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By Ryan Harrison
(as told to Elisabeth Deffner)
Photos provided by the author



Knowing Myself



Tennis pro Ryan Harrison was the tenth person in the history of the Association of Tennis Professionals Tour to win a match before turning 16 and the third-youngest person since 1990 to win an ATP-level match. Now 17, he is jumping back into his career after having to take several months off due to a back injury.

This is my first tournament in about seven months, since injuring my back—and I'm ready to go. I'm really excited to get back. When I first started getting sore, I didn't know exactly what the problem was. I went to the chiropractor for a little bit of adjustment. I took some Advil and just kept going.

But it just kept getting worse and worse and worse. By the time it was unbearable to play, I was in a first-round qualifying match at the U.S. Open. By the end of that match, walking was troublesome; I had to

take the subway 20 minutes home—and I couldn't sit down on the subway.

I went to a back specialist and had a CT scan done. The results showed I had a stress fracture—the disc was broken all the way through.

That was tough.

I was in a body brace for two months. I had to wear it 23 hours a day, and I had to sleep with it on. After that, I had a couple months of rehab.

It just kind of makes you appreciate everything you've got so much more. Practice can become routine after doing it for so long; when you have a serious injury, you realize how much you appreciate the work you put into things—and just being out here!

I started playing when I was 2, though I don't really remember it. My dad was working as the head pro at a pri-

vate club in Shreveport, Louisiana, where I was born. I wanted to go to work with Dad, so I got a little racquetball racket and went to the big backboard there. I had some decent hand-eye coordination, and my dad started working with me. By the time I was 4 or 5, I could make contact and get the ball cleanly over from the baseline.



I started playing in tournaments. When I was 8 years old, I entered the Little Mo Nationals—the only competition for little kids. I entered in the 9-and-under, so I was playing against kids older than me from across the country, and I ended up winning that. That was when I really knew I could play as one of the top players in the world. You never really know how good you are until you compare yourself with other players.

Now I'm 17; I've already turned pro and am playing on a tour. The goal is to be the best in the world—hopefully number one. I've always had that type of personality: if I'm in the top 5, that means there are four people better than me. I don't like thinking there's somebody who can do it better than I can.

I think a player's lying if he says he doesn't look at the rankings or care about the rankings. But you do your workout, stretch, take care of the things you can control—and the ranking will take care of itself. If you have something that sets you back, such as my back problem, you can't get obsessed with your ranking or how much someone is moving ahead of you. You try to focus on what you can control.

Like when I was recovering from my injury, I'd have days every couple of weeks or so during which it would start to get frustrating because I physically couldn't do what I wanted to do. I had to understand it was a situation I couldn't control and do everything I could control. For me at that time, it was eating healthy, trying to stay in shape, trying to keep at my playing weight. I try to stay at 165, 170—I didn't want to come back and be 185. Normally I go to Subway and get a foot-long, but during those months I'd get a six-inch. I cut out the candy and everything. When I came back, I only had to lose about five pounds; I lost that in about five or six days.

I know my goals; I know what I've sacrificed up to this point to achieve those goals. One mistake can ruin an entire career, an entire reputation. Drugs and stuff—that's something I've never considered doing. It's just not good for you.

I guess the main thing is being mentally secure with yourself and happy with the person you are—not worrying as much about what other people think you are, as what you think of yourself.

The *Listen* Pledge

As part of the community, I choose to be a part of the solution rather than the problem. I believe everyone is important, including me. I CHOOSE to respect and treat others the way I would like to be treated. I CHOOSE to set the example of a caring individual, regardless of what others may choose to say or do. I CHOOSE to avoid alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, violence, and illicit sex, because these prevent me from reaching my goal of being the best I can be, and "doing the best I can do." THIS IS MY PLEDGE.



REWRITING THE SCRIPT

Rewriting the Script

By Molly Jones / Illustration by Nip Rogers

In a movie rehearsal, when the scenes aren't going well, the director can call in the writers to rewrite the script. But what about your life? You're the director. When the scenes of your life aren't going the way you want them to go, what can you do?

