

Prescription Drug Abuse Medical Doctors

This research is not just involved with the individual offense, which is the relative viewpoint; it also aims at the absolute viewpoint or what led up to the offense committed. It is also done to lessen crime itself as well as lessen the suffering of the victims and families of whom these crimes were committed against. Life is cause and effect, because this is, that is. This is one of the oldest teachings in the world. Just as a flower needs more than just one thing to bloom, like sun, water, soil, etc., everything is interdependent. A crime needs more than the single act. According to Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board, 80% of all inmates have an addiction to alcohol and/or drugs. If 80% of the criminal acts include drugs and alcohol, why not go to the roots of the problem? 1) Ignorance causes most of human problems. When we think we are separate from everything else, suffering entails. So to combat this, we need to pay attention. Some education is needed but that does not guarantee success, some of us choose to ignore reality even though we are educated. 2) People's access to drugs. We as a society are under the illusion it is the "bad street drugs" that cause most of the crime and violence. This research will show otherwise.

I find that doctors haphazardly dishing out pills, starting pill mills and medicating for money, not the well being of their patient is the largest crime in America. It is a white collar crime "it rarely apprehends and prosecutes." (A.FREAM p1) Remember, with 80% of all crime people are under the influence of drugs and alcohol. If the doctor's were not writing so many unnecessary prescriptions there would not be as much crime. Approximately eight million are addicted to and abuse drugs, these being street drugs. According to the FDA, approximately nine million use prescription drugs for non medical purposes. We start to see the number of legal and illegal drugs is quite different than what the average American has in mind. The numbers are staggering. The Florida medical examiner report shows that more people in Florida died last year from prescription drugs than illegal drugs. According to the report 60% of the 2,088 were from legal medication, while 40% were from cocaine, heroin and other illegal drugs.

Dr. Joshua Perper , the Broward County Medical Examiner said "many of the deaths have been linked to physicians who are making a profit writing prescriptions for pain killers without a sound medical reason." According to CALDATA the entire country is at a 60 to 40% ratio of prescription drug deaths to street drug

deaths. CALDATA also measured up the lives; 40,000 Americans die of direct and indirect effects of drug abuse each year. Let's take 60% of the 40,000, that's 24,000 died of prescription medication. Here is the catch, according to a study printed in Newsweek Magazine, April 9, 2001; only five percent may actually need medication in the first place. At 2,000 deaths during the whole Iraq War, thus far, I estimate that if it went on even for the next thirty years it still would not equal one year of abused medication taking and prescribing. . We as a Society also need to redefine the "War on Drugs". Last year only 70 million dollars went to the DEA to investigate prescription drug offences, compared to 13 Billion on the "War on Street Drugs" (FDA). NIDA, The National Institute of Drug Abuse will announce next week a major public health initiative about prescription drug abuse .The director of NIDA , Dr.Alan Leshner stated " Once you get into the millions of people (abusing prescription drugs) you have a serious public health issue on your hands".(FDA). Personally, I do not recall seeing any of these most important" announcements" in the media, over the past several years! Obviously not much is being about this" Serious Public Health Issue "especially when the top two offenders Xanax and Oxycontin went up in sales over 30 % and we have written a Billion more prescriptions than the 3.7 Billion we wrote in 2004! (IMS Health Inc. Westport, CT.)

In life there is cause and effect, because this is, that is. I surveyed 52 men (which we will see more of further in the report) and I asked the question; would you have committed the crime if your mind was not polluted with drugs and or alcohol? 50 responded , they would have never committed the act they were arrested for and two older men (over 40) said their mind has been polluted so long they would'nt know !Substance abuse has been linked to 35% of all suicides ,70% of spousal abuse , 38% of all traffic fatalities , 50% of all murders , 68% of all manslaughter charges , 40% of accidental drowning , and 52% of all rape If 80 % of all crime is a direct result of substance abuse, let's look at the root and it's branches . Access to drugs legal and illegal are at the root or the U.S would not be spending Over 13 Billion on investigating drugs coming into the country .We are going to focus on the legal drugs that are made right here and how the majority are distributed . There are three branches (if we are to lower crime) that need to be addressed 1) Doctors that prescribe drugs illegally for profit .2) The Medical Board that allows them. 3) The subtle Doctor who is just being lazy and going with the money flow "because everyone else is doing it ".

