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**CANNABIS**  
**ABUSE PREVENTION**  
**PROGRAM FOR YOUNG**  
**CONSUMERS**

# TUTORIAL



**CAPPYC**







# CAPPYC TUTORIAL

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of the prevention of drug addiction it is not often you find proposals targeting young girls and boys aged 15 to 18. The main reason for this lies in the difficulties presented at this age for such purpose. Their proximity to the coming of age, differing educational situations, the presence of already stabilized consumption and the supposed impenetrability of this age range to adult proposals are aspects that enhance this difficulty.

However, one of the biggest problems is likely to be the difficulty of working with the perception that people of this age have on drugs. A perception that is often solidly formed and difficult to change.



The aim of the **“CAPPYC (Cannabis Abuse Prevention Program for Young Consumers)” project** is to extend the possibilities of educational work with young people between the ages of 15 and approximately 18, within the framework of education in values and with the goal of providing ideas and instruments that favour the relationship between young people and drugs, which already occurs at these ages, should take place in a context of maximum information and, therefore, maximum freedom and autonomy.

The program is a methodological work proposal intended for educators of formal and non-formal education to facilitate their educational task with people between the ages of 15 and 18, approximately.

This program consists of an audiovisual document which is intended to encourage reflection and debate based on images, sequences and dialogues that reflect a particularly complex aspect, which is the perception that young people have on drug use in general and, in particular, on the positive effects of its use.

This Tutorial is part of the **“CAPPYC” program**. That is to say, the program consists of two instruments: the audiovisual document and the tutorial, both having the same importance and different uses. The audiovisual document is the starting point, the tutorial proposes ways to lead and conduct the debate and reflection. The point of arrival will be established by the young boys and girls.

This tutorial contains:

- This introduction.
- An overview of the “CAPPYC” program.
- A section setting out the contents of the program, the most important theoretical aspects and the specific characteristics of the audiovisual support.
- And a section that reviews the chapters of the audiovisual support and sets out the methodological proposals (activities).



## 2. THE PROGRAM

The **“CAPPYC” program** is based on an audiovisual presentation that contains a series of excerpts from the story of Alex and Salva, two seventeen-year-old youths, from what they expect of drugs use (especially cannabis) and what drugs give them. The ultimate goal of “CAPPYC” is, precisely, to analyse and present the differences and discrepancies between the positive expectations generated by drug use, that is the “benefits” of it, and the real effects of drug use.

One of the fundamental reasons why the consumption of a particular substance becomes established is that it focuses on the expectations of certain benefits following consumption. Often, these expectations are based on perceptions or constructs that may be more or less true to reality. Some such perceptions involve myths or fallacious ideas about the benefits of the consumption.

Dismantling these perceptions, or at least their myths, is a highly appropriate preventive goal for this age group. Far from insisting on a preventive task based on information about the risks and the negative

effects of drug use, our aim is to update and reformulate the positive effects, the supposed benefits of drug use, or at least some of them.

When conceiving and designing the “CAPPYC” program, the difficulty of addressing the age group with a proposal of an educational nature cannot go unnoticed.

These young people have already completed their compulsory education or are close to doing so, and are on the verge of coming of age. They are quite impermeable to the messages and recommendations from within the framework of values and which have institutional origins (in this case educational). For this reason the program must take care especially of two matters of capital importance in order to overcome the initial resistance: the format of the message and the nature of the proposed activity.



The audiovisual support allows you to expect greater attention. Young people and adolescents have a higher level of “audiovisual socialization” than previous generations and are more open to this type of medium. They are more aware of its keys of transmission and interpretation. In addition, at around sixteen years of age, there is a coding of written texts associated with the academic approach.

The fact of choosing an audiovisual support does not guarantee that the message will indeed get through. For this reason, when designing the contents and how to convey them, we attempted to establish a balance between two extremes.

On the one hand, we avoided making a tedious audiovisual document resembling a written text, of an eminently informative, documentary and unattractive nature. On the other hand, we also avoided the temptation to make a video clip in which, due to the impact of the message, the support becomes devoid of content.

Therefore, we sought an audiovisual support that keeps the narrative keys and the typical language of the genre, with characters, frames and events, but at the same time all of these elements are designed firmly based on the objective and truthful characteristics that portray the youth population in general and the consumption of drugs in particular.

What is more, in some cases it may happen that the document has allowed some “educational licences” in terms of the language, images or the behaviour of the young people shown, risking as far as possible for the sake of a greater capacity to reach the target population.

The second issue dealt with by the “CAPPYC” program in order to be effective is the nature of the proposed activity. The ideas, the contents of the program are not affirmations or statements, they are not recommendations, or solutions, not even alternatives. The proposal is to invite young people to problematize, to question, to look at situations from all angles just as they occur in reality.



In this way, the target group becomes actors, almost accomplices in the program. Whether or not they will gain a greater field of action over their own lives will depend on their ability to reflect on what they say, do or see.

The program seeks to be at their level, not lowering its level of intention, but raising the capabilities that are often supposed of young people up to limits in which they perceive themselves.

The “CAPPYC” program has five chapters, lasting approximately 5 or 6 minutes per chapter, and a total length of just over 30 minutes. It can be watched entirely or chapter by chapter. Each chapter makes sense in itself and can be used for educational purposes, providing an activity for this.

Alex and Salva are two young people who spend their lives just as many young people do. They smoke, go out, play, laugh, talk, skip class and flirt. In each chapter, Salva and Alex find themselves in a different situation. In addition to them and their usual environment, each of the chapters shows a part of the perception about the benefits of drug use. As we shall see later on, the situations of the chapters are based on three main axes of reference.



These three axes represent some of the most central and important myths that the youth perception of drug use associates with the benefits of this consumption, namely:

- The effect that drug use has on getting away from problems.
- The effect that drug use has on having fun.
- The effect that drug use has on the ease of establishing relationships and “forming a group”.

Ideas and thoughts on each of these axes and their development are included in the review of the chapters below.



### 3. CONTENTS

The “CAPPYC” program aims to dispel the myths surrounding the benefits of the consumption of drugs. When you take drugs, this has certain effects. Some of these effects can be positive and some negative, and they may occur in short, medium and long term.

Among the effects of drugs there is a series of “benefits” for the people who use them. These benefits are related with the reality on different levels. Some of them can be considered real benefits, as in the case of an athlete who takes a drug to increase his or her endurance and therefore be able to train more. This may be against the code of ethics of the sport, but if the athlete disregards this code, the increase in the physical endurance s/he expects (which indeed takes place) is a derived benefit of the consumption of drugs.



Often there are benefits of the use of drugs that are not well calibrated, that are not adjusted to reality. The perception held for some of these benefits is mythicized, that is to say the value given to it is exaggerated or disproportionate. That means that more is expected of what will in fact occur.

In spite of the fact that the reality shows that the expectations concerning some of the benefits of the consumption of drugs are often exaggerated, it is surprising how these expectations remain intact over time. The amount of myth surrounding certain positive effects of drug use is so great that external or uncontrolled factors are often alleged to explain unfulfilled expectations.

