
THE TRUTH ABOUT
LSD
Lysergic Acid Diethylamide
Acid
Tabs
Microdot
Blotter
drugfreeworld.org

WHY THIS BOOKLET WAS PRODUCED

You hear a lot of talk about drugs these days—at school, in the streets, on the internet and TV. Some of it is true, some not.

What you may not know is that much of what you hear about drugs actually comes from those selling them. Former dealers have said they would tell people anything to get them to buy drugs.

You need the real facts and the truth about drugs so you can make an informed decision about them. That is why we have prepared this booklet—for you.

Your feedback is important to us, so let us know what you think about this booklet. Visit us at **DrugFreeWorld.org** and email us at **info@drugfreeworld.org**.

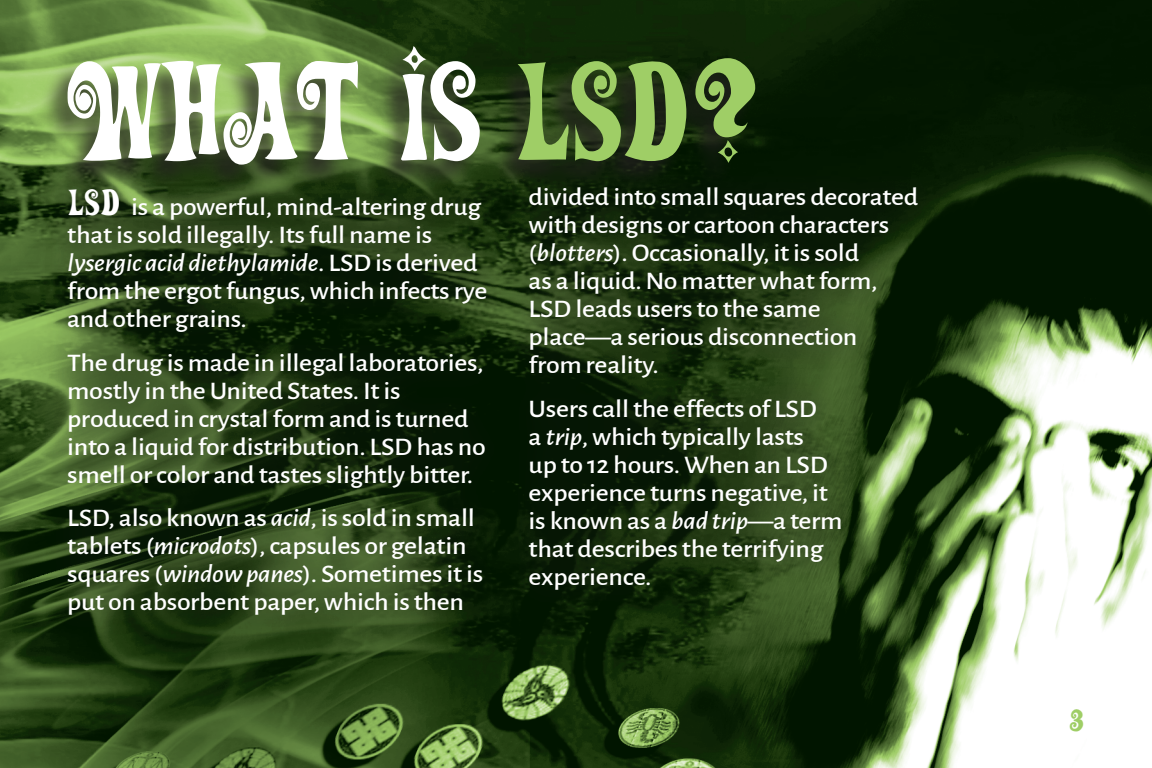
WHAT IS LSD?

LSD is a powerful, mind-altering drug that is sold illegally. Its full name is *lysergic acid diethylamide*. LSD is derived from the ergot fungus, which infects rye and other grains.

The drug is made in illegal laboratories, mostly in the United States. It is produced in crystal form and is turned into a liquid for distribution. LSD has no smell or color and tastes slightly bitter.

