

Marijuana and Recovery

Marijuana addiction counselor resources

- pot smoking addiction depression
- marijuana addiction treatment
- relapse prevention tools
- addictive qualities of marijuana
- drug abuse teacher resources

Marijuana Addiction Recovery Counselor Guide Excerpts

To give you an idea of the topics covered in the **Marijuana and Recovery** Counselor Guide, here is a list of the chapters:

- Introduction
- How to Use This Guide
- Discussion Questions
- Leading Client Activities
- Activity Directions for Counselors
- Worksheet #1 My Denial
- Worksheet #2 For Polydrug Users
- Worksheet #3 Withdrawal From Marijuana
- Worksheet #4 12-Step Meeting Log
- Worksheet #5 My Action Plan for Handling Triggers
- Worksheet #6 My Support Team
- Worksheet #7 Action Plan for Handling Offers
- Worksheet #8 Recovery Boosters
- Worksheet #9 What Are Your Dreams
- Interview with Julia Ross, MA, MFCC
- Interview with Daryl Inaba, D. of Pharm
- Interview with Adolph Montana, MA

Below you will find two excerpts. A Discussion Questions page and a Worksheet:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Sample page)

The first topic discussed in the program is "denial." Julia Ross, a drug treatment specialist, notes that denial is a real "stumbling block" for marijuana addicts because it's particularly hard for them to admit that marijuana use is a problem.

But without getting past denial, Julia says, "there is no future in recovery." Do you think *you* have been "in denial" in the past about your marijuana use? What kinds of rationalizations or excuses did you use to deny it was a problem? Do you think you've "gotten past it" now? If so, what was it that helped you do this?

Many people interviewed in the program recall how they always denied that pot was an addicting drug. Did you also take that stance? Do you still? If you now see marijuana as addicting, what is it that has changed your mind?

Adolph Montana, one of the experts and recovering people interviewed in this program, call marijuana "the great deceiver." What do you think he meant by that? **With other drugs, it is often easier to see the devastation they cause, but marijuana can be deceiving. It doesn't *appear* to be the thing that's causing your life to be unmanageable.**

Several people mentioned how they would "blame anything but the drug" for their problems, and especially for the fact that they were moody and irritable when they didn't have any pot. When confronted with their irritability, they would deny that too and blame the other person. "*You're* obnoxious and annoying, and I'm just reacting to you.../I don't have a problem." Looking back, do you think you did this, blame others for your irritability and moodiness, and not look at the marijuana use as a cause?

Julia Ross noted that addicts who are using a number of drugs at the same time ("polydrug addicts"), will often give up everything *but the pot*, even though the pot may be as big or bigger a problem as the other drug use. Why do you think polydrug addicts try to hold on to the ability to use pot, even when they give up everything else?

Julia Ross also noted that for polydrug addicts, continued use of pot will lead to relapse. If you are a polydrug abuser, has that been true for you in the past? Describe an instance when you tried to give up everything but pot and eventually relapsed to your other drugs. Why do you think that happens? Julia Ross says that recovery from heroin, speed, cocaine, etc. is "slowed down" if a person keeps smoking pot because all the "negatives" of marijuana addiction are still with them and interfere with recovery.

What "negatives" did she mean?

Memory loss, irritability, depression, impaired judgment, etc. If these symptoms continue because of marijuana use, they will eventually undermine recovery from any other drug that you are attempting stop using.

Worksheet #2 (sample)

FOR POLYDRUG USERS

Check all the drugs that have been a part of your past use:

Marijuana _____ Prescription meds _____ Alcohol _____

Designer drugs (ecstasy, etc.) _____ Cocaine or crack _____

LSD, PCP, other hallucinogens _____ Heroin _____

Amphetamines (speed, crank) _____ Inhalants (glue) _____ Steroids _____

Other drugs: _____ List: _____

Other drugs: _____ List: _____

In the past, did you consider marijuana part of your problem, or just the other drug(s) that you checked? Why?

Did you ever try to stop using the other drug(s) that you checked, but kept smoking marijuana?

If you answered "Yes" to Question 3, describe what happened? Did you eventually relapse to the other drug use?

If you answered "Yes" to Question 4, do you think your continued marijuana use played a part in the relapse(s)? If so, how?