

The most commonly used drug in the world today is neither aspirin nor marijuana or tranquilliser pills, but

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is fast becoming known as the 'in' drug as young people, who are beginning to realise the harmful effects of marijuana, LSD, and the hard

drugs are rediscovering alcohol. Alcohol, they find removes worry, relaxes their inhibitions, calms their fears, and besides it is socially approved.

In recent years widespread drug addiction among teenagers has made many young people dependent on drugs for fun and pleasure. Because it is an addictive drug, but also legal, alcohol is the 'perfect' answer for those who need a replacement for former drug habits.

The alcohol industry has not been slow to encourage this trend. The recent production of the 'pop wines' - fruit flavoured wines such as apple, currant and strawberry - is making it big with teenagers and college kids. They taste good, are fairly cheap and will ensure the user's popularity, their producers continually declare through television, radio and magazines.

Since the beginning of written history we have evidence that the four basic ingredients for alcohol (sugar, water, yeast and mild warmth) were available and used to make fermented drinks. Bacchus, god of wine, is credited with bringing it to the Greeks. The side of alcohol which Bacchus presented pictured it is a source of relaxation and pleasure, nourishing the body, restoring and preserving health, and ennobling festivals and rituals.

King Solomon, of Bible fame, experienced another side of alcohol and wrote:

"Who has woe? Who has sorrows? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who tarry long over wine, those who go to try mixed wine. Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind utter perverse things." Proverbs 23:29-33 RSV.

A million separate tragedies testify to the truth of Solomon's words. Every twenty minutes a drinking driver kills a person. More than 50 percent of all fatal automobile accidents involve an intoxicated driver. And although it is known that one out of ten social drinkers will become an alcoholic, social pressure to drink continues unchecked. The social drink today is so widespread and accepted that less than 5 percent of the hosts and hostesses interviewed in a recent survey said they provided an attractive alternate to alcohol for their guests who preferred not to drink.

SAY NO alcohol - it is the simplest and best way to go.

To be continued.....next month.

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