



## Breaking free from drugs

### Drug use is delusive; spiritual insights are dependable.

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In college I was curious about the reputed mind-expanding effects of marijuana and other drugs, and I began experimenting. The biggest appeal was to be able to escape from the limits of my mind and just let go.

For a while I actually believed that drug-induced sensations were not only pleasurable but fraught with insight and a larger sensitivity to what was really going on. At the same time I was troubled by my observations of frequent drug users who had developed a need to be on drugs just to feel "normal." I also noticed a boring repetition of opinions expressed in a trite, "hip" vocabulary.

However, I continued experimenting with drugs until I found myself caught in the same delusions. Then something unusual happened. Some friends who had also been using drugs stopped using them. I noticed that they were now much happier people. Their schoolwork improved, and their personal lives were not so confused. In every case, it seemed to me, they were achieving the freedom we all wanted, but without drugs of any kind—not even the beer and coffee that seemed such an essential part of college life!

I found out that Christian Science had been introduced to my friends by one of their girlfriends. As they, one by one, had begun to study Christian Science, an undeniable change of character took place. It all seemed like a rebuke to my efforts to raise consciousness through chemical substances.

Then I became interested in Christian Science myself but still was unable to give up the desire to get high. I continued to vacillate in and out of the drug scene. Three significant events finally resulted in my losing all interest in drugs.

The first was an insight that made me realize the futility of drug use. One afternoon in a store I ran into one of my friends. We struck up a conversation, and as usual I began to discuss my latest insights from a drug high. My friend looked at me and in a kind but firm manner told me that it was impossible for him to find that kind of thing really valid compared with the insights he now had through prayer and the study of Christian Science. He said the drug scene was self-defeating and actually limited consciousness instead of expanding it. He was able to explain in a few brief words something of the infinite range of Spirit, God, and of man's ability to reflect Him.

The second step was a view of myself as basically good. I talked with a Christian Scientist who understood the impulse to be free of the drug habit. She said the good that I was trying to accomplish could not be hindered by confusion and selfishness. Her conviction that man is actually spiritual, as God's child, was so clear that it helped me believe in my innate goodness. I felt that she could only see the good that I was trying to express, and through her view of man (and thus of me) as wholly good and pure, I gained a strong desire to express the goodness she talked about.

Although drugs were still a temptation, I managed to stay free of them for about a month. Reading the Bible Lesson,<sup>1</sup> I was beginning to think clearly. I began to get a lot of satisfaction out of trying to help others, and to think less about myself and my selfish needs. This led to the third and most significant event.

One evening, suffering from a cold and congestion, I felt barely able to breathe. My efforts to heal myself had been ineffective. After reading *Science and Health* by Mrs. Eddy for a while I turned out the lights and lay in darkness, praying. For the first time in my life I humbly asked God, "Father, what do I have to know or do to be healed?" And I actually listened, expecting an answer. Immediately, I was aware of a sense of light filling my consciousness, and three words occurred: "It's not you!" To me these words meant that the real me was not a mortal boxed into a material history, personality, and body. I perceived that the bad habits, the sickness, the

darkness, the fear, had nothing to do with my true identity; that in fact identity is timeless and spiritual. It's completely independent of anything material. The joy that came with this view of my true selfhood was wonderful. I knew I was healed; and the congestion and pressure were suddenly gone.

From then on all interest in drugs was completely wiped out, and I gained a sense of dominion that has carried over into every aspect of my life. What I wanted was to learn more about Christian Science and spiritual healing. A statement in *Science and Health is relevant* to this experience: "The eternal Truth destroys what mortals seem to have learned from error, and man's real existence as a child of God comes to light."<sup>2</sup>

To anyone seeking freedom from drug use—caffeine, nicotine, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, or alcohol—the teachings of Christian Science offer a solution. In place of dull dependency we can have joy and vitality. We can overcome the belief of limitation—whether heredity, false attraction, or lost opportunity—through the realization of man's spiritual identity. Theories about addiction and incurability do yield to the power of prayer and Christian regeneration.

The spiritual authority that characterized the healing ministry of Christ Jesus is present today. The delusion that drugs give pleasure, insight, or solution can be overcome by recognizing that the belief in matter as cause or effect does not have authority. As *Science and Health* puts it, "Every supposed pleasure in sin will furnish more than its equivalent of pain, until belief in material life and sin is destroyed."<sup>3</sup>

Seeing the self-destructive nature of drug use was a first step for me. A desire to give up the belief of satisfaction in sensuality was an important next step. And prayer—purifying my motives—helped to bring actions into line with a higher sense of what man is.

It's through prayer as taught in Christian Science that we can discern man's freedom from material laws and their dire effects. Through prayer we can take the spiritual standpoint that looks out on the universe of Spirit. Mrs. Eddy writes, "Metaphysics, not physics, enables us to stand erect on sublime heights, surveying the immeasurable universe of Mind, peering into the cause which governs all effects, while we are strong in the unity of God and man."<sup>4</sup> These views of God and of our relationship to Him harmonize our lives. As the illusive nature of

matter-based beliefs is recognized—"It's not you"—Truth gives us dominion over false concepts. As the Bible says: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."<sup>5</sup>

Right where the mistaken sense of life as material claims to hold us captive, spiritual reality is present. Our real identity— permanent and timeless—shines through.

We can annihilate dependency on drugs, or any other material crutch, by claiming our God-given dominion.

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<sup>1</sup> Found in the *Christian Science Quarterly*. ↑

<sup>2</sup> *Science and Health*, pp. 288–289. ↑

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6. ↑

<sup>4</sup> *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 369. ↑

<sup>5</sup> Isa. 60:1, 2. ↑