

# The Transformation Series



Module

**Addiction**



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[www.thecollegewithoutwalls.com](http://www.thecollegewithoutwalls.com)

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The South African Kinesiology Practitioner College

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## INTRODUCTION

**Learn how to overcome the untruths holding you back from your unique Self, through studying the short workshops in the Transformation Series.**

An initiative of the South African Kinesiology Practitioner College, this outreach programme, is designed as a universal resource for those seeking to embrace the path to a better life; to learn how to overcome struggles and difficulties; and to create a future filled with hope, independence and joy. The background, methodology, understanding and purpose of doing Self Work is clearly outlined in Gabby's informative book, **A Call To Self**. It is therefore highly recommended to develop a foundation to your learning, through reading the easily accessible Ebook, A Call To Self.

The vitally important Life Skills presented in The Transformation Series of workshops are not all covered in the book A Call To Self, and thus the need for an additional platform to enable people to have the opportunity for further learning was born.

Featuring content decades in the making, this outreach programme takes students on a structured journey that equips them with the skills to build a foundation of awareness, gain enhanced confidence and to triumph in a demanding and fast paced world.

The continually expanding Transformation Series is an essential guide for those looking to master their own lives.

### **FORWORD:**

from **A Call To Self** in Gabby's words:

*This book developed into a heartfelt gift of gratitude to my three decades of clients and my greatest teachers – Inmates at a Maximum Security Prison.*

*Here I found, 'at the bottom rung of the ladder' - stories that would make grown men cry. The desperation to learn Life Skills and techniques to overcome Stress, took me to a height of Love Beyond All Understanding. To guide a person back to their own unique Self is a precious gift.*

*Ultimately, we are all the same, diamonds in the rough. We all experience stress and need tools to overcome our suffering.*

*That is why this book is dedicated to YOU.*

## Biography

Gabby is South African born but grew up and was educated in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia as it was called then). She is happily married with three grown children and currently has three grandchildren.

Gabby began her Healing Path in 1990 with a Diploma in Reflexology. In 1993 she became a Touch For Health Instructor, and is still registered as such with the International College of Kinesiology in Australia. In 1995 she was awarded a Professional status with the South African Foundation of Educational Kinesiology. In 2000 Gabby became a Faculty Member of the International College of Professional Kinesiology Practice in St. Heliers, New Zealand. A few years later Gabby started the South African Kinesiology Practitioner College in Johannesburg.

In 2006 Gabby began teaching in Leeuwkop Maximum Security Prison, which she continued for twelve years. She was nominated as a candidate for the Woman of The Year Competition, for her prison work.

Speaking of her passion, Gabby says:

“I have always loved teaching kinesiology but never knew how fulfilling teaching kinesiology to prison inmates could be! Again, it took me to another level! I quickly identified an urgent need for Life Skills within the prison walls and set about writing a workbook on Stress Management. The title is *“Healing in a Maximum Security Prison – A Life Skills and Kinesiology Handbook*. This was published in 2009.”

“I am very excited to say this book has recently been reworked and re-launched. The new book is called *A Call to Self*, and is for anyone and everyone needing to overcome their struggles in life. For accessibility it is presented in Ebook form with an additional Study Guide.”

Currently Gabby continues to see clients privately and is writing more Life Skills papers as an online upliftment programme available from her College Without Walls.

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# ADDICTION

## WOULD YOU TAKE DRUGS AFTER READING THIS?

*“After staying awake for 4 nights on drugs and drunk I went to work late on a Monday morning. This for me was totally normal despite having 22 warnings and threats of being dismissed due to being intoxicated at work. On arrival I was asked to explain about goods that had gone missing from the premises that weekend....I was also asked to do a drug test (but of course I refused)...I told them I would come explain everything now I just needed the toilet quick. I got my cell phone and house keys and ran to the bus stop and waited for the first bus home....yes I was taking the bus because 2 weeks prior to this I wrote off my brand new golf because I was drunk and high and rolled three times outside the casino.*

*On the way home in the bus my mom called me and said the police and my work are looking for me and she was crying on the phone....It was at that stage that the gift of desperation kicked in...I was finally at the end of the road, where I could not lie anymore; I could not hurt anymore people....My stomach felt like it was full of poison and I just wanted to die....I had been living a double life for 15 years. I had no idea who I was and what I wanted in life. All my goals and dreams were destroyed by the drugs. I loved no one and at that stage definitely I did not love myself. My soul was so empty my vision was so blurred. My thinking was so distorted...I told my mom on the phone I am going to kill myself; the drugs have ruined my life. She asked me nicely to go home and wait for her. I told her she had better hurry up.*