For example, one of the most anticipated positive effects of the consumption of a large amount of substances is the state of well-being. Drug use often does not directly involve this state of well-being, or it does for a very short while followed by a period of intense malaise, or simply nothing happens at all. When this is so, when the expectations of well-being are not fulfilled, other issues have come into play. Over expectation is not doubted or problematized.

And this is not happening, (the expectations are not doubted), precisely because the construction of these positive effects is very robust. It is based on a hedonist culture, visually and conceptually supported by advertising, the media and the social construct of well-being, and it's highly complex to change it.



However, it must be done. At least for one reason in particular, that between the ages of 15 and 18 the negative version of drugs has already been formulated enough times. Young people have been fully informed of the risks entailed in irresponsible consumption. In many cases they already know the ideas that require adequate risk management.

Now is the time to discuss the benefits, to move from a negative discourse about consumption to a discourse that will demystify the benefits: *Are you sure it's fun? Are you really closer to your mates? Do you really forget about everything?*

This is the logic that the contents of the program pursue. The chapters and the story of Alex and Salva are designed to enable young people to pause and reflect on the extent to which these benefits of consumption are really as they expect them to be.

At every age, in every culture, there are some myths more powerful than others. There are many ideas that have been mythicized regarding drugs. This must be so because what is reasonable is not nurtured necessarily by myths. Three axes of reference were chosen for the “CAPPYC” program based on three of the main myths about the benefits of drug use among young people.

Below, in the form of reflections, is a summary of some ideas that explain, describe and qualify the degree, direction and content of each of these three myths. The idea is to provide a small framework so that the people who are going to work with this program can properly locate the scenes, the language, the ideas or the characters in the story of Alex and Salva.



### ***The myth of fun through drugs***

There are almost as many ways to have fun as there are people. Everyone has had some time the chance to see how someone else is having fun doing activities or being in situations you think are a waste of time or simply unbearably boring.

But in addition there is a social construction of what is meant by having fun, a homogenizing and encompassing description of fun activities that not only describes how it corresponds to their stereotyped character, but also sets out what should be done to have fun.

The media, especially advertising, have generated a social discourse of fun based on company (it is difficult to have fun alone), laughter (if you don't laugh it may be gratifying but not fun), emotional activation (a dose of supposedly intense feelings is required), sexualisation (as a central element of having fun), social power (ability to influence) or purchasing power (more money equals more fun), spatially and temporally located (places and time for fun and places and time not for fun) and high doses of physical and psychological stimulation.

Based on this social construction of fun, most convenient for companies and the market because it is equivalent to buying fun, the consumption of drugs is an activity that fits quite well in the scheme of the previous paragraph.

Drugs are used to have fun because their consumption has consequences that are, to a certain extent, similar to what the social construction of fun says is to have fun. That is to say, the consumption of drugs is not in order to have fun, it is having fun.

So, if when you take drugs you don't have fun, the problem is yours, and you have to do something about it. Take more, take better, or at least conceal the "mechanical failure" you have, because there must be something wrong with you if you don't have fun.

In spite of the fact that the situation of consuming and not having fun is statistically much more common than the other, either due to problems stemming from consumption (bad trips, excesses, small overdoses, adverse effects...), or simply because nothing happens, the encoding inoculated in the brain of many groups of young people about having fun and what it means to take drugs is much stronger.



For this reason, the phrase: to consume is to have fun may seem simple but it contains a far-reaching fallacy, since realist negation (based on what is happening) places the emphasis, the problem or the solution outside actual own drug use.

Often people do not enjoy their consumption of drugs, neither when consuming them, nor when feeling (or not) their effects. Often, people can even come to believe that they get enjoyment from consuming drugs or when they feel their effects. However, fun is also associated with behaviours and actions not related with the consumption of drugs.

For example, you can dance with or without consuming. To a person in the first case, it will be clear that s/he is having fun because of dancing. For the person in the second case he has to decide whether it is because of the dancing, the consumption or both. Social pressure and youth stereotypes put a great pressure on young people, so that the consumption is the chosen behaviour to have fun.

Cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs are consumed in situations that are usually fun in themselves: with friends, free of any challenging tasks, joking and chatting, with music... That's why sometimes consumption is labelled fun, simply because it takes place in fun situations, but not because it is fun in itself.



### ***The myth of getting away from problems***

One of the reasons that young people use drugs is to “escape”. From their problems, their family situation, their school or professional situation, from the bad things that make up the world, from the grim future...

The word evade (to evade is to provide oneself with an escape) appears in the [Spanish] dictionary as the avoidance of harm or danger or as disinterest in a concern or unrest. It is important to highlight that for both cases (avoiding and disinterest) is necessary in order to overcome or cope with problems: the search for the solution.

In clinical psychology, mental training techniques are used to help people avoid negative, unpleasant thoughts or stop intellectual spirals that fail to adapt to their situation. It is a good way to increase well-being.

However, these techniques are often applied to two types of thoughts or ideas: those that are beyond the control of a person and therefore nothing useful can be done and those that are clear to the person to whom the thoughts occur that they are uncertain or incorrect.

That is to say, evading a thought, avoiding a problem, fleeing from an idea or ignoring a difficulty is only useful when really nothing can be done to solve it. When this is applied to personal situations in which evasion replaces coping, the problem is far greater.

The use of drugs for evasion becomes a double trap, in the first place due to the actual consumption of a substance (which can be dangerous) and, above all, because this consumption replaces, removes, behaviours and thoughts aimed at solving the situation.

Problems of relationships with others, failure at school, the chances of having a future, fun sex, a happy life, well-being are elements whose common factors involve work, effort, mistakes, frustrations and numerous attempts, both to achieve and to maintain them.

Evasive drug use is a bargain for the mind. It prevents us from working towards what is in our reach, it provides us with a comfortable situation, while it prevents us from continuing to think clearly about what we must resolve.

Often the use of drugs to evade problems is a form of complaint, a system to grumble about the situations around us that leave us no alternative but escapism. There is a proverb that says if your problems have no solution, what are you complaining about? And if they do, what are you complaining about?

Complaints in all their manifestations, crying, shouting, silence, aggressiveness, inappropriate behaviour (or drug use) involve some escapism. Complaining prevents me from being constructive. Regret and discharging get a good write-up. Almost everyone is allowed a little relief, and greater relief if the problem is big.

Some drug consumption allows you not to think about problems, but this is because they do not allow thinking about anything.

Western culture has been provided with gimmicks and artefacts to cause evasion from problems, from television to medicaments, almost all of them with results which are of little effective with regard to the well-being of the people and have complicated side effects.



### ***The myth of group creation***

It goes without saying that hardly anybody takes drugs alone. With exception for the consumption that is already anchored in dependency or the consumption prior to the situation of accompaniment and destined to it.



The first question is: do drugs create groups because it is great to consume drugs together or do drugs create groups because the group consumes drugs together? That is to say, the effect of drug use within the group could be similar to getting lost in the snow for two or three hours or winning a match or getting money to travel on a shared basis. It is likely that this will be the case, however, the collective consumption of drugs is more publicized and is closer to hand than other activities capable of generating these same consequences in a group.

