiences and said "gradually I was killing myself. I was losing the will and strength to live. I had lost my self esteem. I had destroyed all my relationships. There was a deep, black hole, instead of a soul inside. I was not at all concerned if people were worried about me or my family was being destroyed. I was concerned only about one thing -how to get my next dose. I kept injecting more and more heroine in to my body. All I wanted was to die while intoxicated, because waking up always meant pain and worries"



DRUGS ARE FUN FOR SOME TIME

AFTER THAT THERE IS FUN AND PROBLEMS

IN THE END THERE ARE ONLY PROBLEMS AND PAIN

**IT IS YOUR TURN NOW
TO THINK AND SPEAK**



Do you know what substances adols you know use ?



Which special characteristics of adolescence can take adols on a wrong path?



Can these special characteristics only mislead you? Please explain your answer with examples.



Why has the writer written “drug use is life abuse”?



WAYS TO PREVENT AND BE FREE OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Friends, as you have seen, substance misuse is a dangerous habit. It is actually an illness. It can destroy us and our families. All of us together have to fight this menace. It is our collective responsibility.

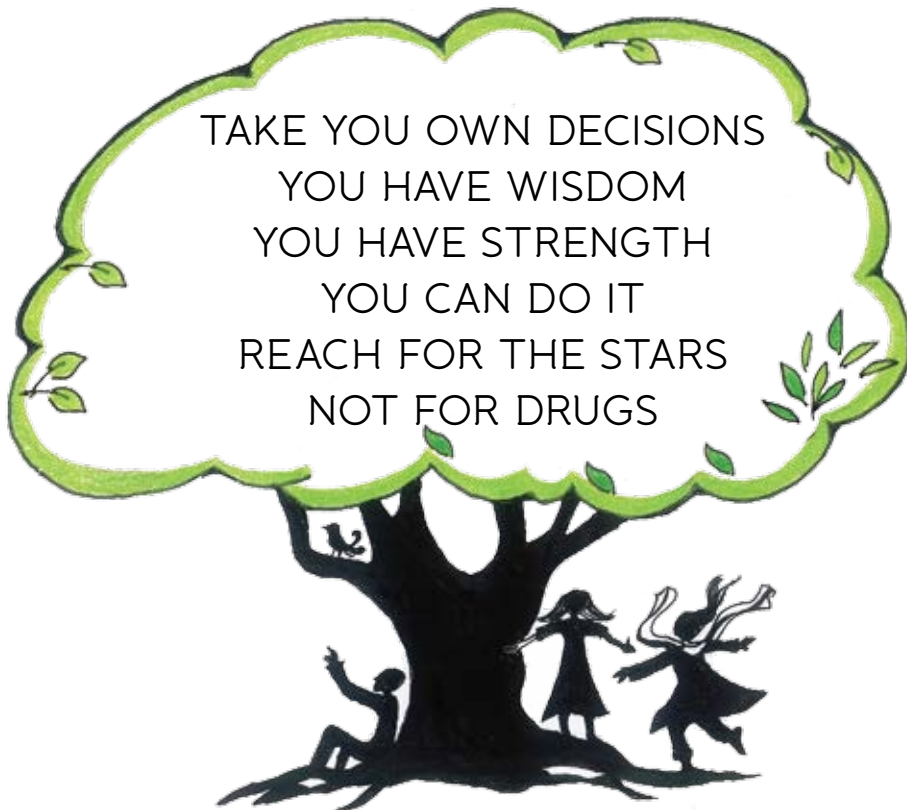
After discussions with and getting to thousands of adols like you, some facts have emerged, and these can be useful also for you. Adols with the following attitudes and behaviour patterns face LESS risks of getting into substance misuse.

- Adols who have self esteem, who trust themselves and have a positive attitude towards life.
- Adols who can deal with difficult circumstances, who face adversities bravely; who do not give up easily and who use their resources and time wisely.



- Adols who get along well with their families, Who help and seek help from others and who share and discuss their problems with others.
- Adols who have good friends and who help and advise friends who may be getting in to problematic activities and habits.
- Adols who know how to say 'NO' emphatically and do not get swayed. Adols who reflect carefully and take their own decisions and do not give in to peer pressure

Always ask yourself what you expect from life and then work to create that life.