*I got home and sat on the edge of my bed....My room was completely empty. I had sold everything I owned, even my clothes. I was thinking...kill myself or rehab???? The gun I had sold 3 days ago....I thought maybe I must get on a plane and run....but had no energy I was dead tired and so thin and so ugly I could not even look in the mirror. I started praying to God to forgive me and please help me as I never want to use drugs or drink ever again.....It was at that stage my mom walked in and hugged me and said Chris you need help.... For the first time in my life I pulled off the mask I had been wearing my whole life. I looked her in the eyes, I was crying...I said the words, mom I need help”*

This is part of a Testimonial written by a man called Chris, who found help at the Fish Hoek Drug and Rehabilitation Centre in False Bay South Africa. This Centre is run by the Therapeutic Community Centre, who gave permission for their information to be shared. The FBTCC (The False Bay Therapeutic Community Centre) is registered with the provincial Department of Social Development, and their attitude to rehabilitation is designed to encourage addicts to change their attitude towards life, so that they can move towards personal transformation and achieve and maintain sobriety.

## Why does a person take alcohol or drugs?

Every day we make decisions – some are short-term decisions like ‘shall I catch the bus or train today?’ But other decisions can be more long-term, such as what line of study should I go into, so that I can qualify as a banker for example.

And then there are times when we do not want to make a decision at all, especially when they appear to be difficult or stressful! Emotionally you may not be in a position to make the decision because you feel pressured, overwhelmed, confused, or exhausted.

And maybe other factors may be involved – Peer pressure, self-confidence, your culture, family, education level, health status and many more. It also depends on your sense of responsibility.

Obviously problem solving would be a healthy plan of action but more often than not people will take addictive substances for the following reasons:

- To cover up emotional problems
- To run away from life circumstances
- Stressed people reach for alcohol to ‘calm them down’ (which is an illusion!)  
This is dangerous as the habit of ‘using’ alcohol can become a substance dependency. This is mentioned as alcohol consumption seems to be accepted in social circles as normal.
- To stay in their friendship group
- It is a ‘cool’ thing to do!
- You do not believe YOU could ever become an addict.

The crazy thing is, once you are high or drunk your decision making ability is compromised and you may get into trouble with the law or cause family problems.

## Stages of Substance Abuse

1. **Experimentation.** *“I will never get hooked on this so let me try it”*
2. **Moderate use.** *“I can handle this; I do know when I have had enough”*  
This includes weekends, social or evening participation but does not affect anyone else.
3. **Abuse:** *“I don’t get drunk. I know what I’m doing and am fine after drinking a bottle of whiskey” or stealing money to pay for another fix.* The more he uses, the more he will need, to obtain the desired effect. The craving becomes greater and the person will often go into denial that it is a problem. He believes he can give it up whenever he feels like it. If challenged he could become physically or verbally abusive. Health issues may arise and he will need more and more of the substance to feel satisfied. Work stress and interpersonal relationships will become problematic and this is where outsiders become affected too.
4. **Dependency:** *“I have had a tough day. I feel anxious/depressed/have a headache – I have to have a fix.”* A person will be physiologically and psychologically dependent and will use his substance of choice compulsively without being able to control the amount he consumes. Or at what time of the day. Life will start to become unmanageable for himself as well as the family. He may resort to violence, and be unlawful, such as driving cars whilst under the influence, encouraging others to participate and generally being a poor role model. He will blame others for his problems as a means of denial and avoids taking responsibility. His health starts to show signs of the abuse. Problems such as lungs, liver, heart, brain, as well as kidneys can no longer take the strain.
5. Depending upon the choice of substance, sometimes **death** will result.

The time it takes to reach the final stages of addiction varies from person to person. This could occur from an overdose, mixing cocktails of drugs, or through an accident. Over a period of time, the physical body could go into organ failure and death.

The FBTCC cover alcohol as well as drug abuse. I am indebted to them for their clear, precise information regarding substance abuse. I love their holistic approach to treating alcohol and substance abuse, that aims to heal mind, body and soul. They address the causes and not just the symptoms.

The following is information as to what substances are, how they are abused and what the symptoms are. The idea is to provide as much information as possible to educate and help people make informed decisions as to what they wish to put into their mouths and bodies! Knowledge is power!