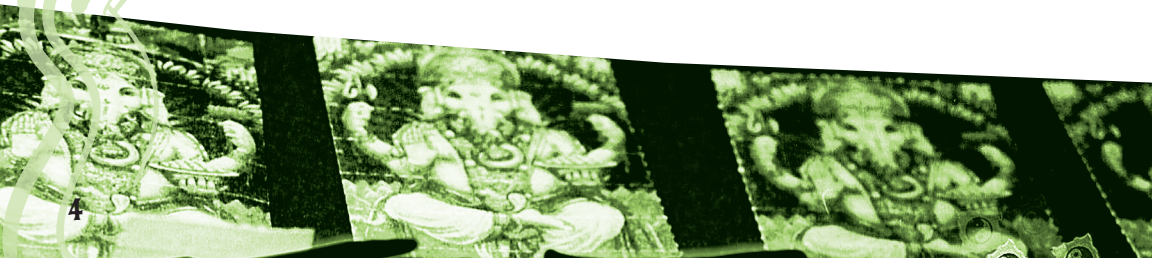
LSD, also known as *acid*, is sold in small tablets (*microdots*), capsules or gelatin squares (*window panes*). Sometimes it is put on absorbent paper, which is then divided into small squares decorated with designs or cartoon characters (*blotters*). Occasionally, it is sold as a liquid. No matter what form, LSD leads users to the same place—a serious disconnection from reality.

Users call the effects of LSD a *trip*, which typically lasts up to 12 hours. When an LSD experience turns negative, it is known as a *bad trip*—a term that describes the terrifying experience.



STREET NAMES FOR LSD

- Acid
- Battery Acid
- Blotter
- Boomers
- California Sunshine
- Cid
- Doses
- Dots
- Golden Dragon
- Heavenly Blue
- Hippie
- Looney Toons
- Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds
- Mellow Yellow
- Microdot
- Pane
- Purple Heart
- Superman
- Tab
- Window Pane
- Yellow Sunshine
- Zen





At the age of 16, I was introduced to a drug that I abused for over three years—LSD. What I was unaware of was the fact that LSD is the most potent hallucinogen known to man.

"The drug came on a small piece of paper no bigger than my index finger called a *blotter*. Fifteen minutes after putting the paper on my tongue, my entire body got hot and I began to sweat.

"Some other reactions that I experienced while on the drug included dilated pupils, nausea and goose bumps. While high on LSD, I felt like there was a huge distortion both in my mind and body. The visual changes as well as the extreme changes in mood were like some strange, scary trip—one in which I felt like I had no control over my mind and body." —Edith

WHAT IS A HALLUCINOGEN?

Hallucinogens are drugs that make users see images, hear sounds and feel sensations that do not exist. Some hallucinogens also cause users to experience sudden and unpredictable mood swings.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF LSD?

LSD's effects are unpredictable. They depend on the amount taken, the person's mood and personality and the surroundings in which the drug is used. It is a roll of the dice whether someone will have a racing, distorted high or a severe, paranoid* low.

Normally, the first effects of LSD start 30 to 90 minutes after taking the drug. Often, the pupils become dilated, body temperature rises or lowers, while blood pressure and heart rate increase. Users might also sweat or feel chills.

Other effects include loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth and tremors. Users also often experience changes in visual perceptions, becoming fixated on the intensity of certain colors and visual distortions.

Extreme changes in mood can occur, from a spaced-out "bliss" to intense terror. The biggest danger is that LSD users can't tell what is real and what is caused by the drug. Some LSD users feel an intense false sense of enlightenment. Not only do they dissociate from their usual activities in life, but they also feel the urge to keep taking more of the drug.

Other users suffer severe, terrifying thoughts, loss of control, fear of going insane or fear of death. A bad trip can last up to 12 hours and, once it starts, there is often no stopping it.

* paranoid: extremely and unreasonably suspicious, distrustful or afraid of other people without evidence or justification

DELUSION AND HALLUCINATIONS

Even a moderate dose of LSD can cause intense delusions and visual hallucinations. Users may see objects become distorted, changing shape or size, and experience shifts in sound, color and touch. Sensations might mix together, like hearing colors or seeing sounds. These changes can be frightening and lead the user to panic.

Decision-making and recognition of danger can also become impaired. An LSD user might step out of a window to get a "closer look" at the ground, or stop to admire the sunset, dangerously unaware that they are standing in the middle of a busy intersection.

Many LSD users experience flashbacks, or a recurrence of an LSD trip, often without warning, long after taking LSD.

