

Drug Abuse & Crime

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

CONCERNED PARTIES, THE WORLD OVER, WHO WISH TO COUNTERACT THE EFFECTS OF DRUGS, CRIME AND AIDS IN OUR SOCIETY, SHOULD DO SO WITH ABSOLUTE SINCERITY. IT IS A MATTER OF CONCERN THAT THE ROOT CAUSE OF THESE PROBLEMS HAVE NOT BEEN TACKLED AND THAT MERELY THE SYMPTOMS ARE TREATED. THIS MAKES ALL EFFORTS TO RID SOCIETY OF DRUGS, CRIME AND THE SPREAD OF AIDS LOOK LIKE A CONTINUOUSLY WASTED EFFORT. THE EFFECTS OF ALL FORMS OF CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND GET-TOGETHERS TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM SEEM USELESSLY INEFFECTIVE.

If the politicians and the governments of the world were seriously concerned about improving the moral quality of life for their citizens, then the initial step to achieve this should be to ban the beverage use of alcohol, the production of such beverages, pornography and all forms of shameless dressing. These evils contribute towards all major crimes more than anything else. It would seem that a culture of pass-time and fashion dictates the arrangement of seminars and conferences to address such issues. In doing so, mere lip-service is paid to counter-acting crime and the spread of Aids as opposed to constructive moves to eradicate the problems.

It is for this reason that Islam had banned the use of alcohol, and had always advocated a rigid form of dress code and discipline thereby barring any form of shamelessness from entering the moral fibre of society. The great Prophet of Islam (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) has said, "Alcohol is the mother of all evils." The use of alcohol has contributed most towards promoting adultery, thieving, murders and all other forms of major and minor misdemeanours.

In our so-called "technologically advanced" world of today, the challenge to Islam and the Muslims, in addressing the problem of crime, gangsterism, Aids and drug abuse, is no different to the challenge that the Muslims were faced with during the advent of Islam, in the face of pre-Islamic ignorance.

We pray that the Almighty Allah grant the responsible authorities the understanding to address the root cause of the problems rather than treating the symptoms.

THE BEST FIGHT AGAINST GANGSTERISM AND DRUGS IS TO UPLIFT THE SPIRITUAL QUALITIES OF HUMAN LIFE AND CONTROL UNNECESSARY DESIRES

WEALTH HAS BLINDED THE UMMAH TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT MANY HAVE ESTABLISHED ILLEGAL DRUG BUSINESSES. MUSLIMS MUST RETURN TO A LIFE OF GOOD CHARACTER. THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE SERVING THE RELIGION AND ARE SPIRITUALLY INCLINED SHOULD PUT THEIR LIVES INTO CONTEXT.

The responsibility of Muslim parents in the new South Africa has become much more than it used to be. The grim situation and the criminal atmosphere outside the home is not only diverting the minds of our children away from the Deen, but it is also diverting them away from general human values, towards a totally criminal environment and society.

The immodesty and shamelessness in schools, offensive literature and obscene television programmes of today face a massive challenge to the Islamic Culture. The best method of fighting against Drugs and Gangsterism is to lessen the need for materialism in our lives and to strive to attain proper social and spiritual standards in our society.

The greed to gather large amounts of wealth has blinded man to such an extent that he has established illegal drug

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businesses that are wiping out an entire generation. If the pleasant qualities such as kindness, satisfaction, patience and consciousness are awakened in a person, and these are used to combat and drown his greed for wealth and his evil and carnal desires which are destructing him, then he without doubt will be able to live the life of a civilised and conscientious human being. If a person implements humbleness, modesty, kindness and good character in his life, then his life will be comfortable in this world and in the Hereafter, just as it is evident from the Holy Quran in which Almighty Allah says, *"This home of the Hereafter, we assign it to those who desire not exaltation in the earth, nor disorder. And the end is only for those who are pious."* (Surah Qasas, Ruku 9, Verse 83) The Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) has stated, *"Love of the World is the root of all wrongdoing."*

Those persons who are serving the religion and are spiritually inclined, should put their lives into context and stay away from materialistic wealth, pomp and splendour. No person can attain spiritual elevation until he does not remove the love for material wealth from his heart.

This is the time when most youngsters are at the period of change. Many are moving away from the general acceptance of parental and elder control and values, and are just managing to assert their own individuality. Children want to look and behave like every other youngster in their age group, from their choice of clothes, hair styles and make up, to listening with glazed eyes to the same music and mooning over pop idols. To some, this assertion of individuality may include experimentation with drugs.

Despite the strenuous efforts made by the honest police and custom officers, drugs constantly pour into the country by air and sea. The drug-lords or drug barons, who are usually well-organised, make millions of rand of profit from selling drugs through their agents on the streets. In South Africa, the drug problem is on the increase. More and more children are exposed to drugs such as dagga, heroin, cocaine, alcohol, tobacco, LSD, etc. The shocking news is that drugs are now being sold to school children from little as 6 years old.

Recently, most schools have issued warnings to children and parents about the harmful effects of a very dangerous drug called LSD, commonly known as rust, acid and microdot. In order to promote the use of this drug among school children, the drug manufacturers are now marketing LSD in the form of squares of paper that look like stamps, coloured tablets about the size of an aspirin, tiny pinhead-sized tablets (microdots) and as small spots on small pieces of blotting paper (blotter acid). On first inspection, children are attracted to these "sweets" as they are sold in the shapes of famous cartoon characters and beautiful and appealing looking sweets. When these "sweets" are eaten, they immediately take on a certain effect and before the child realises, he or she becomes drugged and also addicted to that type of "sweet".

There are many effects of this drug. The drug has an effect on the persons central nervous system. The person will begin to experience strange body sensations such as floating and heaviness. He or she will begin to hallucinate. Perceptions of time and distance are poor. The symptoms are also a rising body temperature and blood pressure, enlarged pupils and rapid heart beat. Sweating will alternate with shivering, appetite is lost and nausea felt and all this may be accompanied by fear and agitation, and by insomnia. As the effects wear off, the user may be left feeling tense, nervous, highly strung out and washed out. (Drug Abuse, Gosden, Tony Blase, 1987, pg. 110)

If you believe that your child has started taking drugs, whether it is LSD to any other form, do not panic or explode into recriminations. Get in touch with social and medical agencies through doctors, social workers, or your local Imam. There are some very active and useful organisations in South Africa from whom advice and encouragement may be obtained.

What are some of the danger signs of drug abuse?

1. Money and easily sold goods start disappearing from the home.
2. Sons and daughters being absent from home more often.
3. Careless about appearance.

4. Unusual displays of temper with no apparent cause.
5. Lack of appetite.
6. Excessive use of perfume to hide the smell of drugs.
7. Wearing sunglasses at unusual times usually to hide the eyes.
8. Unusual borrowing of money with no evidence of any purchases.
9. Consistent paleness of complexion; unusual state of fatigue or excitement; becoming droopy and languid, alternating with excessive high spirit and moroseness. (Drug Abuse, Gosden, Tony Blase, 1987, pg. 23)

What can I do to help stop drug abuse?

1. Inform your children and teach them about the horrors.
2. Encourage them to talk to other members of your family if they don't want to talk to you - uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, etc.
3. Encourage schools, youth clubs, Islamic organisations, your local Imam or Moulana to warn about drug abuse.
4. Join your local organisation and put pressure on your local political representative, councillors, and the Government to do something to stamp out the drug trade.
5. If you suspect a person/s selling drugs in your area, report your suspicions to the police.

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