## **ALCOHOL**

This can be divided into three main categories:

### ***Wine, Beer and Spirits***

It can be fermented, such as beer and wine; it can be distilled, such as vodka and whiskey and can be fortified, such as sherry and vermouth. Alcohol is freely available and in society, an etiquette to be enjoyed and encouraged. However, alcohol is a depressant not a stimulant as many people believe! In moderation it makes people feel good; it takes the edge off stress and makes social gatherings more fun. It provides 'liquid' courage to deal with intimidating situations.

Problems arise when people find they can't feel good, relax, have fun or cope with situations unless they've had a drink or two – or more. The effects of alcohol depend on the amount consumed; the size and weight of the person drinking; gender; and whether the person drinks regularly or not. Some people 'hold' their alcohol and some people can't, whilst others can hold certain types of alcohol but can't hold other types.

#### **Pleasant side-effects:**

- Feeling of relaxation
- Feeling of goodwill towards everyone
- Happiness
- Confidence

#### **Unpleasant side-effects:**

- Loss of co-ordination
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Sadness
- Confusion
- Lower inhibitions result in irresponsible behaviour
- Anxiety
- Exhaustion
- Sometimes verbal and/or physical abuse

### **Long-Term side-effects:**

- Increased blood pressure
- Compromised immune functioning
- Hallucinations
- Liver cancer and cirrhosis

### **Drinking Behaviour:**

Some people can drink a glass or two of wine or a beer or two a night or a few nights in a week and that's that. Other people don't drink for six nights a week and then do all their drinking in one go. This is called binge drinking and is a disturbing trend that is becoming widespread in all levels of society. The effects of binge drinking is similar to other drinking habits, but can be more severe as alcohol is consumed quickly and in high volumes. This puts extra stress on the liver and kidneys and can result in alcohol poisoning, coma and even death.

### **Alcohol addiction:**

Excessive drinking can result in physical and psychological alcohol dependence. Tolerance is also a danger, which means that high volumes of alcohol are needed for drinkers to experience the same effects.

### **Withdrawal**

The dependence results in physical withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms may present within four hours of the last drink and they can last for up to five days. Symptoms include:

- Shaking
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Headache
- Increased blood pressure
- Confusion
- Hallucinations (DTs)
- Seizures
- Heart attack
- Insomnia

Alcohol addiction is a problem in all levels of society, in most age groups and in all races. It's one of the most difficult addictions to get over because drinking is socially acceptable, and most people do it. That's why many people require intensive in-patient rehabilitation to help them recover from their addiction.

We think **alcohol abuse** and **alcoholism** is the same thing. They are very similar, but they are actually two different forms of behaviour. A key difference between the two is that alcohol abusers are not physically dependent on alcohol. Unlike alcoholics, their bodies do not need three drinks before breakfast before they go into withdrawal. Alcohol abuse is when people are *psychologically addicted* to alcohol; they do not think they can enjoy a night out unless they have six beers, six shooters and six glasses of wine. And they feel they need alcohol to cope with situations, like stress at work.

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism are both self-destructive behaviours, with far-reaching effects. Alcohol abuse is rife in South Africa. It has been estimated 30% of the population has an alcohol problem,

but it has also been said that the numbers could be significantly higher! The effects of the problem can be seen in the high numbers of domestic violence and violent petty crime, as well as the high number of road accidents in which alcohol has played a part.

Let's go back to Chris's story (which I have taken the liberty of shortening):

*"We started looking quickly for rehabs as I knew I was going to be arrested. I obviously had no money at the time so my mom had to pay for my rehab....I found a place in Fish Hoek called false bay TC. I phoned and told them my situation. They told me I need to come now....."*

*I packed my little bag of clothes and called a friend to take me to this Rehab. Obviously I used cocaine and meth for the last time on the way to the Treatment Centre....it's amazing all this sh\*t is going down, my life has fallen apart. I have lost everything, family, friends, jobs, cars, and my dignity but I still wanted to use (how selfish)...And at that stage I was against the world and God.*

*I arrived at the treatment centre and was booked in immediately. Was told I could have 3 days rest and then would have to join the group and be part of the programme. (A tear is falling down my eye while I am typing this letter).*

*I could feel I was in the right place. I was told not to worry about what is going on outside...I need to focus on myself and how am I going to change.*