Bad trips and flashbacks are only some of the risks of LSD use. LSD can also cause long-lasting mental issues like psychosis or severe depression. Unfortunately, some people never recover from acid-induced madness.

Because LSD accumulates in the body, users develop a tolerance for the drug, needing increasingly higher doses to achieve the same effects. This increases the risk of a bad trip and psychosis.

THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF LSD

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

- Dilated pupils
- Higher or lower body temperature
- Sweating, chills or goose bumps
- Loss of appetite
- Sleeplessness
- Dry mouth
- Tremors

MENTAL EFFECTS

- Delusions
- Visual or auditory (hearing) hallucinations
- An artificial sense of euphoria or certainty
- Distortion of one's sense of time and identity
- Impaired depth perception
- Impaired time perception
- Severe, terrifying thoughts and feelings
- Distorted perception of objects, movements, color, sounds, touch and the user's own body image
- Fear of losing control
- Panic attacks
- Flashbacks or a recurrence of the LSD trip, often without warning, long after taking LSD
- Severe depression or psychosis



I started drinking at the age of 15. Then I progressed to taking Ecstasy, speed, cocaine and LSD.

"I found it difficult to hold down a job and became depressed and thought I would never overcome my obsession with drugs. I attempted suicide twice by overdosing on pills. I was put under psychiatrists, who gave me even more drugs, antidepressants and tranquilizers, which just made matters worse.

"As an outlet for my feelings, I turned to self-harm—I started cutting and burning myself."
—Justin

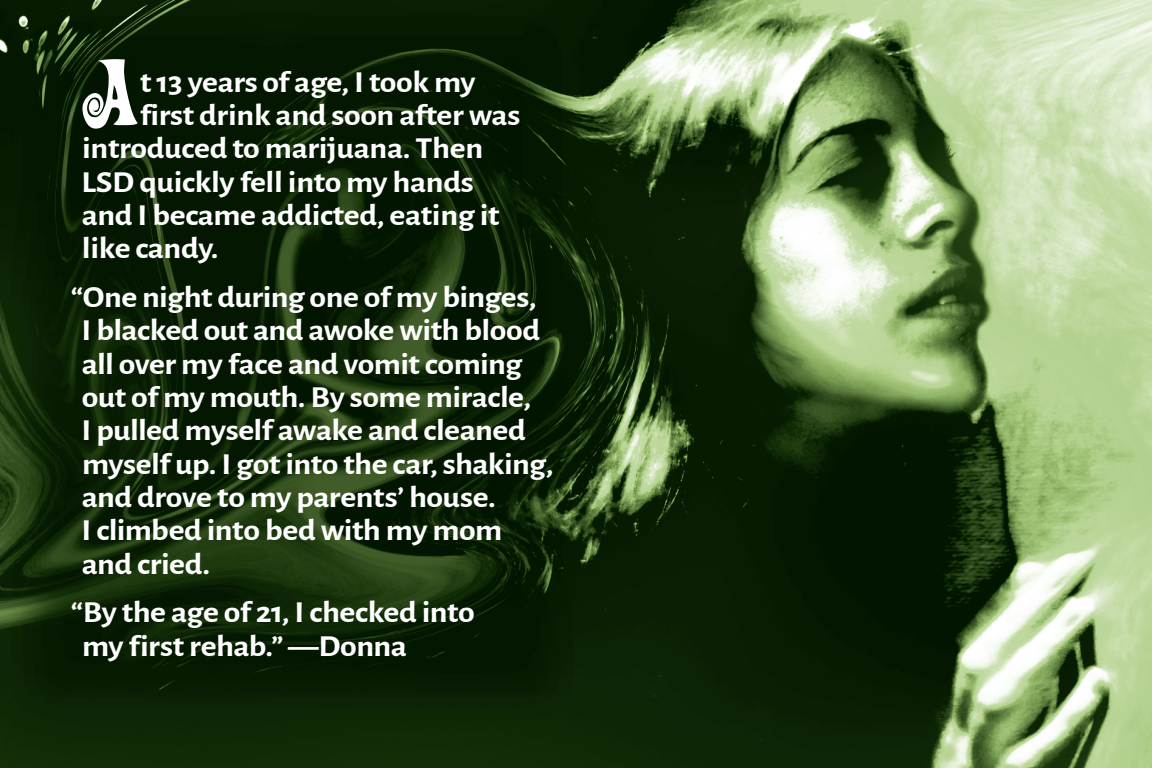
After taking the acid, I imagined that we had driven head-on into an 18-wheeler and were killed. I could hear the screeching metal, then a dark and evil quiet. I was terrified at this point—I actually thought we were dead. For a year, I wouldn't go into any cemetery because I was terrified I would find my own grave." —Jenny

For a person on LSD, which is often taken in tab form (below), an intense, altered state transforms into dissociation and despair. Often there is no stopping bad trips, which can go on for up to 12 hours.









