



## Action Update

February 8, 2010

### Understanding Drug Abuse and Addiction

Many people do not understand why individuals become addicted to drugs or how drugs change the brain to foster compulsive drug abuse. They mistakenly view drug abuse and addiction as strictly a social problem and may characterize those who take drugs as morally weak. One very common belief is that drug abusers should be able to just stop taking drugs if they are only willing to change their behavior. What people often underestimate is the complexity of drug addiction—that it is a disease that impacts the brain and because of that, stopping drug abuse is not simply a matter of willpower. Through scientific advances we now know much more about exactly how drugs work in the brain, and we also know that drug addiction can be successfully treated to help people stop abusing drugs and resume their productive lives. ~ NIDA <http://www.drugabuse.gov/infacts/understand.html>

**Action: Learn a fact about addiction and share it with two people and ask them to share with two more.**

#### More Resources:

Drug Abuse and Addiction:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/ScienceofAddiction/addiction.html>

NIDA - Facts on Drugs:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/infacts/understand.html>

The Science of Addiction:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/ScienceofAddiction/>

Marijuana InfoFacts:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/infacts/marijuana.html>

Commonly Abused Drugs:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsofAbuse.html>

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