

## Response to Gateway Drugs

### Gateway Drug

Gateway drug (which is also called gateway theory, gateway or effect refers to the idea of taking drugs that are not very traumatic, but may lead to the use of drugs, which are more serious and more dangerous in the future. This theory is often referred to substances such as tobacco, alcohols, and marijuana. Some research shows that the most serious and dangerous substance prior to the use of such substances has been marijuana or alcohol (Wayne & Lynskey, 2005).

### Such Drugs Exist

In public discourse, there are different versions related to gateway drugs. For instance:

1. Substance abuse is the gateway in order to make the consumer at greater risk for abuse of other substances.
2. Substance that is known as the gateway, prepare the brain for addiction to other substances. (Independent of the increased likelihood of turning to other materials)
3. It has been noted that consumers of light or legal substances begin to gradually move toward heavier, illegal and dangerous substances. Gateway features are more than social reasons, and involves pharmacology.

## **Three Substances as Gateway Drugs**

### **Marijuana as Gateway**

Some scientific research indicates that the use of marijuana is likely to cause dangerous illegal drug use in the future. While some studies show that it is not. Gateway theory has been the target of much criticism. The proponents of the theory as a gateway to the wrong causal relationship between the two variables is correlated only communicate with each other. There is a relationship between drugs considered as soft for instance marijuana and severe drugs for example cocaine (NIH Research, 2011). Marijuana as a gateway claims that marijuana use may likely cause people to subsequently increase the use of more dangerous drugs and it tends to be a gateway to more dangerous drugs. The hypothesis is one of the main pillars policy against marijuana use various countries.

It has been found that factors such as the extent of tobacco cigarette advertising and the practice of mixing tobacco and marijuana together by smoker, which is common in Europe, goes hand to hand with young people as marijuana increases nicotine dependence. There may be pre-existing attitudes, which have grounds for turning to drugs. The availability of multiple drugs in custom packaging makes it difficult to understand the issue. In this context, drug subcultures are more effective than marijuana. Understanding the relationship between marijuana use and use of other substances requires further research on social context, individual characteristics, and drug effects on the individual.

### **Cigarette as a Gateway**

Cigarette smoking is definitely a gateway drug. Cigarette is not necessarily addictive, but considered as a gateway to the world of drugs. It has been found that smoking is a gateway drug,

and according to studies, more than the percentage of drug addicts into drug addiction before, were smokers. The addiction to a new drug is very dangerous and taking the ingredients and deleterious effects on the nervous system of the body, causing many adverse affects. More than 70 percent of drug addiction begins with smoking as it is a gateway drug.

### Alcohol as a Gateway

There is risk associated with the fact the alcohol consumption may lead to other hard drugs. Some studies suggest that there is a clear conclusion about the consumption of alcohol among young alcohol users leading to cocaine and heroin. Another hypothesis is that this may be because of the gateway effect of "common factors" that are involved in taking any illegal substance. Due to the illegal use / sale of alcohol, it is more likely that consumers will be in situations in which people that use other illegal drugs, and / or sell are met. By this reasoning, some studies have shown that alcohol and tobacco can be considered as a gateway. However, one explanation may be that marijuana may be more serious than alcohol or tobacco as a gateway drug (Elizabeth, 2012). Other studies also reveal that drug use largely exists due to the living conditions of people. Research shows that alcohol users compared with the others are more likely to use other drugs.

### Expert's Response

An expert was asked about the effects of the gateway drugs. The response of the expert revealed so many facts which are hardly known to many about the gateway drugs usage and its effects. It was also revealed that marijuana which is considered as a mild hallucinogen contains some of the alcohol's depressant and some of the properties which are disinhibiting. It affects on

the user very heavily which is influenced by the past experience and expectations, but most of the users who use it for the very first time would not feel anything different. Whereas a smoker can feel difference within few minutes and he may get on peak within 10 to 30 minutes. Some of the effects include dryness of mouth and throat, impaired balance and coordination, increased heart rate and diminished short term memory (Maia & Szalavitz, 2010). Temperate dose of the drugs usually tend to encourage a sense of dreamy state and a sense of relaxation and well being that promote fantasies and distort perception. The long-term side effects of such drugs are not conclusively known. Many people fear that the use of medical marijuana may cause cancer. Cannabis does not contain some of the same compounds as tobacco. However, because medical marijuana patients will be using their medication less frequently than many people smoke cigarettes, the risk of cancer because marijuana is thin. According to new research, the use of other illicit drugs teenagers smoking marijuana, largely due to factors such as employment status and stress. In fact, the most reliable indicator of whether someone uses other illicit drugs is a race / ethnicity, and not smoking marijuana ever (NIH Research, 2011).

Addiction is a disease, just like diabetes, and it should be treated as such

Addiction is a disease which is just like diabetes and does not have any permanent cure. It prevails in the body of addict as long as he keeps on using such drugs and ultimately ruins his/her internal functions.

Addiction is a not disease, like diabetes, and it should not be treated as such

Addiction is not a disease; it is basically a habit in which a person get accustomed to of taking and eventually he/she feel dead without taking it. It should not be treated as diabetes,

because it can be completely cure with the consent of an addict. There are so many institutes that only give medical services for the drug addicts. Addiction can be controlled through adequate rehabilitation and counselling as well.

If addiction is a disease, is the addicted individual relieved of responsibility? Why or why not?

Addiction is not diseases and addicted individual is not at all free from his/her responsibilities because of the fact that the addiction is not presented to him by someone; it is completely his own decision to get into such things. An individual has started taking drugs may of the fact that he wants to go away from his responsibilities.

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