It is clear that feeling united with the rest is one of people's needs, and that the consumption of drugs and certain states of euphoria accompanying them could be a way to satisfy it: a satisfier. For this to be true, everybody would have to get the same effect from drugs and with very similar consequences, which has already been demonstrated both actively and passively not to be the same.

Often, the outbreaks of collective love are caused by some units of the group that are echoed in the others because of how nice it is to feel loved and due to the novelty of the situation in a society generally plagued with broken relationships.

When they return home or meet up again the following day the relationships remain the same, identical. Human relationships need other elements in order to develop solidly and stably. Solidity and stability are keys for well-being.

When we consider drug consumption as a way of satisfying the need of belonging and group identity, it must be taken into account that some of these forms (satisfiers) are synergistic, that is to say, that once they solve one issue they enable solving several others. For example, walking around the city allows you to be healthier, to get to know the city and serve the environment ideologically. Other forms solve one single thing, and have adverse effects on others.



## 4. METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSALS

The “CAPPYC” program is an educational one. For this reason it includes this section in which there is a series of proposals of activities to work on various topics considered fundamental in dealing with attitudes towards the use of cannabis among young people.

Some of the topics are:

- The resolution of conflicts through negotiation.
- Generational differences.
- Perception of the relationship with cannabis in the present and in the future.
- False beliefs about cannabis.
- Use of cannabis for group creation and social relations.
- The search for fun through the use of cannabis.
- Reasons for starting to consume cannabis.
- Perception of control over the use of cannabis.
- Types of drug consumption.
- Expectations regarding the consumption of cannabis.
- Limitations stemming from the consumption of cannabis.
- Addiction to cannabis. Role of consumption.
- Decision-making.
- Dual nature of cannabis use.
- Evasion from problems through the use of cannabis.

The proposals are made following the logical order of the chapters. Each activity is structured according to the following sections:

- Aims: where the issues dealt with by the activity are set out.
- Material resources: where the chapter on which you are going to work is specified.
- Approximate time: section that sets the estimated duration of the activity.
- Preventive meaning: where the meaning and relevance of the topics to be dealt with are briefly outlined.
- Development of the activity: key section that enables to carry out the proposed work and by which the trainer can know what to work and how to use the contents.

It is useful to use the material in five sessions of about 50 minutes (taking into account that viewing each chapter can last approximately 5 minutes). In each session, the work focuses exclusively on the chapter corresponding to that day referring, if necessary, to the content worked on in previous sessions. At the same time, it is advisable to work the program on a weekly basis, since the contents of each session are interrelated.

The methodology used in the activities is highly varied, ranging from questions to encourage reflection and debate among the young people, to more structured group dynamics, through small individual exercises that will be shared. What the activities do have in common is that to some extent, they force emphasis on a specific part of the ideas of the film going a little beyond the concrete scripts and dialogues.

## Activities

### 1. WHAT I WANT TO DO WITH MY LIFE

#### Brief overview of the chapter

In this chapter Salva and Alex talk about the meaning of an anecdote in which Salva's father speaks to him about drugs use. During their conversation it is important to realize the attitude and comments they make towards adults, how they relate to them, how they assess the parents, and the conflicts they face on a regular basis in their relationship with them.

#### Aims

- To reflect on the relationships between young people and adults.
- To analyse frequent conflicts in youth-adult relationships and generate strategies that facilitate overcoming these conflicts.
- To use negotiation as a way of improving social relations.
- To reflect on the relationship they will have with cannabis in the future.



### Myths worked on:

- Escaping from problems.

### Material resources

- Chapter 1 *What I want to do with my life.*

### Approximate duration

50 minutes.

### Preventive meaning

Relations between young people and adults are numerous, and sometimes difficult to handle. When people live together it is possible that conflicts will arise and some elements make this more likely: economic dependence, age, communication, different interests, among others. If we want to tackle this conflict and achieve positive results, it is necessary to analyse the conflicts that have arisen and think about the skills that enable overcoming these conflicts.

Where there is conflict, negotiation is usually necessary. Negotiation improves human relations in general, because it promotes communication, improves the quality of living together and strengthens the relationship.

It is important to keep in mind that people of different ages have to live together, depend and interact, since the relationships between young people and adults are rather inevitable. Therefore, the sensible thing would be to think about how to capitalize these relationships and turn them into a source of pleasure, or at least, a space of non-conflict.

Learning the skills to solve conflicts is a key for preventing young people from resorting to the use of cannabis as a way of not dealing with problems and escaping from their responsibility in social relationships, whether it is with adults or equals.

### Development of the activity

*"During the excerpt we have seen, on many occasions Alex and Salva refer to their relations with adults (parents, teachers, the caretaker...), relationships that they do not seem to live satisfactorily. So, we are going to start this session by talking about the adult world".*

For this, the trainer divides the class into groups of 5 people and asks them to define "adult". Before starting the work, the following questions will be asked to serve as a guide:

- What does being adult mean for you?.
- At what age does one become an adult? Does being an adult go beyond coming of age?.
- What do you expect of your parents (or other adults)? What should they do with respect to you? What does Salva expect of his father? Why?.

After 10 minutes, ask them to leave aside their definition of adult and continue working in the same groups to build a profile of what adults would make of them, of young people (how do they think adults see them? How would they define them? What do they expect of them?). They will have another 10 minutes for this.

Once the group work is completed, they will present their definitions (“adult”, “young person/youth”) through a spokesperson, and the trainer, by drawing two columns on the board (one for the definition of “adult” and another for the definition of “young person/youth”), will allocate the information provided.

From the definitions created, a brainstorming is conducted with the aim of finding similarities and differences between the two descriptions constructed. There will probably not be many similarities, so a debate based on the following question will be started: Why so many differences?

Then the trainer refers to the different lacks of respect that Salva and Alex direct at the adults around them and that are displayed in the video, starting a short debate around the following questions: What do you think about that? Is it usual among boys and girls of your age? How do you think adults can earn your respect? At a given point, Salva says “Instead of punishing me he goes and gives me a camera”? How do you feel about this? As parents would you have done better? How?



After the short debate, the trainer hands out a blank card to each young person. Individually, they have to write on one side two difficulties they have with adults, and on the other, two virtues that would enable handling the difficulties adequately or even overcoming them (these virtues must be theirs, not the adults’). After 5 minutes, the trainer will collect the cards requiring a few minutes to sort them into groups with the aim of releasing the information to the large group, which will then be transferred to the board (a volunteer can write it up as the trainer reads out).

The virtues mentioned may be transformed or converted into “relationship strategies with the adult world” creating a document that could be called *“We care for our relationships with adults when...”*

At this point, the educator will launch the idea that in a conflict (either with an adult or with a peer) there are two parties involved, and to overcome this conflict, both parties have to change something. One of the parties can begin with this change, and so the trainer will encourage the young people to be the ones to take the first step, based on the virtues identified. Taking the first step is intelligent and shows an extraordinary attitude that will improve the relationship in the present and in the future. The trainer can resort to the following ideas related to negotiation, an ideal strategy for social relations to be satisfactory:

## THE NEGOTIATION

Sometimes, there are differences and conflicts between young people and adults that are difficult to overcome... Making a mutual effort to reach agreements and upholding tolerance over other attitudes, the adults' attempt of understanding and freedom for the young people, a clear attitude among young people to find their place in this society, and acceptance of their responsibilities by the young people, are essential elements for the negotiation to succeed.

