

OVERCOMING THE GRIP OF DRUG ADDICTION

DEBORAH AKERELE

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Foreword

This book is honest and needed. In a world where drug abuse is destroying lives quietly and quickly, *Drug Addiction* by Deborah Akerele offers clear, practical insight with a personal touch.

Deborah doesn't write to impress—she writes to help. Her words are straightforward, relatable, and full of purpose. Whether you're a young person navigating peer pressure or a parent trying to understand, this book offers wisdom and guidance.

What I appreciate most is how it balances facts with real stories, helping readers see the human side of addiction. It also reminds us that healing is possible, especially when we face the truth and lean into support.

I believe this book will open eyes, stir compassion, and start important conversations. I'm glad it exists.

Tobi Glory Fateru

Founder: The Perfect Exchange

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this book to the Almighty God, for the wisdom, inspiration and guidance he gave to make this book reality.

I also want to dedicate this book to my dear parents and siblings.

OVERCOMING THE GRIP OF DRUG ADDICTION

AUTHOR'S EMAIL: DEBORAHAKERELEBOOKS19@GMAIL.COM

FACEBOOK: DEBORAH AKERELE

INSTAGRAM: deborahakerele(valouree)

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS DRUG ABUSE?

Drug abuse is often the misuse of drugs, also known as substance abuse, which can affect both the emotional, physical, and social well-being of a person. Some of these drugs can be the ones we use at home or hard drugs. When you take drugs more than the necessary dosage, you're abusing it. For example, paracetamol is a common drug that's often abused. Everyone knows it's used for headaches, but have you ever asked yourself why you're feeling the headache? Sometimes, the body just needs rest, but because we're used to misusing drugs, we think every headache demands paracetamol. Other examples of drugs being misused are Vitamin C and blood tonics. We need to take precautions on how drugs are used by following the prescription.

Drug abuse and substance abuse, though often used interchangeably, have a subtle distinction. Drug abuse

typically involves the misuse of illegal drugs or prescription medications, such as opioids, cocaine, or heroin. Substance abuse, on the other hand, encompasses a broader range of substances, including illicit drugs, prescription medications, alcohol, tobacco, and other substances.

In essence, drug abuse is a subset of substance abuse, meaning all drug abuse can be classified as substance abuse, but not all substance abuse necessarily falls under drug abuse (for instance, alcohol or tobacco abuse).

Hard drugs, on the other hand, are substances that can be addictive, cause dependence, or harm. Here are some examples of hard drugs:

- Opioids:

1. Heroin
2. Fentanyl
3. Morphine
4. Oxycodone

- Stimulants:

1. Cocaine
2. Methamphetamine (meth)
3. Amphetamines

- Depressants:

1. Barbiturates
2. Benzodiazepines (e.g., Xanax, Valium)

- Hallucinogens:

1. LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide)
2. PCP (phencyclidine)

- Other:

1. Ketamine.

In Nigeria, some of these drugs are given street names.

Examples are:

- Cocaine: "Ice," "Snow," or "White"

- Heroin: "Brown Sugar," "China White," or "Smack"

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- Methamphetamine: "Ice Meth," "Crystal," or "Glass"
- Cannabis: "Weed," "Grass," or "Igbo" (in some Nigerian dialects)

Other names can include:

- Cocaine: "Koko" or "Apata" in some areas
- Heroin: "Brown" or "China"

The ratio of substance abuse in men to women varies depending on the substance and population. Men are more likely to develop substance use disorders than women, with men being about 2-3 times more likely to develop alcohol use disorder and 1.5-2 times more likely to develop drug use disorder compared to women. Men are often ensnared to start using substances at a younger age, which can come from the influence of friends, peer pressure, environment, and others. Because of the focus of parenting, which seems to be more on the female child, men are easily prone to use and entrapment, frequently and in larger quantities, contributing to their higher rates of substance use disorders. Women, however, are less likely to develop substance use disorders later in life, with a more rapid progression from

first use to dependence.

CHAPTER 2

CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE

1. Peer Pressure: The influence of peers at school and in one's environment can lead individuals into substance abuse. This is particularly true for those from families where they feel unloved, unheard, or unsupported, causing them to seek validation elsewhere.

2. Emotional Struggles: Worry, anxiety, depression, and trauma can drive individuals to substance abuse as a coping mechanism or escape from their emotional pain. However, this temporary relief often exacerbates problems in the long run.

3. Family Challenges: Children from dysfunctional families often experience relationship issues due to neglect, which can increase their vulnerability to substance abuse. Feeling neglected, they may seek love and acceptance in unhealthy ways.

4. Mental Health: A history of underlying mental health conditions, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or bipolar disorder, can heighten the risk of substance abuse. Symptoms like excessive restlessness, inattention, or impulsivity may lead individuals to seek solace in harmful substances.

