

YIM Magazine

For youth from youth... magazine about drugs
and drug prevention

► **CALLING OUT TO YOUTH
TO MOBILIZE THEIR
POWER**

Interview with Andrea
Mićanović about how she
keeps going

**WINTER TRADITIONS - A
GOOD EXCUSE TO DRINK?**

Learn more about how winter
traditions encourage unhealthy
habits

**WITH GOALS AND
RESOLUTIONS
TOWARDS A BETTER
LIFE IN 2018**

Or how to make your
dreams come true



”

***TOGETHER
WE BUILD A
BETTER
FUTURE.***

“

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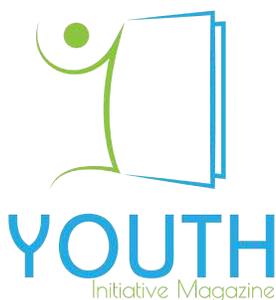
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Big thanks to the kind support of the UNODC office in Vienna

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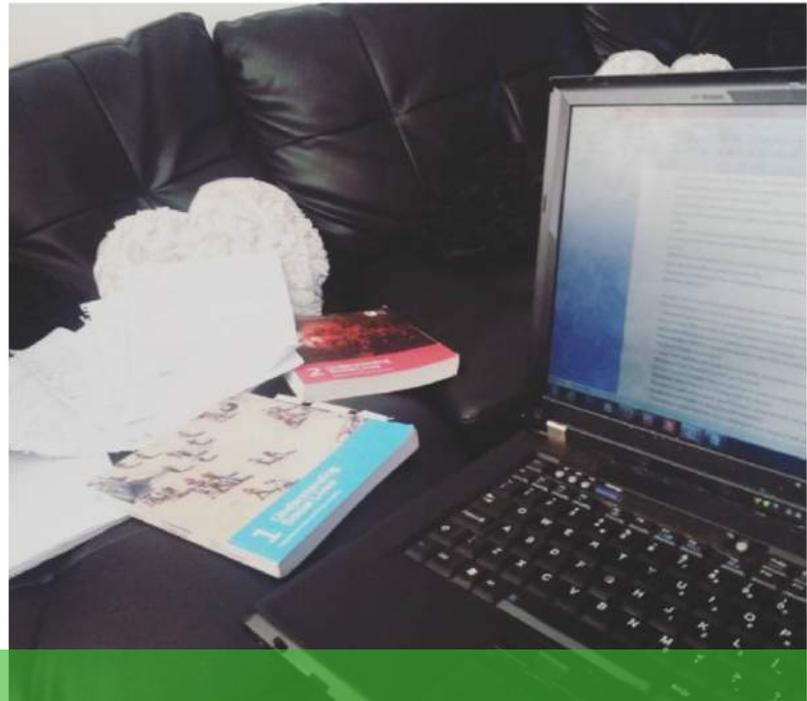
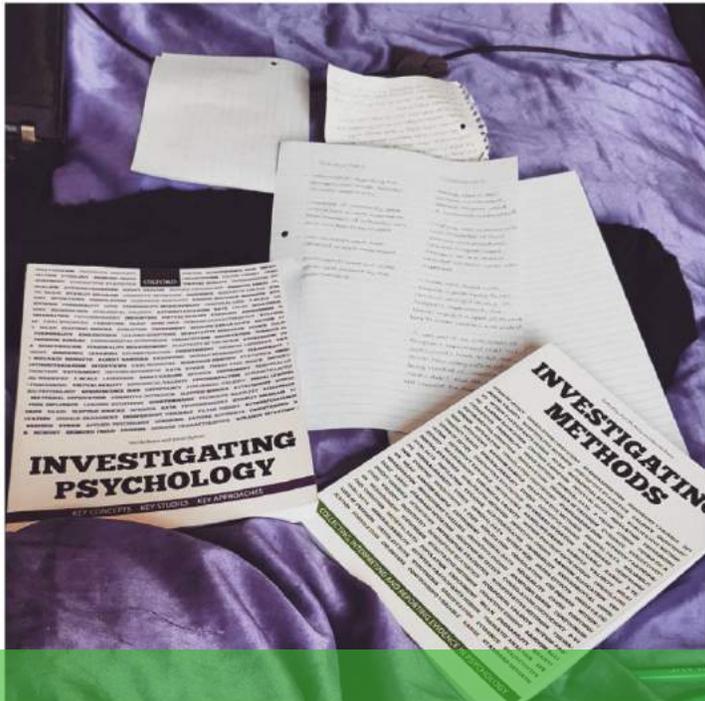
It's December. December gets cold over here in Austria, so many people naturally start drinking; a little bit of Irish coffee for a snack, mulled wine at the Christmas markets in the afternoon, finishing off with few cups of homemade punch while watching TV in the evening.

Of course, that carries a lot of health risks. But what is worse, is that it does not end there. The Christmas is over and the New Year's Eve provides an alternative excuse for drinking. And smoking. And as much as you promise yourself that you will finish those bad habits when school/university/work begins, it is difficult to do so. For some people impossible.

In this issue, you can find out more about how Christmas has turned into a drinking race which can have disastrous consequences for people with a genetic predisposition towards drug abuse. You can read more about the drug situation in the US. But not to be all gloomy, you can also get inspired by a story that has won the first round of the Young and Ambitious campaign, the story of Penny Betts. More importantly, you can get hands-on tips from Milly about how to make your goals and resolutions from last New Year's Eve.

I wish you wonderful holidays and good reading.

Nikoleta Michalová
EDITOR IN CHIEF



It took time until I found myself

I was never one of those kids that were getting straight A's on my GCSE's. I did alright at school, I showed up most of the time, I listened to the teachers, did not mess about too much and I tried to get my head down and work. The problem was, I just did not want to be there. I wanted to be out in the world, learning what I wanted to learn and not what the government decided I need to. So, I scraped through my GCSE's, said 'thank you' and dropped out of school at 16.

I got a job straight away, working in an office, but I didn't stick with it for too long as I found it incredibly boring. It just wasn't

really my thing. I was young and free and wanted to do more than making my boss' his coffee, typing up letters and filing up some paperwork. So I went in search of something new, something fun and exciting. When I was younger, I had no idea what I wanted in life. I remember having a debate with my teachers at school when I was 14 and I had to "choose my options" of things I wanted to study in 10th and 11th grade. They were asking 14 year-olds to make decisions that, really, would have affected the rest of their lives. I did not know what I wanted from life when I was 14. I'm almost 30 now and it is taken

me this long to figure it out. Some older people I know never really knew what they wanted to do, just bounced from job to job their whole lives, and yet here you are being expected to deal with these decisions so young.

Do you know what he told me? "You are not qualified." That is all he kept saying, and my heart sank a little more each time he said it.