Take Zeb. He had three tests at school today, then Coach chewed him out at practice when he dropped a fly. He just wants to unwind a little by watching TV before dinner.

His dad swings open the front door. "Again? Go to your room! You know the rule—homework before TV."

"Good to see you too, Dad," Zeb mumbles loud enough to be sure his dad hears.

"What? Are you sassing me?"

Zeb slams the door of his room. It sounds like the walls might crash.

"That's it!" his dad booms. "You're grounded for a week!"

"A week? That's not fair!"

Instantly, Zeb wants to get even. He wants to make his dad sorry for treating him this way. He knows, too, that this will be another terrible week.

How many times have Zeb and his dad been

through a scene like this? Seventeen times? *One hundred and seventeen times?*

Think proactively

When our emotions take over instead of our heads, we often find ourselves reacting the same way over and over. Maybe with you it's your mom who doesn't like your girlfriend, or a teacher, or your stepdad, or your best friend. You're angry, you want to get even and, above all, never let them think they've won.

Unfortunately, emotions don't solve problems. In fact, when we act on how we feel at the moment instead of on facts and reason, the results usually make problems worse, or even cause new ones.

Who's right or wrong isn't the question. The question is, Does your angry reaction solve the problem or make it worse? Does it get you where you want to go, or does it make your situation even more difficult?

In tough situations like Zeb's, it's easy to find yourself *reacting* to what the other person does rather than thinking *proactively* and acting in your own best interest. Whenever we *react* instead of *acting* purposefully, we're no longer in control.

Being in control doesn't mean controlling anyone else; nor does it suggest we can control everything that happens to us. We can't. It means staying in charge of ourselves, choosing our responses rather than reacting emotionally so that our actions help us create the future we want.

How good are you at talking things out instead of getting angry? Go to www.listenmagazine.org and put yourself in our real-life situation. Then see what our expert says and pick up some tips on ways to strengthen ties instead of breaking them.

WHENEVER WE REACT INSTEAD OF ACTING PURPOSEFULLY, WE'RE NO LONGER IN CONTROL.

Unfortunately that's not what happened. But even though Zeb couldn't control what his dad did, he still could have taken charge of the situation. Instead of talking back and slamming the door, suppose he'd said, "I'm sorry, Dad. I was wiped out from tests and ball practice, and I needed a little break. Could we talk about it?"

Zeb's surprising new response may have helped his dad see that his own actions were a little overboard. But when Zeb reacts angrily, his dad almost certainly will, too.

Rewriting the script doesn't always solve a longtime problem right away, but it's a first step in taking charge of how your life is going. A wise person said, "If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've always gotten." Can you see this happening in your life?

Take charge now

If your emotional reactions sometimes make life more difficult for you, try one or more of these keys to regaining control:

- Notice times when you react emotionally rather than responding thoughtfully with purpose. For a week, write down brief accounts of those times.
- Plan a surprising new response to one situation which usually makes you feel angry or hurt. Picture yourself responding in this new way.
- Continue to speak up for yourself, but practice doing it in a thoughtful, good-humored way. This approach will keep doors open for communication and cooperation and could lead to solutions, rather than to bigger problems.
- Remember: when you approach things thoughtfully, you're not giving in, you're taking charge.

The truth is that Zeb's dad let *his* emotions take over too. Instead of yelling at Zeb and ordering him to his room, his dad might have said, "Hey, Zeb, could you turn that down so we can talk? I thought we had an agreement about homework . . ."

15. Fifteen teens had to go to the ER with shakiness, tremors, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, or high blood pressure, said Judith Alsop director of poison control's Sacramento Division.

"It's a sign of the times," Buck said. "Kids don't see rest and healthful eating as a way to have more energy."

✓ *It's important to remember that caffeine is a drug.*

Caffeine Junkies

By Kate Oczypok

Caffeine in its natural form is actually quite bitter. We're more used to it, though, in things such as coffee, soda, and chocolate where it's been sweetened. Although caffeine is in many products people consume every day, it's important to remember that it's a drug. It can make you more alert and give you a burst of energy, but those effects come at a cost.