5. Environment: The environment plays a significant role in shaping a child's worldview and behavior. Growing up in an unhealthy environment can negatively impact self-esteem, while exposure to violence, rape, or substance abuse can contribute to an individual's likelihood of substance abuse. Socioeconomic factors and easy access to substances can also play a role.

6. Lack of Awareness: Limited knowledge about substances and their effects can lead to experimentation and addiction. Curiosity and a lack of understanding can have devastating consequences.

7. Self-Medication: Some individuals may resort to substance use to manage physical pain or health issues without consulting medical professionals. This self-medication can lead to dependency and worsen health.

Here are some stories of drug addiction:

Tina, a young and vibrant 18-year-old, had her life forever changed when she was drugged and brutally raped by her neighbor, Brother Shaggi.

The trauma of that fateful day lingered, and Tina found herself struggling to cope with the emotional aftermath. Despite her efforts to hide the pain, she couldn't shake off the feeling of shame and guilt that haunted her every step. As the days turned into weeks, Tina's despair deepened, and she turned to substance abuse as a means to escape her reality.

Tragically, the substance abuse only exacerbated her situation, and Tina's life spiraled out of control. One fateful

day, her parents returned home to find her lifeless body, with a note beside her that revealed the horrific truth about her experience with Brother Shaggi.

The note was a heart-wrenching account of her pain, her struggle, and her ultimate surrender to the trauma.

The news of Tina's death sent shockwaves through the community, and her parents were consumed by grief and anger. In their quest for justice, they ensured that Brother Shaggi was held accountable for his heinous actions.

The court ultimately sentenced him to 30 years in prison for manslaughter, a verdict that brought some solace to Tina's family, but could never undo the damage that had been done.

From the story you can see:

1. The impact of trauma on mental health.
2. The importance of support systems and open communication.
3. Accountability and justice in cases of abuse.

The story of Jack

Jack's life took a dark turn when he got mixed up with the wrong kids at school. They got him into smoking weed, and it wasn't long before he was in deep. His parents were clueless, and things got out of hand fast. He got kicked out of school after a fight with a girl, and his parents were left reeling.

Lessons to learn:

1. Peer pressure can lead to serious consequences.
2. Open communication with parents/guardians is crucial.
3. Substance abuse can quickly spiral out of control.
4. Early intervention and support are vital.

CHAPTER 3

EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

There are several effects of drug abuse on the victim.

Financial crises:

Drug abuse can lead to financial crises, a victim of drug abuse will spend all that they have on drugs, they are more particular about satisfying their desires. It is a strong addiction that any money they have or acquire the only thing they want to use it for is to get drugs.

They think of drugs before they think of food, and some of them look malnourished. Drug addiction is a serious issue that can drain your finances.

Look unkempt:

Some of the victims of drug abuse can look unkempt and dirty. They wear rags and appear to be crazy with terrifying looks.

Low self-esteem:

Drug addiction can cause low-self esteem. You feel you are inadequate and not enough and begin to isolate yourself because no one wants to associate with you.

Mental health(insanity): Insanity is one of the effects of drug addiction. You wonder why you see some people roaming the street with madness, some of them are the effect of drugs. Drug addiction is harmful and can land one in the psychiatric hospital.

Health crises (Kidney failure, heart failure):

The effect of drugs also causes heart failure, and kidney problems.

Wrong misuse of drugs causes kidney problems, the increase in kidney failure is at a high rate. Statistics show that 10% of the population, or approximately 850 million people, suffer from kidney disease. Every 850 million people in the world you count, 10% of them have kidney diseases.

These drugs can directly damage kidney cells and tissues. Prolonged drug abuse can lead to kidney failure and would require dialysis or transplantation. Hence the need to be

more intentional about your health.

Arrogance:

Drug abuse can lead to arrogance, it makes the victim wild and always wanting to pick a fight against others. People who abuse drugs are mostly arrogant and do not respect others, they are full of themselves and think they have arrived and no one can talk to them.

Increase risk in Domestic Violence:

Drug abuse causes domestic violence, the rise of drug abuse holds a percentage in some of the broken homes we see today.

The relationship between substance abuse and domestic violence is very significant and cannot be neglected.

Research shows that over 40% to 60% of intimate partner violence (IPV) incidents involve substance abuse.

- Looking back it reveals that one-fourth to half of men who commit domestic violence have substance abuse problems.
- Substance abuse is the cause of 47% of domestic assaults, showing that 92% of men who assaulted their female

partner using substances on the day of the assault.

- Substance abuse can increase the risk of domestic violence, and victims of domestic violence are more likely to develop substance use disorders.

Increase in crime rate:

Substance abuse is linked to higher crime rates.

In Africa, limited job opportunities and unemployment have driven many young people to substance abuse, contributing to increased crime rates.

Addressing unemployment and providing support for substance abuse treatment could help mitigate this issue.

