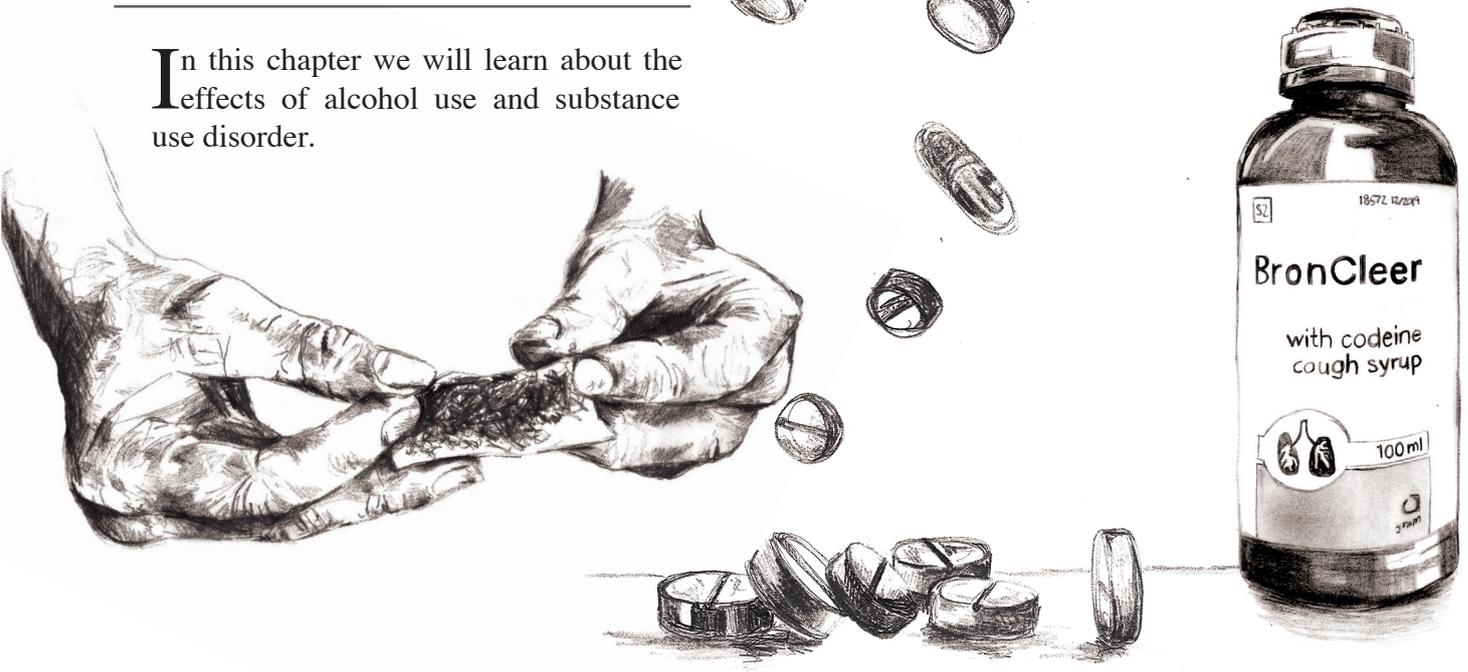


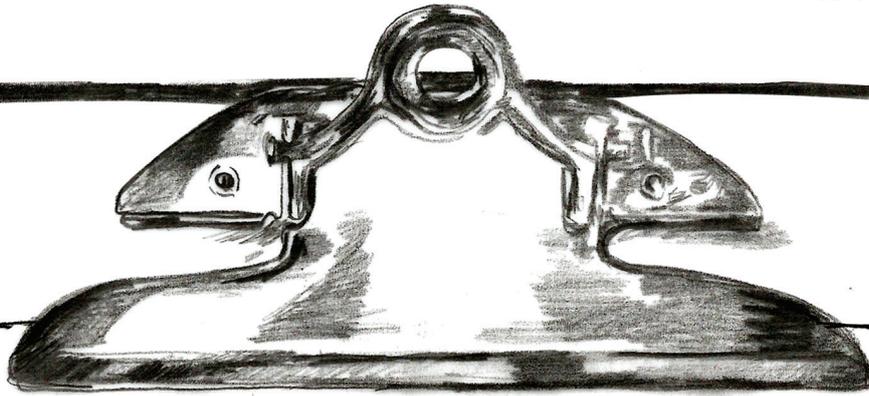
Chapter 8

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

(SUD)

In this chapter we will learn about the effects of alcohol use and substance use disorder.