Some people are more sensitive to caffeine than others. At Burbank High School school nurse Sjaan Buck sent three kids to the hospital by ambulance last year because of caffeine side effects. One had two doughnuts and two Monster energy drinks for breakfast and he hyperventilated to the point where he couldn't move, Buck said.

From May 2007 to May 2008, California Poison Control handled more than two dozen energy-drink-related calls from kids, mostly ages 14 and

Doctors say caffeine overdoses are on the rise, in teens and young adults. Overdoses can result in anything from dehydration to seizures, according to Dr. Ann Slattery, a clinical toxicologist.

Slattery said they used to receive a lot of calls from teenagers who took too many caffeine tablets to stay up. "Now, with the energy drink, we are seeing more interactions where people might be drinking coffee, then an energy drink (and suffer from adverse reactions)," she said in an ABC news article.

Many kids and teens get their caffeine from candy and energy drinks. Companies such as Nestle have picked up on the caffeine craze

recently. The company released a Butterfinger Buzz bar for a limited time in early March 2009 that claimed to have as much caffeine as energy drinks.

People can now buy drinks with as much as 500 mg of caffeine, kidshealth.org reported. This amount is extremely risky, especially when combined with other things. It's important to recognize the dangerous effects of what many deem a harmless drug.



Gambling Away Your Future

By Elisabeth Deffner

Have you ever bought a scratcher ticket? Have you bet a few bucks on the outcome of an athletic event?

These seemingly harmless pastimes are actually forms of gambling—a highly addictive activity.

Research has found that the thrill of gambling activates the same area of the brain activated by cocaine use. Like drug users, gamblers are seeking a high—only their high isn't brought on by substances: it's the emotional rush of winning money. If gamblers lose, that high fades—so they gamble more, trying to recapture it.

"For adolescent gamblers in particular, the risk of developing pathological gambling is almost twice the adult population," says Neda Faregh, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow in health psychology at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. "They're more vulnerable to the negative consequences of gambling."

Jerry started out betting on sports games. It seemed like fun, but soon he moved to online gambling. He stayed up all night betting, then he had trouble getting to school. Pretty soon he hit a losing streak. He stole from his parents to pay his debts, then he stole their credit cards to make more bets. By the time his family found out about his problem, they were thousands of dollars in debt—and Jerry couldn't see any way out. He tried to kill himself.



Gambling addiction destroys addicts' careers, their relationships with others, and their credit; but it can also lead to or combine with other addictions, such as drinking, drugs, and smoking. The gambling habit can cause stress, anxiety, and even depression in addicts.

Though there are age limits on gambling in the United States, it's unfortunately easy to lie about one's age online—and the internet is filled with sites where gambling addicts of all ages can feed their addiction.

"The more you gamble," adds Faregh, "the more likely you are to have a problem."

You may have a gambling addiction if you bet more than you can afford; if you lie about your gambling habit; if your grades, athletic performance, and friendships are suffering as a result of your habit; or if you steal or borrow to support your habit.

The best advice: don't give gambling a try. And if you think you have a problem, seek out assistance from Gamblers Anonymous or another organization for problem gamblers.

The 411

By Exenia R.