Social isolation:

Substance abuse can lead to social isolation, causing individuals to drift away from family and friends. This isolation can manifest physically, such as living on the streets, or emotionally, where one may be physically present but mentally and emotionally detached due to substance use. This can result in significant emotional distress and strain on relationships with loved ones.

Anxiety and depression:

Substance abuse can lead to anxiety and depression. Sometimes, most of the triggers of substance abuse are when one is battling with depression and anxiety due to challenges of life. They tend to find a way of escape and end up becoming more and more endangered by taking these harmful substances, which trigger the whole thing and make them worse

Lost of interest:

Substance abuse can also lead to loss of interest in activities. Individuals may lose interest in activities they used to love and enjoy. They may begin to experience coldness and weakness. It can also affect their feeding lifestyle, leading to loss of appetite and disinterest in favorite foods.

Imprisonment:

Furthermore, substance abuse can lead to imprisonment due to increased crime rates and domestic violence. The consequences of substance abuse can be severe and far-reaching.

Mood swings:

Mood swings and hallucinations are also common consequences of substance abuse. Mood swings can manifest in various ways, such as:

- Increased irritability and anger
- Sudden shifts in emotions, from calm to anxious or aggressive
- Emotional instability, making it challenging to maintain relationships
- Paranoia and suspiciousness
- Hallucinations, which can be auditory or visual.

Substance abuse can also lead to problems at work or school. Individuals may struggle to perform their duties, leading to disciplinary actions, job loss, or academic struggles.

Death:

Substance abuse can be fatal. It can lead to untimely death through overdose, organ damage, or accidents. The emotional toll of addiction can also contribute to mental health issues, such as depression, which may increase the

risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Substance abuse is a serious concern that can have devastating consequences, including a significant impact on mortality rates.

CHAPTER 4

OVERCOMING DRUG ABUSE

Overcoming drug addiction requires a multifaceted approach. Here are some ways to break free:

- 1. Seek Professional Help:** Talking to a therapist can be a game-changer. They can help you understand your addiction, develop coping strategies, and work through underlying issues. Don't be afraid to reach out – you've got this!
- 2. Nourish Your Body:** When you're struggling with addiction, it's easy to neglect your physical health. Focus on eating nutrient-rich foods that can help your body recover. A balanced diet can improve your mood, energy levels, and overall well-being make you look beautiful.
- 3. Spiritual Support:** For many people, faith plays a significant role in recovery. Asking for help from a God can provide comfort, strength, and guidance. Be honest about your struggles, and let your faith community support you.

4. Lean on Loved Ones: Your family and friends can be a vital source of support. Don't push them away – let them in. Share your struggles, and ask for help when you need it. Having a strong support network can make all the difference.

5. Join a Support Group: Connecting with others who are going through similar experiences can be incredibly powerful. Support groups provide a safe space to share your story, receive guidance, and stay accountable. You'll find that you're not alone, and that can be a huge relief.

6. Medical Detoxification: In some cases, medication can help manage withdrawal symptoms and cravings. Detoxification should always be done under medical supervision to ensure your safety and comfort. This can be an important step towards recovery.

7. Identifying your triggers: This is an important step in your journey to recovery.

By understanding what sets you off, you can develop strategies to avoid or cope with those triggers. It's like having a path to navigate potential challenges that may arise.

Some common triggers are:

- People, places, or things associated with substance use
- Stress, anxiety, or emotional states make you unstable.
- Past situations or environments that live a lasting memory.

By being aware of your triggers, you can take proactive steps to manage them and stay on track with your recovery.

CHAPTER 5

A RELAPSE

When facing a relapse, it's essential to focus on the present moment. Here are some strategies to help you get back on track:

- **Distract your thoughts:** Engage in activities that bring you joy, such as playing a game, reading a book, or exploring a new hobby. This can help shift your focus away from cravings and negative thoughts.
- **Take a walk:** Connect with nature by taking a stroll in a park or simply spending time outdoors. Nature has a way of healing and restoring balance to our lives.
- **Find accountability:** Reach out to a trusted friend, family member, or support group for encouragement and guidance. Sharing your struggles with others can help you stay on track and motivated.
- **Rest and recharge:** Prioritize self-care by getting enough rest, eating nourishing foods, and engaging in activities that

promote relaxation and stress relief. This can help you regain your strength and resilience.

--Affirmations are a powerful tool that can aid in your recovery journey. One creative way to use affirmations is to write them on colorful cardboard pieces and display them in your space as a constant reminder of your strength and progress.

Here are some affirmations that can help you:

- I am free from the chains of addiction.
- My past is behind me; I embrace the new.
- I am a fighter, and I have overcome the grip.
- I let go of old lifestyles, friends, and colleagues who want to drag me back to my past.
- I maintain a new posture and do the impossible.
- I overcome obstacles and challenges that come my way.
- I am a brand new person.
- I am not alone; I receive support from friends and guidance.

- I am happy and adapting to a healthy lifestyle necessary for my growth.

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