When a conflict situation becomes prolonged in time, the chances of failure to reach an agreement increase proportionally. As a conflict extends, the unpleasant situation is prolonged, increasing the indifference and/or contempt, therefore in negotiation (the search for agreement) some things should be kept in mind:

- When trying to resolve a conflict, we must try to see how both parties can win. Success is the mutual benefit. If this is not the case, it would be a competition, not a negotiation. Competition is a poor strategy because in relationships between young people and adults, with this attitude, it is very likely that both parties will lose. Cooperation is fundamental.
- When two people are trying to reach an agreement they must address and identify their differences in criteria (how each one defines and understands the situation) and the objective (what each one wants to achieve in the agreement).
- The agreement should indicate which criterion governs its compliance.
- In agreements, give up is the key. Exactly what each one wants will never be achieved and that is why what can be renounced and what cannot be, should be clear to each party. The essential (important, substantial) things for one will be preserved and no cession can be granted in their regard. However, there are many other non-essentials things which could be the ones that may be given up in a negotiation.
- There are not usually many essential points. Each one must analyse how important the things are and sort them to find out what is really essential in their lives (what is essential in something might also change as life goes on. What is essential now may not be later).
- Active listening, empathy, the expression of feelings and opinions, giving and receiving criticism politely, are important skills in negotiation.
- Relationships based on agreements are more durable and satisfactory.

In order to come to an end, the following questions are posed:

What will you be like in 20 years' time? What will your life be like? What employment, personal, family situation do you think you will be in? How will you feel?

What relationship will you have with drugs? What do you think of Salva's father's comment (at the beginning of the video) when he says "If I could turn back time again I would do other things I didn't have time for, but I wouldn't smoke again"? Why do you think says that? Do you think that you might make the same comment in a few years?

## 2. A LITTLE BIT OF RESPECT

### Brief overview of the chapter

After an introduction about the future, Alex and Salva are in a bar talking about what is fun (a drunk cousin) and what doesn't make any sense (a metaphor). Then they try to flirt but a discussion about who has smoked the joint prevents them from doing so.

When it turns out that the act of using a drug is not a tool that uninhibits and encourages them, but rather the opposite, doubts may arise concerning the results of consumption in this area of relations.



### Aims

- To reflect on the myths and false beliefs that exist about cannabis.
- To analyse the use of cannabis for interacting with others.
- To promote critical attitudes in young people that contributes to decision-making regarding drug use in general and cannabis use in particular.

### Myths worked on:

- About the substance.
- About the creation of a group.
- About fun.

### Material resources

- Chapter 2 *A little bit of respect*.

### Approximate duration

50 minutes.

### Preventive meaning

Cannabis is the most used illegal drug in the world. In the last decade its consumption has increased considerably, especially among teenagers and young people, and at an increasingly early starting age. Its consumption apparently does not generate social concern, although research is increasingly

revealing that it leads to significant mental problems. It is considered especially important not to accept at first all the information heard about cannabis, but to question it, judge it and doubt it. In this way, doubting and questioning what one thinks he knows becomes an effective preventive strategy.

Drugs are often associated with such values as freedom, happiness or fun. Discovering that drugs actually do not contribute to achieving these values, at least durably, it will promote among young people critical attitudes that will contribute to decision-making about drug use.

### Development of the activity

Il formatore inizia l'attività dicendo ai giovani che esistono molte credenze relative al cannabis, molte delle quali poco corroborate: scopo dell'attività sarà fare un piccolo esercizio in cui, tra tutte, ne analizzeranno alcune per decidere se sono vere o false.

The trainer starts the activity by mentioning to the young people that there are many beliefs about cannabis, a lot of which are little corroborated, and so they will do a short exercise in which, all together, they will analyse some of them and decide if they are true or false.

#### 1. **Joints clean the lungs. F**

*Cannabis smokers can suffer and contract obstructive lung diseases. If joints cleaned the lungs, this type of disease would not be caused.*

#### 2. **Smoking joints is better than smoking tobacco. F**

*Cannabis smoke is more harmful to the lungs than tobacco smoke, mainly because of the way the smoke is inhaled. Smoking without a filter, taking deep puffs and smoking down to the end means that more toxic substances are absorbed and promote lung cancer or chronic bronchitis, among others. In addition, the majority of people consume cannabis mixed with tobacco and so the consequences of the two substances are joined.*

#### 3. **Cannabis does not lead to addiction. F**

*Although some studies have not been able to prove it, its continued consumption may lead to a greater or lesser degree of addiction, depending on the individual and social characteristics of the consumer. When you stop consuming it for a few days you may experience symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, restlessness, difficulties to sleep, among others. These symptoms improve if cannabis is consumed again. Like other drugs, its continued use can cause tolerance, and so to achieve the same desired effects, the individual has to consume more.*

#### 4. **Cannabis helps you sleep. F**

*It helps you to fall asleep, however, studies show that continued consumption interferes with the sleep process by inhibiting the ability to reach the REM stage. Constant "light sleep" is not restful.*

#### 5. **It is a natural drug, it comes from a plant, it can't be bad. F**

*The words "natural" and "harmless" are not synonymous. Many of the drugs that are currently consumed come from plants (e.g. cocaine, heroin, etc.) but this does not make them less harmful. The fact that it is a natural product does not mean it cannot be toxic. In fact, many species of*

plants and animals have venoms and they can still kill a person despite being natural. Cannabis smoke contains more than 300 chemical substances, many of which are toxic to the body.

**6. It is a therapeutic substance, it helps to treat diseases, smoking it can't be bad. F**

Of cannabis's 400 different substances, only the THC has therapeutic properties. The method of administration of this ingredient (still not legalized), has nothing to do with its recreational use. It would be administered by means of a capsule, under medical prescription and with consumption guidelines (dose, frequency...).

**7. Cannabis relaxes. F**

It is not true that consuming cannabis automatically brings about a state of relaxation. It can also cause other effects such as confusion, lethargy, altered perception of reality and, more unusually, states of anxiety and panic. In addition, relaxation may also be the result of alleviating the withdrawal syndrome (withdrawal syndrome causes anxiety, insomnia, irritability, depression, decreased appetite, etc.). The consumer has the illusion of feeling more relaxed, but what s/he is really achieving is a reduction of the malaise produced by the lack of the substance in the organism that produces a certain amount of nervousness (a mechanism which is also present in the consumption of tobacco).

**8. In the Netherlands smoking joints is permitted and there is no problem. F**

The Government of the Netherlands has just issued a report that advises changing the situation concerning hashish in the country due to the illegal trafficking that is appearing. Statistically in the Netherlands more or less problematic consumption also exists.

