

CRAVING : No Longer A Phenomenon

Now back in the 1930's (*the Phenomenon of Craving*) was part of the Doctor's Opinion. In the 1930's they knew very little about metabolism. Today they know lots about it.

Metabolism:

- 1) Today they know that if you put anything in your system such as a piece of bread or a piece of beefsteak, that the mind and body recognizes what that is. And...
- 2) Certain organs in the body begin to produce some things called enzymes.
- 3) These enzymes attack that food and begin to break it down and separate it into useable and non-useable items.
- 4) What the body can use such as the proteins, amino acids and vitamins - the body will retain.
- 5) What it can't use it will dissipate through the urinary and intestinal tract.

They call that ***metabolism***. Today they have proven that The Doctor's Opinion is no longer just an opinion, its actually true. And just to stress the obvious: this is not "official" A.A. information. A.A. won't get involved into why we're allergic, because that "outside issue" might bring controversy. But this information, which was presented a few years ago by members of the medical community, is so interesting and has such depth and meaning for people like us, I think we would be remiss if we didn't look at it. So let's look at it for just a moment.

Take for example, the group of "normal/social" drinkers who are able to drink "safely". They are at ease with alcohol. They take a drink or two, and their mind and body sense it, the enzyme production starts, and the enzymes attack the alcohol,

1st Stage: The enzymes breaks it down into ***acetaldehyde***,

2nd Stage: then to ***diacetic acid***,

3rd Stage: then to ***acetone***.

Final Stage: In the final stages it becomes a simple carbohydrate made up of *water, sugar, and carbon dioxide*.

- The *water* would be dissipated through the urinary and intestinal tract

- The *sugar* is a form of energy which the body will burn and store the excess as fat to be used at a later date

- The *carbon dioxide* will be dissipated through the lungs.

In the normal social drinker this takes place at the rate of approximately one ounce per hour. While it varies with different people, the average seems to be about one ounce per hour. And if they don't drink more than an ounce per hour >>> they can't get drunk. Their body metabolizes it, burns it up and gets rid of it at that rate. Very seldom do you see a social drinker consuming more than an ounce per hour. If you're with one of them and they're drinking more than an ounce an hour, you better get out of the way. Cause they're going to puke on you after a while. They'll either go to sleep or they'll puke on you, one of the two, *every time*.

Now, lets look at the Alcoholic, the one who cannot drink with impunity - he's at dis-ease with alcohol. And that separates us from the norm.

When alcoholics put it in our body, the same thing happens. Their mind and body sense it, the enzyme production starts, and the enzymes attack the alcohol,,

1st Stage: break it down to ***acetaldehyde***,

2nd Stage: then to ***diacetic acid***,

3rd Stage: then to ***acetone***.

final stage: - - - - ->>>It seems as though, in our bodies, the enxyemes necessary to break it down from acetone to the simple carbohydrate, are not as they are in the body of the nonalcoholic. Therefore it stays in our body for a longer period of time as acetone. And: ***It is proven today, that acetone ingested into the human system that remains there for an appreciable period of time, will***

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produce an actual physical craving for more of the same.

This shows how alcohol is not completely processed through the alcoholic's body, and the resulting havoc it creates.

In a non-alcoholic's body, that acetone goes through that final stage of conversion to simple carbohydrate so rapidly that the craving never occurs.

***---- In our body it stays there long enough,
thereby allowing that craving to develop – which
demands a second drink....etc***

The Alcoholic's acetone level goes up - and if the acetone is what causes the craving, then the craving becomes harder with a second drink.

Now you put in the third, and **the acetone increases, causing the craving to intensify, and that demands a fourth >>>>>as the acetone level increases with each drink, the craving becomes greater and greater and greater**

Because the more you drink, the greater the craving.....it's just endless once it starts.

And , we know that Alcoholism is a progressive disease. This is true whether we are drinking, or sober twenty some odd years. In relation to the physical aspect, for each year that we grow a little older in sobriety, our bodies grow older too. And as the body ages, the production of enzymes needed to break down alcohol, slows down as well. If an alcoholic picks up a drink after twenty years of sobriety, the acetone that will now remain longer in his system will trigger stronger cravings than he has ever felt before. The drinking will be much worse and it will be much harder to stop if he so desires. ***We do not pick up where we left off; we pick up as if we never stopped.***

So not only do we have a physical illness, but it is *progressive* because of:

- (a) damage to the body, and also
- (b) due to the aging factor.

Now that we can see that, we can hopefully accept the fact that we can no longer successfully drink alcohol. Until we could see this we always felt there had to be a way we could drink without getting drunk, and it damn near kills us. But now that we can see this - we can more readily accept the fact that we can no longer drink like "other people."