Lately in Health

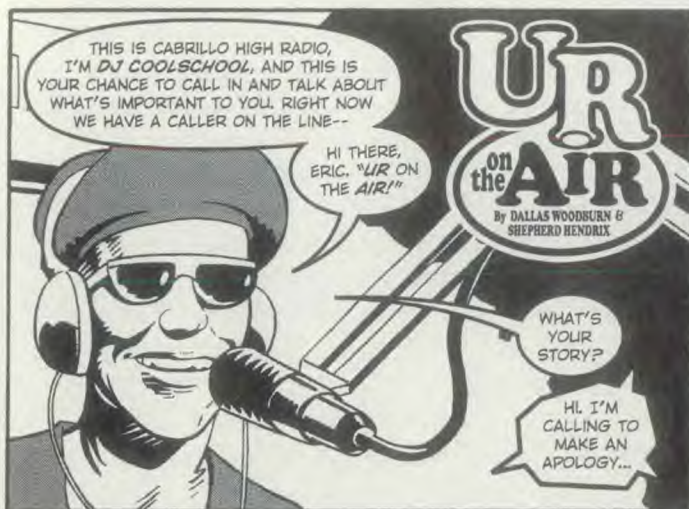
Taking care of your health is a challenge and responsibility, and living an active life is a big part of that. According to a recently released study from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 16 percent of U.S. teens are overweight or obese, and 85 percent of obese adolescents become obese adults. But teens who regularly exercise are more likely to maintain a healthy weight as adults. Exercising (and eating and sleeping well) makes you look and feel good. And there's more:

Jump for Joy

Jump-training increases bone density, according to a Japanese study at Chukyo University done on young and old rats. Examples of jump-training include plyometrics (often done as interval training, with sprints of activity followed by active rest periods) and jumping rope. Other weight-bearing exercises—such as running, walking, and weight lifting—have also been found to be similarly good for bone health, which deteriorates with the aging process if we don't engage in preventative, counteracting behaviors like proper exercise, rest, and nutrition.

Fitness Focus Factor

There has been a 300 percent rise in the use of "brain enhancement" drugs, such as Ritalin, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Some marketing campaigns sell them as "smart drugs" for users desperately seeking a competitive edge, while ignoring major risks for dependency and the lack of research on long-term health effects. They also ignore an obvious alternative: walking. It has been shown to boost memory and brain function, increase blood vessels in the brain, and reduce the risk of stroke—only a few of the many benefits of regular exercise.



MAY I HAVE YOUR ABBREVIATED ATTENTION?

Jacquie Ream, author of *K. I. S. S. Keep It Short and Simple*, argues that text messaging is working against students learning strong critical thinking and communication skills. Rather than learning to spell, says Ream, kids are "learning acronyms. . . . Text messaging is destroying the written word. Feelings aren't communicated with words when you're texting; emotions are sideways smiley faces. Kids are typing shorthand jargon that isn't even a complete thought."

She may have a point. According to recent data, only 25 percent of high school seniors are proficient, capable writers. Want to gain some eloquence despite a texting habit? Think critically, delving into subjects beneath the surface. Don't be afraid to have intelligent discussion, and refrain from allowing texting to be your preferred communication method. Work on your writing skills, too. (That next great novel, screenplay, or article might just be written by you.)

SOMETHING GREEN BEFORE YOU GO

We take from the earth every day, and recycling is one way to give back. A company called TerraCycle offers free packaging return programs called "Brigades," which collect hard-to-recycle items such as drink pouches, cookie wrappers, and yogurt cups.

TerraCycle diverts waste away from landfills, with a monetary incentive—each collected item raises money for the charity of the collector's choice. Their "upcycled" products, made from the recycled items, are available at major national retailers and on the TerraCycle Web site.

Ready to recycle with some environmentally beneficial fundraising? Visit www.terracycle.net/brigades.



THE LOWDOWN ON

By Jessica Dye

Marijuana is the most commonly abused illegal drug—a mixture of dried seeds, leaves, stems, and flowers from the hemp plant. It can be green, brown, or gray, and it has a very distinct smell that is both sweet and sour.

On TV and in movies, characters are often shown using marijuana to get high and laughing a lot, as if it's no big deal. But in reality, there is nothing funny about marijuana use. It's a crime that can get you into a lot of trouble. Depending on the laws where you live, you can spend time in jail for having marijuana—even if you don't actually use it!

"In some cities and states, a person will be issued a ticket for possession or use of marijuana," says Sergeant William Bell, of the Cincinnati Police D.A.R.E. unit. "In others, they will receive mandatory jail time."