ALCOHOL CASE

M. is a father of 4 children, he is 35y old and works in a factory. Work is hard, he does not earn a good income. His wife can not make ends meet, she sells tomatoes and looks after the children. M. is frustrated. He likes to meet his friends at the bottle store Fridays after work and on Saturdays as well.

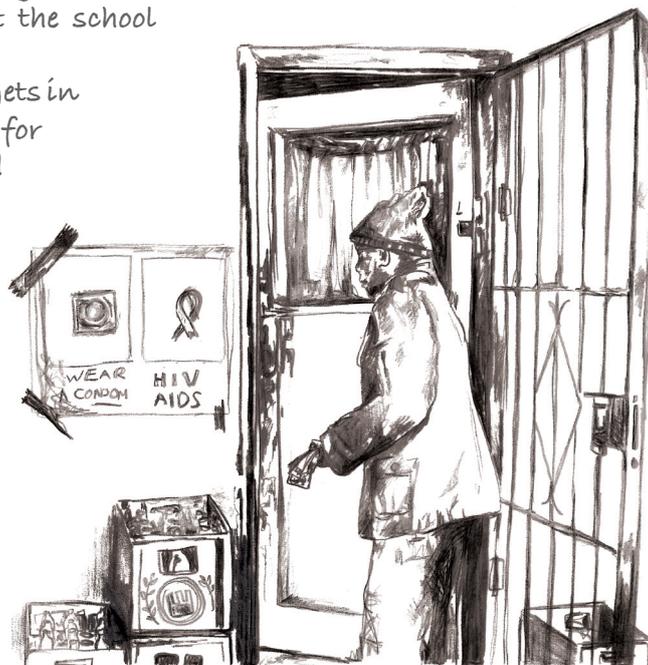
On Fridays, he gets his pay, and he is tired of the week, he thinks a few drinks will help him to relax. When he comes to the bottle store, some of his mates are there already, some colleagues go too, they congratulate each other to having survived the hard week. They agree that going home would be miserable. They would just get complaints from their wives or other female relatives. And especially the wives are so ungrateful, the men find. And there are too many children around.

The men have a few drinks, M. buys another round for his friends. He feels strong and happy, he laughs and dances. There are a few women outside the bottle store as well. He likes dancing with them.

Not one thought crosses his mind about how he is just spending what was intended for food, the rent, the rates. They are behind with the rent anyways, forget the school fees.

When he finally goes home, he gets in a bad mood when his wife asks for the money. He ignores her and goes to bed. On Saturday, M. does not feel so good. He gets angry with his family and leaves the house. He meets his friends at the bottle store. On Sunday, M. goes to church with his family.

On Monday, he goes back to work. What will happen the following Friday?



ALCOHOL HAS THE FOLLOWING EFFECTS:

- » Happy mood
- » Sedation
- » Loss of inhibition
- » Talkativeness
- » Confusion
- » Drowsiness



IDENTIFYING A PROBLEM DRINKER:

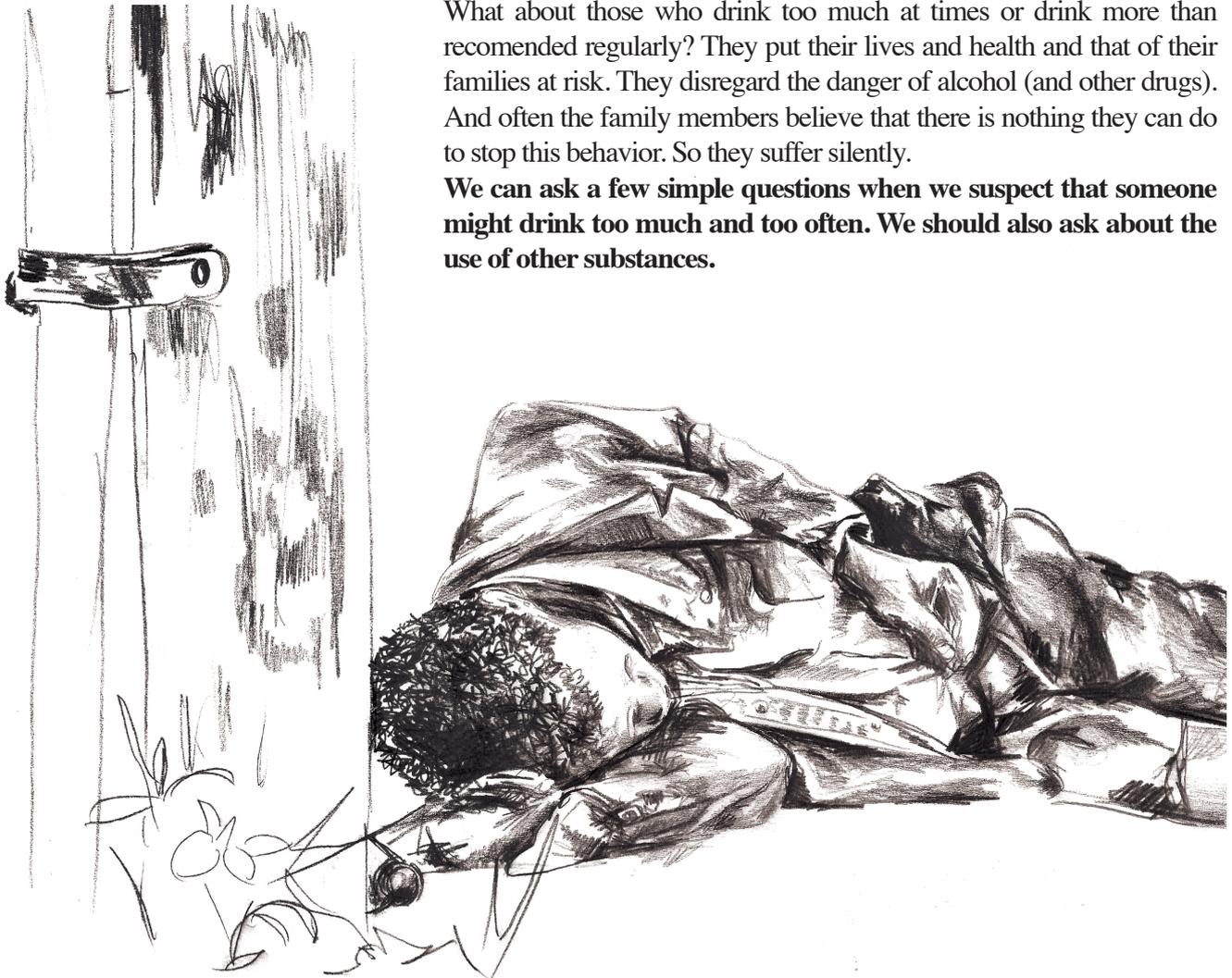
We often think of the long term heavy drinker who is passed out on the ground, unable to get up and not able to keep a job and look after his family.

Longterm abuse can make a person depressed, anxious, even paranoid, and dysfunctional. Abuse of alcohol can cause psychosis, dementia and physical symptoms such as liver damage.

Chronic alcoholics tend to also lose the ability to look after themselves, they neglect body care, proper food intake and all other responsibilities towards themselves and others.

What about those who drink too much at times or drink more than recommended regularly? They put their lives and health and that of their families at risk. They disregard the danger of alcohol (and other drugs). And often the family members believe that there is nothing they can do to stop this behavior. So they suffer silently.

We can ask a few simple questions when we suspect that someone might drink too much and too often. We should also ask about the use of other substances.





FIRSTLY,
we want to
find out about
their alcohol
consumption.

SECONDLY,
we want to find
out whether they
have developed a
dependence.