It is also good to remember that life is not only about living for yourself, your pleasures and your satisfaction. There is much more to life than self indulgence. Try and help someone and experience the joy and satisfaction of doing a good deed. NO intoxicants can give you that feeling. Do not forget that we are all connected.

**EVERYONE'S WELL BEING
IS OUR WELL BEING**



Substance misuse is a disease. It can make a permanent entry into our mind and body. There are many reasons for getting into it, and many factors which encourage it. Similarly, there are factors and conditions which reduce the risks of getting in to substance misuse. The responsibility lies not only with those who get addicted but their families, schools, societies and governments also have a responsibility.

OUR WELL BEING-IS EVERY ONE'S WELL BEING



PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BETTER

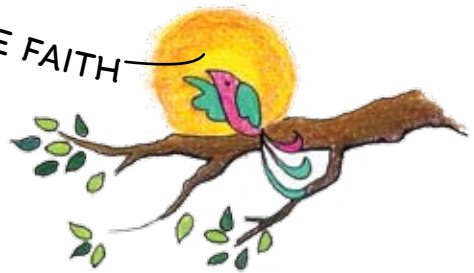
Substance misusers are part of our families and societies. We need to talk to them, understand them and also help them. They need our love and support, not our criticism.

To prevent and to get out of the clutches of substance misuse, we need to firmly believe that –



Every problem has a solution. The energy, strength and determination of adols can overpower every problem.

HAVE FAITH



It is difficult to get out of substance misuse, but it is possible.



Prevention of substance misuse is easier. By joining hands we can fight this menace.

ENERGY, STRENGTH, DETERMINATION



Prevention is better than cure. Better than struggling to rise after a fall, it is better that we move carefully and do not fall. We can take the following steps collectively to prevent substance misuse –



We should all have proper and adequate information about substance misuse. It is not enough just to have catchy slogans saying “SAY NO TO DRUGS”. We have to inform everyone – adults, adols and children, about the harm that substance misuse can do. When people know the devastating impact of substance misuse, they will definitely try to take action for preventing it.



The silence about substance misuse needs to be broken. We have to create an atmosphere for honest discussions. Many adols who got addicted, have said that they wanted to talk to their family members about it, but there was no possibility of any honest discussion on such issues. In some families there is

- * Absence from classes and bad performance in studies.
- * Mood swings; sometimes very happy and at other times irritable
- * Outbursts of anger
- * Declining health
- * Keeping a distance from family members and friends
- * Repeated visits to the bathroom or sitting behind closed doors.
- * NO information about where they are going and why
- * Money bungling
- * Money and expensive items disappearing.



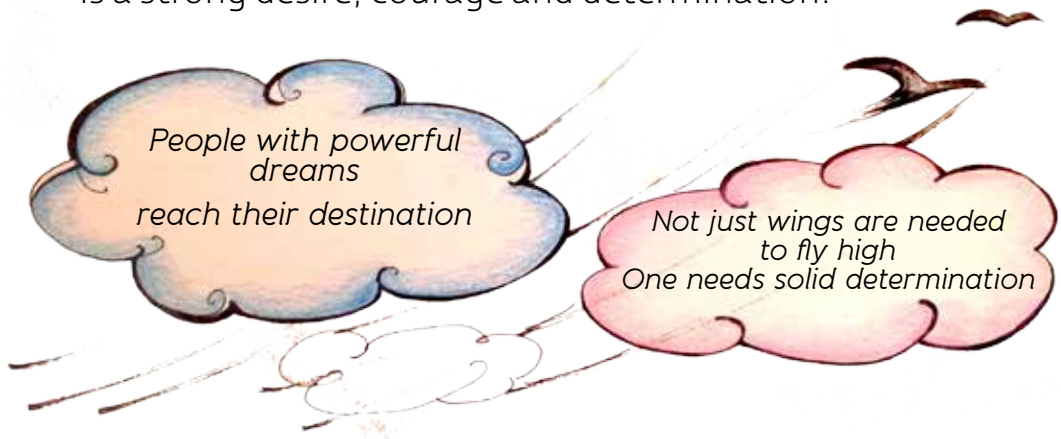
If you see such signs in anyone, look more carefully. Find out about his / her friends, he / she is moving around with.