*I started seeing myself in the eyes and hearts of others...I was broken beyond repair when I realised what I had become. I remember crying and looking in the mirror and the counsellor asked me what do you see?? I said I see nothing...he said no, you are seeing the devil he is in front of you.... I had become the devil...If that is not rock bottom then I don't know what is. The gift of desperation was there. I started working the programme and complying with the rules. I started changing. I had to change my whole attitude!*

- *I was dishonest – I became honest*
- *I was manipulating – I became responsible for myself*
- *I could not deal with life – I started dealing with life*
- *I hated myself – They taught me to love myself*
- *I started believing in God and trusting the process*
- *I started to realise I was the problem, not the drugs*
- *They showed me who Chris really is.*
- *I had to dig deep to find myself*
- *They restored me to sanity*
- *They gave me my family back.*

*I don't lie anymore. I don't have to steal anymore. I feel comfortable in my own skin. I set goals on a monthly and yearly basis. I was about R125 000.00 in debt. I have paid this all off in just under 3 years. My life changed completely; people look up to me and ask me for help these days.*

***"I went to a club when I was 13 and came home when I was 25"***

If you know you have a problem, please find a Treatment Centre close to you. It is not easy to do this on your own. You need comprehensive treatment where everything from detox to spiritual counselling and nutritional guidance is required. Other holistic treatments

include Life Skills, particularly coping mechanisms; behavioural change; goal setting; and relationship building. You will also require psychological and spiritual counselling as well as group and family therapy. And then of course aftercare, for on-going support on the long road to recovery, and to help avoid – and recover from – a relapse.

## **DRUG ABUSE**

Drug abuse happens when someone uses a drug, or a cocktail of drugs, in an irresponsible and dangerous manner. The drugs can be over-the-counter or prescription, such as you would get from your chemist. Or they can be illegal, such as heroin, cocaine and tik. Anyone can become a drug addict; your kids' school teacher, your mom, the gang leader on the wrong side of the tracks, the homeless man you see down the street – even you. This is because no one ever sees it coming. It starts innocently with an experiment here, a prescription pain killer there. And for some people that is where it ends. For others, however, it is just the beginning of a dangerous road that leads to crime, pain, suffering, and often, death.

Many people will say they are casual drug users. They may have a bit of cocaine at a party or have a joint occasionally watching movies with friends. They will tell you they have it under control. But there is a fine knife-edge between *control* and being *out of control*. It does not take much to turn this habit into a crutch during a stressful time. And then it takes even less time for chemical dependence to develop. Suddenly it is not possible to go to a meeting without taking a little something for moral support.

It is the physical chemical dependence that turns drug abuse into addiction. This is also when a tolerance starts to develop. When addicts try to stop, the severe withdrawal symptoms are usually enough to drive them back to their dealer.

### **Who is at risk?**

Anyone can become an addict but there are certain predisposing factors that can increase the risk.

- People who have mood, thought, or personality disorders such as bipolar and schizophrenia may be at risk of becoming a drug addict.
- People who grow up in homes in low socio-economic areas, where alcohol and/or drug abuse is common. They may follow the example set by their parents, neighbours or friends.
- Young people with too much money in their pockets, while parents are out enjoying themselves and the kids are without adult supervision.

### ***DAGGA (Marijuana / Cannabis)***

Dagga is the South African name given to Marijuana or Cannabis. It is made from the bright green star-like pattern of leaves of the Cannabis hemp plant. The leaves and sometimes also the seeds, flowers and stems are dried and rolled up in a type of cigarette called a joint or a bong.

**Other names are grass, pot, weed, dope, reefer and ganja.**

Dagga belongs to the depressant category of drugs, as it slows down communication between brain and body.

- Dagga can be smoked (as above)
- Is sometimes baked in cakes and cookies
- Smoked or eaten as Hashish, which is blocks of dried cannabis resin
- The Hash oil extracted from hashish, can be smoked, eaten and vapourised.

Hashish and hash oil are stronger than marijuana leaves.

### **Pleasant Side Effects**

- Dagga is favoured for the feeling of relaxation that follows any kind of consumption. The feeling does not last long: 2 to 3 hours, and the intensity varies according to the person, the atmosphere, the size of the dose, and the blend.
- Different way of thinking about the world and feelings of enlightenment.
- Altered sensory perception
- Excitement for life, in a good way
- Hallucinations, which not everyone enjoys!
- Hunger

### **Unpleasant Side-effects**

- Confusion
- Paranoia
- Red eyes
- Loss of co-ordination
- Hallucinations
- Hunger

### **Long-term Side-effects**

Not everyone believes that dagga has long-term side-effects. People who regularly use dagga do not think it does them any harm. However, studies have shown that long-term use does have an impact on the body and mind:

- Increased risk of respiratory disease and lung cancer.
- Deteriorating memory and cognitive functions
- Lethargy
- Impaired hormone production
- Increased risk of mental disorders, such as psychosis and schizophrenia.

