



UPPER ISLAND ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE SERVICE

It's Enough To Drive A Person To Drink!

TETRA-HYDRO-ISO-QUINILONE (T.H.I.Q.)

Everyone knows someone who "sure is different" when he or she drinks booze. (Aunt Sophie's crying is excused when she drinks because "She's a hopeless romantic and frustrated actress". Uncle Jack engages in drinking - featuring lecherous behaviour and passing out in front of everyone, this performance is dismissed because "he is under a lot of pressure".) In North America, particularly, the question has been asked why many can drink alcohol and find it non-addicting, while many others becomes addicted with little effort.

People studying alcoholism have proposed an explanation for this unexplained difference in individual reactions to alcohol. One researcher discovered a substance in the brains of chronic alcoholics that is closely related to heroin. This substance, is called Tetrahydroisoquinilone (or THIQ).

When the normal adult drinker takes in alcohol, it is eliminated at the rate of about one drink per hour.

1. The liver first converts the alcohol into Acetaldehyde. This is very toxic and, if it were to build up inside us, we would get violently ill and could die.
2. The liver changes acetaldehyde into Acetic Acid, which is known as vinegar.
3. Vinegar is then broken down into Carbon Dioxide and water - which is eliminated through our kidneys and lungs.

That is what happens to normal drinkers.

In alcoholics, a very small amount of poisonous Acetaldehyde is not eliminated - it goes instead to the brain and goes through a biochemical process, winding up as THIQ.

- THIQ is manufactured right in the brain and has been found in the brain of the alcoholic drinker - It has not been found in the brain of the normal social drinker.
- THIQ is highly addictive as a pain-killer, more addictive than morphine.
- The addictive properties of THIQ: there are certain kinds of rats that cannot be made to drink alcohol. Put them in a cage with a very weak solution of Vodka and water and they will die of thirst before they would touch alcohol. If you take the same kind of rat and put a small quantity of THIQ into the rat's brain, the animal will develop a preference to alcohol over water. He will be happier if you mix his drink with less and less water.

All we needed was a small amount of THIQ to turn a tea-totalling rat into an alcoholic rat. When THIQ is injected into a monkey's brain and studied up to seven years later the THIQ was still there.

This takes us back to the progressiveness of the alcoholism disease. An alcoholic person who has been sober for 10 to 25 years then starts drinking again will show the same symptoms of alcoholism he displayed before. The human alcoholic is still carrying the THIQ, just like those man-made alcoholic rats and monkeys. When Uncle Jack is brought in for treatment he is drunk and even though it is slowly killing him, he just cannot stop drinking.

There are other alcoholics in his family; there is a family pre-disposition, an abnormality in the family body chemistry. Alcoholics do not intend to make THIQ when they start drinking.

Potential alcoholics do not know about the predisposition towards THIQ making that their brain chemistry has inherited. The alcoholic brain likes these chemicals and transform them into THIQ when they drink. The alcoholic will be as hooked on alcohol as it was heroin and for the very similar chemical reasons.

We have heard and read about people claiming that change of lifestyle, aversion therapy or personal image enhancement will allow an alcoholic to become a social drinker. If you are an alcoholic do not believe it! Science so far has given us no cure for the disease of alcoholism. If you cannot drink and act according to intention, you are not a social drinker! You are not a social drinker if you cannot predict with any reliability whether you will have a normal or abnormal drinking episode.

Alcoholism is a primary disease, it is it's own disease, it causes its own symptoms and it is not the symptom of other disease. It creates its own problems and has it's own treatment. It is not a character or moral flaw, bad luck or lack of will power. (It takes a whole lot of will power to keep drinking, suffering hangovers, getting beat up and arrested on occasion).

There is good news! Now, instead of guilt, the alcoholic can take on some responsibility. The responsibility of stopping drinking, with treatment, means when you refuse to put more THIQ in your brain you cannot reactivate the THIQ that is already there. Alcoholics can learn how to control it and live like normal healthy individuals. Alcoholism: there are very few chronic, progressive and incurable illnesses where 25% to 80% of those who have it can get well again. When men and women who were not social drinkers are sober for years!!! They must be doing something right!!!