Talk openly to this person or ask someone else who can talk. A person with such signs needs your help.

**GIVE SUPPORT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE
LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE THERE FOR THEM**

FREEDOM FROM INTOXICATION IS POSSIBLE: LET US SEE HOW

If we try with our full might, we can deal with every difficulty and find a solution for every problem. All we need is a strong desire, courage and determination.



These are some steps which can be taken to get out of addiction-



The first step is to honestly accept that all is not well; you are addicted and you cannot fight addiction alone. You need help.



The second step is to have a strong will to get out of substance misuse. Say it to yourself and to others that you are determined and you will not back out.



The third step is the willingness and preparation to seek help from friends, family members and experts.



The fourth step is to listen to experts, family members and friends and to follow their advice.

THOSE CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE NEED LOVE AND SUPPORT

Those who thought they could get out of addiction whenever they decide to, now realize that they are not able to do this. Long term abuse changes brain patterns. You need medicines to put things right. Psychological counseling is also required.

People addicted to intoxicants need immediate handling by experts. It is wrong to think that family members alone can deal with the situation by being strict or using force or by not giving money.

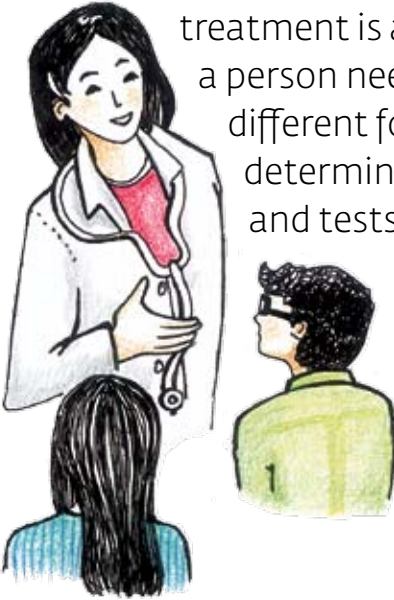
In every State of India there are government and voluntary rehabilitation centers where addicts can get admitted and be looked after by doctors and counsellors. Getting out of substance misuse is not easy and there is always the risk of relapse.



EXPERT SUPPORT

Many doctors, psychologists and social workers are working against substance misuse. They are doing research, collecting information and running rehabilitation centers. These centers are being run by both voluntary organizations and government institutions, but their numbers are few.

All addictions are not the same; therefore their treatment is also different. What kind of treatment a person needs and how long it will take is different for each person and this can be determined only after a thorough examination and tests.