Your GCSE and A-level results do matter, and they do stay with you forever, so my advice would be to get your head down at school, revise and get through those exams the best you can. But with regards to being successful and making something out of yourself in the big world, my road to success started when I left school.

My job search took me to the job center, where I sat in front of a recruitment advisor and poured my heart and soul out, telling him about all my passions and things I wanted to do with my life. Do you know what he told me? "You are not qualified". That is all he kept saying, and my heart sank a little more each time he said it. I never felt like I would be able to do any of the things I wanted to do.

One of the things I expressed interest in: working with children, so I applied for every school and nursery in the area, and I kept getting turned down. Everyone knows that you can't get qualifications without experience, and yet no-one wants to take on someone who doesn't have the experience, so it becomes a vicious circle and I often felt like giving up, until I decided to volunteer at a local nursery. I met with the manager who gave me my chance and then I started: I was doing bank work, and then I was employed properly by the company and given the chance to get my qualifications in childcare. All because of a lovely woman called Anne Budd, whom I will forever be grateful to, because she gave me something that no-one else was willing to give me: a chance.

From then on, I achieved my NVQ Level 2 and

Who is Penny Betts?

Penny Betts is one of those ladies whose day seems to have 48 hours instead of 24; she is a photographer, BSc Forensic Psychology student, a blogger and recovery support worker. She is also a loving partner.

Her blog Pretty Penny is one of a kind... it is funny, yet serious. It is honest. If things are going bad for her, she writes it. If things are going well for her, she writes it. In other words, you can be sure to find a person who is alive, breathing and making her way through every day struggles with a smile.

<http://prettypennyblog.uk/>

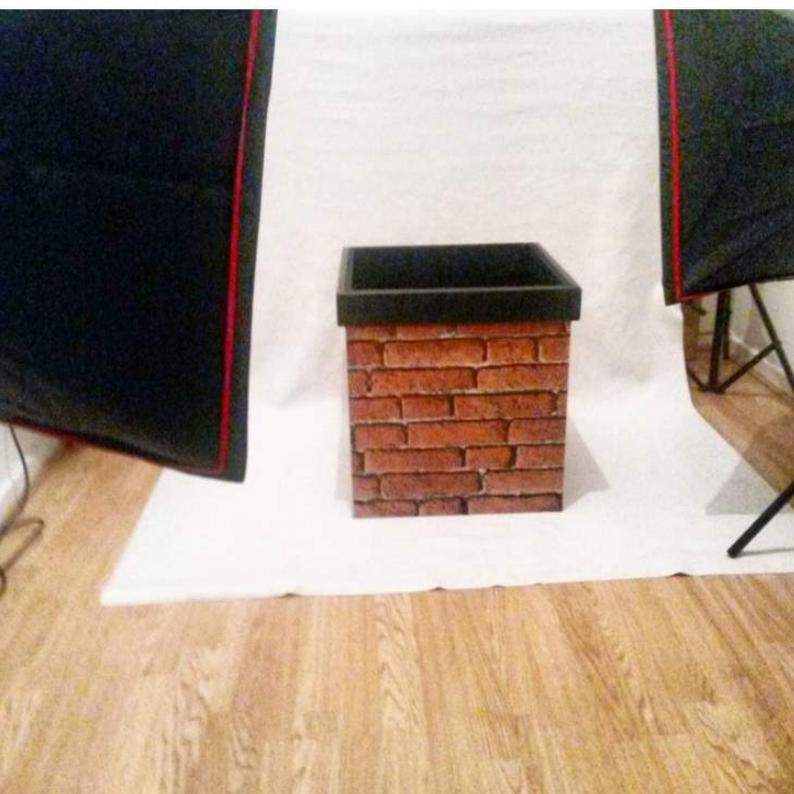


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3 in childcare and progressed from being a volunteer in a nursery to the senior position of room leader of the baby room, managing all the 0 - 2 year old babies. I absolutely loved it and really enjoyed my time working in childcare.

As I grew a little older, my interests and hobbies began to change, and I became very interested in psychology and human behaviour. This led me to leave my career in childcare and explore a new avenue, working with people with mental illness

and challenging behaviours. The study of human behaviour fascinated me: I attended many training courses and met some very inspiring people who dealt with psychology, which inspired me to gain more knowledge in any way I could.





Penny Betts
PHOTOGRAPHY

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I began studying a Bachelor's degree in Forensic Psychology two years ago, and have so far completed the first stage of the degree. I am studying part-time so I can work while I study, which means the degree will take 6 years but it will be worth it.

My career has taken me to working with people with mental conditions and addictive behaviours. Some of the people I work with suffer from schizophrenia, some have had previous issues with alcohol and drug abuse and some have forensic histories. My job is to help and guide them to make the right decisions in life, attending appointments with them and supporting them to live a more independent life hoping that they will be able to rebuild their lives and live in the community on their own one day.

My hobbies and interests have also led to successes. One of my main hobbies is photography. I taught myself how to use a camera properly and practiced a lot. Over time I have improved and been able to build myself up as a local photographer. I now have my own business as a baby portrait photographer, working from home in my little studio and having an extensive portfolio. Recently I have also started a blog and started working with beauty and fashion brands.

When people ask me how I became successful, I always laugh it off and say I got lucky and just landed on my feet. But, they never saw that teenage girl in the job center who poured her heart out, begging for someone to take notice of her and give her a chance. Truth is, you don't get lucky, you don't just land on your feet and things don't just fall in your lap. Success is something that you need to work so hard for, and sometimes you do need to learn to fall before you fly. But believe me, when you do learn to fly, you'll soar, and everything will be worth it in the end.

Do you also know the other Young And Ambitious?



Maisha Reza



Thang Huynh



Modou Njie



Gabriel Do Amaral



Do you have an inspiring story to share?

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Welcome to the Young And Ambitious campaign! Here you can read stories of young people from all over the world for inspiration, you can connect with them, share your own story and much more. Stay tuned, stay ambitious!



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November 26, 2017



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November 12, 2017



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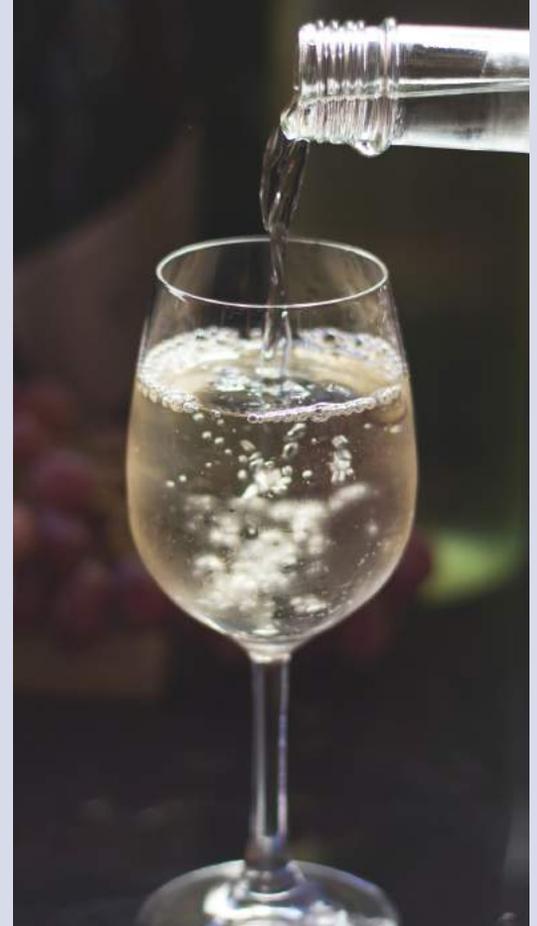
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All those people checked out. Thanks for being one of them!

