An Altered State of Consciousness

Name

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An altered state of consciousness can be defined as brief change in the normal functioning of one’s mental condition without the person being considered as unconscious (Schneider & Velmans, 2017). These conditions can be created intentionally or unintentionally by an individual. Some of the altered states include sleeping, panic, sexual euphoria, accidents, drug use or childbirth. In this paper, I will be writing a summary of the research conducted on internet and videos watched which are related to drug use.

Drugs that alter the state of consciousness are known as psychoactive drugs and the chemical present in them is known to change the moods and the perception of the users. These drugs are available in some of the beverages and drinks that we take daily which made me interested in this topic. These drinks and foods include coffee, chocolate and other soft drinks while also present in alcohol and some drugs prescribed by physicians like aspirin.

Psychoactive drugs are known to change consciousness where the neurotransmitters are altered of their operations in the central nervous system. These drugs are known to be antagonistic in which case, they block the activities of the neurotransmitters or they are protagonists in which case they simulate the activities of the neurotransmitters. When these drugs are used, they tend to make some individual experience symptoms like intensified energy, heightened moods, slow heart rates and respiration, enhanced calmness, sleep, heightened tolerance to other medicinal drugs, and acts to relief intensity of pain (Tjäderborn, Jönsson, Sandström, Ahlner & Hägg, 2016).

Psychoactive drugs that are known to be antagonistic include stimulants which act to block serotonin and dopamine’s uptake in the central nervous system. The absence of these neurotransmitters in the brain result in increased activity in the ANS the reason why stimulants are used to keep people awake and in controlling weight. Depressants on the other hand, are psychoactive drugs that slow down the activities of the CNS. Depressants acts to reduce the impulse transmission from the lower brain all the way to the cortex and helps in relieving pain.

References

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