Regular users argue dagga is not as addictive as other drugs and that use does not lead to physical or psychological dependence. However, studies have shown this is incorrect and that dagga is definitely addictive and can produce physical and psychological dependence. People also show an increased tolerance to the drug, which means that they now have to consume more of it to get the same results.

## **Withdrawal**

Dagga withdrawal is perhaps the least testing of the all the drugs. However, the effects are still serious enough that some people require help getting through withdrawal and rehabilitation.

Ex-users have about a week of discomfort with symptoms that include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Irritability
- Diarrhea
- Insomnia
- Anxiety

## ***TIK (Crystal Methamphetamine)***

Tik is the South African street name for **Crystal Methamphetamine**. It has a very bad reputation in South Africa because it is more potent than other forms of meth and because it is so easily available. It started off as the drug of choice in poor communities because it is

cheap but has since spread to other levels of society. Its effects are stronger and last longer than other forms of meth, but the crash is also much worse.

Tik and other forms of crystal meth are stimulants, as opposed to depressants because they increase activity between the brain and the central nervous system.

It is a white powder that is smoked, snorted and injected. Crystal meth also comes in crystalline blocks, also smoked, snorted and injected. Tik is an extremely powerful drug that takes effect immediately if it is smoked or injected. Its lag time is about half an hour if it is snorted or swallowed.

The instant effects are pleasurable, but the after-effects are awful and the long-term effect even worse!

## **Pleasant side-effects**

- Euphoria
- Heightened sense of contentment and satisfaction
- No worries in the world
- Confidence
- Energy
- Power
- gratitude

### **Unpleasant side-effects**

- Anxiety
- Heart palpitations
- Panic attacks
- Sweating
- Hallucinations
- Aggression
- Headache
- Cramps

### **Long-term side-effects**

- Malnutrition
- Depression
- Meth mouth: rotten and broken teeth caused by poor oral hygiene and constant grinding.
- Mental disorders called tik psychosis
- Insomnia
- Seizures
- Organ failure
- Heart attack
- Brain damage
- Coma
- Death

### ***Tik* addiction**

There are few drugs more addictive than tik. It does not take long for psychological and physical dependence to set in. Relapse rates with tik are very high because it is difficult to work through the severity of the physical withdrawal symptoms and to get over the psychological cravings.

In-house rehabilitation is necessary to treat tik addiction because addicts need to be removed physically, from the enabling environment. They also need the enforced structure and holistic therapy to break the destructive patterns and ways of thinking that keep them in the addiction cycle.

### ***AMPHETAMINES***

Amphetamines are stimulants that can be used legally, as medicine, and illegally, as recreational drugs.

In the medical world, amphetamines are used to treat narcolepsy and ADHD. But for fun, people use amphetamines to get a sense of euphoria and pleasure.

**Other names for amphetamines are speed, uppers, black beauties, ice and base.**

Amphetamines come in powder form, tablets, capsules and crystals.

They can be snorted, swallowed, injected and smoked. They can also be applied directly to the gums for an instant high.

Not everyone experiences positive side-effects, but the immediate effects are usually quite pleasurable for many and that is why it is so easy to become addicted. On the other hand, the unpleasant side-effects are **most** unpleasant! Again, this would depend on factors such as the quality of the drug, the physical size of the user and the size of the dose.

### **Pleasant side-effects**

- Euphoria
- Confidence
- Energy
- Happiness

### **Unpleasant side-effects**

- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Constipation and diarrhoea
- Dizziness
- Depression

### **Long-term side-effects**

- High blood pressure
- Paranoia
- Chest pain
- Tremors
- Seizures
- Stroke

It can take a while to develop an amphetamine addiction, but prolonged use, even for medical reasons seems to end in an addiction. The addict's body relies on the drug to get them through everyday activities. Addicts also crave the drugs psychologically and believe they need it to carry out day to day activities. There is also the danger that the person develops a tolerance for the drug and thus has to take higher and higher doses to experience an effect.

The crash is so bad, that many people aim for a constant high.