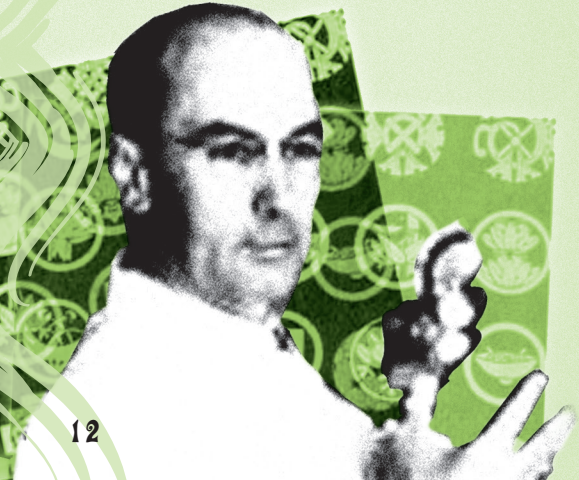
At 13 years of age, I took my first drink and soon after was introduced to marijuana. Then LSD quickly fell into my hands and I became addicted, eating it like candy.

"One night during one of my binges, I blacked out and awoke with blood all over my face and vomit coming out of my mouth. By some miracle, I pulled myself awake and cleaned myself up. I got into the car, shaking, and drove to my parents' house. I climbed into bed with my mom and cried.

"By the age of 21, I checked into my first rehab." —Donna

LSD: A SHORT HISTORY

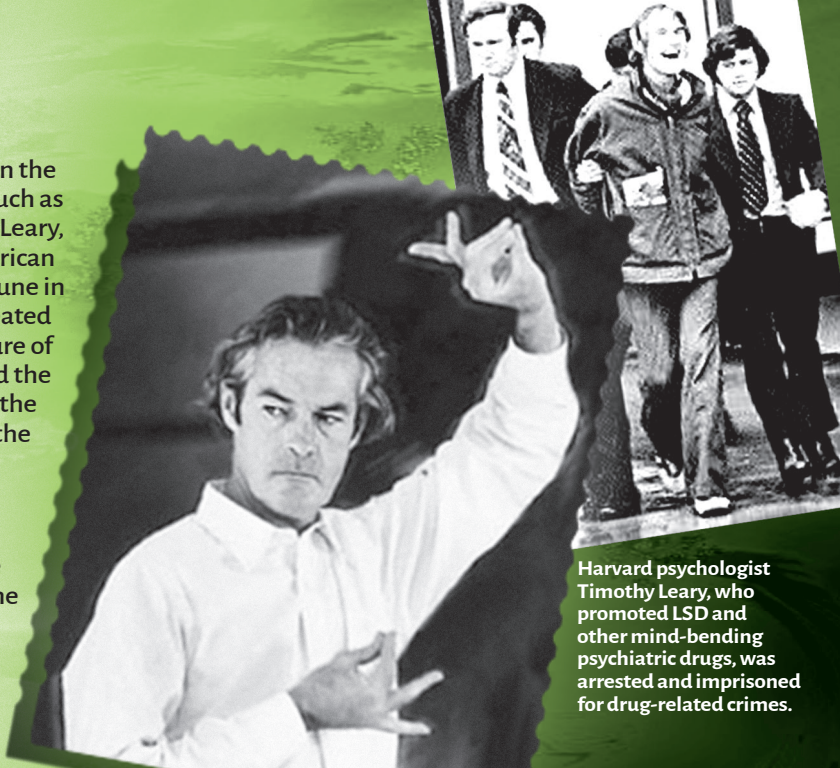
In 1938 in Basel, Switzerland, Albert Hofmann, a chemist working for Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, synthesized LSD for the first time while searching for a blood stimulant. However, its hallucinogenic effects were unknown until 1943, when Hofmann accidentally ingested some LSD. It was later found that an oral dose of as little as 25 micrograms (equal in weight to a few grains of salt) can cause vivid hallucinations.



