



Cannabis and stress



Learning about the relationship between cannabis and stress can help us make better decisions. And talking about the pros and cons of self-medicating with cannabis can broaden our understanding.

Activity steps

1. Ask: What do you know about the relationship between cannabis and stress? Have a brief discussion.
2. Watch the [Cannabis and stress video](#).
3. Walk through the **Cannabis and stress** handout, and explore the questions below, in small groups or pairs.

Reflect and discuss

While most people don't use cannabis, some of us use it occasionally for fun, and a few of us use it regularly or frequently (daily or almost daily). According to the video, daily cannabis users tend to be people who struggle with chronic stress (long-term exposure to stressors). They say cannabis helps them relax, escape from problems, and feel less angry or frustrated. Almost 1/3 of frequent users say cannabis helps them "get through the day."

- What are some other ways to relax, escape and reduce feelings of anger or frustration? How do they help?
- What does it mean to you when someone says cannabis helps them get through the day? Give examples.
- Have you ever had a problem just getting through the day? If so, what did you do to manage?

What are your thoughts on how the 'positive feedback loop' works? How can it be applied to other human situations? Give examples.

According to the video, acute stress happens in the moment, such as during a job interview or test. Using a small amount of cannabis may not have much of an effect except to dampen our emotional response, while high amounts of THC may increase our experience of stress levels.

- What are some things in your life that cause you acute stress?
- How do you manage stressful situations? Give an example.



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The video mentions that some people choose to self-medicate with cannabis rather than see a doctor about prescription medications for anxiety or stress.

- What are the pros and cons of self-medicating with alternative medicines?
- What are the pros and cons of using prescription medications?
- Who would you consult if you were overwhelmed with anxiety or stress?

Cannabis has been used for thousands of years to treat various conditions, including chronic stress, as discussed at the beginning of the video. Yet, at the end of the video we learn:

“In the medical field, there is still a great deal of caution and skepticism associated with cannabis as a treatment method. While there are some studies that show the efficacy of cannabis, there are just as many that show the opposite and even detrimental effects.”

- How can we explain mixed messages about cannabis as a treatment option?
- What interests you more: anecdotal information (stories of people’s real-life experiences) or scientific studies? Why?