Amphetamine withdrawal is so bad, many addicts simply give up and return to the habit. Some of the symptoms are anxiety, depression, confusion, pain, nightmares, and exhaustion. Intensive rehabilitation programmes are required to give the addict treatment to overcome their addiction.

## **COCAINE**

*“A few years ago, I started using cat and cocaine with friends. At first it was fun, but then it got worse...it became a regular, daily thing. Every day I HAD to use. I can remember in the beginning it was just on occasions, a weekend thing. It was fun and amazing to feel the burning through my nose, the awful taste in my throat and the high it gave me. I could party for hours and go days without sleep.*

*Whenever I used, I could focus on something for hours, and not lose my concentration. NOTHING could stop me. Or so it felt....The years of using continued. I always thought that I had the upper hand of the drug, and that I can control it. I mean, come on, any drug addict thinks that. At the time it felt great. I felt on top of the world, until one day when my whole world came crashing down on me.*

*My using became so often and so bad, that whenever I got my monthly salary, I spent everything on drugs. I'd phone my dealer right away and get my fix. I'd pawn things for money, I'd steal money. My personality changed, in a bad way. I wasn't the same anymore. So one day I just couldn't anymore, and I moved away from the people that I was living with and using with, but things just got worse. You see, I stole a large amount of money from those people, and it so happened that the girl had been tested by her mother for drugs, and her test came out positive, to which she and all my drug using buddies decided to put the blame solely on me....As soon as they noticed I stole their money, they threatened me with the police. IT WORKED!*

*Right there and then was my turning point, and my decision to stop using. I couldn't anymore, I knew I need help, and fast, before I take my own life.” - Carmen*

Cocaine starts life as a leaf on the coca plant. (No not cocoa!) Once harvested, it is mixed with a blend of chemicals to change its properties. It is a stimulant as it excites the processes of the central nervous system. It started out as a high-end drug, used mostly by celebrities and business executives. However, cocaine is now cheap and available to anyone who wants it.

**It is available in various forms, including powdered cocaine and crack cocaine.** Crack cocaine is an enormous problem in the lower-income groups because it is mixed together from a variety of impure substances, which increase the health risks for addicts.

Cocaine comes in three different forms:

- **Cocaine hydrochloride:**  
a crystalline powder that is usually snorted but can also be injected.
- **Cocaine base:**  
Which is also a powder.
- **Crack:**  
Which looks like rocks and is often smoked or injected.

The effects of taking cocaine are immediate. There is no lag time between using and the high, which means coke addicts are quick and easy to develop. Again, the effect of using cocaine depend on the method used, the size, weight and gender of the user, and the regularity with which the drug is used.

Injecting cocaine produces the strongest effects but may not last as long – only around five to ten minutes. Snorting does not produce the dizzying heights of injecting, but it lasts up to three times longer. To addicts, snorting cocaine may be the acceptable method because it gives the impression that the addiction is still under control!

**Pleasant side-effects:**

- Euphoria
- Energy
- Feeling of power
- Confidence
- Pain relief
- Increased alertness

**Unpleasant side-effects:**

- Increased heart rate
- Sweating
- Irritability
- Convulsions
- Un-predictable behaviour, which could turn violent

**Long-term side-effects:**

- Paranoid psychosis
- Malnutrition
- Disorientation
- Respiratory Illnesses
- Ruined nose tissue
- Insomnia leading to exhaustion
- Depression
- Stroke
- Heart attack
- Death

Cocaine taps into the reward centres of the brain, which provides the feelings of overall goodness, happiness and euphoria. The problem is when people start to crave those feel good feelings, which encourage them to take more cocaine and more frequently. Eventually the body loses the ability to tap into its own reward centres and thus only cocaine can produce the desired results. This is what is called physical and chemical dependency.

Because the effects do not last long, people tend to use large amounts in a short space of time, usually when out for the evening for example. As addicts develop a tolerance for cocaine, the amount consumed increases dramatically.

The withdrawal from cocaine addiction produces some very unpleasant symptoms which are even more severe in long-term users. The symptoms last around two weeks and include:

- Depression, occasionally leading to suicidal thinking
- Chronic fatigue
- Tremors
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Mood swings

Cocaine is no longer a rich-man's drug as it used to be. It is readily available to all levels of society and becomes more affordable as the purity decreases. This becomes even more dangerous, and anyone you know could become an addict.