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Winter traditions - a good excuse to drink?

The winter months are here again, along with their festive mood - lots of fun, joy, and nightlife that especially young people are looking forward to all year long. The moment that the old year becomes history, and eagerly waiting for the next one to knock at the door, it usually happens that to most of them it seems as if an alcoholic drink and a cigarette would be a perfect match, providing a warm atmosphere. One drink is followed by another, one cigarette turns into few and

soon, without even realizing it, the whole bottle of wine is gone and the pack is empty.

It is completely fine to toast the year ahead of us; to the changes that will take place, challenges and successes. It is also natural to celebrate all the joyful moments that are yet to come. But only as long as we do not cross the limits. Unfortunately, many do. Especially on this time of the year.

It is not at all surprising that

One drink is followed by another, one cigarette turns into few and soon, without even realizing it, the whole bottle of wine is gone and the pack is empty.



Americans consume more alcoholic beverages on New Year's Eve than on any other day of the year. It is a time of celebration, a festival that has been tied to alcohol consumption for years. Christmas is the second most popular day to imbibe. Studies have also found that people who drink are much more likely to smoke, and people who smoke are much more likely to drink. On the same note, dependence on alcohol and tobacco are correlated. A smoker is four times more likely to drink in excess than a non-smoker which is further highlighted during the festive season. Taking apart the dangers of being under influence of alcohol, such as accidents, loss of memory and increased chances of taking also other types of harmful substances, alcohol and tobacco have severe influences on our health. Chronic liver disease, cancers, cardiovascular disease, acute alcohol poisoning, lung disease... and much more. Bearing in

mind that many of those diseases are often life-threatening, do you need any other reason to be convinced of the importance of fighting against tobacco and alcohol overuse?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has published a report, in which it is stated that almost six million people die from tobacco use and 2.5 million from harmful use of alcohol each year worldwide. The same report explains that tobacco is expected to kill 7.5 million people worldwide by 2020, accounting for 10 percent of all deaths. These numbers sound frightening but they are far from everything that we risk during this festive season. We can only wonder; why does society tell us that exposure of our organisms to the harmful effect of the mentioned psychoactive substances is really a proper way to celebrate?



It happens all the time that particularly young people, attracted by numerous cafes and clubs that offer unlimited alcoholic beverages for a symbolic price, often drink in limitless quantities during the New Year's Eve. They do not consider the consequences of such actions, which is why they are the most common patients on January 1st with the diagnosis of alcohol poisoning. Furthermore, car accidents occur more often during holidays. For instance, according to the St. Luis Post-Dispatch Newspaper, compared to the average weekend night, the 12-hour window between 6 p.m. on December 31st and 6 a.m. on January 1st tends to have about 71% more crashes where alcohol or other psychoactive



substances are listed as a contributing factor. This means that those who drink during the holidays do not endanger only themselves, but also the others. All of this for a contemporary feeling of satisfaction.

The answer is no, not only from the point of view of enlightened individuals but also from a government. Tobacco and alcohol represent a major social threat and that governments, along with civil society organizations have to undertake necessary steps to deal with this issue instead of focusing on more important ones, such as poverty, health research and education. To reduce harmful alcohol use, WHO recommends various measures, such as increasing excise taxes on alcoholic beverages, regulating the availability of alcoholic beverages (including minimum legal purchase age), restricting exposure to marketing of alcoholic beverages through marketing regulations or comprehensive advertising bans, etc.

It is not only governments and organizations that can help, each one of us can. We can try to be the beginning of a change we want to see in our local communities and countries. So let's agree on something - while celebrating the following New Year's and Christmas Eve, we will all put alcohol and tobacco aside, and in the name of a better future we will choose to celebrate with a glass of soda!

By Andrea Mićanović

THE US OPIOID CRISIS



by Nijat Eldarov

The United States is currently going through one of its most noticeably awful emergencies. More than a thousand people per week die from opioid-related overdoses, and a few specialists say the loss of life may not stop for quite a long time. In the interim, millions more Americans experience the ill effects of opioid compulsion.

The emergency has achieved such a scale, to the point that, apart from the dangers it poses to general well being, it is negatively affecting the economy and a risk to national security.

In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical organizations consoled the medicinal group that patients would not wind up plainly dependent on solution opioid torment relievers, and social insurance suppliers started to recommend them at more noteworthy rates. This along these lines prompted boundless redirection and abuse of these meds as it turned out to be evident that these medicines could, in reality, be very addictive. Opioid overdose rates started to increase. In 2015, more than 33,000 Americans faced their demise because of an opioid overdose, including remedy opioids, heroin, and illegally produced fentanyl, an intense manufactured opioid.

Fentanyl is additionally sliced into heroin to fortify feeble supply – regularly without the consumer’s knowledge. With heroin and other plant-determined opioids, the assembling procedure starts in an opium field where plants must be reaped. Since fentanyl is engineered, all that is needed to produce it is a lab.



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“The opioid crisis is an emergency, and I’m saying officially right now it is an emergency. It’s a national emergency. We’re going to spend a lot of time, a lot of effort and a lot of money on the opioid crisis,” said President Donald Trump in a speech.

Just one in four individuals who abuses opioids has received a treatment, as indicated by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

However, there is solid proof that pharmaceutical joined with treatment can decrease opioid addiction . Medications, for example, methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone would all be able to be utilized to treat individuals dependent on opioids. Be that as it may, they are best joined with behavioral treatments that show individuals how to adapt to their issues and propel them to change.

Such treatment for individuals with opioid issues is frequently inaccessible. State and government detainment facilities hold around 300,000 individuals indicted for disregarding drug laws, with a few states much more prone to detain wrongdoers than others. It can likewise be the situation that medication clients are not permitted to live in broad daylight lodging which, thus, makes their lives less steady and access to help like social administrations more outlandish.

