

# JEWS, DRUGS AND BEING UNCOOL

*by Rabbi Y.Y. Rubinstein*

The only tiny wee worry I had when I thought to write this article was the reaction of parents. Like an absolute twit I spent the last two years in the North West telling those who wanted to know the extent of the drug problem in the area. Most people told me they thought I was lying. The head master of Manchester's King David school spoke at this years speech day ominously about "Publicity seeking Rabbis. " When the truth is pretty awful, people reject the truth, they just don't want to hear.

Now this cheers me up because if parents and community are in "Denial " (bit of a right on social work term that) then they still think it's a bad thing. I know of one group of Jewish kids who are regularly tripping with their parents, which is of course seriously un-cool, imagine snorting with your Granny!

That's really the point, people start to do drugs cause it's cool. A teacher at a teenage centre phoned me six months ago because a twelve year old girl she teaches had approached her as she felt no longer able to hold out against the pressure from her friends to do drugs. How long can a person stand the mental torture of being un-cool ?

I'll tell you things about drugs that you already know. At a certain Manchester club whose name I will change to Pacienda (dead subtle!) people were selling each other water purification tablets for ten pounds each. "Seriously great trip man!" Needless to say the only trip was to the toilet, again and again and again. "E" is killing lots of folk now, I spent a week with a victim who was just out of intensive care, they saved his life but he lost most of the muscle in his leg. LSD is the best way I know to walk into the world of the mentally ill permanently. Society cares so much about mentally ill young people that they close the hospitals that care for them and complain when they end up on the streets selling the "Big Issue".

My experience of the Drug Agencies is that they are appalling. They talk about responsible drug use. Pathetic ! There is no responsible LSD use or responsible Injectibilles use. There is less dangerous

use less awful use....but it's still dangerous and awful. In January "Select" magazine, in an article on the mounting deaths caused by "E", wrote:

"Since 1992, there has been very little research into the effects of "E" in this country. The emphasis has shifted. We're now into what we might call the San Francisco phase of the "E" phenomenon. In the early '80's, sado-masochism became the past time of choice among a large element of the Gay community in California's second city. So much so that, unfortunately, they kept killing each other. The health authorities felt they had two options. They could try prosecuting people for beating each other up. The problem was they were doing it in the privacy of their own homes. Hard to enforce. So they went for the alternative, running safe S&M classes; lessons on how to assault your partner without killing them. The policy was based on the simple premise that people are going to take risks whatever you do."

Pathetic!

I even know of one drug counsellor who is himself a user, he counsels enough to buy his stuff, flies around the inside of his head and then does some more counselling. (I'll give you his number if you like and if you feel he'll do you any good and if you think Yassar Arafat is really Santa Claus.)

But why are we getting into the world of drug use, Planet Mental? The answer's obvious.....cause everyone else is ! and the worst crime imaginable is to be an individual.... to be different.

The story of the first Jew, Avraham is meant to serve as the model for all other Jews. In a world filled with people believing one thing....the same thing and doing the same things, Avraham the Jew, had the guts to stand up and tell them all they were wrong.

His father had a shop which sold Idols. One day when his father was out Abraham smashed them all save one. when his father returned to survey the scene he cried out " What's happened ? " Abraham explained that the idols had been fighting over who was the best. The remaining one had taken an axe and destroyed the rest. his father went crazy, " Don't talk rubbish, I made them with my own hands and Idols don't walk they don't talk and they don't have fights and smash each other up." Abraham replied," If they don't do any of those things, in fact they don't do anything, then why do you worship them?" They didn't like him for it, they even tried to kill him for it...but he was right and he knew it and eventually he convinced many of his opponents too.

In a recent TIME magazine Lance Morrow, one of their regular essayists, wrote a piece which

attacked those in society who have given up fighting that which is obviously wrong. He wrote how when he was a young man, his school allowed fourth formers the privilege of a common room where they could smoke between classes. Then everyone smoked, society tolerated and encouraged it. The heroes of the era, Humphrey Bogart and the rest all smoked and everyone wanted to do what everyone else was doing and of course what their Idols were doing. Today he says, smoking is no longer acceptable, the idols no longer smoke... and so the kids follow. His essay is depressing and cynical. People are sheep he writes and the Sheep dogs of the age position them into doing exactly what they are supposed to do.

It is too much to expect our idols to change their behaviour and shepherd us away from drugs. So if the idols wont change we'll just have to go back to changing and smashing the idols, stop being sheep and start being Jews.

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