



Dr. Blosa Science

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### Comprehension story 10

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow, using your own words wherever possible.

For the most part, I stopped smoking marijuana in the mid-1970s because I grew bored with too many social evenings lying on somebody's living-room rug, staring at the ceiling and saying "Oh wow!" this renunciation was not wrenching moral decision, but rather an aesthetic rite of passage as my palate began to savour California Chardonnay with the aridity I once reserved for Acapulco Gold. Yet as an aging baby boomer, my attitudes remain emblematic of that high times generation that once freely used soft drugs and still feels more nostalgic than repentant about the experience. 05

This permissive mind-set colors my instinctive response to current drug problems. The initial breathless media reports of the crack epidemic aroused all my journalistic skepticism, and I grouched that the anti-drug frenzy seemed like *Reefer Madness* revisited. On those infrequent occasions when friends and acquaintance still pass around a bootleg joint, my reaction remains benign tolerance. Just a few weeks ago, when marijuana made a furtive appearance at my wife's 20<sup>th</sup> high school reunion in upstate New York, I viewed this throwback gesture as a quaint affectation, almost as if the class of '69 had all shown up in tie-dye T-Shirts instead of business suits and cocktail dresses. 15

Many may scorn these confessions as evidence of immaturity, unreliability and even moral laxity. But we are all the product of our life experience, and I, like so many of my peers, cannot entirely abandon this *Lucy in the sky with Diamonds* heritage. Normally I only share these slight outré sentiments with close friends. But such views have become a public issue with 20

drug Czar William Bennett's attacks on my generation's self-indulgence, coupled with George Bush's prime-time address to the nation on drugs. For in identifying those responsible for the cocaine crisis, the President pointedly included "everyone who took the other way." Am I really a fellow traveller in this epidemic of addiction? Do my affectionate, albeit distant, ties to 1960s-style permissiveness render me as culpable as Bennett claims? Or is my comfortable middle-class life so far removed from inner-city crack houses and the Colombian drug cartel that any allegation of casual nexus represents little more than politically motivated hyperbole?

The honest answer, which both surprises me and make me squirm, is that to some degree Bennett and Co. are right. My generation, with its all too facile distinctions between soft drugs (marijuana, mild hallucinogens) and hard drugs (heroin and now crack), does share responsibility for creating an environment that legitimized and even, until recently, lionized the cocaine culture. This wink-and-a-nod acceptance, this implicit endorsement of illicit thrills, has been a continuing motif in movies, late-night television and rock music. My personal life may rarely intersect with impoverished drug addicts, but the entertainment media created in the image of people like me easily transcend these barriers of class, race and geography.

And what should the Woodstock alumni association tell its offspring? Conversations with friends, especially those raising teenagers, suggest that adults with colorful pharmacological histories face unique problems in following the President's exhortation to "talk to your children about drugs." For such parents, family-style drug education often comes down to awkward choices like lying about their own past, feigning a remorse that they do not feel, or piously ordering their children to read lips rather re-enact deeds. More subtle message can get lost in the adolescent fog. One 17-year-old I know well seems to misinterpret his parents' preachment about the particularly addictive nature of cocaine to mean, choose prudently from the comucopia of other drugs available at local high school. How much easier the burden must be for a parent who honestly instruct his children, "Don't tell me about peer pressure. Remember, I got through the '60s without drugs."

Such self-righteousness is inappropriate for those of us with less sterling record of resisting temptation. Thus I stand, a bit belatedly, to concede my guilt in contributing in small way to the drug crisis. Maybe the '60s were a mistake, maybe I too frequently condoned the self-destructive behavior of others, and maybe I was obtuse in not seeing a linkage between the marijuana of yesteryear and the crack today. I hope that this admission, which does not come easily, will animate my behavior. But while I am willing to shoulder some of the blame on behalf of my generation, I trust that the other equally respectable conspirators in America's two-faced war on drugs will acknowledge their own complicity.