While the national government forces some of its own confinements, it allows state and nearby lodging experts slack by they way they apply rules concerning drug clients. Strong research could enhance the way torment is overseen and energize the suitable utilization of opioids. Then, better utilization of information could help handle wrong endorsing and the redirection of legitimate opioids into the underground market. Feeble observing has empowered specialists and patients to surge the market with solution opioids.

Over the course of the last while , there has been an acceleration of the restorative utilization of opioids and different psychotherapeutics and additionally their mishandling and nonmedical utilization. As a result of the way that hydrocodone

has turned into the main recommended medicine in America, it isn't hard to see the noteworthy effect this has had on non-medical utilization, especially since the unlawful utilization of endorsed psychotherapeutics (counting opioids, which are at present at the highest point of that list) now dominates the utilization of nonprescription unlawful drugs. Street pharmacists are no longer the essential source of illegal medications. Our most noteworthy adversary is presently recommending wrong designs, in view of an absence of learning, seen wellbeing, and undertreatment of torment.





THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN DRUG PREVENTION

by Nijat Eldarov

Manifold researches demonstrate that the primary reasons why children don't utilize alcohol, tobacco, or medications may be due to their guardian - their sedate impact and realization of how it might baffle them. Therefore, it is so essential that parents create a solid relationship with their children in which they feel secure to discuss their problems. This environment also provides an opportunity for parents to discuss substance use and abuse. Parental care, communication, and monitoring seem to be the best tool to fight

against the prevalence of drug consumption amongst school children.

The Principles and Main Characteristics of Parental Care

Teens feel the need to be accepted within their communities and therefore are rather vulnerable to peer pressure. Even though this should be considered a natural situation, there are preventative measures parents can take to help protect teens against drug abuse.

Setting expectations is an essential element of drug abuse prevention.

As a parent, it is important to communicate with the children properly. Informing the children about the various kinds of drugs will also make them have a more thorough understanding about the hazards drug abuse can cause.

Monitoring the children is another important aspect of drug abuse prevention. Parents may monitor the attitude of their children by answering their phone calls, seeking help from neighbors when away, getting curious about the behavioral changes in the personality of their children.



Raising awareness about the adverse effects of drug use is one of the most vital roles of parents regarding this issue. Parents should particularly note that the drug consumption may lead to legal punishments, long-lasting physical and mental health problems, such as brain damage, social exclusion, strained relationships, increased probability of prevalence of transmissible diseases, including HIV and hepatitis, financial and academic problems.

Providing children with the information about the personal experiences and functioning like role-models are deemed to be great ways to communicate with potential drug users. Trust and communication are vital in combating against drug prevention. Parents should also teach their children to gain the ability to recognize the fact that each person may have a risk for substance abuse regardless of any identification criteria. However, parents need to educate themselves about alcohol, tobacco, and drug use before talking to their children, as well. Otherwise, supplying children with false information may not only increase their chances of abusing drugs but may also lead to parent's loss of their credibility. Some experts consider it beneficial to set some time aside for parents and children to do role plays in which one person tries to pressurize another to drink alcohol, smoke, or use a drug which will bring out informative ideas of drug use. Analyzing the different situations would lead to more understanding regarding the matter. 2014's statistics collected by

National Institute on Drug Abuse shows that 49% of 12th graders have used an illicit drug in their lifetime and nearly 20% of high school seniors have used a prescription drug at some point which clearly demonstrates the urgency of this situation.

While attempting to conduct a family-based prevention program, parents should act in accordance with the principles shown below:

Prevention programs should bring about the betterment of protective factors (such as parental support) and lessen the risk factors (for instance, eccentric attitude by children) ;

Family-based prevention programs should improve family relationships and include parenting skills and training in drug education and information. Family bonding is the “spine” of the relationship between parents and children. Bonding can be strengthened through skills training on parent supportiveness of children, parent-child communication, and parental involvement. According to Klosterman and Spoth, Parental monitoring and supervision might be improved by training on rule-setting and techniques for monitoring activities. Drug education and information for parents or caregivers strengthen what children are learning about the harmful effects of drugs and opens opportunities for family discussions about the abuse of legal and illegal substances. Brief, family-focused interventions for the general population can positively change specific parenting behavior

that can reduce later risks of drug abuse.

The existence of peer discussion groups and parent role-playing would make it worthwhile to reap the benefits from the drug prevention activities since they are considered the most effective ways in this sense.

Besides, getting children engaged in sports, hobbies and other activities would be very useful. These usually are positive interactions that help develop character and lead to good peer relationships.

Worldwide Experiences of Improvement of Parental Skills

Evidence-based family skills training programmes are deemed the most effective tool to combat substance use among children after nurse home-visitation programmes. These programmes target the whole family and offer the enhancement of skills for parents on monitoring and supervision of children's activities and communication.

Children learn social and communication skills, and at the end of each session, share their experiences relating these skills to the usual family “gatherings”. These programmes improve family functioning, organization and interpersonal intelligence and have been found to have multiple positive outcomes for children and adolescents including decreased alcohol and drug use, increased

child attachment to school and academic performance, decreased child depression and aggression, increased child social competence and pro-social behavior and decreased family conflict. In addition, these programmes have been found to be cost-effective.

UNODC’s guidelines on family skills which were published in 2009 contain evidence of effectiveness, principles of family skills training programmes, cultural adaptation guidelines, as well as information about monitoring. The guidelines are available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The WHO and Liverpool John Moores University launched Violence prevention: the evidence, an eight-part series of briefings on the evidence for interventions to prevent interpersonal and self-directed violence. By spotlighting evidence of the effectiveness of interventions, Violence prevention: the evidence provides clear directions for how violence prevention funders, policymakers, and programme implementers can boost the impact of their violence prevention efforts, and by extension contribute to drug abuse prevention. Preventing violence through the development of safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents highlights the crucial contribution that family skills training programmes can have in this respect.

Parents' role is the most effective "tool" uses a word that shows prevention through nurturing in the course of prevention of drug abuse among mostly, schoolchildren. Since they are considered role-models, parents should use this position because attitude relates to their behavior while position relates to the overall role they have while raising awareness of their children about the adverse consequences of drug consumption. Today, researchers mainly focus on the importance of betterment of parental monitoring, supervision, communication, and support with regard to their children so as to abolish the substance use. Heaps of activities are being organized to attain them as high as possible family skills. As the problem is closely associated with the barriers of sustainable development, parents should still have ways to go and put their best efforts to achieve a drug-free society.





Vulnerability for substance use disorder is strongly conditioned by a unique genetic predisposition

Interview by Nikoleta Michalova

In your “Science and medical standards in prevention and treatment of drug use disorder” you have stated that genetic predisposition temperament is one of the pathogenesis of a complex health problem: drug addiction. Can you explain to us in more detail what the

research has shown?

