

Ways of Thinking

DRUG ADDICTION

The issue I will be facing is drug addiction, it has been growing at a devastating rate, especially through the youth of today. I will be investigating the use of harmful drugs and substance abuse and tackling it through a creative outlet of music composition, as stated by Kahil Gibran, “music is the language of the spirit. It opens the secret of life bringing peace, abolishing strife.” Hopefully, Gibran is right, and my work and others can help battle this sad loss of life through substance abuse, which is more common than ever before.

In Today's modern World, and modern society especially with the youth of today we're facing a terrible problem, this being drug addiction. Me and my fellow peers have united together to educate people on a problem we have all faced and sadly had some personal experience with. So, we decided to tackle this issue in the best way we thought possible, through music. Music is an expression of the soul and has been used as a platform of expression and for awareness for many decades in the western World, promoting 'Peace and Love', During the Vietnam war to artists such as Muddy Waters paving the way for Black Music promoting equality in ways many people never understood or even considered. We set out to help people who themselves have battled drug addiction and make others aware. Addiction is the compulsive physiological need for addictive substances such as Heroin or even legal such as Nicotine. Substance abuse is a horrible thing we see too much, especially in certain areas, it dictates people's lives as they chase that 'fix' and takes the lives of many, as stated by the office of national statistics, 'Nearly 4400 drug poisoning deaths were registered in England and Wales in 2019, the highest number since records began in 1993, a report from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has shown.'

Inspired by and gathering thoughts and discussing things that have affected us all, even some of our favorite inspirations, musicians who lost their lives too early to drug addiction and alcohol abuse. Including John Bonham, Jim Morrison and some historic iconic figures such as Jimi Hendrix, these creative people who 'had it all' lost what's most precious of all in the chase for that high, they lost their lives. Jimi Hendrix himself, inspired so many generations and words it best, 'Music Doesn't lie. If there is something to be changed in this World, then it can only happen through music'. – Jimi Hendrix. This inspired us. Oasis' Noel Gallagher tried bringing light to Britain's drug problem in his 'own' way in 1997, "As soon as people realize that the majority of people in this country take drugs, then the better off we'll all be." Followed by, "Drugs is like getting up and having a cup of tea in the morning", as stated by the Independent In 1997. The fact that drugs have become so common and easy to get a hold of inspired us to compose a piece of music looking at the mentality of a drug abuser, and the utter dependence and fear, and thoughts that race through their mind in this state. There

have been so many artworks portraying the peoples struggle through drug use, such as pictures as Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* depicting Heroin addiction, the use of life ruining class A substances, and the toll that takes body mind and soul, the utter dependence of a drug addict.

Through my research into drug addiction, I have learnt that drugs have portrayed a massive role in music, that's the creation of it. For Example, the Beatles and they're excessive use of LSD, to festival goers and the youth of our generation experimenting in psychedelics to create a euphoria and heighten their senses for pleasure of live music. I have learnt that drug culture was embraced in the 60's and 70's with the end goal of that altered perception of numbness to reality and an 'escape' almost. The relaxed environment of music festivals can be the danger and the promotion of drug use has become worrying in popularity, as stated by the [BBC in a 2018 article](#), '[the number of cocaine related deaths rose from 112 in 2011 to 371 in 2016](#)'. That's 371 too many, hence our desire to combat it in such a creative way accessible to our youth group.

Accessibility has inspired our creative direction for our task as the common conception of drugs, is that it promoted positively through music, and were trying to combat that negative stereotype as fellow musicians ourselves that you don't need drugs. Music isn't all 'sex, drugs and rock and roll' how it was previously conceived in the days of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. How easy it is to purchase these products makes it one of the biggest industries in the black market, its growing at an exponential rate. Thanks to social media, it's become a platform and an investigation by [BBC News](#), '[found it took 27 minutes to receive an order of cocaine](#)', that makes it all too accessible, especially due to the growing mental health cases in the UK which are exacerbated through recreational drug use.

Our initial first step, was simply brainstorming our niche for our music, and composing all our ideas and personal stories and events of how our lives have been affected, gaining that youth perspective. I wanted to compose a song to help people perceive how much your life can be affected by drugs and that they aren't the way forward, as personally myself I nearly lost my older brother to drugs, hence such strong opinions and perceptions on the subject matter due to a near loss with a loved one. As I never want another to know the fear and experience it firsthand.

My research leading up to this composition piece has helped to show the harsh reality of this, but not just that, however, the risks and the rises in death in something that seamlessly starts out recreationally. [Mental Help show how common it is too](#), '[Approximately 17 million people or 0.04% of the population Worldwide abuse cocaine](#)' The easy accessibility and popularity of the drug, and its highly addictiveness makes it so popular, especially due to its stimulant nature on nights out as its most common use.

In the lead up to my song writing, I asked my friends personal accounts from their lives which I sadly can't state in this essay due to the personal matter of it all. But, even at as young as 15 they've firsthand lost friends through addiction to drugs, and death

through selling them, only for the intention to earn enough money just to use them to self-medicate instead of asking for help. Due to these tragic accounts, I've heard, I thought it was wise to use Trainspotting's 'choose life' speech from its 1996 release. Through its suitability for my topic, how simple pleasures are greater than the euphoria one achieves from drug use in all its simplicity.

Reflecting back at my journey though, what can be perceived as an almost morbid subject matter which a lot of people try not to think about, I myself, have educated myself more than ever to 'choose life'. My creative focus, as a thinker has benefited me greatly as I've taken something in the World, such as Drug addiction and created a positive outcome for something negative. That's something not many people can say they have achieved, and I am proud of my work, and have gained knowledge and insight researching such an impending problem many people face. I already had a lot of knowledge on the subject matter, however, for me it was the firsthand accounts that showed me the importance of the message I was trying to pass on, these were things which I'd never suspect were on my own doorstep, and I'm grateful for those people and their openness to help others through my task and idea.

In summary, I've learnt a lot, I've achieved an artistic outlet in a way I never normally would. Usually, I compose music based on what's on my mind, I don't chase almost and set out with a song idea or a message in mind. I've learnt a lot through this, and that you can pass on a message through music that you may sometimes have to research, which is such a strange and beneficial thing for me and my music.

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