**9. Cannabis disappears from the bloodstream slowly. T**

THC, the main active ingredient in cannabis, is a highly soluble substance in fat and accumulates in the brain from where it is eliminated slowly. After a week, on average about 50% of the amount ingested is eliminated. In habitual consumers, this time can extend up to 1 month.



Then, the trainer introduces the video they are about to see (chapter 2) commenting the following:

*"We're going to see Salva and Alex in a pub talking about what is fun and what is not (they do not share the same criteria). Then, at the same place, the two friends approach two girls to hold a pleasant conversation, which seems complicated to achieve..."*

After viewing the video, the trainer divides the class into pairs, and asks them to draw up a list of the limitations that are arising as for the encounter with the girls to be satisfactory. For this work, the "class" will have between 5 and 10 minutes.

Some of the limitations could be:

| Sequence                                                                                                         | Possible limitations and negative aspects                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Talking to Ali.                                                                                                  | The boy doesn't remember Ali despite having studied together 1 year ago; he is always so stoned he does not remember a lot of things.                                       |
| You can't do anything without a joint.                                                                           | The consumption of cannabis limits his ability for enjoyment and interaction.                                                                                               |
| We're in good spirits                                                                                            | If there are no joints for smoking you can't enjoy yourself and as the girls don't have the material to make one [joint] he gets angry, but pretends to be in good spirits. |
| He smokes because he says it loosens him up.                                                                     | When he loosens up you feel like giving him a good whack...                                                                                                                 |
| Once he's over that business of being shy and it's open for a conversation, you tell him that he makes me laugh. | Searching for some prop for socializing can become a problem when it becomes essential and when after a time you can't act without it.                                      |



The trainer could make the following comment:

*“In the first consumptions, it is the person who decides what to consume, where and when. But as the habit becomes formed, the person no longer chooses and it becomes the substance that imposes its rules about when, where and how. Are we really free to decide when to stop taking a substance? At what times?”*

Then, the trainer stops at an expression that appears in the chapter: “He smokes because he says it helps loosen him up”; and poses the following questions to the group:

- What does it mean? (He speaks more, he is friendlier, he is capable of chatting up whoever he likes, etc.).
- How does one feel when he is not loosened up? (Bored, tired, with no mood for doing anything. These are negative feelings from which you want to get away and so you may be capable of doing anything).

To bring the activity to an end, the trainer makes a statement and asks the students to propose answers that question the statement. For this, and by maintaining an order, everyone who wants can argue his/her response.

*“If you don’t smoke joints you’re boring and you don’t get any enjoyment”:*

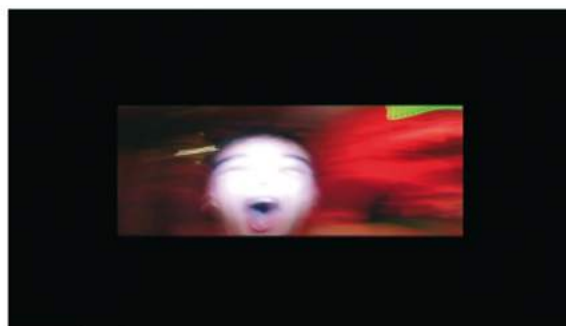
- Boredom is not something to flee from, it is normal and can be an opportunity to change and do other different things.
- When joints are smoked, you can also get bored and things might not turn out as you were expecting them.
- If you get bored, think a little about what to do.
- Smoking joints presents the risk of becoming a habit and an addiction. In the beginning it might seem that you decide what to do, but with time it is the substance that decides.

Then, all together, ideas about things that can be done to enjoy and interact successfully without relying on the use of drugs will be discussed.

### 3. I CAN STOP WHENEVER I WANT

#### **Brief overview of the chapter**

Alex and Salva have arranged to meet another friend to play video games. Alex’s consumption of joints puts the game into second place for him and at the end he gets angry because they tell him he is out of control.



### Aims

- To reflect on the reasons why young people begin to consume drugs, particularly cannabis.
- To promote positive attitudes towards health and negative ones towards the consumption of cannabis.
- To be aware of how difficult it is to be objective in assessing whether the consumption of drugs is under control or not.

### Myths worked on:

- Chapter 3 *I can stop whenever I want.*

### Approximate duration

50 minutes.

### Preventive meaning

When starting to consume cannabis many factors may be involved. It seems that curiosity, the search for new sensations and fun are the ones that typically come up as being the main reasons why young people start to consume. Generally, initiation to consumption tends to arise in a group, with people close to and known by the person.

Smoking joints can become a habit, a difficult habit to break. A person may end up thinking that if s/he doesn't smoke, s/he won't have fun, feel good, and relax, among other functions, and this can lead to an increase in the amount consumed and the frequency of consumption. The concept "I am in control" is totally subjective. The effects of cannabis use, like those of other drugs, are unpredictable and depend on many factors (personality, time of consumption, expectations, quantity, etc.).

### Development of the activity

At the beginning of the chapter, Salva speaks about his friend Alex and says the following:

*"Alex has been my friend all my life, he has his things, he's a real pain, but if you know how to handle him he's not a bad bloke. You have to be really patient with him"*

*"Before, César was a good friend of him, and "El Largo" [nickname] too, but now they don't want anything to do with him. When we arrange to meet they always ask me if Alex is going to come because if he does, they won't feel like meeting up anymore"*

Having recalled these comments of Salva's, the trainer poses the following question:

- Why do you think César and "El Largo" no longer want to meet up with Alex? Does this have anything to do with the cannabis use?

Then, a brainstorming activity is launched about the reasons which they believe young people use drugs (specifically cannabis). They are written up on the board.

## POSSIBLE REASONS WHY YOUNG PEOPLE CONSUME CANNABIS

### ***“Everybody does it”***

The proportion of consumers among the general population is a minority (see consumption data in the country of origin. Information on prevalence to demystify the perception that it is “normal” behaviour). This argument can be used to justify one’s own consumption, but is weak and should be rejected. It is important to underline that subjective perceptions, although they seem real, are often wrong. The belief of normality can be defined by the social, group or environmental influence (by the places the habitual consumer frequents).

### ***“To have fun”***

Drugs are used to have fun because their consumption has consequences that are, to some extent, similar to what the social construction of fun says about having fun (fun based on buying, consuming, laughing, emotional activation, specific places, rituals of consumption, etc.). Drugs fit quite well in this scheme. It seems that drug use is not so you can have fun, it is having fun. It seems like if you consume drugs and you don’t have fun, the problem lies with the drugs, in spite of the fact that consumption often takes place without guaranteed fun, either due to their effects, or because simply nothing happens. Often consumption takes place in situations which are fun in themselves... so, what is it really fun: the company, the activities, the places? If consumption takes place alone, will it be just as fun?

### ***“It helps me escape from my problems. To handle frustration”***

Momentarily, it may seem that being under the influence of drugs lets you forget some problems and feel calmer, but this effect disappears when the drug is eliminated from the body, and so the problems and concerns remain there, and the only thing that has been achieved is to delay the search for solutions to resolve this situation.