It's interesting that you mention it because, in a few weeks, there is a conference called "Addiction" in which we aim to reconceptualize the etymology of substance use disorder. Not a long while ago, drug abuse was a moralistic, criminal subject. Now we know that the vulnerability for substance use disorder is strongly conditioned by a unique genetic predisposition that has an influence of around 50%. The first one is simply influencing temperament. A gene in the opioid function of the brain determines the character. Gene variance is also a significant factor that affects the relationship between children and their parents from the very beginning. There are cases of mothers who don't develop a secure attachment to their child because of the difficulties of connecting to their child's temperament and this creates the basis for a lack of bonding in a family. A third way, not to be forgotten, is the pharmacogenetic issue. Some gene variants are changing responses to drugs. For example, a boy smoking marijuana can experience an immediate relaxation disorder within the first week of smoking due to pharmacogenetic responses, or can have a hallucination and

psychotic reaction after 7 years of smoking marijuana. This is completely changing a trajectory of future drug abuse; one who experiences a negative psychotic reaction immediately is unlikely to continue

Some gene variants are changing responses to drugs.

with drug abuse.

The difference between the boy who has the reaction after seven days and the boy who has it after seven years, that's purely down to genetics? But not every boy will have a reaction; some children will never have this reaction.

It is up to genetics and to the nucleotides to change this reaction. However, we can have many other factors with the same consequences. Environmental factors, such as childhood experiences, execute the same kind of reaction. For research purposes, this phenomenon is studied in isolation but in real life, it is intertwined. All of this is influencing people in a very complex way.

What can be done to reduce the impact of the genetic predisposition temperament?

First and foremost, the attitude of parents towards their children. Start with setting them rules. Some people say that rules are not necessary. I always have a mother from Ghana in my mind who told me that they didn't give rules to their children because they didn't expect their children to respect them. So even before trying it, parents already imagined their children to break them. Which is absurd. When the woman gave her children rules, a miracle happened: they were respecting them! Even worse than not setting rules at all is the idea that they should be same for everybody. But every child is completely different so they also need an individual approach. Applying the same rules, not dealing with the differences is already creating a problem. The parents should be taught to take into account the complexity of this difference, applying a different style and approach to every child. The intensive inter-personal relationships, love relationships in the family are able to make a very important thing that is complete, in a neurobiological way going to impact on the effect of genes. They are

going to create epigenetic effects. Each gene can be read in different ways as it has active and silenced characteristics, so, through this, the silence parts can be activated and vice-versa. This means that neglect and intensive care can completely change the trajectory of a child that has been born with a certain temperament, inherited by the genes.

How does the health branch of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) help countries and local communities to implement those preventative measures?

We disseminate information about good practice (practice based on science, ethical and effective response) on both prevention, drug use and abuse together with the World Health Organization (WHO). We propose strategies for indirect drug use prevention such as protecting children, fighting inequalities and school drop-out. We propose science-based methodology, life skills education for students and family skills for parents. We do very simple things that can be learned by parents with a not necessarily high level of education or a lot of resources. In fact, people we mostly work with are from low-income countries. We

propose activities to them like games through which they learn different ways of parenting. For example, you sit in front of your child with a blank piece of paper in your hand and you are asked to write what you like about your child. Usually, the parents sit there embarrassed. They tend to say: "Now that you asked me to do this, I can see that I am always worried about my child and I can make a long list of their negative characteristics. But positive ones are way more difficult to come up with..." Parents are always worried. But they often don't take the time to think about what is exciting and good about their child. And this is the fabric of depression. If your parents can't appreciate you, you are condemned to prozac for the rest of your life. Once we help the parents to recognize this attitude, we teach them to give their son or daughter undivided time; half an hour to play with lego or another game at home. Devote it completely to your child, not looking at your iPhone, not working on your project nor doing anything else. We teach them to discuss rule-setting and we also highlight the importance of child monitoring. *Where are you going, what are you doing, when do you come back?* Normally, the response is one that I cannot repeat in an



What can you do to reduce the probability of drug addiction?

LET US KNOW AND WIN A PRICE!

Please share your contributions to youthinitiativemagazine@gmail.com by 1.2.2017. You can also answer on FB or IG by answering the relevant post.



interview. And normally parents give up easily: I will not ask anymore. But we try to encourage them not to be put down and continue asking... In the subconscious part of the brain (the rational, cognitive part), the constant questions make their children think: Oh my parents are bothering me again. I can't stand them anymore! But the subconscious part of the brain has a different response: If they are asking me so much, if they are bothering me so much, it's because I am of value to them. I am not some garbage. To

motivate the parents to join, we often offer a dinner which is a strong tool, particularly in low-income countries where they have problems with food. For students, we do life skills education as well. We want to encourage youths to discover their own capacities to be also part of the minority against the majority. Not to be conditioned by the majority or by the belief that the majority acts the way you are told to act. For example, alcohol and drugs are used as something so normal in media and some cultures, yet it is used

by a minority and not by a majority. In the US, between 20-21% of people used marijuana in their lifetime, in Europe around 33% do so. In the past year, it would be only about 15%. Daily, it's only 5%! We also do a lot about treatment where we train professionals to treat the substance use disorder. We create a pilot experience for them. We show them that they can really be useful. It is however very much to the sources available. The pilot experience is very expensive.

Often, there is an impression that youths do not have the power to do anything regarding an issue of this size. However, as you have highlighted several times, especially during the annual Youth Initiative Forum, youth is a key factor in drug abuse prevention. Are you familiar with an effective drug abuse prevention carried out by youths that are already in place?

For sure. Youths working to eliminate drug abuse must be aware that the adults are sometimes frustrated, disappointed and hopeless. So you find them saying: "yes, we have to do drug abuse prevention in schools and within families," but they are not sufficiently motivated. Using non-science based methodologies for many years didn't achieve desired results as it isn't working and thus led to problems. So you can imagine that adults don't believe that it's in their powers to do much. Therefore there is a tendency to surrender. So, the youth have to take the issue in their hands and say, this is not the way to go. It is the time that I rebel against this, that I rebel against the big alcohol and tobacco producers who are making money on my skin. This is what youth

initiative is about. It's about the mobilization of youth. Youth should be no more a target of prevention, but a protagonist of prevention. This was proven to improve the engagement of youth and improve their capacities to say no to drugs.

What further activities would you like to see youths take part in?