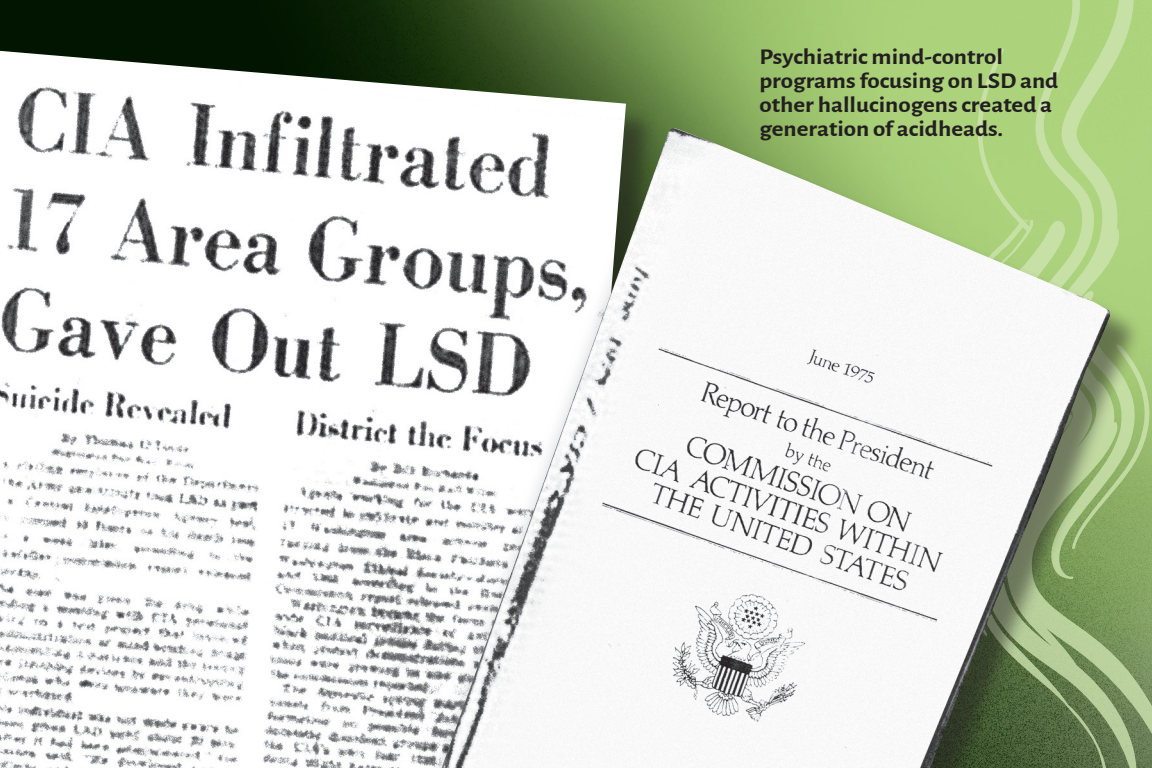
Because of its similarity to a chemical present in the brain and how its effects mimic certain aspects of psychosis, LSD was used in experiments by psychiatrists from the 1940s to the 1960s. While the researchers failed to discover any medical use for the drug, the free samples supplied by Sandoz Pharmaceuticals for the experiments were distributed broadly, leading to wide use of the drug.

LSD was popularized in the 1960s by individuals such as psychologist Timothy Leary, who encouraged American students to "turn on, tune in and drop out." This created an entire counterculture of drug abuse and spread the drug from America to the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe.

While the '60s counterculture used the drug to escape the problems of society, the Western intelligence community and the



Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary, who promoted LSD and other mind-bending psychiatric drugs, was arrested and imprisoned for drug-related crimes.



Psychiatric mind-control programs focusing on LSD and other hallucinogens created a generation of acidheads.

military saw it as a potential chemical weapon. In 1951, these organizations began a series of experiments. US researchers noted that LSD "is capable of rendering whole groups of people, including military forces, indifferent to their surroundings and situations, interfering with planning and judgment, and even creating apprehension, uncontrollable confusion and terror."