The list, alas, is long. Begin with public officials who have exploited the issue for 20 years, advocating phony feel-good nostrums like the current fad for drug testing in the workplace, as if mid-level bureaucrats were drug society's prime offenders. Joining the politicians in the dock are those anti-drug crusaders who have either squandered credibility with exaggerated scare talk or strained credulity with prissy pronouncements. The media are culpable as well, for sensationalized coverage that has often served to glamourize the menace they are decrying. Then there are the social-policy conservatives who purport to see no connection between the flagrant neglect of the economic problems of the underclass and the current crack epidemic. And sad to say, well-intentioned parents can also contribute to the hysteria by viewing drugs as the sole cause of their children's problems rather than as a symptom of family-wide crisis.

For drug use, as Bennett argues, is indeed a reflection of the nation's values. And as long as American society continues to place high premium on titillation than truth and on callousness than compassion, the latest attack on drugs may prove like all the failed battle plans of the past, to be mostly futile flag waving.

## Questions

- (a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)
- (b) What does the author mean by:
- (i) “... Was not a wrenching moral decision ...” (line 04) (03 marks)
  - (ii) “... nostalgic than repentant about the experience” (line 08) (03marks)
- (c) In not more than 100 words, the problems former drug user face in  
Fighting drug use (12marks)
- (d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage,  
using you own words wherever possible
- (i) Renunciation (line 03) (02 marks)
  - (ii) Emblematic (line 07) (02 marks)
  - (iii) Furtive appearance (line 14) (02 marks)
  - (iv) Moral laxity (line 19) (02 marks)
  - (v) Epidemic of addition (line 27) (02 marks)
  - (vi) culpable (line 28) (02 marks)
  - (vii) adolescent fog (line 49) (02 marks)
  - (viii) belatedly (line 56) (02 marks)
  - (ix) squandered credibility (line 69) (02 marks)
  - (x) Futile flag waving (line 81) (02 marks)
- (20 marks)

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

## Suggests answers

(a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)

Drug crisis

Campaign against drug abuse

Guilt of drug abuse

(b) What does the author mean by:

(i) “... Was not a wrenching moral decision ...” (line 04) (03 marks)  
was not complex ethical choice/decision

(ii) “... nostalgic than repentant about the experience” (line 08) (03marks)  
Did not regret/did not feel guilty  
He still remember those times with a mixture of sadness and happiness rather than regret

(c) In not more than 100 words, the problems former drug user face in

Fighting drug use (12marks)

### THE PROBLEMS FORMER DRUG USER FACE IN FIGHTING DRUG USE

Former drug users may face the following challenges when trying to combat drug use, namely:- community members may not trust their intension or efforts; they might face resistance from the community or former associates, making it difficult to gain cooperation and support; they may feel remorse about their past drug abuse and guilty to communicate to victims of drug abuse, and lastly exposure to drug-related environments and activities can trigger cravings and increase the risk of relapse. It can also lead to personal risks.

(d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage, using you own words wherever possible

(i) Renunciation (line 03) (02 marks)

Abandonment/ act of giving up/relinquish/rejection/resign

(ii) Emblematic (line 07) (02 marks)

Symbolic/representative

(iii) Furtive appearance (line 14) (02 marks)

Show up secretly/quietly

(iv) Moral laxity (line 19) (02 marks)

Carelessness/ethical negligence

- |        |  |            |
|--------|--|------------|
| (v)    | Epidemic of addition (line 27)<br>Wide spread drug abuse/dependence          | (02 marks) |
| (vi)   | culpable (line 28)<br>guilty   | (02 marks) |
| (vii)  | adolescent fog (line 49)<br>confusion to the youth/no relevance to the youth | (02 marks) |
| (viii) | belatedly (line 56)<br>too late/very late                                    | (02 marks) |
| (ix)   | squandered credibility (line 69)<br>lost trust                               | (02 marks) |
| (x)    | Futile flag waving (line 81)<br>In vain/ wasted efforts/worthless struggles  | (02 marks) |

(20 marks)

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

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**Thanks**

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