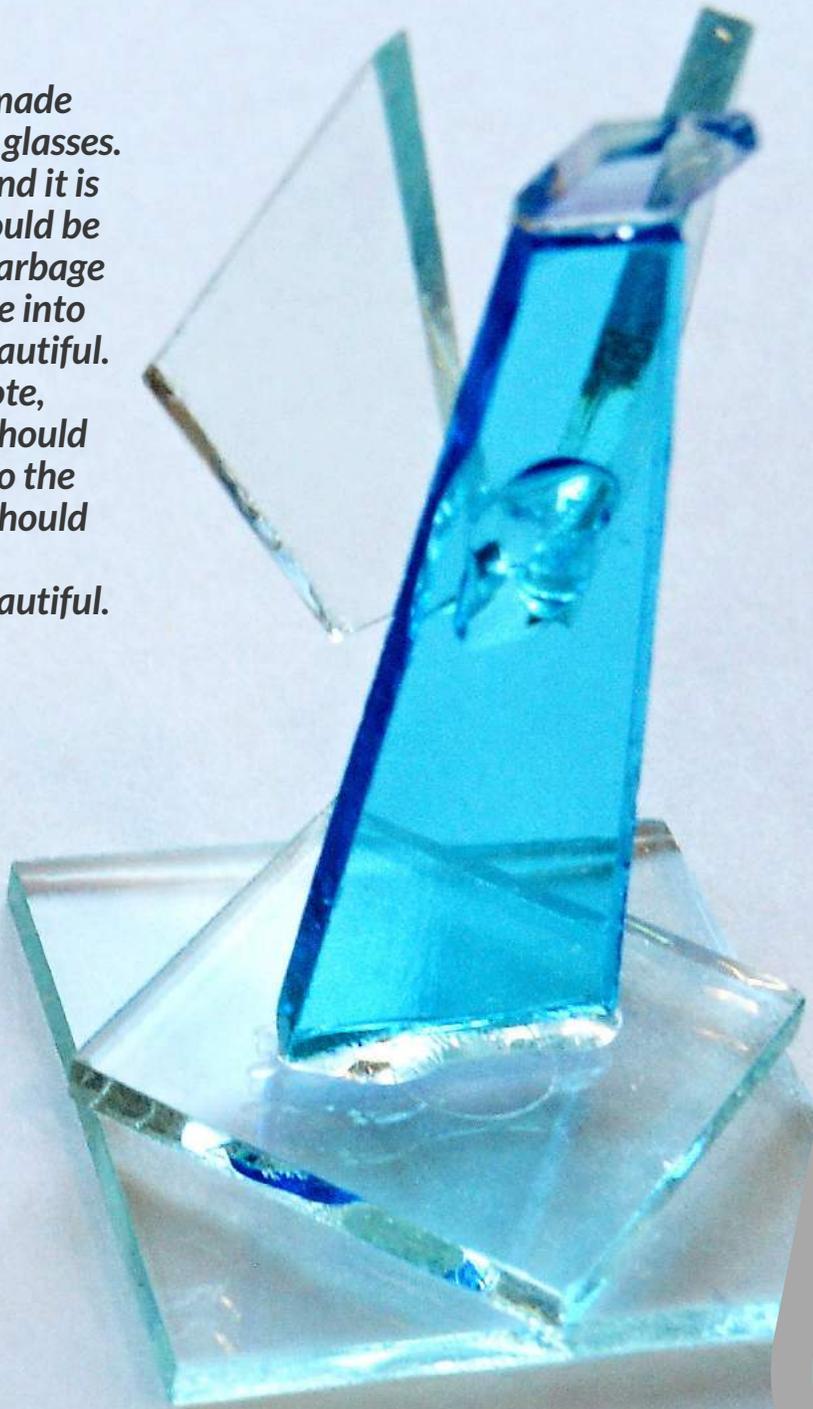
Well, I have to say that I am already very impressed by what you are doing with the youth initiative because there is a variety of experiences. The creativity, the fantasy, and the energy are absolutely amazing! There was dancing, free language school, influencing the media, skiing with policymakers and much more. So this question is really opened to youth. I, myself cannot even think of being more creative than them.

You have worked in this branch for a long time. You were Director of the Drug Addiction Treatment Centre in Parma, later in the Addiction Research Centre, Director of the National Observatory on Drugs, at the Prime Minister's Office and Member of International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

at the United Nations. Now you are director of the health branch at UNODC. What are your three biggest success stories that you had in your career?

I am not sure if I can speak about success or consequences of my work. The first consequence is quite surprising; I fell in love with my work and it became my passion. The people who are affected by substance use disorder turn out to be the most wonderful people after they come out from recovery. They are the most sensitive, loving, committed, motivated and loyal people you will ever meet. Those people have suffered a great deal in their childhood and adolescence. Many because of their sensitivity. Imagine a family with twins whose father died. Their mother is having a hard time, but she is doing the best she can to help them recover from their loss. She brings them good food and toys one day. One twin takes the toys, starts eating and says he loves the food. But the second boy isn't interested in the toys, he refuses to eat the food and pulls into himself instead of socializing. Which one do you think will be affected by drug use disorder? I learned not to lose hope in any situation. It is not research but it

This angel is made out of broken glasses. The idea behind it is that what should be put into the garbage can be remade into something beautiful. In a similar note, broken lives should not be put into the garbage but should be made into something beautiful.



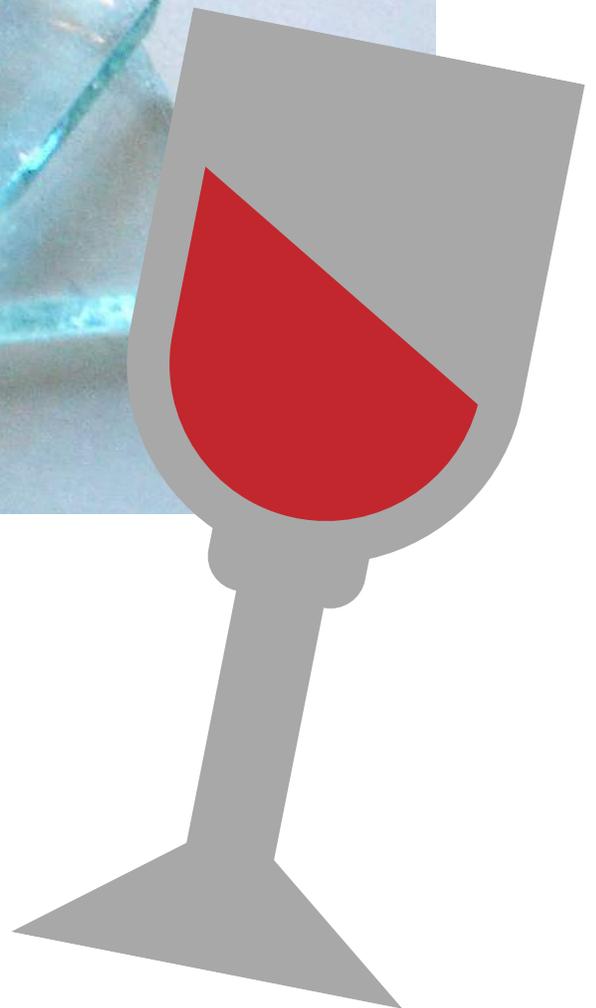
is the fact that there is always hope.