## **HEROIN**

*"It started out as fun. I thought I'd experiment seeing that all the cool kids were doing it. I wiped my eyes and realized that I was 27 years old and a drug addict! What a tough pill to swallow, not tougher than the harm I did to myself and those around me though. My addiction to heroin was a vicious cycle of lies, deceit, guilt, shame and darkness. I was on the verge of death, I contemplated suicide over and over thinking that I am a worthless piece of dirt. This year, is my fifth year embracing recovery and by the grace of God and all those that support me up to this day, I am eternally grateful and loving life. Thank you False Bay TC for equipping me with the tools I need to make it thus far. I choose to be clean. I choose to be sober. I choose life. Thank you."*

*Nick – 31 year old male.*

Heroin comes from the Opioid family of drugs, which also includes **opium, morphine and codeine**. All of these are depressants; after use, brain and nervous activity slows down. Heroin causes an intense feeling of euphoria immediately after use. The feeling does not last long, and people soon become tolerant to low doses, which makes them seek even bigger highs with ever increasing doses.

**There are many street names : smack, china white, unga, beet, gear and Thai white.**

Heroin ranges in appearance from a fine white powder to brown rocks. It is usually sold in little packets of foil or balloons.

It can be used in a variety of ways – smoked, injected, snorted and packed into ordinary cigarettes or cannabis joints. As in all drugs, it has pleasant and unpleasant side-effects which vary from person to person. They also depend on the size of the dose and on how long the drug has been used.

### **Pleasant side-effects:**

- Euphoria
- Warmth
- Comfort
- Contentment
- Complete lack of pain

### **Unpleasant side-effects:**

- Confusion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Insomnia
- Loss of co-ordination
- Slow heart rate
- Respiratory failure
- Death

### **Long-term side effects:**

- Depression
- Constipation
- Mood swings
- Collapsed veins (from injecting the drug)
- Brain damage
- Organ failure

As far as addictive drugs go, heroin is the top of the list. It only takes **ONE** experience of intense euphoria for people to become addicted. The more they take, the less intense the experience becomes. So, they now have to take more of it more often to experience the same high.

The result is physical and psychological addiction, which doubles the difficulty of withdrawal and recovery.

When people try to give up heroin, they are forced to deal with psychological cravings, as well as physical withdrawal, because their bodies have become dependent on the chemical properties of the drug.

### **Withdrawal**

In very serious cases of addiction, physical withdrawal symptoms may appear in as little as six hours. They get gradually worse until they peak at between twenty-four and seventy-two hours. The symptoms eventually subside after five to seven days.

Some of the symptoms of withdrawal:

- Diarrhoea
- Increased excretion of body fluids, such as sweat, tears and snot
- Vomiting
- Fever and cold sweats

- Insomnia
- Severe cramps
- Muscle spasms

Given all these problems when it comes to recovering from heroin addiction, it becomes obvious that addicts need professional help and support to successfully kick the habit.

### ***THE 12 MOST ADDICTIVE DRUGS (See drugabuse.com)***

- **Amphetamines**
- **Benzodiazepines:**  
such as Valium and Xanax which are prescribed to treat anxiety, insomnia, alcohol withdrawal and other conditions
- **Methadone:**  
A synthetic opiate. Methadone is approved for the treatment of heroin addiction but is often considered more addictive than heroin and even harder to withdraw from.
- **GHB (gammahydroxybutyrate)**  
This was approved by the FDA in 2002 for the singular use of treating narcolepsy
- **Nicotine:**  
16 million people suffer serious illness that is caused by smoking. Long-term brain changes are caused by continuous exposure to nicotine.
- **Alcohol**
- **Cocaine**
- **Crack**  
Made from baking soda and powder cocaine. Crack is smoked, damaging lung tissue.
- **Crystal Meth**
- **Heroin**
- **MDMA or MOLLY:** Commonly known as **Ecstasy**.
- **OxyContin:** similar to heroin. A potent synthetic opiate.

### ***DATE RAPE DRUGS (Information from Sunrise House)***

These are drugs that are sometimes used to facilitate a sexual assault. When used in this way, these substances are often given to the victim without the person's knowledge. Sedatives and drugs can cause memory loss. They are slipped into alcoholic drinks which can exacerbate their effects. Date rape drugs are often odourless and tasteless, making them difficult to detect. This type of drug can make people weak, confused or even unconscious. As a result, people are often unable to defend themselves against an attack. In some cases, they may not even know that an attack took place!

