

# *Addiction*

Addiction plays a large part in my research because a person who is addicted can commit crimes, trash family relationships, and persuade others to take a drug, leading *them* into addiction as well. The most obvious thing about addiction is that it is very hard to come clean once in the hole. I interviewed an addiction psychologist, and she said the hardest part about treating addiction is the shame that comes over a user when they come for help. Many times, addicts don't think they need professional help to come clean, and they might try strategies like slowly doing less of the drug, or going cold turkey, or trying to stop taking it all at once. Occasionally, these strategies work, but professional help is always a better option. The process is long and very difficult, with withdrawal symptoms and the craving of the drug, but if the patient is determined, they can come clean.

Addiction is when one's body releases a certain chemical called dopamine in the brain. This dopamine allows the user to feel pleasure when taking the substance. Drugs keep the dopamine in the brain for a long time, so when the dopamine runs out, the user may feel stress, depression, or paranoia. These harmful after-effects keep the user coming back for more, for fear the symptoms might get worse. Many addicts use drugs to get away from the hurtful symptoms that come from not having the substance in their systems. This eventually gets worse, making the user feel abnormal without drugs.