### ***“My friends do it”***

The consumption of drugs may, to some extent, bring about momentarily a collective union, but when the person goes home or the people see each other the next day, their relationships continue to be the same. Human relationships need other things in order to develop solidly and stably. You may start smoking in order to socialize, and end up alone precisely to smoke and because of smoking.

### ***“To lose my inhibitions”***

The use of cannabis can lead, among other things, to good feeling, easy laughter, euphoria, disinhibition, but it can also relax, cause sleepiness and bad vibes. This will depend fundamentally on the amount consumed, the personal characteristics of the consumer, his/her expectations and the environmental circumstances.

After analysing and discussing the main reasons that lead a person to consume cannabis, an important matter which must be made clear is introduced. Just as there are many reasons why people use cannabis, there are also many ways to consume it. The differences in the way of doing this will depend on the time elapsed between consumption and consumption, the reasons for consumption and the role/significance it has for the individual (why s/he consumes it, for what purpose).

At this time the trainer will briefly review the different types of consumption:

*Use:* form of consumption that does not generate any negative consequences.

*Experimental use:* Initial contact with a substance. This type of consumption most often arises during adolescence.

*Occasional use:* Intermittent use of the substance, with no fixed frequency and with long intervals of abstinence. The person uses the substance in a group, though s/he is capable of carrying out the same activities without the need for any drug, and is already familiar with its effect on the body and that is why s/he consumes it.

*Habitual use:* Frequent use of cannabis. The person consumes increasingly more quantities and in more situations. Consumption is not usually only in a group, but also alone. The person usually shows some control over his/her consumption.

*Abuse :* repeated cannabis use damaging their physical, mental and social health. Continued use leads to addiction and tolerance, and failure to consume causes unpleasant symptoms.

• *Drug addiction:* The person needs the substance and his/her whole life revolves around this in spite of the complications this may cause. The person is aware of the difficulty to control the use of drugs. A large amount of time is spent on activities related to obtaining the substance and its consumption. Frequent intoxication or withdrawal symptoms when the person performs certain obligations. Substantial reduction or abandonment of social, occupational or recreational activities. Continued use of the substance despite being aware of the problems it is causing to him/her. Frequent tolerance.

After reviewing the different types of use, the trainer raises the following questions and issues to the group:

- Do you think that the young people who appear in the video have the same type of consumption?
- Why have they arranged to meet up that afternoon? (To play according to Salva and "El Largo"; to smoke according to Alex: "We have arranged to meet to smoke a few joints and I'm doing all the work". "No, Alex, we had arranged to meet to have a few games on the Play [Station]"):
  - Refer to the following comments:
  - "You're a bit slow, aren't you?"
  - "Are you playing?" "No, I am going to make another one"

- Do you think that it will always have been like that? (It is important to mention that normally the use of drugs starts in a group and the initial ritual is usually shared by young people. The problem is that the function or the significance that each person gives to this consumption will depend on many variables, and so the process and the evolution of consumption will differ from one person to another. In this way, what began as shared behaviour becomes an individual one). Alex meets up with them, but in reality he is not with them. His behaviour is close to the definition of drug addiction... he is absent, focused on consuming. Alex revolves his life around consumption. At all times he is thinking about smoking and what he needs so he can do it (he has an argument with El Largo over the lighter). Why does he leave? (He no longer feels a part of the group, he begins to distance himself).
- A comment is introduced that refers to other friends who do not want to meet up with him and the following question is raised to the group: Why do you think they do not want to see him? (They no longer have anything in common, and Alex, focused on his interest in consuming, doesn't look after his relationships and even screws up fleeing his responsibilities: *"Maybe they're mocking him"* to which they reply *"You solve everything the same way"*). Alex is fleeing from reality, he has created his own world.
- At one point "El Largo" says: *"You're hooked"*, to which Alex replies: *"I'm not hooked, matey, I can stop whenever I want"*
  - On the basis of this comment, the class is split into groups and asked to say if they agree with what "El Largo" says and write down the indicators observed on Alex which show that he is "hooked", and what Alex relies on in order to say that he is in control of his consumption. After 5 minutes of group work, the class gives feedback and the trainer writes down the indicators on the board.
  - Afterwards, on a piece of paper and individually, each one will write, on one hand, what things s/he could say to Alex so he realizes that he is not in control of his consumption (see symptoms of addiction to cannabis), and on the other hand, what advice s/he could give him to reduce his consumption or quit it (what he could do).
  - What do you think of what Alex says at a given moment: *"Relax...?"* (In reference to the consumption function). Alex uses cannabis to cover many things.

### SOME SYMPTOMS OF ADDICTION TO CANNABIS

1. S/he devotes a lot of time to the consumption of and the search for cannabis (getting money for it, searching for the supplier, buying it, preparing it...)
2. S/he no longer does things s/he used to for example: playing sports, reading, meeting up with a friend.
3. S/he has tried to give up at some time and has not managed. If s/he has never tried it, it could be a good time to do so.
4. S/he is beginning to worry about the consequences of consumption.
5. S/he uses cannabis to cover some need (e.g. to relate) or to counteract negative sensations and/or feelings.
6. S/he needs to smoke more to achieve the desired effects.

#### 4. PASA LA VIDA

##### Brief overview of the chapter

In this chapter Salva recalls the first time he smoked a joint at a family wedding. His cousin gave it to him. The conversation between the cousin and Salva is very significant because it briefly reviews the difference between the expectations concerning consumption and the consequences of consumption. Salva's cousin emphasizes things like solitude, in the end only to answer to himself, justifying himself from the idea that life, not personal decisions, is always to blame for what happens.



##### Aims

- To reflect and question the expectations that young people have in relation to the use of cannabis
- To train in the process of taking responsible and autonomous decisions.

##### Myths worked on:

- About the creation of a group
- About fun
- Escaping from problems

##### Material resources.

- Chapter 4 *Pasa la vida*.

##### Approximate duration

50 minutes.

##### Preventive meaning

Often there are benefits of the use of drugs that are not well calibrated, not adjusted to reality. The perception one has about some of these benefits is mystified, i.e. the value that is given to them is exaggerated or disproportionate. This is to say that more is expected than is going to happen. In spite of the fact that the reality shows that expectations concerning some of the benefits of drug consumption are often exaggerated, it is surprising how these expectations resist in time and among consumers. When working with young people over the age of 14 it is interesting to question the supposed benefits of taking drugs, rather than focus on the negative consequences of consumption.

##### Development of the activity

Often the expectations towards cannabis use determine the reasons why people start to consume. Therefore, it will be important for the trainer to begin the activity by asking the young people to remember (through a brainstorming activity) the reasons identified in the previous session, which, in some way, do mark what young people expect from the use of cannabis.

Further, chapter 4 is played, in which Salva and his cousin are engaged in a conversation about the reasons for smoking joints. The trainer comments that in this conversation one can briefly see the difference between the expectations concerning cannabis use and the real consequences of such consumption (the expectations of consuming are not always met).

