

Drugs Don't Work

Hodac, Inc., Drugs Don't Work Support Center
Stress and Substance Abuse

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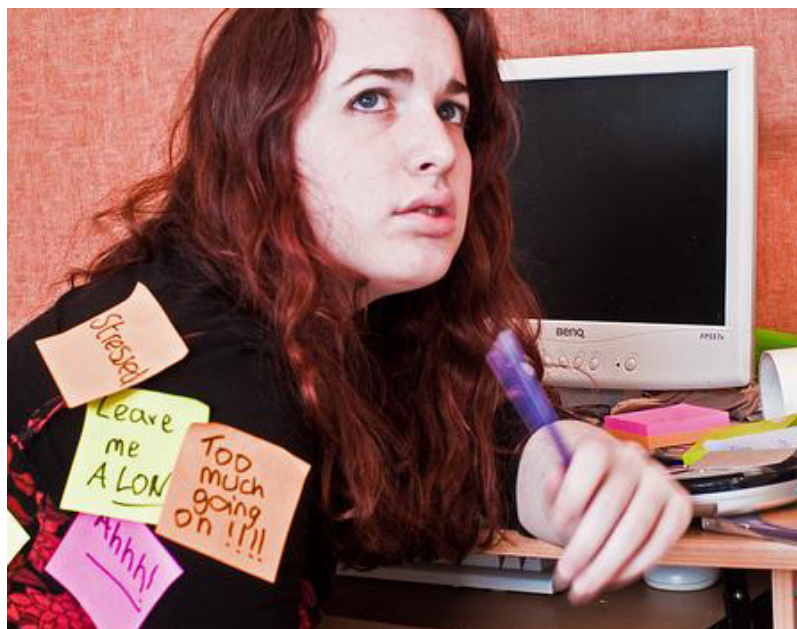


DUI Risk Reduction

Classes

Will be held Dec. 5th and 6th from 9am-5pm
and Nov. 7th and 8th from 6:30pm - 9:30pm.

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- You must have an assessment prior to attending class. Call office to schedule.
- The assessment is \$82.00. The 20-hour course is \$205.00
- A picture ID is required first day of class.

“Thus, when people abuse drugs or alcohol, it will add to the inhibition already being provided by the opioid peptides.”

Watching the economy crumble, Americans are, for the first time in years, personally exposed to a national financial crisis. More than 47 percent of all Americans say they have felt more stressed in the last year. “[People] today are different from the folks of the Depression era,” says Wallick. “We’re a generation that’s a little too selfish to jump out windows, so we’re going to self-medicate instead.” Over 22 million people in the U.S. are dependent on drugs and alcohol. That’s 9 percent of the population over 12 years of age. Addiction specialists have seen an increase in problems since the economy took a serious downturn. In a survey conducted by the American Psychological Association, eight out of ten adults said the economy is a major cause of stress. One known stressor during this economic downturn is uncertainty. Consumers do not know when the economy will return to normal, which frightens people.

Bill Pfohl, a clinical psychologist, believes that “this is an issue of how you cope with stress, because you can’t change the economy.”

Unhealthy coping mechanisms are already apparent as overindulgence in alcohol and substance abuse is on the rise. Alcohol and other drugs are often used as tools to deal with stress and strain and initially, it may seem to make things better. The drugs may help you sleep, forget problems, or feel more relaxed. However, any short-term benefit can turn sour fast. In the long run, using alcohol and drugs to cope with stress will cause a whole new set of very serious problems, as well as worsening the original problems that lead you to drink or use. For example, it’s difficult to create or keep good relationships with family and friends when you are regularly drunk or high. Family members can feel rejected by someone who is always under the influence. In addition, witnessing someone’s behavior while under the influence can be distressing, and children may not understand the changing behavior. Therefore, alcohol and drug problems are dangerous for loved ones, because they are often linked with family violence and driving while intoxicated

The body reacts to stress by secreting two types of chemical messengers (hormones in the blood and neurotransmitters in the brain). Some of the hormones

travel throughout the body, altering the metabolism of food so that the brain and muscles have sufficient stores of metabolic fuel for activities, such as fighting or fleeing, that help the person cope with the source of the stress. In the brain, the neurotransmitters trigger emotions such as aggression or anxiety that prompt the person to undertake those activities.

Normally, stress hormones are released in small amounts throughout the day, but when the body is under stress the level of these hormones increases dramatically. However, drug use inhibit the stress hormone cycle and presumably the release of stress-related neurotransmitters just as the natural opioid peptides. Thus, when people abuse drugs or alcohol, it will add to the inhibition already being provided by the opioid peptides. This may be a major reason that some people start taking drugs in the first place, suggests Dr. Kreek. “Everyone of us has things in life that really bother us,” she says, “Most people are able to cope with these hassles, but some people find it very difficult to do so.” In trying drugs for the first time, some people who have difficulty coping with stressful emotions might find that these drugs blunt those emotions, an effect that they might find rewarding. This could be a major factor in their continued use of drugs.”

Stress and Substance Abuse (continued from front)

When the effects of the drug wear off, the addict goes into withdrawal. Research has shown that, during withdrawal, the level of stress hormones rises in the blood and stress-related neurotransmitters are released in the brain. These chemicals trigger emotions that the addict perceives as highly unpleasant, which drive the addict to take more drugs. Because the effects of most drugs last only 4 to 6 hours, addicts often experience withdrawal three or four times a day. This constant switching on and off of the stress systems of the body heightens whatever hypersensitivity these systems may have had before the person started taking drugs, Dr Kreek says, "The result is that these stress chemicals are on a sort of hair-trigger release. They surge at the slightest provocation," she says.

If you think that alcohol or drug use has become (or is becoming) a problem for you, or someone you know, there are a number of things that you can do. Call your health provider, contact a physician or therapist, call your local VA hospital, or contact Hodac's Helpline Georgia (1-800-338-6745) for guidance in your recovery. These contacts can help you or someone you know achieve a healthy life style.

References:

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Stocker, Steven, "Studies Link Stress and Drug Addiction", National Institute on Drug Abuse, Vol 14:1 1999 Apr <http://nida.nih.gov/NIDA_Notes/NNVol14N1/stress.html

Walser, Robyn D. Ph.D., "Drinking to Reduce Stress" Stress Trauma and Alcohol and Drug Use A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet

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Institute claims smoking bans reduce heart attacks

Smoking bans can reduce the risk of heart disease and heart attack, possibly by as much as 47 percent, according to a report from the Institute of Medicine. A committee of IOM researchers conducted a review of data on the correlation between secondhand smoke exposure and heart problems, as well as 11 studies evaluating the impact of smoking bans. The report concluded sufficient evidence exists showing exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of heart disease among nonsmokers by 25-30 percent.

This newsletter is published to provide timely information to readers. Its content is not intended as advice for individual problems. Editorial material does not imply endorsement by the owner, publisher, editor or distributors. The reading of this newsletter is equivalent to 10 minutes of employee training for Drugs Don't Work members. For questions regarding your newsletter or DDW program contact DDW Representative, Sherielle Sands at (478) 953-5675 ext. 223

Defensive Driving

Defensive Driving Classes will be held on Nov 9, 10 and 21st from 9am - 4pm.

You must register in advance. Cost of class is \$75.00 cash or money order. You can get points off your driving record, or get your license reinstated, or get a discount on your driving insurance.

Hodac's Victim Resource Center seeks volunteers for Volunteer Response Teams

Attention!

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Must submit to Background check

Must pass a Drug Screen

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