Let us start with the latter. According to United States Health Facts website over 100 Million people young and old are on prescription medication for anxiety and

depression alone (This does not include pain medication). Maybe we should redefine what psychiatry can and cannot do ! Some researcher was interested in redefining psychiatry by saying only 5% may actually need medication. They are describing a term that is used in today's psychological field called a Mild Middle Class Neurosis. This term is used to describe the average person today, it does not refer to people who have been miserable all of their lives; rather it refers to the vast group of non-mentally ill people who might occasionally wind up in a psychiatrist's office with COMMON MILD symptoms of stress. In the book , Psychiatry And Enlightenment , Dr. Harold Bloomfield states " mild middle class neurotics are rushing to Psychotherapists in such large numbers that many psychiatrists have chosen to make less and less time available for treating severely disturbed patients. If Psychiatry could help the average mild middle class neurotic, then the time could be justified but, clinical research and experience have confirmed that a Psychiatrist is no more help to most mild middle class neurotics than a wise and loving friend. A growing number of Psychiatrists, as well as me, believe that the time has come for the profession to admit that psychotherapy, per se, is not the answer to the pursuit of happiness."

Dr. Bloomfield also warns us that prescribing drugs for everyday problems is a major concern for the country."Though these drugs are indispensable in the treatment of the truly mentally ill, the massive ingestion of tranquilizers, sleeping pills, mood elevators, and antihistamines by the tens of millions of people is now regarded as a major health problem." Many doctors, like Dr. Bloomfield are starting to see the negative consequences of medicating people for everyday problems. This aspect does not seem criminal, but a highly educated, trained and disciplined person, who has to go through an immense program of study, to be licensed for ethical conduct of what is right and what is wrong, should know the differences between who actually needs medication and who does not. How can a doctor give a diagnosis on the initial visit? They can not! But most are still prescribing on the initial visit!

I do not have to go to research to know doctors prescribe on the first visit, many prescribed to myself on the initial visit. In one year I saw six different physicians and all six prescribed a controlled drug among them morphine, percodan, xanax and vicodin. Not one of the doctors refused my requests; do we see a trend here? It is called doctor shopping, and it is really easy. Governor Bush, according to Narc-Anon Southern California, calls for a doctor investigation. He said,"Doctors are contributing to the problem of drug abuse by writing prescriptions too quickly and the state needs to better track the use of prescribed drugs." (It usually takes something bad to happen to a

wealthy politician before laws are changed for the better. Bush's daughter Noelle was arrested for prescription fraud) He also said "we over medicate, over prescribe legal drugs. There's a pill for everything ". Rep. Gayle Harrell said about the Bush situation "we used to think drug abuse was simply street drugs. You thought cocaine, marijuana, and heroin. However, when we look at the numbers in our local community, it really is proven that there is more of a problem with the abuse of prescription drugs ". There was also an article in the Worcester newspaper "Oxycontin addiction turns cop into robber "the state trooper was arrested for fraud and theft in the local hospital. If Gov. Bush's daughter and a state trooper, who were shown an appropriate way to live, can become more devious after being on prescription medication, what do you think the chances are of someone who was not shown a good example?

Let's now look at the extreme doctors who are usually substance abusers themselves. The Washington Post had an article on April 9, 2005. (I am not so much interested in " bad" doctors, there is good and bad in everything, but I am more interested in the medical board ,whom keeps allowing these sad events to happen .) Scores of physicians across the country have been given repeated chances to practice despite well documented drug and alcohol problems. They have stayed in business with the permission of state medical boards; even when many have relapsed multiple times and posed a danger to patients, records show.

