

Dear Friend:

I understand you are using drugs, although I do not know what kind, of course. It is your right to use whatever drug you choose, but I wanted you to know a few things so that you can make informed choice about your own health and your own future.

If you are shooting up, your veins will collapse sooner or later. It does not matter much now as I know you can find another vein, maybe in your toe, or your neck. The problem may come later in your life if you need blood tests or, God forbid, if you need an IV.

Let me tell you about my friend Della. She was a long term Junkie. By the time she got to 43 all her veins were gone. Getting a blood test done often resulted in multiple stabs in the arms and finally, when they could not find a vein anywhere, they resorted to cutting the tip of one finger to get blood that way. When she was 44 she developed a severe infection in her spine, due to a bad bug in the dope. She got a spinal abscess in her neck. If I had not been with her she would have died. Have you ever seen a dead person with rigor mortise? Well, she looked like she had rigor mortise and was still breathing. She was taken to the hospital and needed IV fluids to keep her alive. Well, guess what? They could not find a vein. In the end they put in a main line which went in her chest and straight into the top of her heart. She was screaming in pain and begging for them to let her die. She did not die but was in hospital for three months. They told her she might never walk out of there as she stood a good chance of becoming a quadriplegic. They had to keep replacing the line as it kept getting infected. Oh, did I mention she has Hepatitis? She got that from needle sharing many years ago. Her liver is slowly failing. She swells up and has days when she cannot get out of bed.

How about snorting? Do you snort? Well my house mate did. She lost the cartilage in her nose. The drugs ate it away. She lost her teeth too. You know about meth mouth, don't you? All the teeth rot at the gum line. She lost all her front teeth one by one. She didn't want anyone to know, so she got an old set of false teeth and broke one or two off, and glued them to the stumps of her teeth with superglue. I have seen her stand in the bathroom holding a hairdryer to dry the superglue, while she was dizzy from the fumes. The drugs ate up her joints too. Her finger joints looked like an old old woman when she was 40.

How's your brain? Drugs can do some weird things to your brain; I mean things that you don't know about until years afterwards. Some while ago I was talking to a young guy - well he was 31 - and he had been using for about 7 years. His memory was shot. He would start talking and then forget what he was saying. He admitted he did it to himself. It was pretty sad really as he said;

"If only someone would have told me I could get like an old man at 31".

Drugs - all drugs though some are worse than others - can change the neuro-pathways in your brain. That means that your brain does not work the way it should. Who knows what effects it will have when you are 60 years old? Have you ever seen someone with Alzheimer's? They drool and cannot speak, they cannot attend to their bathroom needs and someone has to clean their butt. They poop in their pants

and pee on themselves. Finally they cannot eat and have to be fed and then they cannot swallow. After that they usually die. It is a long slow way to die.

If you are a woman, are you planning to have children? Do you know what happens to babies born to drug mothers? They suffer withdrawal just like you do, when they stop getting the drugs. They can be affected in their brain too, often permanently. Using drugs while you are pregnant can increase your risk of having a baby with Downs syndrome, or just being small at birth. Being small at birth will increase the baby's chance of dying in the first month of their life.

If you are a guy reading this, do you know that marijuana increases your risk of testicular cancer? Men ages 15 to 30 are at greater risk for testicular cancer. Do you know how to check yourself for testicular cancer? By the way, anabolic steroids can cause withered testicles and impotence.

All this is your choice. You may want to shrink your family jewels or carry a baby for nine months and then watch it die. As I said, this is your choice. I just want you to know, so that at some later time, you do not say;

"Oh, I wish someone had told me".

Your friend,

Vivienne

www.drug-addiction-family-recovery.com

PS. If you are not a user but you care about someone who is, please print this out and give it to them.