

I am a fish. I swim through life, sometimes watching for predators and at other times enjoying the cool waters that I know as my home. Just like all fish, I am curious. When a fish sees something new and unexplored, they become engrossed in it, and want to know what it is. Curiosity is a tool, because if we were never curious we would never ask questions, but sometimes our inquisitiveness can become a trap. I am a fish, and when I see a little worm on a hook, I don't know what it is or what it's doing there, but I want to find out. Unfortunately, by the time I do find out what it's for, it will be too late.

Similarly, drugs are things that people think they want, but they will really end up hurting them in the end. More and more teen-aged Americans are being pressured into trying new things by the people around them and by television and music. Cigarettes and alcoholic beverages are unfortunately becoming second nature to many of those people. A lot of people try drugs and alcohol to try to escape the pressures of every-day life, because they're depressed, or because they want to be "cool" or rebellious. Sorry to say, most of the time they don't stop to consider the consequences. I will say 'no' to drugs and alcohol because they are a waste of money, a loss of time, and a distraction from life.

People who spend lots of money on drugs are really investing in their death. If you're going to spend heaps of cash on something, it should at least be something constructive, but drugs are just the opposite. Besides the differences in your exterior--- yellow teeth, bad breath and wrinkles--- drugs and alcohol can severely damage your insides. The acids in alcohol can scar your liver and cause internal bleeding in the stomach. This would be like spending millions of dollars to build a first-rate hotel, with beautiful detail in the exterior and clean, comfortable, accommodations on the inside, and then renting a wrecking ball and tearing down the whole thing.

Secondly, drugs are a waste of time. You can always earn back the money wasted on your hotel, but all the time you spent will be gone; I want to be using my limited time here on this planet for what God intended me to use it for. Every cigarette that is smoked is six to fourteen minutes off that person's life, and I don't want to make that finite number of days that I have shrink. Besides reducing the amount of time we already have, devoting that time to drugs and alcohol will keep us from using that time wisely.

Finally, drugs can be a distraction from what life is really all about. Many people rely on drugs to turn their attention away from the pains that come up in their lives. Maybe they lost a loved one, got laid off work, or are just having a difficult time sorting everything out. Whatever the case is, the truth of the matter is that turning to drugs is only going to make things worse; they can make you sick, you can get in trouble with the law, and you could even end up hurting someone around you. Some healthier, more productive outlets could be sports, art, and reading.

Drugs rob people of their money, time and lives; people get so absorbed in drugs that they don't even notice what all they're losing. Today, the media has such great influence on a lot of people, especially teen-aged. Unfortunately, many people choose to use music and television to encourage young people to use drugs and alcohol rather than avoid them. Movies glamorize smoking and drinking, and companies that produce drugs and alcohol spend millions of dollars each year on advertisement, trying to draw in business.

Not only do I want to avoid drug and alcohol use myself, but I want to help people around me to steer clear of drugs. Making the mistake of trusting drugs with your problems can backfire, and once you start it isn't an easy task to stop. Ask any drug addict, and I'm sure they'll tell you they wish they'd never started. After all, if you don't have the first one, you can't have the second.

Bibliography:

Condon, Judith. *The Pressure to Take Drugs*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1990.