

**FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH**

by: Chester Brost

About twenty years ago, there was a television commercial that portrayed an egg-frying in a hot skillet-while a voice portentously warned, "This is your brain on drugs." And while in some circles, the spot may have indeed had some affect, it was also the source of many jokes and wise cracks. However, this analogy has indeed turned into a literal reality.

Paul Thompson, a scientist at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine found that with the continued use of methamphetamine (speed, crank, crystal, zip, etc.), a highly addictive, illegal substance, you will actually permanently destroy a great deal of your brain.

With the use of high-resolution magnetic resonance imaging, scientists were able to map the brains of methamphetamine addicts for the first time. The pictures that were released last June in The Journal of Neuroscience (yeah, I know, but someone has to read it, right?) were as dramatic as the fried egg spot on television.

The limbic system, which is responsible for controlling moods, cravings, rewards, and emotions sustains the greatest damage. Among those whose brains Thompson studied, an average of 11.3 percent of the limbic cells were destroyed. But, that's not where it ends. The cingulate gyrus and the hippocampus, two areas of the limbic system that deal with memory (see for what it's worth March 2005), also show a great deal of cellular loss and injury.

On average, 7.8 percent of the tissue of the hippocampus, a spoon-size area under the frontal lobes, was destroyed, and that means gone forever folks!

This damage is very selective, it only affects these two areas, while HIV for example, will affect the entire brain. Overall, the brain tissue that is destroyed by methamphetamine abuse is the same tissue that is affected by early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

Another source went on to describe how the drug ravages the entire body causing tooth and hair loss, malnutrition and insomnia for days on end.

More than thirty-five million people throughout the world are thought to use it regularly, these figures are at epidemic proportions when you figure that both heroin and cocaine use worldwide is estimated at a combined rate of 25 million users 10 and 15 million respectively.

In addition to the destroyed brain mater, the tooth loss, hair loss, etc., methamphetamine addicts' brains will get up to-and exceed-more than 10 percent in size due to inflammation of the white matter of the brain. Which, personally, I find understandable based upon what all is involved in the manufacturing process of methamphetamine. Anhydrous ammonia, which is an important source of nitrogen fertilizer for crops is also an important source for manufacturing methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine can be smoked, injected, snorted, or taken orally, and is usually manufactured in "back room" laboratories using recipes involving chemicals from various consumer products, including cold medicines containing ephedrine, drain cleaners, lithium batteries, matches, automotive starting fluid and other noxious substances that are combined, heated, processed, and ingested into ones blood stream.

If you ever wondered why you can only buy a small amount of the cold remedies such as Sudafed, it is because the DEA has made retailers put them behind the counter and control their sale. Methamphetamine makers obtain the anhydrous

ammonia by siphoning tanks at fertilizer plants and farms; farmers spray anhydrous ammonia on cornfields to increase growth.

Most addicts report that they became addicted by trafficking the substance first. A source that wished to remain anonymous told me that, "you can't beat the money, you can turn 30 bucks into three thousand in two days, sometimes one night. Then come the partyin' and the lines of crank, then the next thing you know your in your basement for a week or two with little or no food and nothin' but meth. After your dealin' and snortin for a year or so it's all f#@ked up, you've lost some teeth, some friends, and you can't think straight, then comes the penitentiary. End of story."

When you do the math, 11.3 and 7.8 percent brain loss, well that's almost 20 percent of your brain, not counting how averages are figured (some of those studied lost more than 20 percent and some less) and don't forget about the other damage-tooth loss, etc. the problem that I see is there is no coming back, unlike heroin and cocaine-most times you can turn your life around, clean up, get it together and lead a normal-productive life, but once your brain dies, well, it's dead! This is just FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH.

Ride Safe, Chuck

**Sisters Point of View**

Dear Preacher,

I want to thank you for asking me to be the woman's voice in your paper, you will never know how honored I was by you asking me to do that and for that you and your better half will always have a part in my heart.

Now to the point, for anyone that knows me I usually do not beat around the bush but get right to the point like it or not.

You know that I have decided to not write after the passing of my Space and to tell you the truth I do not know when I am going to be ready to continue telling some of mine and his stories. The pain of losing my soul mate is still so fresh in my heart and when anyone says "Oh those bikers" I tell you my Space was a man among men!

But the reason for this letter is to challenge all those women out there riding there own machines (bikes) to tell some of their stories!!!! If they ride they have to have a story or 2 to tell everyone.

So all you women out there riding your own machine or even sitting on the back I challenge you to tell some of your stories, and let it be known that there are more than a handful of real women bikers out there!!!! I have known and know a lot of real women bikers and I tell you some of them sitting on the back makes them no less of a biker. But for you women who have control of your own machine, come on show all of us how much of a biker you really are. Tell all of us some of the events or mishaps on the road.

I will from time to time write an article for you Preacher if you will still have me, for it is an honor to write in such a decent rag (paper). I will most definitely let you all know how the trip to the Grand Canyon goes when I take my Space's ashes there this June and give us a prayer on our journey (no major break downs on the bikes). So there it is. I pray for all of you on and off the road. May the wind always be in your face and the ground under your wheels (feet) and may we all see each other in a better place someday. Love ME

You take your time sister, we are all here if you need us.

Preacher@freeriderspress.us

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