Taking into account the motivations and expectations which are often accompanying the cannabis consumption (recalled and collected again), the trainer presents an activity in which the young people will become investigators in order to determine what really lies in these expectations, following a scientific method.

The scientific method tells us two things:

- For a statement to be regarded as true, it must be met in ALL cases.
- A statement will be considered false when we find ONE SINGLE CASE in which the prognosis is not fulfilled.



The trainer will provide an example for them so that they understand how to proceed: In the first sentence of the clip, Salva tries to convey the idea that joints help create relationships, help fit into a group. We should consider this false because as we can see in the clip, and Salva also reminds us, Suso is smoking alone, away from all the others, without relating to them. Hence, we should consider this reason as NOT VALID since it does not ALWAYS help relate with others.

The class is divided into groups of 4 and to each group one of the statements bellow is assigned (when the group is larger than 20 people, some groups will work with the same statement). The procedure to be followed is as above: take into account whether the statement is fulfilled in all possible cases, in which case it would be considered VALID, or whether there are cases in which it is not fulfilled, in which case it will be considered as NOT VALID:

| MOTIVATIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | ALWAYS FULFILLED<br>BECAUSE...<br>(concrete examples<br>can be inserted) | NOT ALWAYS FULFILLED<br>BECAUSE...<br>(concrete examples<br>can be inserted) | STATEMENT<br>VALID? |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <p><b>To have a good time and it gives you good vibes</b> (Initially the use of cannabis can produce feelings of pleasure, euphoria, well-being, chattiness and easy laughs for no reason. But this must be qualified, as it does not affect everybody in the same way and for those who does, after this initial stage, it is highly probable that a state of relaxation and drowsiness will arise which will probably make them feel not so well. In addition, the effects obtained are also greatly determined by the mood of the consumer. It is not the drug that makes the difference, but each one's ability to make the most of a situation and have fun with it).</p> |                                                                          |                                                                              |                     |
| <p><b>To feel more self-assured</b> (After the initial feeling of disinhibition, of feeling special, it is very likely that one will feel edgy, agitated, anxious, etc., and that this false feeling of security will turn out to be quite the opposite. Cannabis is a central nervous system depressant, and as such its consumption enhances social isolation. It causes apathy to relate, to talk, to think, to criticize, to make proposals, etc. With time you begin not to care about anything or anyone...).</p>                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                          |                                                                              |                     |
| <p><b>To relax</b> (Even though there could be such cases, it is not necessarily so: the expectations, the context in which it is consumed and each individual's personal situation will have a far greater influence than the substance itself. The effects of cannabis are unpredictable, there are people who smoke a joint to relax and however they get excited).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                          |                                                                              |                     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <p><b>To forget about problems</b><br/>(Problems will still be there once the effect of the joint has gone. What really works to try and solve problems is to face them up. The consumption of cannabis facilitates the distortion of the problem, and occasionally it makes it worse, it can make us sad, irritable, etc., and this doesn't help find solutions. Smoking joints allows you to disconnect for a while but does not solve or get rid of the problems, it just delays facing them up).</p> |  |  |  |
| <p><b>To rebel against the adult world</b><br/>(Drugs in general and the use of cannabis in particular have, without doubt, become one of the many ways that young people have to question what they consider as being imposed by the authority: social norms, adult rules. This supposed rebellion consists of contradicting, without a logical decision-making process that allows them to rebel against everything they don't like, but in an intelligent and reasoned way).</p>                      |  |  |  |

After 15 minutes' work, a spokesperson for each group will present its results, putting together the arguments used with those of the other groups.

The trainer will comment that often we allow ourselves to be influenced by others' views and opinions to consume cannabis without wondering whether they might be wrong. It is important that before consuming cannabis, each person should consider their reasons, doing it with criticism and reflection, without being influenced by what has so often heard, but probably hasn't question it.

Further, the trainer will work with two sequences from the episode in which Salva must take a decision, more specifically the following:

First clip (2'39" – 3'18"): Salva: "What are you smoking?" .... Suso: "What do you think?" to Salva: "Yes? Give it here!" ... Suso: "That's my cousin! Yes sir!")

Second clip (4'18" – End): From Salva: "Bloody hell, cousin! And that tattoo, mate"

Having viewed the sequences again, the educator raises the following questions to the group:

- Do you agree with the decisions Salva has made?
- Do you think they are appropriate?
- Do you think he has been a bit hasty? That he has been influenced by his cousin?
- Do you think that deciding whether or not to take a drug is simple? What does it depend on, in order that someone can make a good decision, intelligently? (By intelligent decision we understand it to be a decision that benefits the person who takes it, that affects him/her positively).
- What can we do to make our decision “intelligent”? (Stop thinking, take the necessary time to assess the options we have, consult someone with more experience, identify the pros and cons, and remember similar situations, among others).

From the received responses, the trainer defines the steps to follow in order to take decisions intelligently:

1. Take time to think.
2. Consider all possible alternatives
3. Compare the alternatives, establishing which has the most benefits and which has the fewest disadvantages.
4. Opt for an alternative and get it under way.

If there is still time, the trainer will quote some sentences from the episode to practise decision-making (s/he will need to have the names of all participants previously on small bits of paper that s/he will select randomly, and the person whose name is chosen will answer). The game will be to give an “intelligent” response/opinion:

- Life is very long and you must not get overwhelmed. If you miss one train, another will come along and other things will happen.
- The sooner we know the taste of shit, the better. In this way we can get used more quickly to the shit that life is.
- The more information I have on the effects and consequences of drugs, the more excited I am to try them.
- It is better to listen to our parents and not smoke joints.
- If you only have one puff of a joint nothing happens, it's fine, you won't die.
- The problem of joints is if you get hitched, which is when you start overspending money, you smoke before going to sleep, before lunch...
- Are you going to go to the school that your father recommends? Why is that?

## 5. TAKE ACTION

### Brief overview of the chapter

In this chapter Salva and Alex recall the last time they were in a bar and tried to resolve their differences related to joints. They talk about the freedom that drugs give you and take away, about



## Aims

- To reflect on the use/function of cannabis consumption.
- To analyse the elements involved in the consolidation of the habit of consuming cannabis.

## Myths worked on:

- About the creation of a group
- Escaping from problems

## Material resources

- Chapter *Take action*

## Approximate duration

50 minutes.



## Preventive meaning

With regard to the use of drugs, within each person there may be forces in both directions. The arguments in favour and against it are within each of us, so it is important to understand the dual nature of drugs and the dual nature of the people who take them.

It is difficult to reach the conclusion that consumption has gone too far and has become a habit near addiction, but it is necessary in order to be able to consider cessation or a reduction in consumption.

The first step towards stopping taking a drug is to perceive and be aware of the negative consequences that such consumption is having on the person. Once these consequences are visualized, the process to eliminate the habit may begin. The relationship between positive effects (more numerous in the phases prior to the habit) and negative consequences will be inverted. The weight of the positive effects starts to decrease, and the negative consequences can increase in importance, thus the person could evidence them in the form of losses. At this time, the individual is forced to make an assessment by weighing up the gains and the losses incurred through consumption, thus taking a decision in one direction or another (to continue to consume or consider eliminating the consumption). In the event of deciding not to continue to consume, the individual, supported by his/her social network (family, friends, among others) and/or professionals, must begin a process of cessation that will be difficult and hard, but will allow him/her to regain control of his/her life.

