Having too much Marijuana to intake has its harmful effects to our body as it may lead to addiction and abuse. Without doubt, the primary disadvantages that people would say are that it can cause injuries, develop addictions and cause crimes. Aside from that, intense anxiety, fear, distrust and panic are also common side effects. It blocks memory formation, may increase the risk of depression and users may experience psychosis. (Astaiza, Spector, Welsh, 2014) In addition to this, the immediate desired effects from consuming marijuana include relaxation and euphoria, while some immediate undesired side-effects includes dry mouth, impaired motor skills and reddening of the eyes. However, the effects only come from the abuse of the drug and the addiction to it, which also leads to the idea that marijuana is a “gateway drug” and can therefore influence a user to use harder drugs.

Although addiction to marijuana has negative effects on the behavior and health of its users, just like any other drug (legal and illegal), it can still be beneficial to the people if consumed at a right amount and for the right purposes. Some of the positive effects include pain relief, controls nausea, muscle spasticity and stimulates appetite. Marijuana also controls epileptic seizures, treats inflammatory bowel diseases and slows the progression of Alzheimer’s disease. Researchers at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco reported in 2007 that a chemical found in marijuana stops cancer from spreading which may also protect the body against some types of malignant tumors. (Astaiza, Spector, Welsh, 2014)

In the society today, many people would argue that the consumption and possession of marijuana contributes to the crimes committed in connection to the Oplan Tokhang and war on drugs promoted by our President Rodrigo Duterte. However, the President has surprisingly expressed his support for the legalization of marijuana in the Philippines as long as it is used for medical purposes. “It’s effective, I will not deprive Filipinos of the benefits of medicinal marijuana, but I must have a clear definition of what it is and it must be approved by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration).” the president said during his 2016 campaign. While the president’s support for medical marijuana does not appear to be in line with his advocacy to eliminate all illegal drug users, he still strictly opposes marijuana’s use for recreational purposes. (Weiss, 2017)

Consuming Marijuana for medical purposes should be legalized in the Philippines because it is believed to be safer than the prescription drugs. Furthermore, it can create jobs and revenues and help the country’s economy. More and more people get arrested even if not everyone possesses them for negative reasons. When you legalize marijuana, less people will be arrested for the right reasons. Because of the advancement of technology, doctors and researchers can further find accurate answers as to the functions of medicinal marijuana. Not only does it become a want but also a need to other people. Because of this, marijuana will be a great demand, thus increasing the economy due to its greater availability. When marijuana is legalized, the governments can start taxing marijuana just like tobacco and start earning from it as well. If marijuana is brought to the legal market, it would result to job and economic opportunities in the formal economy instead of the illicit market.

 Tobacco and alcohol are two of the primary causes of deaths in the Philippines. Approximately ten Filipinos die every hour due to tobacco-related diseases. However, not one single death has been recorded due to marijuana overdose. (Labininay, 2017)

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Many people go against the idea of legalizing marijuana because it has been branded as “bad” and “illegal” without thoroughly studying its effects and possible help to the health of the people and the economy of the country.