The damage to your body is no laughing matter either. "Marijuana has 50 to 70 percent more cancer-causing chemicals than tobacco," Bell says. "In addition to the increased risk of cancer, marijuana users suffer from short-term memory loss, inability to concentrate, loss of coordination, and slower reflexes." And contrary to what you may have heard, studies show that marijuana *is* an addictive drug, with painful withdrawal symptoms.

NOT A GOOD TIME

"[There was] a burning sensation flowing through my brain. Like acid was being flowed through my brain," writes an Internet blogger named Hunter.* Marijuana can cause some people to have anxiety and panic attacks. When this happens, as it did to Hunter, what is meant to be a "good time" feels like a living nightmare instead. "[My heart started] beating harder than it normally does when I smoke. . . . It got worse and my ears started to burn," he recalls. "And then the voices started. . . . I don't know if it was me or something else telling me 'You are about to lose your mind,'"





'You are about to die,' and 'This is it,' I laid on my bed and began to shake—not trembling—SHAKING. Bad. I felt like I was going to die. I didn't want to call 9-1-1 for obvious reasons."

DREAM STEALER

In addition to risking your physical health, marijuana use can also impair your thinking and judgment. Think for a moment about your goals. What do you hope to accomplish in life? Addiction to any drug will stand in the way of your dreams, and marijuana is no exception.

"I have read that you cannot be addicted to pot, but I was," Hunter writes. "I was angry if I didn't smoke. It got to where I dropped out of college and did nothing but smoke [marijuana] and listen to music."

Hunter thought using marijuana was harmless and couldn't see what it was actually doing to his life. It took another bad experience to set him on the road to recovery. During another panic attack, he started to fear for his life. He thought of the commercials he'd seen, and every one had a message for him—death, drug abuse, losing family.

That was when he knew he had to stop.

A DANGEROUS GAMBLE

Using marijuana is a choice that can have serious consequences for your health and well-being. Sergeant Bell notes that obtaining the drug can also put your safety at risk. "My experience has been that marijuana sellers and users interact with people involved in all types of criminal behavior," he says. "When there is any type of problem in this environment—from an argument to a murder—they tend to handle it themselves instead of calling the police."

Researching the relationship between drug use and homicide, Bell has found that in most cases in which a murder victim has had marijuana in their system the perpetrator was unknown.

"Marijuana users put their lives in the hands of people who do not care about them," Bell says. "In some situations a marijuana dealer may be willing to kill or seriously injure a person during a marijuana transaction. It is foolish to put your body, life, and family at risk to get high."

* Not his real name





Write Now

Your Guide to Getting Published

By Jessica Burkhart

Do you dream of seeing your book on bookstore shelves? If you want to be an author but aren't sure how to get started, keep reading. It doesn't matter if you're 15 or 50—you can get published.

Don't wait

Start pursuing your writing goals now. Mandy Hubbard, author of *Prada and Prejudice*, started writing when she was 21. She found a site online where writers shared work. "I posted my first few stories, and the

◀ **Twenty-two-year-old Jessica Burkhart started freelancing at 14. By the time she was 19, she'd published over 100 articles in magazines such as *Girls' Life* and *The Writer*. Jess wrote her first novel, *Take the Reins*, while she was a full-time college student. *Take the Reins* is the first installment in the eight-book *Canterwood Crest* series from Aladdin MIX. Visit Jess online at www.canterwoodcrest.com.**

feedback and encouragement I received turned my dabbling into a passion."

Alyson Noel, author of the number one New York Times bestseller *Evermore*, has three specific tips to take your writing from hobby to career. "First: Read!" says Alyson. "The best way to understand story structure is by reading a lot of stories to see how it's done. Analyze what works and what doesn't, then try to figure out why."

Then, Alyson suggests, "Second: Write. Write poems, short stories, in your journal, to-do lists—it doesn't matter. Getting in the habit of writing will not only improve your craft but help build the necessary discipline for the day when you write for a living!"

Finally, "Third: Learn. If you have writing classes in school, take them," says Alyson.