## Development of the activity

The session starts by watching episode 5 and stopping when Salva says *"How did you work it out with Alicia?"*

Then the trainer asks the group what kind of relationship they see between the comment at the beginning (*"In the end, if you think that in life you are going to be dealt the same hand, you end up disheartened"*) and the conversation between Alex and Salva:

Alex: *"That guy doesn't deserve the dosh he's got"*

Salva: *"That guy has worked for it. He's been at least 5 or 6 years recording demos until they signed him"*

Alex: *"That guy has been doing for 5 or 6 years whatever I know to some producer to bring him out a CD"*

Salva: *"Why do you have to always see the bad side of everything? Everyone except you.... I've never seen you work for anything in your life. You would see the bloke every afternoon taking his notebook and going to work.... That's working, Alex"*

Alex: *"I'm working on it...."*

(When a person believes that the "future is already written" and that things do not depend on him/herself, it is easy not to make an effort and plan out his/her life. S/he can go with the flow and rely on everything that makes life easier).

Further, recalling the sequence when Salva says: *"How did you work it out with Alicia...?"* the following questions are raised to the group:

- How do you think Alex worked it out with Alicia? What do you think happened? Why? Can that be related with drug use? How? (Participants are reminded of what they worked on in activity 2 *A little bit of respect*).

After hearing some views, the unseen part of the video is shown, pausing again at the time Alex says: *"Come on, shall we have a joint and make up?"*). Continuing furthermore, some questions are raised, such as:

- What image has Alex given? And what about the musician? Which one of the two had taken drugs? (as seen in the video) (These things do not always happen when a drug is consumed, and here is where the trap lies, in part. On some occasions, beyond our control, drugs can play tricks on us, the more you consume, the more likely it is to happen).
- When Salva confronts Alex with the situation, instead of seeing the negative consequences that the consumption of drugs, particularly cannabis, might be causing him, Alex replies: *"Come on, shall we have a joint and make up?"* Is he interested in talking about what happened? Is he interested in changing? Once more, he tries to solve and escape the problems that are brought by his consumption, by consuming more.

Then resume watching, letting it play until the end.

Having watched it, the class is divided into groups of 4 people and they are asked to interpret what they have seen.

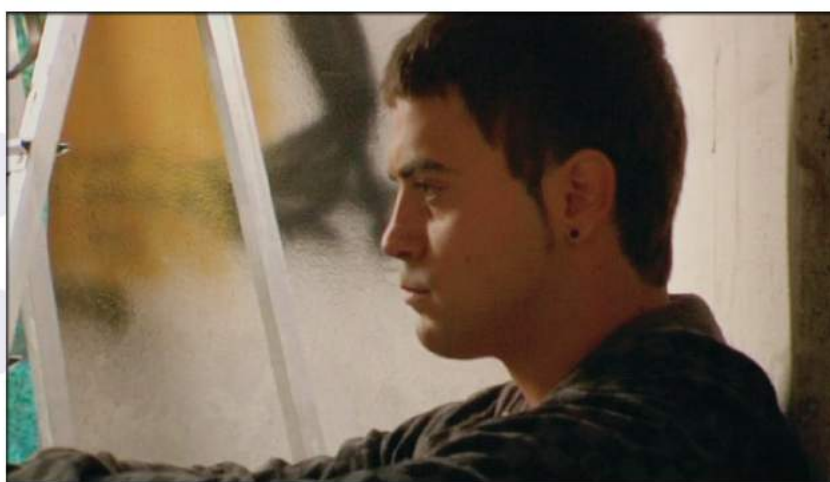
### **SOME INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ENDING**

- After a while, Salva faces up the reality and realizes the consequences of his consumption of cannabis (among others: distancing himself from his friends, irritability, difficulty to interact with others, management of his free time, apathy). He begins to realize that his life revolves around consumption.

*"I want you to do more things, I want you to get out and have fun (he begins to see the problems of consumption), to meet new people, to give up this shit".*

Salva begins to realize that he avoids problems, like the one concerning buying the vase of his friend César's mother (to face up what he did) or meet up with the girl (also face up to his "blunder").

Two confronting "selves", the one that wants to continue with this life dependent on consumption and distanced from others ("I don't care about meeting up with her, I don't care about anything"), and the one that wants to get back his previous life, not linked to consumption ("This is what I want, for you to be yourself", "If you want now to get back to your life and it's a shit..."). It is a personal confrontation with his other self.

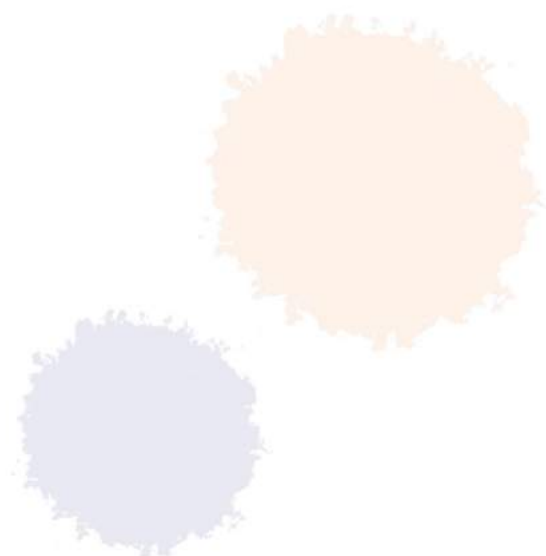


- Another interpretation is that Alex is the "drug", the "cannabis", and Salva begins to question this consumption, to realize what it has given him so far and continues to give him (Alex: *"you are what I want you to be"*, What I let you be", *"You came to me"*, *"If you feel like a shit now, don't blame it on me"*, *"I have always given you what I have promised"*, *"if you want now to get back to your life and it's a shit... it's not my problem mate, it's yours"*. You can note some similarities between some comments and the definition of drugs. In addition, reference is also made to personal responsibility in the consumption of drugs (*"you came to me"*, *"if you feel like a shit now, don't blame it on me"*) and the effects, which are not always the ones desired and sought (*"I have always given you what I have promised"*).
- Within a person who consumes drugs there are arguments in favour and against it. Drug use has two sides. If the arguments in favour take precedence over those against, it is more likely that consumption will continue. In the case of Salva, the time may have come at which there is a disagreement, giving priority, it seems, to the arguments against. This would be the right time to consider stopping consuming and seeking help.

- Even if it is still the same person, outwardly two different individuals are reflected, under the influence of consumption. According to the time, the circumstances and the amount consumed, it will be Salva or it will be Alex. In the video, the Alex moments are more frequent due to his addiction which has already set in.

After 10 minutes the participants pool the work done in groups concluding that interpretations may be varied but all of them, if they have been argued, are valid.

Further on, the trainer will review the steps and tips worked on to help somebody who may want to stop consuming drugs.







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