Thank you for your time.

Do you have any last words for our readers?

Thank you!

Finally, I want to take a minute to thank the youth engaged in youth





DRUG ABUSE AND THE SOCIETY

"many topics despite our living in the 21st century are still tabu"

Nowadays drug abuse is one of the biggest issues for modern youth worldwide. According to recent research, the number of young people who have been the victims of drug dealers is increasing on a daily basis. As we all know, the main reason for this problem lies in society. Long working hours keep many people worldwide unable to take care of their children, so it's a pretty common situation that many kids live without full-time support. Many kinds of research which have been published in numerous daily papers, as well as academic magazines, have shown that the key risk periods for drug abuse are during major transitions in children's lives. The first big transition for children is when they leave the security of the family and enter school. Later, when they advance from elementary school to middle

school, they often experience new academic and social situations, such as learning to get along with a wider group of peers. It is at this stage - early adolescence - that children are likely to encounter drugs for the first time. It's more than a usual situation that many pre-teens want to be accepted in a new school so, as labile types, they are likely to try basically everything just to be accepted. The topic of being accepted and respected in the society is very popular in many psychological kinds of research as well as every other aspect of life: from TV shows and documentaries to books.

As a recent High School graduate, I have been in a friendship with numerous types of people. My school was not that good. It wasn't such a rigorous place this should be at the beginning and as

acceptance rate failed at the beginning of the fall semester I have met many kids who transferred from much worse schools in hopes that a lot of AP Economics and Social Science classes would help them get into prestigious majors later at college. Anyway, one of my acquaintances was a friend to many kids who had missed out and had been victims of drugs at some stages of their lives. The youngest victim, according to his own words, was only 15 when trying to smoke weed with his friends. Later, when he entered High School he became an addict and ended up in debt, at the hospital without an opportunity to go to college and have a normal life. That person was one of many examples of how drugs can ruin

your career, social life, chances to get back on the track, although you are “healthy” again.

Drug abuse is a big problem which is going to get bigger and bigger if the Ministry of Health keeps refusing to find effective ways to stop it. The problem of high rate drug addiction has ruined many economies worldwide, marked a lot of groups of people and lives of individuals. Although everyone knows that drugs are bad, many famous people (for example musicians or actors) give bad examples to their audiences that contain mostly young people. Because of this serious problem many Elementary and High

Schools started sessions for students about drug abuse and many topics despite our living in the 21st century are still taboo. I have participated in numerous workshops as a High School student related to these topics and although if it was a required part of the curriculum, especially if something bad happened in previous weeks, I think that it is a great start of something positive. In addition, there are so many ways to motivate the youth to be active in many fields beside their work in school or college. From numerous NGO's to many courses and hobbies that would look great on their CV's and college applications it is one of the best ways to make a positive impact on their society.



Calling out to youth to mobilize their power

Interview by Chahrazad Sadi

You are a very impressive young woman. You are a full-time student, a journalist for YIMagazine, the Chairman of the Board of High School Students Union of Montenegro and a Coordinator of the Youth Centre in your city. In the few years of your high school student career, you achieved more than some people achieve in their whole lifetime. What keeps you motivated to work so hard?

The fact is that this 'lifetime' does not last as long as it may sometimes sound! Therefore, I strive to set clear goals for myself and seize every day to get a bit closer to them. How many times do we hear someone saying: "You are a young person and should be the change you want to see in the world"? This quote has been used so often, that many of us would say it is an annoying cliché. Nevertheless, it represents a powerful message, which tells that if we want to change something in our societies, we must first be ready to fight for that change and

You are a young person and should be the change you want to see in the world

make our own contribution.

Through participation at various international events, I had the opportunity to meet many passionate and dedicated young people, who are working even harder for the betterment of their communities, and their commitment has been a real wind in the back for me. I know that only if we work together towards the same goal, we will encourage the development of the whole world. Sounds like a big deal, doesn't it?

What are you the most proud of?

I am definitely the proudest of friendships I have made with many young people, coming from different parts of the world, and different cultural and social backgrounds, with whom I can

freely share my thoughts, exchange experiences and knowledge. I feel fulfilled when I know that there is someone out there who will take their time to listen to me, regardless of the time zone, geographic distance or even poor Internet connection.

What are the biggest challenges you had to go through to get to where you are?

I am so grateful for each challenge I have come across so far because every one of them shaped my personality and strengthened my character in a particular way. To be honest, I cannot think of the biggest, but the first that I came up with when I read the question was time management. It has not always been easy to reconcile extracurricular activities and leave enough time for studying, which is why I apologize to my Samsung Notes for being disorganized. (laugh) Anyways, my grandmother usually says that the more obstacles you overcome on your way to success, the bigger and more important it is. And she is definitely right. I would just add

that the support of your family, friends, and professors, along with your passion towards the work you do are always a huge motivation that makes you keep going even when it seems so hard to succeed, that you would rather give up.

Why are you committed to drug prevention?

As a representative of High School Students Union of Montenegro, I had the opportunity to work in the field of drug use and/or substance abuse, which helped me understand that certain improvements should be made on both national and global level. Speaking of my country, as I have written in the article that was published in the previous issue, the ESPAD (European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs) report 2015, for example, has shown a slight but continuous

increase in the use of psychoactive substances among high school students in Montenegro, which is a serious call for relevant national institutions and civil society organizations to take further steps towards solving this issue. But it is a call for youth, as well. It is a call for all of us that are being directly or indirectly affected by the problem of drug use to get involved in the process of finding and implementing appropriate solutions. And drug prevention is one of them.

What do you hope to achieve in this field?

Speaking of drug abuse prevention, I hope to give my contribution to establishing a proper system of support for those who are starting to experiment with psychoactive substances and contribute to reducing the level of stigma and discrimination of young people seeking help, so that they can freely approach the institutions. But in the process of drug use prevention, I think that



dissemination of information plays a very important role. During the UNODC Youth Forum, we agreed that the first problem we have to handle is that young people generally are not well-educated on the consequences drug use leaves on the physical and mental development and behaviour of its consumers, which is one of the main reasons they easily succumb to peer pressure and consider drug consuming the most simple getaway from this 'cruel' reality. We all agreed to work towards solving this issue, so I hope to keep my word.

What message would you like to pass on to young generations and future leaders?

An American author, James A. Baldwin, once said: "There is never the time in the future in which we will work out our salvation. The challenge is in the moment; the time is always now." So we, the youth, should always bear in mind that today is the time to sow the seeds, whose fruits we will pick tomorrow. And there is no better time to be a leader of the future than right now, in the present!

Interested in reading more from Andrea?