ALCOHOL QUESTIONING:

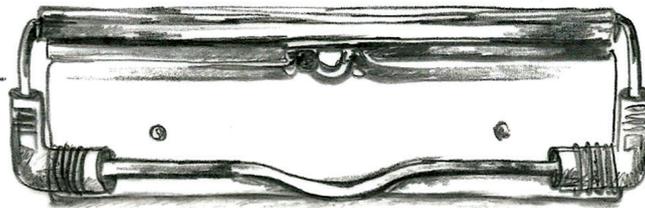
1. Alcohol consumption:	YES	NO
Have you had 5 or more standard drinks on any given occasion in the last 12 months?		
Do you drink more than 2 drinks per day?		
Do you drink every day of the week?		
<p>■ If the person says yes to any of the first questions about consumption, we proceed with the next set of questions to find out about a possible dependence.</p>		

2. Dependence	YES	NO
Do you have a strong desire or does it feel like you have to have alcohol?		
Do you find it difficult to control the amount of alcohol, the timing of drinking or to stop the drinking?		
Have you found that you need to take more alcohol than before to feel the same?		
Have you found that you neglect activities that you used to like and that you spend more and more time on getting and consuming alcohol?		
Have you found that you ignore harmful consequences such as liver damage, depression, problems with thinking and remembering and continue to drink?		
<p>■ If a person says 'yes' to at least 3 of these questions, he or she has an alcohol use disorder. Less than three 'yes' answers indicate that a person practices harmful alcohol use.</p>		

Most of our efforts when talking to a person with substance abuse issues will be centered around making the person see that the substance abuse is actually making life worse. We can explore with substance users what they think others think about them. Do people even know that they abuse substances? In the case of alcohol does it maybe even seem acceptable and no one has ever said anything to the users about their drinking?

When a person starts to see that the substances are affecting his or her life negatively, we can offer our help to find ways to either reduce or even stop the drinking.

Another common substance that is used in our communities is: Broncleer/ Broncho



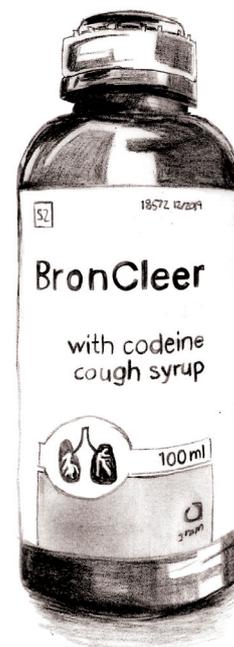
DRUG CASE

T. is 21y old. He dropped out of school in form 2 as his relatives were not able to afford the school fees anymore. Both his parents had died when T. was quite young. He tried to find a job, helped out at a shop for a while, worked on the field, and helped his aunt chopping fire wood and sell it by the road side. One of the guys on the street showed him once how to feel better by drinking cough syrup. T. did not want to believe it. He found the taste of it rather horrible. His friend reassured him that it was just coughing syrup and that it was quite affordable as well. He did feel his head get lighter, buzzing somehow. Funny things happened to his vision and he felt like he was not in his body anymore, he felt like he had to lean into something not to fall over. Also, his friend laughed at him as his voice became really slurred.

Over the weeks, T. carried on...

He also constantly needed money, so agreed to sell cough syrup to others. He had to be careful not to be caught by the police. Sometimes he was his own best customer.

Today he has 5 bottles of Broncho a day just to keep functioning. He cannot support the withdrawal symptoms. His aunt is really angry with him.



BRONCHO HAS THE FOLLOWING EFFECTS:

- » Slurred speech
- » Blurred vision
- » Euphoria
- » Sedation
- » Lethargy
- » Drowsiness
- » Impaired motor skills
- » Out of body experiences

DEPENDENCE AND WITHDRAWAL:

Chronic use of a substance makes a person need to take more of the substance to have the same effect. Also, when intake is suddenly stopped the body will develop withdrawal symptoms.

Withdrawal symptoms are very uncomfortable and the addicted person will try everything to avoid having them. Medication given by the health care provider can help a person to go through the physical withdrawal.