Some of these substances are:

**Rohypnol:** Can be effective in 20 minutes and last 8-10 hours

Rohypnol is a benzodiazepine, a central nervous system depressant. In other countries this drug is used to treat anxiety, sleep disorders, and seizure disorders. It is illegal in USA. Small doses cause sedation while larger doses lead to a loss of consciousness. White tablets can

be dissolved in liquid and cannot be smelled or tasted. To deter the use of this drug in rape, the tablet is now green and turns liquid blue when dissolved.

**Common Side effects:**

- Drowsiness
- Decreased blood pressure
- Bloodshot eyes
- Slurred speech
- Impaired judgement
- Gastrointestinal disturbance
- Urinary retention
- Headache
- Reduced reaction time
- Muscle relaxation
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Disinhibition
- Tremors
- Amnesia (loss of memory)

**GHB: (Gammahydroxybutyric acid):** This can be effective in 15 minutes and last 3 – 6 hours

This is a depressant drug, sometimes used to treat cataplexy and narcolepsy. It comes in powder form and can easily be dissolved in liquid. It has a slightly salty taste. Mixing GHB with alcohol increases the effects of the drug and can trigger coma and respiratory depression. Low doses can cause drowsiness, nausea, and visual distortion. Larger doses may lead to:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures
- Decreased heart rate
- Respiratory depression
- Lowered body temperature
- Nausea and vomiting
- coma

**Ketamine:** This takes effect after 5 minutes and lasts 30-60 minutes

This is a dissociative anaesthetic. It would distort perceptions like sight and sound, and cause feelings of detachment. Its sedative effects are sometimes used during radiation and burn treatments but is most commonly used in veterinary practices. It is most commonly found in liquid form.

**Common side-effects:**

- respiratory depression
- dissociation
- hallucinations
- dizziness
- difficulty speaking
- nausea and vomiting
- amnesia (loss of memory)
- impaired motor functioning
- dangerously fast heart rate

**Chloral Hydrate:** Effect takes 15-20 minutes and can last several hours.

Usually stolen from pharmacies. It is a sedative sometimes used to treat insomnia and anxiety, or before and after surgery. Both liquid and capsule form are used to facilitate sexual assault. The liquid can be created from common household chemicals!

The drug has a slight bitter taste. The sedating effect is much stronger when mixed with alcohol.

**Common side effects:**

- difficulty staying awake
- nausea and vomiting
- diarrhea
- rash and itchiness
- confusion
- depressed respiration and heart rate

**How to Protect Yourself:**

- Certain protective measures can lower the chances of becoming a victim of a date rape drug.
- Because these substances are often added to alcoholic beverages, you should never accept a drink from someone you do not know well, and always watch when a drink is being prepared for you.
- Do not leave your drink unattended.
- Do not drink from punch bowls or other shared containers as they may already contain drugs.
- Drinks that contain a drug may taste salty or bitter.
- Never drink anything that tastes strange.
- If possible have a non-drinking friend accompany you to a party, bar or similar setting.
- Most importantly, always get help right away if you feel drunk without cause, or if you feel like the effects of your drink are stronger than usual.

\* \* \*

If you or if you know of someone who is abusing drugs, PLEASE encourage them to reach out for help. I have taken the information from the False Bay Therapeutic Community Centre ([www.falsebaytc.co.za](http://www.falsebaytc.co.za)) as I love the way the information is clearly set out for maximum understanding. Many people do not have access to finding this information for themselves, so this is for you!

The FBTCC bases its rehab programmes on the internationally recognised Therapeutic Community Addiction Treatment Model. The model helps addicts realise the destructive nature of addiction and brings about a desire to make significant behavioural changes that address underlying problems and help maintain healthier lifestyles. *The model focuses on the whole person – emotionally mentally, physically and spiritually. In fact, spiritual growth is one of the most important elements of addiction treatment, as it encourages residents to look beyond their self-centred world and start considering how their actions impact others. As a result, residents gain a greater sense of responsibility from their problems and their ongoing battle against addiction.*

There are many other centres in every country around the world. Please find one near you and enter their programme to rehabilitate yourself before it is too late. I have witnessed young boys of around ten years of age sniffing glue! What comes next?

Drug peddlers are on the look-out all the time, to persuade children and young people to start experimenting with drugs. Please be very careful and strong enough to say NO!

If you are in any kind of trouble, phone a CHILDLINE or LIFELINE Centre in your area. They will be able to help you.

**There is no Study Guide to this Module.**