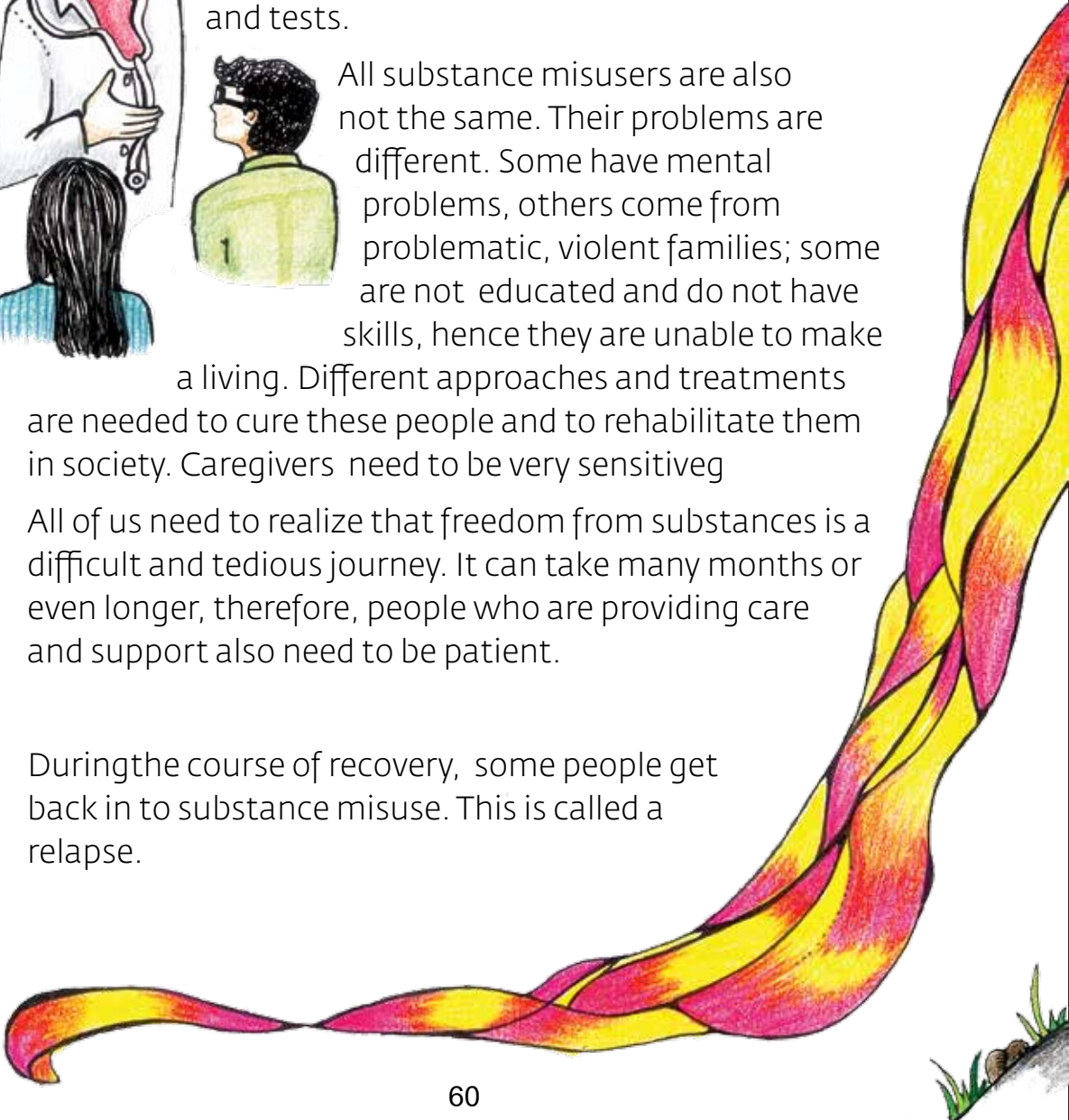


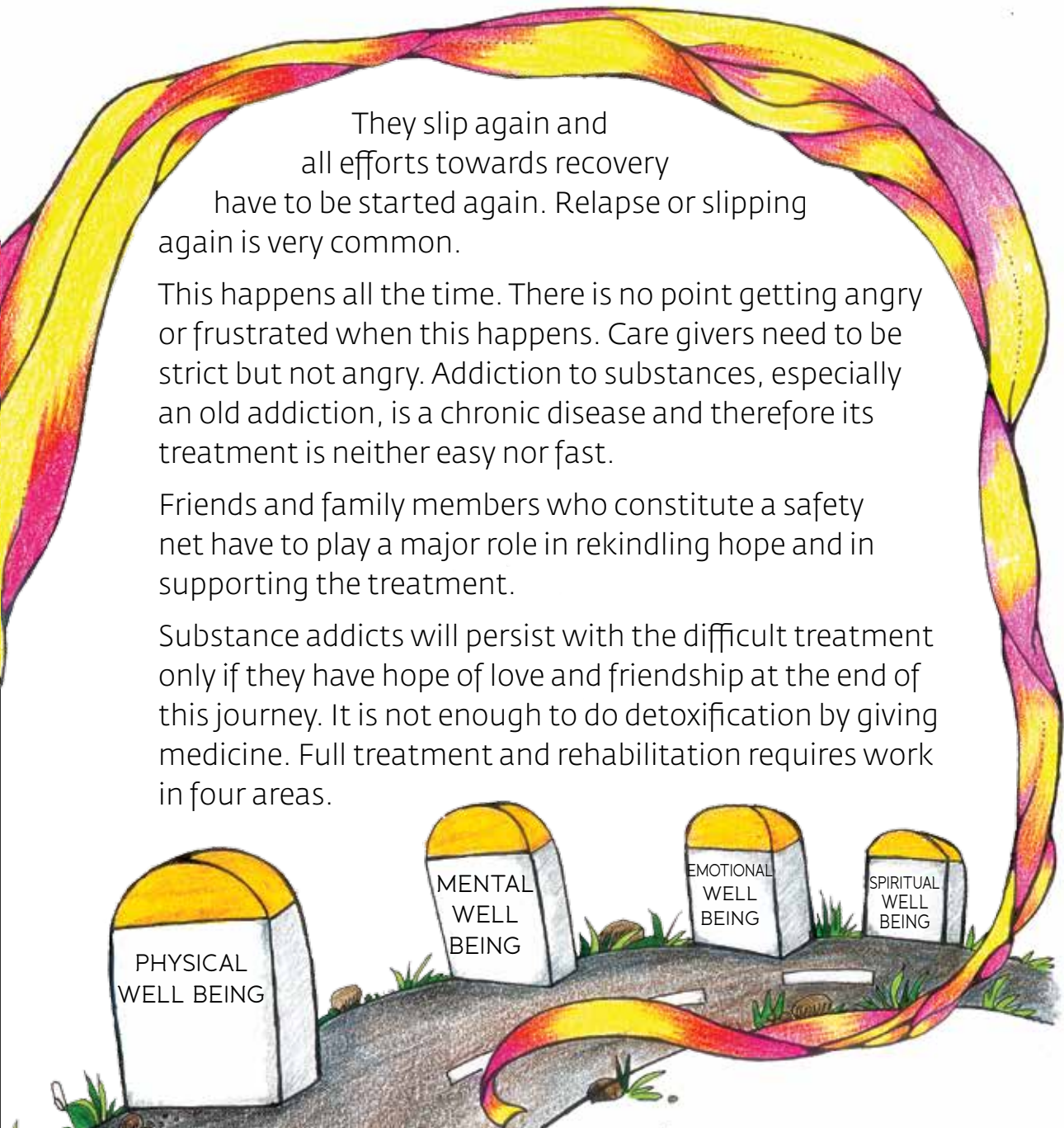
All substance misusers are also not the same. Their problems are different. Some have mental problems, others come from problematic, violent families; some are not educated and do not have skills, hence they are unable to make

a living. Different approaches and treatments are needed to cure these people and to rehabilitate them in society. Caregivers need to be very sensitive

All of us need to realize that freedom from substances is a difficult and tedious journey. It can take many months or even longer, therefore, people who are providing care and support also need to be patient.

During the course of recovery, some people get back in to substance misuse. This is called a relapse.





They slip again and
all efforts towards recovery
have to be started again. Relapse or slipping
again is very common.

This happens all the time. There is no point getting angry
or frustrated when this happens. Care givers need to be
strict but not angry. Addiction to substances, especially
an old addiction, is a chronic disease and therefore its