Withdrawal symptoms have the power to make a person relapse and forget everything about the plan of changing his or her behavior. They might steal and lie if they think that it will help them to obtain more of the substance they are addicted to. The addiction becomes the only focus in their lives.

Clinically, we can observe these symptoms of withdrawal in the table below:

substance	examples	withdrawal symptoms
» depressants	alcohol, mbanje, sedatives 	agitation, hyperactivity, high BP and palpitations, anxiety, hallucinations, confusion, seizures, shakiness
» stimulants	amphetamines, crystal meth, cocaine 	fatigue, depression, social withdrawal
» opioids	pethidine, broncho, heroine 	anxiety and agitation and others might present with depression and loss of motivation

PREGNANCY AND ALCOHOL

Women have slightly different patterns of drinking compared to men. Women’s bodies also react differently to alcohol than men’s bodies. This means that women might suffer from alcohol-related problems when they have taken much less alcohol than men. Even if a woman weighs the same as a man, when they both drink the same amount of alcohol, the woman has a much higher blood alcohol level than the man. Thus, she is exposed to a much bigger health threat through the alcohol’s toxicity compared to the man.

Alcohol affects the **liver** and can lead to alcohol hepatitis.

Chronic heavy drinking leads to **heart disease**. Again, even if women drink less overall compared to men, they are more vulnerable to developing heart disease due to chronic drinking. Women who drink regularly, even if only one drink a day, have a higher risk of developing breast cancer.



There is no safe amount of alcohol, no safe type of alcohol and no safe time for a pregnant woman to drink alcohol. The baby will be harmed!

FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

Alcohol is a very strong poison. Pregnant women and those wanting to fall pregnant should never have alcohol. When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol the baby’s normal development will be disturbed.

Children born to women who had alcohol during the pregnancy are prone to suffer from developmental delay as well as behavioral and learning difficulties. The face of a baby with fetal alcohol syndrome is also often abnormal.

Alcohol and drug use can make a person take risks such as not use protection when engaging in sexual activities.



WHO DO WE TALK TO?

FAMILIES OF USERS

A worried family member might address us and speak about the person who drinks too much or takes drugs. The family looks at us to reach out to that person, and we need the family to work with us.

How do we support the family?

1. Listen
2. Acknowledge
3. Explain why some people use substances.
4. Find out what the family thinks maintains the problem and what makes it worse. (Who finds it most difficult to say NO to the addict? Who gives money to the addict? Who fights with the addict and what happens then? Who is most affected by the addict's behavior?)
5. Explain to the family that the addict needs support and first has to stop being in denial before he or she can accept help.
6. Explain that bringing about change will take time and patience.

THE USER/DRINKER

How do we support the person the family complains about?

Can we just approach a person because we have heard that they drink too much?

Of course we can... but what is the best way of getting this person to listen to us?

Our most important job is to reach out to the person in a caring, understanding and very patient way.

What we want is to get the person to be interested in changing his or her behavior which is one of the most difficult tasks.

A person who is addicted to whatever substance is not able to just stop. Addiction is a DISEASE.

They would have stopped already if they could.

They might have tried and failed.

They also have a lot of good explanations why they keep drinking and they might say that they do not have a problem.

This is called DENIAL.

OUR FIRST GOAL MUST THEREFORE BE TO MAKE THE PERSON WANT TO STOP.

How do we do this?

This is a very difficult question.

Maybe we can start with what will not help to make the person want to stop.

NOT HELPFUL:

- » Get angry with him or her
- » Expect him or her to stop
- » Show no understanding
- » Blame the addict

HELPFUL:

- » Persist and visit him or her again and again.
- » Understand that the person might react negatively to our questions.
- » Try to see him or her when they are not under the influence of any substance.
- » Ask them about their life and invite them to come to the Friendship Bench to talk. It helps people to speak about their lives and have someone listen without judging them. We try to find out together with the client what keeps him or her turning to alcohol or drugs.
- » Involve him or her in finding out how alcohol or drugs have stopped him or her from doing what they wanted to do or achieve.
- » Invite the person to come to meetings like our CKT where they can talk about what is going on in a safe environment.



Notes ...



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