

Face off: marijuana burns de

Words of advice: happiness comes from within, not dru



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Let me tell a story. I have a relative who is very important to me.

When I was 16 I was going through a typical teen rebellious phase. During that phase, which lasted roughly two years, I did many things I am not proud of.

Let's just say I have not always had such strong anti-weed sentiments, although it truly didn't appeal to me the way it seemed to with others. However I was still weak and affected by what my peers thought and probably wanted the few friends I had to accept me, plus I wanted to know what they thought was special about it and that's how it happened to begin with. I let it happen a few times after that but had bad experiences doing it.

There were some things that stick out to me during that phase of my life.

I think the worst thing I did, at least the thing with the most consequences and the thing I regret most was exposing my relative to weed, who at the time was 13 and in eighth grade.

That act did not have any immediate consequences. He didn't even repeat it until his sophomore year.

Things did make a pretty drastic change for the worst that year I must say.

For awhile we had the same group of friends. For awhile I didn't really think anything of it. I began to notice him doing it on a more regular

basis than I could have imagined.

First it was every other weekend, then every weekend, then multiple times a week, then it was every other day and finally it was almost every single day.

I was pretty outspoken about my dislike for his "habit" so for the most part he tried to hide it from me. The trouble was it was obvious when he was high and we had the same group of friends so what he did I knew about.

I realized how bad things were one spring night when I was invited to a party. I ended up going with a few friends and to no big surprise my relative was there. The worst part was he had brought his friend, who he has known for many years and considers his best friend.

His friend, however, has never been interested in drugs or drinking. It just does not appeal to him at all ever. No matter how much peer pressure my relative has used to attempt to bring him in, it never works. His beliefs are strong and will not be swayed but he somehow ended up at your typical high school party, a place he would not desire to be.

I asked my relative what his plans for getting a ride home that night were and he informed me that they would ride home with a friend, who was a bad enough driver as it was, I had seen playing a drinking game.

I was shocked my relative would put himself and his best friend in this situation. Could he really be this stupid?

I offered to give his friend, who was sitting on a couch alone while my relative played drinking games and smoked, a ride home. His friend was all for getting a ride with me as I was the only sober driver there.

My relative actually attempted to intervene and say that my parents would think it was weird if I drove his friend home and he wasn't with us. He thought more about getting in trouble than his or his friend's safety.

Well I ended up taking them both home and my parents found out.

They also found out about him "hooking people up" as he would call it.

Which in reality means he would find newbies in the pot smoking world and get their weed, take a good amount of it and charge more money. This scheme of his was a success in the fact that it gave him

an almost unlimited supply while having to spend no money of his own.

This was not the last time my relative would be caught. In fact he was caught numerous times that year and most recently was last week.

I am against any sort of marijuana legalization.

I am against it because of real life evidence and not because of facts that pro cannabis industry comes up with.

I am against it because

instead of finding a job my sister's husband sits at his TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funded housing and smokes pot while fending off the

it. In 2004, more than 298,317 entering drug treatment programs marijuana as their primary drug showing they needed help using."

munchies with his food stamps while my sister cares for their three children.

I am against it because I went to visit my friend a week after having her baby and instead of looking for work her husband was looking for the joint papers.

I am against it because it makes you ordinary and replaceable. Every where you go has the same cliché stoners.

I am against it because since my relative has picked up this "habit" I have never felt like I could trust anything he was saying.

I am against it because I saw my relative go from having an engaging and animated personality to being boring and simply fitting the stoner cliché. He went from being irreplaceable and different to being one of many.

I am against it because since he started smoking he has made it blatantly obvious that he does not care about anything as much as he cares about getting high.

Regardless of what some say it is addicting and powerful.

According to National Institute on Drug Abuse Marijuana is addictive.

"Although not everyone who uses marijuana becomes addicted, when a user begins to seek out and take the drug compulsively, that person is said to be dependent on the drug or addicted to

National Institute on Drug Abuse marijuana can be harmful in a number of ways through immediate effects and long term effects to health over time.

The reasons given for smoking marijuana are primarily bullshit.

They smoke to relax, they smoke to be happy. Why can't they be fully functional people and relax without having to smoke? Why can't they make their own decisions?

By legalizing marijuana we are making it up for everyone to use, as well as making something that should not be used for all to use.

The few who would benefit from it will never outweigh the many that will be destroyed.