

To Quit or Not To Quit – That is the question!

The following information is for people who are not thinking about quitting alcohol & drugs.

If, like some other alcohol and drug users, you do not see yourself stopping using immediately, this brochure is designed for you. Its purpose is to inform you of the advantages of life without alcohol and drugs and to encourage you to stop using. The information that it contains is based on the research and experience of both users and ex-users, as well as a review of the most recent scientific knowledge. We would love to share this information with you.

“There’s no problem with my using, it’s not hurting anyone!”

Is that really the case? Have other people suggested to you that they thought your using is becoming problematic. Are you finding that going to work and doing the quality of work you were doing before is not as easy as it was? Are you finding that you are having to use more than you did before just to function?

A lot of research now shows that the impact of alcohol and drugs on family members especially children is significant. A seminal and huge study called the ‘Adverse Childhood Experiences’ study found that in fact children of alcoholics and drug users are up to *19 times* more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs in their teens and adulthood. People who are misusing substances will often state *“I don’t let it affect the kids”* sadly the study showed that despite the genuine efforts of parents to minimize or even hide their substance misuse from their children, the effect is most often unavoidable.

“I won’t be able to cope”

This is probably the number one thing we hear from people misusing substances, that if they were to stop they wouldn’t be able to cope or function with everything that they have going on in life. Unmanaged stress, anxiety, depression amongst other things are often the underlying issues for many addictions. Research shows that in fact when an individual learns alternative coping strategies they can actually change the neurochemical makeup of their brain. You can literally rewire your brain to function healthily without the use of alcohol and drugs.

Using alcohol and drugs actually makes depression and anxiety *worse* because of the way that it functions in the brain. Stop and think about this for a second, when you first

used to 'make yourself feel better' were you using more or less than you are now? Whilst addiction is incredibly complex one of the reasons that people increase their using is because the substance of choice is negatively altering how our brain manages the feel good chemicals in our brains and so we need to use more and more just to feel ok.

"People are fear-mongering! I know my source. My dealer only gives me the best product"

Whilst you may know your source, do you know and trust your dealers source, or even your dealers, dealers source? A recent study conducted in Vancouver showed that Fentanyl was showing up in over 90% of all street drugs. Even more worryingly the people using the drugs were not aware that their drugs were tainted.

"I've tried to quit before, I can't do it!"

Here at C.I.R.P we have developed specialized treatments which really work with what you are able to do rather than generic treatments which may not work for you. We spend time learning about you, we conduct in-depth assessments which help us to understand some of the hidden issues that may be going underpinning your substance misuse. We develop individualized treatment plans collaboratively with you so set you up for success. Research shows that incorporating

"The withdrawal is too hard; I've tried so many times before I know I can't handle it"

Going through the withdrawal can be an incredibly painful and difficult process. That is why we work with you to look at all the different options available to help you. We connect you with specialized addictions doctors who understand detox medication. The goal of detox is not to make you suffer but to try and help you get off of the drugs/alcohol as comfortably as possible. We are familiar with detox regimes and can connect you with the right professionals to get this underway.

"I can't handle the boredom of being clean - life seems really empty when I'm not using"

Boredom is a topic that comes up frequently when we work with our clients. Often clients will tell us that life is 'bland' or that they find no enjoyment when they are off drugs. Research shows that actually this can be attributed to a number of things

including, believe it or not drug using itself. We all know that drug use alters people's feelings often producing a state of well-being and happiness, this elevated state of mind however is only a temporary state. In the long run research shows that misusing drugs and alcohol can overall reduce your baseline for feelings of wellness. So in a nutshell it has the opposite long term effect. You might recognise this in your own using pattern, you have to use more to feel the same as you did when you first started using. Your baseline has been lowered.