Experiments in the possible use of LSD to change the personalities of intelligence targets, and to control whole populations, continued until the United States officially banned the drug in 1967.

Use of LSD declined in the 1980s, but picked up again in the 1990s, becoming more widely used at dance clubs and all-night raves by older teens and young adults.

The days following my LSD use, I was filled with anxiety and extreme depression. Following my first trip on LSD, I would eat it frequently, sometimes up to four or five times per week for an extended period. Each time I would take the drug, mentally I was drifting more and more out of reality. The eventual effect was the inability to feel normal in my own skin." —Andrea

LSD AROUND THE WORLD

LSD is the most powerful hallucinogenic drug. It can be as much as 200 times stronger than hallucinogenic mushrooms.

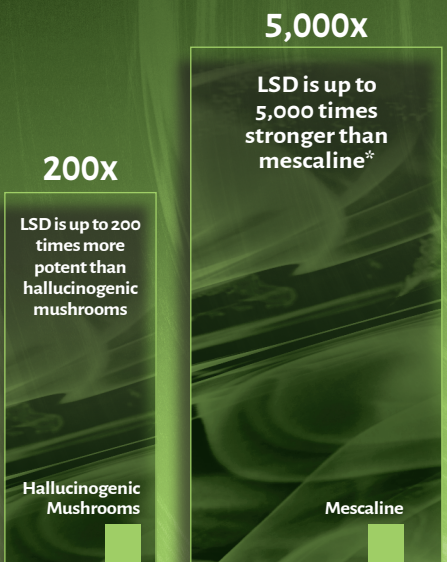
Since 1975, researchers funded by the US National Institute on Drug Abuse have annually surveyed some 15,000 high school seniors nationwide to determine trends in use and to measure the students' attitudes and beliefs about drug abuse. Among high school seniors, 11.3 percent reported having used LSD at least once in their lives. This number jumped to a high of 13.6 percent in 1997. Since 2006, it has stayed at or below 6 percent.

A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration study reported 30 million people in the US aged 12 and older have used LSD in their lifetimes. About 2.5 million of those surveyed had used the drug in the last year, with over 660,000 using it for the first time.

In Europe, as many as 20 percent of nearly 50,000 people surveyed across the continent reported that they had taken LSD in the last year. Among those aged 15 to 24, the percentage of people who had used LSD in their lifetime exceeded 1 percent in 17 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and the United Kingdom).

LSD POTENCY

Most powerful hallucinogenic (mind-altering) drug



I started hanging out at strip clubs and casinos and became very promiscuous, visiting brothel after brothel, and was soon introduced to drugs.

"I lost all my inheritance and had to move to a crack house, where I stayed for over a year, losing my business, becoming a thief and watching people die.

"I was arrested for attempted hijacking and went to prison.

"I had hurt and lost everyone that loved me and was disowned.

"I ended up homeless and on the streets, living and sleeping in a cardboard box by the [train] station, begging and struggling to find ways to get my next meal." —Fred

* mescaline: a powerful hallucinogenic primarily found in the peyote cactus

WHAT DEALERS WILL TELL YOU

When teens were surveyed to find out why they started using drugs in the first place, 55 percent replied that it was due to pressure from their friends. They wanted to be cool and popular. Dealers know this.