"School newspaper? Join! Also, there are lots of online writing classes, writing communities, writing loops, and bulletin boards that provide the kinds of tools and support serious writers need!"

Query and get an agent

When your manuscript is finished, it's time to write a query letter introducing your book and send it to potential agents. "The query letter is your one shot to get the manuscript read, so you need to make it a good one," says Lisa Schroeder, whose most recent book, *Far from You*, came out last year.

After you've written your query, it's time to make a list of agents. "Take your time and research like crazy," Lisa says. She notes that the

search can be overwhelming, but it's important to find the right match. One place to learn about agents? Writer forums and message boards such as Absolute Write (www.absolutewrite.com/) and Verla Kay (www.verlakay.com/). But don't expect to get an agent with your first query. The process can take months or even years.

Prepare for the dreaded rejection

Like all writers, Alyson encountered rejection in her writing career. "It's an inevitable part of the business," Alyson says. "I gave myself 24 hours to pout, sulk, and feel grossly misunderstood, then I pushed it aside and got back to work. If you want to make it in this business you have to persevere—it's the only way!"

Publishing is a difficult business and many authors—including Lisa—acknowledge that it's tough. "It's extremely competitive, getting harsh reviews hurts, and trying to juggle the writing and promotion along with my day job and my family drives me crazy sometimes," says Lisa. "But I keep going because I love stories."

Alyson, Lisa, and Mandy all have one thing in common—they didn't let rejection stop them.

Keep learning

Even after you've published multiple books like Alyson, it's never time to stop learning and growing as a writer. Alyson says, "I'm always taking classes, looking for new books on craft, or referring to my old favorites. Writing is an art—and it, like you, should always be evolving!"

Take the advice from these inspiring authors and get started on your journey to publication. Lisa reminds aspiring writers that it's not just about the writing, but also about the dream. "Not only do stories matter, dreams matter," says Lisa. "And we must do everything we can to make them come true so we never have regrets." Also, check out *Writer's Digest*, the best-selling magazine for writers.





Rachel Glade



Rachel Glade, a 16-year-old high school junior from

Hollywood, Florida, combined her passion for music and books into a very cool summer job: helping launch a children's book, *The Travel Adventures of Lilly P. Badilly: Costa Rica*. Rachel composed original songs for the audio version of the book that was written by her mother. The story focuses on the journey of Lilly, a young millipede who, along with her grandparents, travels to Costa Rica. The book was recently recommended by the Midwest Book Review. You can check it out at www.lillybadilly.com.

LISTEN: Tell us a bit about your book. How did the project begin?

Rachel: My mom wrote and illustrated the book, and she wanted it to be available as an audio book as well. I've played piano for 10 years, so I

wrote and played the music for it. The audio book is 30 minutes of short songs that play in the background to complement the story. When composing music I start with no idea what to do, but I think of a chord progression and improvise from there to fit the mood and story.

LISTEN: The book is set in Costa Rica. Have you been there?

Rachel: No, I haven't, so I had to do research to get a feel for the setting and the culture. The story encompasses many different moods, from peaceful to scary, which I tried to evoke by using different types of music as inspirational jumping-off points, such as jazz and classical music.

LISTEN: Did you have any difficulties working with your mom on a project like this?

Rachel: It is natural for teens and parents to have conflicts.

My biggest advice is to hang in there—everything seems to work out eventually. Working with my mom also taught me about collaboration. Each person has their own expertise and skills they can bring.

LISTEN: How can young people turn their passions into jobs?

Rachel: In high school there are so many opportunities! At my school a lot of kids make business cards and pass them out. For example, if you have a band you can play at events and parties in your hometown. If you want to be a journalist, you can contact your school or local newspaper—many papers feature teen sections or teen blogs.

LISTEN: What lessons have you learned through your experiences?