Andrea is a very productive writer. If you are interested in reading her work, make sure to check out:

- Stories for children with disabilities "Suncev zrak" (you can find them here: <http://szpress.me/?s=andrea+micanovic>)
- Articles in the YIMagazine (you can read the first issue here: https://www.unodc.org/documents/youth-initiative/YIMagazine_June17.pdf

But even more importantly, she is active with youth and had therefore inspired people to write articles about her. Two that stand out are written in her native language:

- Djevojka ZA PRIMJER: Upoznajte UČENICU GENERACIJE podgoričke Gimnazije za koju ne postoje granice! (you can read it here: <http://www.kolektiv.me/94435/djevojka-za-primjer-upoznajte-ucenicu-generacije-podgoricke-gimnazije-za-koju-ne-postoje-granice>)
- PODGORIČANKA ANDREA MIĆANOVIĆ: Mladi rješavaju probleme za koje stariji nemaju rješenje (you can read it here: <https://mnemagazin.me/2017/04/15/podgoricanka-andrea-micanovic-mladi-rjesavaju-probleme-za-koje-stariji-nemaju-rjesenje/>)





Dreaming, thinking about the future and setting goals and resolutions are all important actions to get us active and working. Goals can enrich our lives and keep us pushing towards becoming a better person every day. The New Year is approaching, which means that soon we will get the opportunity to start anew. It offers us plenty of opportunities to set goals and make resolutions. So let's make the most of it!

WITH GOALS
AND
RESOLUTIONS
TOWARDS A
BETTER LIFE
IN 2018



SMART GOALS

S pecific
M easurable
A chievable
R easonable
T imely

People set goals regularly, mainly about their academic and professional achievements. Using SMART goals, one can gain new skills such as playing a musical instrument, giving an effective presentation or to learning a new language. One can take it a step further and set goals to finish University studies with a red diploma and a summa cum laude or to climb up the corporate ladder. Or on the contrary, choose a short, one-time goal such as climbing a tall mountain or reading “War and Peace” by Leo Tolstoy.

When choosing a goal, it is important to find something that will enhance one’s life and at the same time make one enjoy the process. One normally invests a lot of time to make a goal come through, so it’s worth it investing a little bit of time into planning then according to the principle of SMART goals.

In order to achieve your goals, one needs to create a habit: in order to create a habit, one needs to be consistent with actions and not give up. According to a 2009 study by Phillipa Lally, referenced in an article by “Metro”, it can take between 18 to 254 days to make an activity into a habit.

Line Storvoll Strømseth had been knitting for years but she found herself stagnating with her skills. She wasn’t learning anything new at that point. So she decided to take things differently. She asked for a sewing machine for her 20th birthday and set herself the very goal that she spent the months to come working towards it. To learn sewing: “I chose to learn by doing. I have worked my way from project to project learning new techniques. It is more relaxed and exciting than sitting down practicing one technique a time. What is more, at the end you have a finished project which serves as a motivation to keep going.” Making anything for the first time will not be perfect but as she says herself, “The next time it will be easier. At the end of the day, it does not matter if some stitches

look strange. It makes them unique!”

Line enjoys knitting and sewing for several reasons, she does not just find it fun, she also finds it useful to be more environmentally friendly especially when it comes to the clothes. This way, you get it as a side effect of learning. “I have the possibility to make more sustainable choices when it comes to making clothes. I try to choose more environmentally friendly materials for my projects, for example, yarn from Norwegian sheep, rather than a yarn that has traveled from across the other side of the world. Using natural materials of a good quality also makes the garment good quality for which reason it lasts longer.



Moreover, you are less likely to have a lot of clothes as each piece takes hours to complete and at the same time, you are more reluctant to throw it away unless really necessary, which ultimately reduces your clothes consumption.” Other rewards also come with her cherished skills “I feel very proud for every compliment on a skirt I made myself or see someone appreciate a gift I made.”

Her new skills have enriched her life and she mentions that they also made her able to multitask. For example, she can be knitting while watching Netflix, which makes her feel productive while binge watching. “Also, I get to use my creative sides, planning new projects, picking out materials and colors, and putting them together. I can spend hours just thinking about a new project, going through all the different options I have.” Further, she says “I love that my skills are constantly developing and that I am learning something new, even though I have knitted almost my whole life.” She gets much of her inspiration from Instagram where she can see what other people create. @lagetavline, an Instagram account she has created is full of her beautiful creations. All of those came to life only thanks to the fact that she set herself a goal and she stuck to it.



Line’s final words for to everybody who wants to attain a new skill are: “Find something you actually like to do, don’t

just chose a hobby because it is popular or your friends do it. When you find something you like, that will be a good motivation in itself, because you will feel good when you do it. Find people with the same interests as you, either on the internet or even better, in real life. You can learn a lot from others. Don't give up if it is hard at first. All new skills take time, in the beginning, be patient and ask for help if you are stuck. If you don't know anyone you can ask for help,

use the internet. The internet is full of tutorials, blogs and even communities for people with different kind of hobbies, only a click away. Use weekends and vacations to really dig deep into your new hobby if you can't find time in your everyday life. New skills take time in the beginning, but fortunately, the learning curve is steep!"

Resolutions, on the other hand usually contain promises of living a better and a more a healthy life.

When making a resolution one should focus on the physical and mental well-being as well as on how you can improve the quality of your life. Setting a resolution about getting in a better shape by walking to school instead of going by car, going to the gym once a week or taking up swimming and setting the resolutions concerning eating habits are important to keep the body in a good shape; it would lead to fewer health issues and might improve the quality of life drastically.

5 tips for setting a good goal:

1. Choose something that will improve your life!
2. Do your research!
3. Give yourself enough time!
4. Give yourself wiggle room!
5. Find something that you enjoy in the process!

Yet only 8% of people achieve their New Year's resolutions, writes Forbes. So what to do to keep motivated and achieve them?

Get your priorities straight. What does setting your resolution mean? Will you be happy at the end of the journey? Because if you set yourself a resolution that deep down you don't really want to achieve, well then you won't!

Make small steps. Don't expect a change overnight. Do you want to quit smoking? It took you probably longer than one year to get addicted to smoking, to develop a habit so expecting that you would be able to quit in a week is unrealistic. You have to be patient and focus on the big picture.

Lastly, if you find it difficult to start, don't do it alone. Join the #30dayshealthchallenge or other campaigns. You can also sign up for a local club or gym to start exercising. This assures that once things get difficult, you get pushed just a little bit further and get motivated just a little bit more by

the friends you make there. You are not alone in this. What goals and resolutions do you set yourself for next year? Let us know at: youthinitiativemagazine@gmail.com or on our social media!

By Milly Meyer



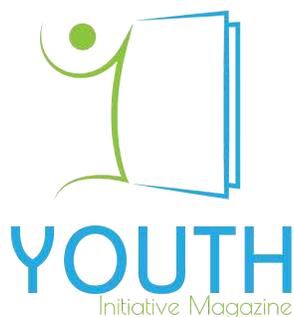
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