treatment is neither easy nor fast.

Friends and family members who constitute a safety
net have to play a major role in rekindling hope and in
supporting the treatment.

Substance addicts will persist with the difficult treatment
only if they have hope of love and friendship at the end of
this journey. It is not enough to do detoxification by giving
medicine. Full treatment and rehabilitation requires work
in four areas.



PHYSICAL WELL BEING

This is the first step. In this, the poison infused into the body by intoxicants is cleaned and withdrawal symptoms like body aches, cramps are treated. This period and treatment is quite painful. It is important to persist with this difficult treatment and to succeed. These efforts require determination, support and love.



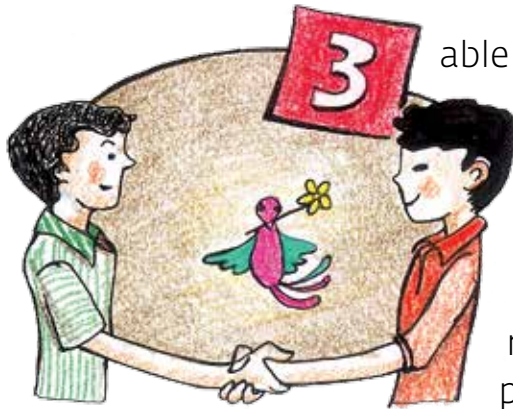
MENTAL WELL BEING



The next step in this treatment is mental well being. Patients need to understand the deep impact of intoxication on the body and mind. The entire mental makeup needs to change. Habits like irresponsibility, not caring for others also need modification. One needs good counsellors for this treatment.

EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

Counseling is also required for balancing emotions. There is a lot of pain, anger, regret, guilt, loneliness, disappointment within. There are many broken relationships. During addiction people are neither



able to see these emotions nor understand them. During rehabilitation and cure all these emotions have to be recognized and understood. Relationships have to be rebuilt. All this requires patience and determination.

One needs constant support of near and dear ones for this.

SPIRITUAL WELL BEING

Some people are greatly helped by spiritual well being. Faith in a higher power can give them energy and hope. This is not about going to temples, mosques, gurudwaras and churches and praying. The attempt is to regain an inner balance and peace; to find some moral values to live meaningfully. In this recovery too, friends, relations and councilors can play a very important role.



Slowly, there will be more self-confidence, relationships will improve and hope will be reborn.

At this stage patients should not be left alone for long. They need a regular routine and interesting activity to avoid a relapse.

They need to be kept busy.

They also have to be given suitable jobs so that they can be independent and become part of society. Even after full recovery it is necessary to provide aftercare. This care is to be done by the safety net, i.e. the family, friends and society. All of us need to have a positive attitude and behavior towards them. Once again, collective effort is required.

To provide this kind of treatment and care, family members and friends have to get information and learn many things.

Friends, we can learn many useful lessons from this process of recovery and treatment. We can also become better human beings after this terrible experience.





**IT IS YOUR TURN NOW
TO THINK AND SPEAK**



Do Through what signs/symptoms can you recognize that someone is in to substance misuse?



Have you ever seen these symptoms in someone you personally know? If yes, what did you do? Share your experiences in a group.



What steps need to be taken to get out of substance misuse?.



For full and successful treatment and rehabilitation which areas of life have to be improved?

7



ADDICTION TO GOOD DEEDS NEITHER HURTS NOR DISAPPEARS

One can be addicted not just to intoxicants. We can choose to get addicted and have a passion for good deeds. The 'high' of good deeds does not create any 'lows', nor any disasters.

There is excitement, energy and joy in doing socially useful activities. One experiences a great sense of satisfaction at seeing the results. Thousands of young people have shown their strength and passion and have created an identity and name for themselves through good deeds. In India on every Republic Day such young people are felicitated and paraded on elephants. They achieve a real HIGH and the nation celebrates them.



The Dainik Jaagran of 27th May 2011 published from Dharamshala carried an article titled 'Mission Junoon (Passion)' about some daring adols. All of them accomplished daring and exciting tasks and proved that nothing is impossible.

TRUST IN ONE SELF

A school girl's interest in sex workers sounds incredible, but young VISHESHA is indeed passionate about it. She thought of this issue when she was asked to write an essay on a social topic in the school. She says, "Social activism is my passion. I had been hearing that the life of sex workers is very difficult. Their circumstances push them in to this work. I decided to get to know and understand them. A school assignment gave me this wonderful opportunity."

Along with, some friends Vishesha decided to make a video film on the life of sex workers. "It was a challenging task because society looks down upon these women. We faced many difficulties for wanting to spend time with them."



Vishesha ignored all opposition, made a film and got her name entered in the Limca Book of Records as the youngest Film Maker.

ARJUN ON THE PEAK

Arjun still remembers those summer holidays during which he visited his grandmother in Pune and climbed Sahyadri hills. This experience made Arjun who hails from Noida recognize his life's mission and passion- Mountaineering. He achieved many heights by the time he came to class 9. In 2010 he climbed Mount Everest and then made a world record by climbing Mount



Lahotse, the fourth highest peak in the world. Arjun said "My flights are not limited to this. I have Miles to go... This is not the end".