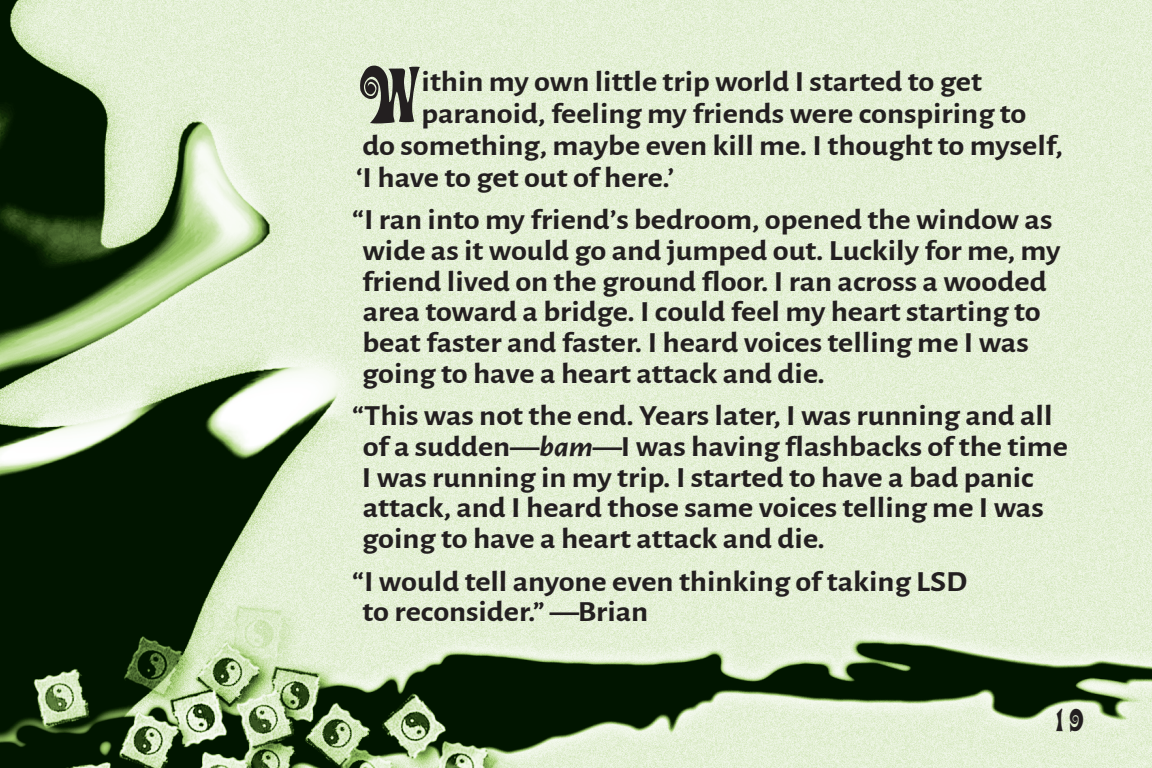
They will approach you as a friend and offer to "help you out" with "something to bring you up." The drug will "help you fit in" or "make you cool."

Drug dealers, motivated by the money they make, will say anything to get you to buy their drugs. They will tell you that taking LSD will "expand your mind."

They don't care if the drugs ruin your life as long as they get paid. All they care about is money. Former dealers admit they viewed buyers as "pawns in a chess game."

Get the facts about drugs. Make your own decisions.





Within my own little trip world I started to get paranoid, feeling my friends were conspiring to do something, maybe even kill me. I thought to myself, 'I have to get out of here.'

"I ran into my friend's bedroom, opened the window as wide as it would go and jumped out. Luckily for me, my friend lived on the ground floor. I ran across a wooded area toward a bridge. I could feel my heart starting to beat faster and faster. I heard voices telling me I was going to have a heart attack and die.

"This was not the end. Years later, I was running and all of a sudden—*bam*—I was having flashbacks of the time I was running in my trip. I started to have a bad panic attack, and I heard those same voices telling me I was going to have a heart attack and die.

"I would tell anyone even thinking of taking LSD to reconsider." —Brian

The Truth About Drugs

Drugs are essentially poisons. The amount taken determines the effect.

A small amount acts as a stimulant (speeds you up). A greater amount acts as a sedative (slows you down). An even larger amount poisons and can kill.