Rachel: It is definitely challenging to sell anything. A lot of people want things for free! Try to appeal to as broad a population as you can, but also stick to your values. If you are passionate about something, you can't back down or let people take advantage of you. We broke the rules with this book; it is longer than a normal children's book, and there is an audio component sold with it. A lot of people said it is too different and wouldn't sell, but everyone who reads it *loves* it! So I'm glad we didn't change our idea because of pressure from other people. When something is difficult, keep at it—the payoff will be great!

I'M JUST SAYING . . .

Fallout

In *Listen* we talk a lot about how every choice affects your life. Some of them are good and some of them are bad. Our goal is to help you to make the best decisions possible so you can avoid the fallout of bad choices. And there's always fallout. Consider Michael Phelps, swimming's golden boy. When he brought home eight gold medals after the Beijing Olympics, he could do no wrong. Big companies like Speedo, Kellogg Company, and Visa wanted him to represent their products. People looked up to him.

And then he made the choice to smoke marijuana at a party. Someone took a picture and published it, and just like that the golden boy was tarnished. Michael Phelps made a bad decision. He freely admitted it and apologized for disappointing his fans. Some companies said they didn't want him to represent their products anymore. Others said they didn't approve of what he had done, but they accepted his apology and let him continue to represent their products. U.S.A. Swimming suspended him from competition for three months. They said, "We decided to send a strong message to Michael because he disappointed so many people, particularly the hundreds of thousands of U.S.A. Swimming member kids who look up to him as a role model and a hero. Michael has voluntarily accepted this reprimand and has committed to earn back our trust."

So Michael Phelps faces a lot of fallout from his bad choice, but he made a good one too. He took responsibility for his bad decision, he apologized, and he's working to do better. We're all human. We all fall down sometimes. The important thing is that we get back up and try again.

Until next time, have fun, be cool, and make good choices,



Celeste Perrino-Walker
Editor



Photo: White House (Shealah Craighead)

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Nothing Foxy 'Bout

METHOXY

Yeah, but it's not like it's dangerous." This seems to be the general consensus behind the use of a fairly new drug, Foxy or Foxy Methoxy. How bad can it be, right? Even the name is cute!

While the tablets themselves, often imprinted with small spiders or an alien head, look pretty innocent, their effects can be anything but. Foxy Methoxy can cause the following side effects: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea (that's not cute!), and hallucinations among other things.

Foxy Methoxy is used most often at raves or dance clubs. Although it's commonly found in tablet form, it is also sold ground, in brightly colored gelcaps. Smoking or snorting Foxy Methoxy is also a pretty common practice, though most people take it through tablet or caplet form.

Foxy Methoxy is considered a "designer" drug. Designer drugs are those which have similar properties to hallucinogenic or narcotic drugs but have been slightly altered. By changing their composition, the makers of designer drugs are able to get around the restrictions which are in place for illegal drugs. Pretty tricky, huh?

Similar to more powerful drugs such as LSD, Foxy Methoxy can cause hallucinations, usually within a half hour or so after being taken. Hallucinations can last from three to six hours and can't be stopped once they start. "Wow," you might be thinking, "a cool trip that lasts for hours. That sounds pretty good." It might sound good, but a hallucinogenic trip isn't always fun. In fact, for many people they are downright scary. And the bad thing? Once you're tripping there really is no way to "get off the train." Scary or not, a hallucinogenic trip may be hard or even impossible to stop without medical intervention. Imagine being caught in a really, really bad nightmare. Now multiple those few minutes of dreamland for three to six hours.

Like many illegal drugs, there is no guarantee that what someone says is in the tablet or gelcap is what's really in there. Who's to say that the "cute" little tablet with the spider or the pretty purple gelcap really contains pure Foxy Methoxy at all? If it really is Foxy, there are still more side effects to look forward to including jaw clenching, muscle tension, and emotional distress. It can also cause you to make bad decisions, things that under normal circumstances you wouldn't dream of doing.

Because Foxy Methoxy is a fairly new drug, there really is not a lot of information on long-term effects. Still, its short term effects, such as vomiting and diarrhea, certainly won't make anyone look very "foxy"—just gross.

By Joy Choquette