

Bingeing – Proud to be British?

by Alastair Mann 21.11.05

A quarter of people in Britain drink enough booze to put their health (and sometimes, that of others) at risk. And they probably don't even realise it.

90% of the adult population drinks alcohol and it's reckoned that 1 in 25 has become dependent.

Between us, we spend £30 billion a year on alcohol, and much of this is by our growing and widely accepted binge culture.

So what is this phenomenon? It seems kids are drinking earlier these days. And bingeing, that is, drinking to oblivion, is most prevalent among 16-24 year olds who think nothing of getting blasted with their friends on a Saturday night. And when out on the town, more than 50% are regularly drinking enough alcohol to render them unconscious. 70% of A&E hospital admissions between the hours of 12.00 and 5.00am are alcohol-related. The biggest worry is these teen drinkers drowning on their own vomit while unconscious. And yet, many of these youngsters don't seem to learn from their mistakes. They keep on doing it.

If it weren't dangerous enough that teen drinking puts them in the way of 1.2 million occurrences per year, of alcohol-induced violence, and also drinking and driving incidents, they're also creating massive health risks for themselves.

It's been shown, with experiments with rats, that just 2 days of excessive drinking causes rapid damage to brain cells. So you don't have to be an alcoholic to seriously damage your brain. In addition, long term abuse leads to depression at best, and cirrhosis of the liver, heart failure and stroke, kidney disease and long term memory loss at worst. 22 000 premature deaths a year are caused by excessive consumption. These are the miserable facts about alcohol.

And before these young adults are fully grown, their nervous and reproductive systems aren't fully developed and are easily damaged by the alcohol they drink.

And it's worse for women as their bodies have a lower proportion of water so they get drunk faster, even faster than a bloke with the same body mass. And so, not surprisingly, they begin to display health problems earlier.

As Lysette Offley, of Sounds Positive Hypnotherapy, Henley on Thames, says, "Drinking issues often stem from unresolved problems during childhood, such as feelings of not belonging, needing to be the best, being bullied, lack of attention from parents or even abuse. But the binge environment is likely to have a lot more to do with fitting in, being seen to keep up with your peers and showing off. The kids say they're bored and that it's cool to get their friends drunk.

"Moderate use of alcohol is another thing entirely and some experiments have shown a benefit especially in middle age. However, binge drinking is a killer and youngsters don't seem to understand what they're getting into. There's growing concern at government level and there are plans for an alcohol education campaign next year, on the effects of alcohol, pretty much like the smoking ads we've seen. They're also talking about putting health warnings on bottles, but will that be enough? Let's hope that soon it becomes cool to take care of your health instead of drinking it away."

If you recognise yourself or someone else has a drinking problem, it's essential to get help before the problem gets any worse. Either go to a professional therapist or get hold of a product such as Sounds Positive's Drink Less. It's a fully downloadable, comprehensive self-help hypnotherapy product also using EFT and NLP to help you take control back of your life.

Do it now.

If you or someone you know is ruining their health through drink, get help to get back in control with Drink Less. For more information visit: <http://www.soundspositive.com>

or ring Lysette Offley BA (Hons), PGCE, Dip Hyp, Dip PLT & SRT, GHR, GQHP on +44 (0)1491 414 122