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

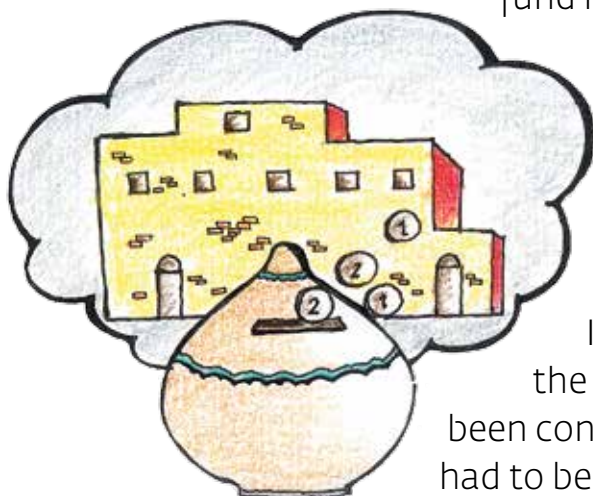


Prakriti Nanda of Lucknow was just five years old when she was completely shaken by the accident which made her friend Shivam blind. Her father told her that he can regain sight only if someone donated his/her cornea. From that early age convincing people to donate their cornea became her passion. Prakriti said, "My friend has given a purpose to my life. It is because of him that I have connected about two hundred thousand people to the Mission of eye donation. My parents helped me in my mission."



THE WATER MESSIAH

Raising funds for building the school auditorium turned Viraj into a successful



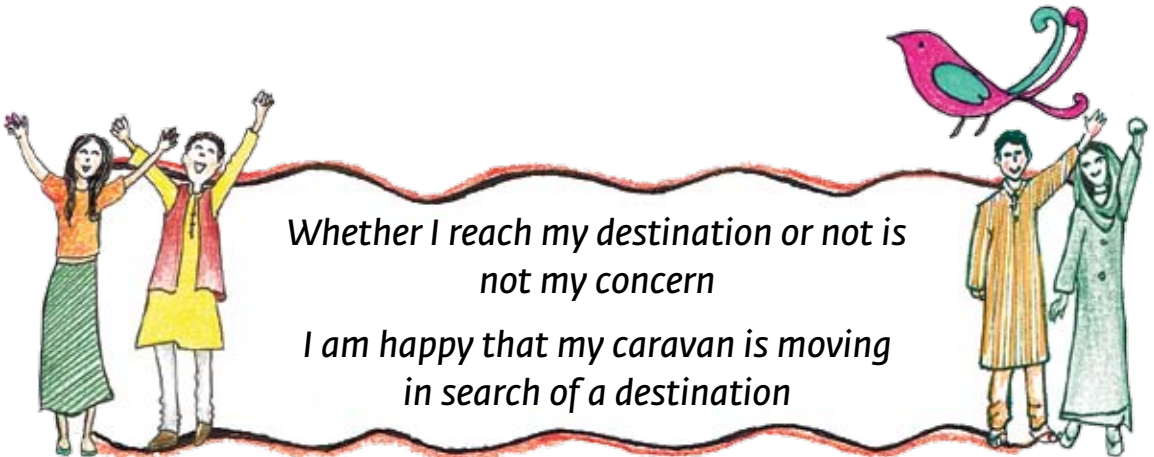
fund raiser. It is difficult to believe what 13 year old VIRAJ

GAPCHUP, a resident of a small village near Pune, managed to achieve.

This student of class 9 tells his story thus, "Last year I was very unhappy that the school auditorium had not been constructed. The building work had to be stopped because of lack of

funds. I felt we should do something. We collected donations from people and the work started again. This small achievement was a big encouragement for me."

Viraj was also distressed because of shortage of water. He thought of making a tool to stop the water over flow from water tanks. Once this tool was ready, he proved its efficiency to people and started selling it. Within a few months he collected one hundred and fifty thousand rupees, which was a national record. Maharashtra government has honored him with many awards. Viraj always says **"Try and it can be done. Keep doing it – it WILL be done"**



IF YOU WANT SUCCESS AND
RESPECT
SAYING NO TO DRUGS IS
PERFECT

Whether I reach my destination
or not is not my concern
I am happy that my caravan is
moving in search of a destination.



**IT IS YOUR TURN NOW
TO THINK AND SPEAK**



What kind of addiction will you choose to get permanent HIGHS and happiness? Why did you make this choice? Have a discussion on this and write it in your diary. You can also write about positive and useful addictions on a chart paper and hang it in the Teen Club or in the class room. Why would anyone choose really exciting, positive addictions?

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Technical Inputs and Financial Assistance provided by
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),
55 Lodi Estate,
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