According to the Review of Medical Boards Records, 74 doctors in the District of Maryland and Virginia were disciplined for substance abuse. The Board found that doctors violated the law by abusing drugs, BUT TOOK NO ACTION, despite the doctors repeated substance abuse. In the 74 cases most had their licenses suspended temporarily. Ten were reprimanded and five were placed on probation but their licenses were not suspended. One doctor who was convicted in Virginia and served time in prison once again has a license to practice in the state. Of the 74 physicians 53% have been disciplined more than once for alcohol or drugs use during their medical careers. Nine were sanctioned at least three times by the same board.

Critics say lenient treatment of substance abusing physician's flows from a seriously flawed national system of disciplining doctors. At its heart is a network of state medical boards made up primarily of physicians, who critics argue, are unwilling to exact strict punishment on their colleagues. Lucian Leape a physician and expert on patient safety, who teaches at Harvard, said "Medicine tolerates behavior that in any other industry would be unacceptable, there are patient's lives at stake and that is more

important than a doctor's career." Charles B. Inlander, President of the Peoples Medical Society said "Doctors are given too much leeway, if a pilot gets caught they're out, if an engineer gets caught they're out. Why does a doctor get special treatment?"

The last part of the easy access to drugs is the prescribing for profit doctors. Pill Mills are set up, where addicted people actually go when there is nothing medically wrongs them. Very much like the methadone clinics, another American tragedy. It is like giving a vodka addict gin, but that's another research paper. Some doctors are actually seeing 80 to 90 patients in an eight hour period. Most of the doctors are making over a million dollars a year even in the worst of neighborhoods. So, who is paying the bill? You are the tax payer. The amount of pain this pill mills cause is best seen in Maureen Flori's story. Her twenty-five year old son, Drew, died because of his addiction to prescription drugs. "She held up bags containing one thousand four hundred and fifty five pills to show the amount her son was prescribed by the same doctor over the last two months of his life."

To better illustrate this, I interviewed an old co-worker, someone I have known to abuse prescription medication. We will call him, Hank. I asked him, "How many years have you been on prescription medication?" Hank replied, "nineteen years". P.R.: "How did you start?" Hank: "I wanted something to chill me out or calm me down. Mostly because the kids were driving me crazy. I didn't really want to drink heavy; someone I worked with took Valium and gave me one. I felt relaxed, so I went to the doctor and he prescribed Valium for me." P.R.: "How many visits do you have to make to the doctors before he gave you Valium?" Hank: "On the first visit. I told him my kids are driving me nuts and my wife is a pain in the neck, could I get something to calm me down so he gave me the Valium." P.R.: "Did it stop there?" Hank: "No, it was so easy; I figured I would get another doctor and get something else." P.R.: "What was the something else?" Hank: "I told the next doctor that I hurt my back at work. I acted like I couldn't move too good and he gave me Percocet. So, now I see four different doctors." P.R.: "Did he actually take X-Rays or test you at all?" Hank: "Yes, the doctor couldn't find anything wrong, especially with the X-Rays, but it doesn't mean it isn't nerves." P.R.: "How long have you been on this medication?" Hank: "Seventeen years. I actually got my sister to go also, she didn't want to, but I told her people at work are giving me six dollars a pill. So, now we have four scripts for Perc's, two for Vicodin, and one for Valium, from four different doctors." P.R.: "Has the quality of your life improved because of this medication?" Hank: "I am divorced; my kids won't have anything to do with me because I started combining alcohol with the drugs and did some real stupid things. I can't drive anymore because I kept crashing the car. Yeah, they have helped

out some. I wouldn't know what to do without them". Hank has now been going to four different doctors over a span of nineteen years and in this time the doctors never questioned why he still needed all this medication .The original doctor gave him medication because his wife and young children were driving him "nuts" . His children have now grown old and have left the house. Hanks wife has also left years ago (because of his foolishness on drugs and alcohol) but the doctor is still giving him medication for a problem that no longer exists; if it did in the first place?

