

Hello,

I only heard about the report today but am aware of the medicinal benefits and debate around marijuana being implemented in Australia legally, as a medicine.

I only had time to skim through the report as I would like to submit this email as soon as possible as today is the deadline.

I use cannabis to help treat and manage a social mental disorder I acquired as a result of family life, tragedies and negative circumstances I've encountered, and demanding workplaces I have been an employee in over time. I am 26 now and have used cannabis to relax (at first) then noticed a lot of my anxieties disappeared after some time and wanted to obtain some more to experiment with.

I've never believed in pharmaceutical remedies as most are unreliable and create a list of additional health problems; short and long term. My brother was diagnosed with ADD at a young age and I can remember the changes he went through then; as well as ostracism and effects that came with it - for being labelled as different and mentally compromised in some regard. Following effects years later include social, family and personal mental separation issues. He has his own battles and chooses to deal with them in his own ways.

I've been ostracized and outcast by various friends and social groups over time due to my "dependence" to an illegal substance; regardless of the effect it has had on my well-being in those social situations - just because it was/still is illegal; despite the multitude of positive benefits it has for humans on a variety of levels.

As it's illegal there have been times where I've tried to grow it in order to avoid contributing to "drug dealers"; some of whom aren't bad people, they just support bad practices (much like those who prevent access to marijuana when there is a rightful, just and necessary reason to allow use of the substance) but have never made a full effort out of fear of retribution and punishment; and have felt forced to return to said "drug dealers".

I have mostly smoked marijuana but I can also obtain hash oil and butter, which I use to cook with, or take orally when I need it. A very simple and safe method of self medicating.

This is a plant. A lot of the founding of early Australia can be directly traced to the use and exploitation of both the marijuana and hemp plants.

(<http://www.thewildeast.net/infocus/history/hemp/>
http://www2.sl.nsw.gov.au/banks/series_64/64_04.cfm)

More so the hemp plant; but my point is - marijuana was legal here once and the reasoning behind why it became illegal in the first place - a whole other unclear story; but my opinion is; it was legal and then was for some reason made illegal, and now should no longer have an illegal status, especially due to the recently (and previously) conducted tests and experiments into the truth of the effects of marijuana, instead of incorrect propaganda.

I feel as though I'm beginning to rant, and; I'm not a formally qualified person in the field of medicine, however I have firsthand experience with a mental illness that marijuana relieves

the effects of. When I feel certain physical pain or sickness it relieves that too. It is a wonder "drug" although it is simply a plant with a multitude of positive benefits for humans.

It does have adverse effects too; don't get me wrong. Personally the worst it's ever done has made me vomit or cough, and it drops my body temperature sometimes (to the point I have to put a jumper on; nothing drastic in any regard) it's not a bad substance and I've never seen it do negative short or long term "damage" in any regard.

Before I used marijuana I was constantly frustrated, anxious and uncertain & defensive about myself in public. In work or social environments I would shut off which would not benefit me in any regard. I got fired, rejected by groups of friends and in social situations by people who knew me but who I didn't know. I developed paranoia and became cynical towards a lot of friends; and pushed them away and alienated myself. I used criminal destruction (sometimes of others personal property - friends, family, strangers letterboxes) and music to cope, and nothing helped like marijuana did. There are (almost) no consequences with marijuana, other than the legal ramification you gamble with by choosing to use it; and that adds to the stresses one already suffers.

Please pass the bill and allow the medicinal use of cannabis. I am not one of the many with a debilitating physical condition that marijuana can help to treat, and therefore, one of the least who should be considered. But it helps me be more productive and healthy, and it should no longer remain illegal.

Thank you for reading my contribution. I look forward to the occurrence of positive change and simply even hearing the outcome of this matter.

Regards,