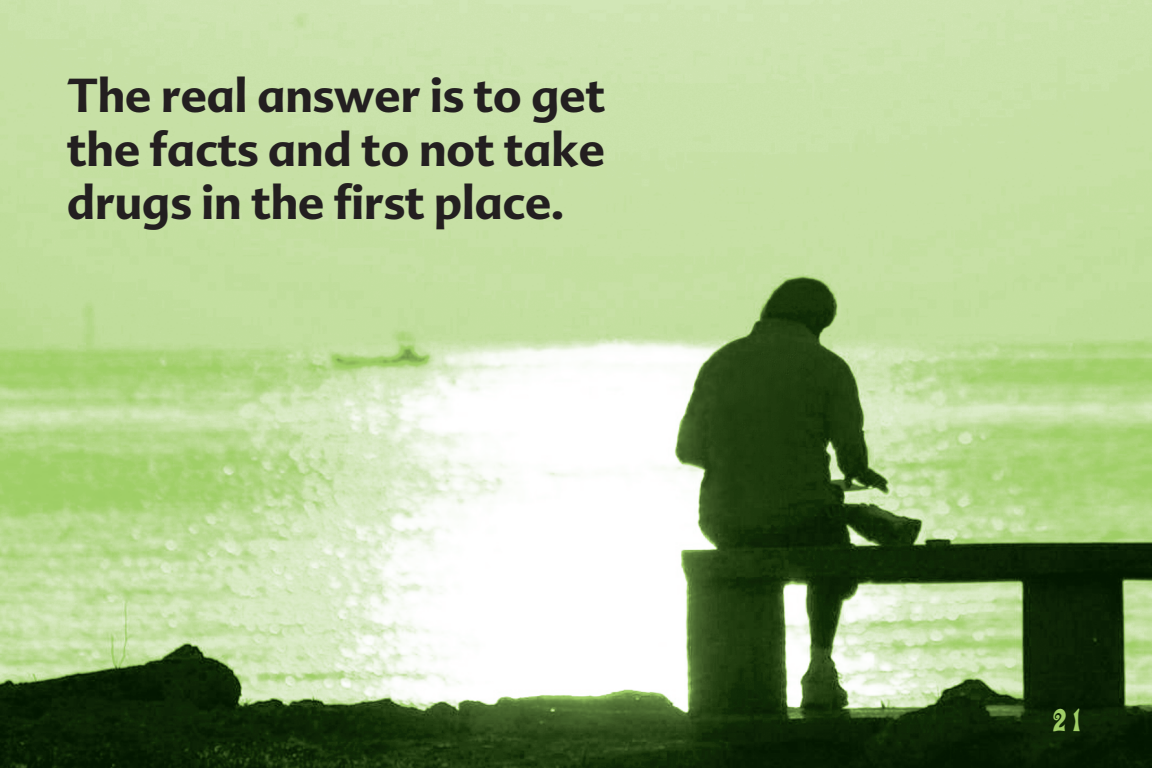
This is true of any drug. Only the amount needed to achieve the effect differs.

But many drugs have another liability: they directly affect the mind. They can distort the user's perception of what is happening around him or her. As a result, the person's actions may be odd, irrational, inappropriate and even destructive.

Drugs block off all sensations, the desirable ones along with the undesirable. So, while providing short-term help in the relief of pain, they also wipe out ability and alertness and muddy one's thinking.

Medicines are drugs that are intended to speed up, slow down or change something about the way your body is working to try to make it work better. Sometimes they are necessary. But they are still drugs: they act as stimulants or sedatives, and too much can kill you. So if you do not use medicines as they are supposed to be used, they can be as dangerous as illegal drugs.

The real answer is to get the facts and to not take drugs in the first place.



WHY DO PEOPLE TAKE DRUGS?

People take drugs because they want to change something in their lives.

Here are some of the reasons young people have given for taking drugs:

- To fit in
- To escape or relax
- To relieve boredom
- To seem grown-up
- To rebel
- To experiment

They think drugs are a solution. But eventually, drugs become the problem.

Difficult as it may be to face one's problems, the consequences of drug use are always worse than the problem one is trying to solve with them. The real answer is to get the facts and to not take drugs in the first place.



Millions of copies of booklets such as this have been distributed to people around the world in over 20 languages.



As new drugs appear on the streets and more information about their effects becomes known, existing booklets are updated and new ones created.

The booklets are published by the Foundation for a Drug-Free World, a nonprofit public benefit organization headquartered in Los Angeles, California.

The foundation provides educational materials, advice and coordination for its international drug prevention network. It works with youth, parents, educators, volunteer organizations and government agencies—anyone with an interest in helping people lead lives free from drug abuse.

REFERENCES:

For the references used to compile this booklet, go to DrugFreeWorld.org/refs.

PHOTO CREDITS: page 5: DEA; page 12: The Albert Hofmann Foundation; page 13: DEA (Timothy Leary arrest)

FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

This booklet is one in a series of publications that covers the facts about marijuana, alcohol, fentanyl, synthetic drugs, Ecstasy, cocaine, crack cocaine, crystal meth and methamphetamine, inhalants, heroin, LSD and prescription drug abuse. Armed with this information, the reader can make the decision to live a drug-free life.

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