I also teach a meditation class and a self discipline program for a D.O.C halfway house here in Waterbury .I interviewed 52 men over the past four weeks. My questions were few and simple. 1) Would you have committed the offense you are now being charged for if you were not "high" on drugs and/ or alcohol? 50 of the 52 said NO, they would not have! 2 (over 45 years old) said they could not remember not being under the influence of something and were undecided! According to the Addictive Services Board, 40% of all people taking prescription medication abuse it. With over a 100 million taking medication that leaves us 40 million abusing their medication in one form or another. There are a lot of people doing a lot of unnecessary things mostly because their mind is clouded with these addictive prescriptions.

The next question in the survey was:" What substance were you taking at the time of your arrest?" Here is the list. 9 oxycontin , 6 Xanax , 4 Vicodin , 4 Percocet , 2 Dilaudid , 1 Robitussin (cough expectorant) , 6 heroin , 6 crack cocaine , 5 ecstasy , 5 "angeldust " , 4 marijuana . We can directly see a 50/50 ratio of street drugs to prescription drugs, it looks a little lower than the 60/40 ratio from the previous research, but remembers these are men actually coming out of or going into prison. These are not the total numbers because the wealthy hire attorneys and as we have seen with white collar crime "they are rarely prosecuted" .The ones who think they got away with something are not in these numbers, yet.

The last question was: Which of the two were hardest to detox from prescription drugs or street drugs? Only 38 of the 52 detoxed off both and all 38 replied "legal prescription medication was the hardest ". Methadone and oxycontin being the worst than heroin. A statement heard over and over was "with street drugs you never know what you are going to get, they are cut (dilluded) more to make a profit. Where a pill is going to have the same strength every time. You always know what you are going to get.

Apparently, the smart person uses prescription medication because it is safer. When 60% of all overdoses are from prescription medication, what they think is safer is just an illusion, not reality itself. There are so many stories. I read almost 100 of them and after awhile it was the same story being told over and over. Mostly a person with everyday problems, goes to the doctors, and the doctor gives them a prescription, they see how easy it was, they want more, so they doctor shop, they start going to extremes (their mind is really clouded now), then BOOM something drastic happens to stop them (if they are lucky) An arrest or an accident. This research is stating if it was not so easy to get addictive medications, WE AS A SOCIETY WOULD NOT BE HAVING THIS MANY ARREST'S AND SO CALLED ACCIDENTS!!

A judge in Harlan Kentucky sentenced a woman to 10 YEARS in prison for selling 4 pills. The judge fumed "Oxycontin is a pure scourge upon the land" (Trend Alert). This is not a typing mistake. 10 YEARS. While there are doctors abusing the system, making millions of dollars and CONTRIBUTING TO 60% OF ALL OVERDOSES AND ENHANCING PEOPLES ABILITY TO COMMIT MORE CRIME. These doctors are not even getting a slap on the wrist or their licenses suspended. Society needs to redefine what doctors can and cannot do! Sadly with humans it usually takes something drastic to happen before change occurs. To me, 40,000 deaths a year, due to drugs and alcohol are drastic enough! 25 Billion dollars in illegal prescription drugs being sold each year is drastic enough! Only 70 million dollars going to prescription drug offenses compared to 13 Billion used for the "war on drugs" is drastic enough! 150 Billion In Social costs for treating substance abuse is drastic enough! Society is always going to have some abuse of drugs and crime. How much drug abuse and crime depends on serious regulation and monitoring of prescription drugs. We also need more programming, so there will not be so many repeat offenders. According to the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice only 8 to 12% of New Jersey's inmates receive addiction treatment while incarcerated. The last prison I was in was Cybulski. There was one program that the waiting list was over 6 month's long. Many of the short term prisoners are told "Not to Bother" by the staff. Hence the attitude of the addict coming out of prison is "why bother". Society needs to impose stiffer sentences, punishments and penalties on negligent doctors. Also the state medical boards need to start taking away licenses from their colleagues who abuse their privilege to be a doctor. These two recommendations alone would reduce crime immensely.