



RESISTING PEER GROUP INFLUENCE AND PRESSURE FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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Alcohol abuse is a major health problem in the world at large. For the past thirty to forty years, alcohol consumption has increased tremendously. Alcohol dependence is a pervasive and destructive yet highly treatable disease. The age at which people start drinking has declined. Taking alcohol even once in a while leaves the possibility of a habit and the drinker may start drinking frequently and in large quantity, which could have drastic effects on his health

Peer groups play a crucial role in shaping the behaviours and attitudes of individuals, particularly during the transitional phase of college life. As young adults navigate their newfound independence, the influence of peers can significantly impact their choices, especially concerning alcohol consumption.

As a pivotal period of growth, exploration, and social interaction, college life can lead students to face various challenges, including peer pressure regarding alcohol consumption. The college experience often amplifies instances of social engagement, where alcohol consumption may be perceived as a rite of passage or a means of forging connections. However, succumbing to peer group influence can lead to detrimental health implications, academic underperformance, and adverse personal relationships. In this review, we will explore

effective strategies to help college students resist peer group pressure regarding alcohol consumption, each of which we will adapt to help students maintain their autonomy as they navigate their college experience.

The Peer factor and resonance of Peer Pressure

To begin understanding the strategies for overcoming peer group influence concerning alcohol consumption, it is critical to recognize the pervasive impact of peer pressure itself.

Research indicates that peer influence is one of the most significant factors in promoting drinking behaviour among college students. Many young adults feel compelled to conform to the norms established by their peers, which can lead to risky drinking behaviours and lasting repercussions.

Peer pressure is consistently implicated in the excessive drinking of college students. However, both theory and empirical findings suggest that peer pressure is a combination of three distinct influences: overt offers of alcohol, modelling, and social norms.

During adolescence influence of the parent is supplemented by that of the peer group. During this period individuals, 1st experimented with less socially disapproved substances like alcohol and tobacco as the gateway drugs. People who wish to use alcohol are often drawn toward peer groups with similar motivations and drug-taking attitudes.

A person's environment and peer to a great extent influences and persuades him to attach to the risk of becoming alcohol dependent. For most of them alcohol is only a pleasant accompaniment for their social activities. The media as well as the movies have often glamourized drinking as an act of heroism.

The initial strategy to counter this influence involves increasing awareness of individual values and goals. The journey of overcoming alcohol-related peer pressure is deeply personal and varies widely among individuals. By identifying what one stands for and setting personal boundaries regarding alcohol, students can establish a strong foundation for resisting peer pressure.

Effective Strategies for Resistance

For students seeking to navigate university life while resisting the inclination to consume alcohol due to peer pressure, several effective strategies can be implemented:

1. Establishing Personal Values:

Students should engage in introspective reflection to clearly define their values and priorities. Understanding what matters most, be it academic success, health, or personal fulfilment, serves as a guiding principle when confronted with peer pressure.

2. Seeking Support Networks:

Developing a support system comprising like-minded peers can provide a sense of community and affirmation for students who choose not to drink or wish to limit their consumption. Active participation in alternative social groups, such as clubs centered around hobbies, sports, or volunteer work, can foster connection without reliance on alcohol.

3. Practicing Assertiveness:

Communicating personal decisions with confidence is critical. Students can practice assertive techniques to decline alcohol without compromising their self-respect or relationships. Phrases like “I’m on a health kick” or “I prefer to stay sober tonight” can effectively convey one’s choices without igniting confrontation.

4. Creating Alcohol-Free Events:

Student organizations can take the initiative to host alcohol-free gatherings, fostering a culture where moderation and sober interaction are celebrated. These events not only provide a safe environment but also challenge the belief that socializing requires alcohol.

5. Utilizing Campus Resources:

Many universities offer counselling services, workshops, and seminars addressing substance use and peer pressure. Students should actively seek out and engage with these resources to enhance their coping skills and deepen their understanding of the effects of alcohol consumption.

6. Mindfulness and Stress-Management Techniques:

Many students turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism for stress. Thus, incorporating mindfulness practices such as meditation, yoga, or deep-breathing exercises can help mitigate pressure and foster emotional resilience.

Fostering Change Through Awareness and Encouragement

In conclusion, while peer group influence can exert a strong compulsion toward alcohol consumption among college students, it is essential to recognize that resisting this pressure is not only possible but also necessary for personal growth and health. By establishing personal values, building supportive networks, and employing assertive communication, students can create an empowered social identity that prioritizes their well-being over conformity. It is crucial for colleges and universities to actively promote these strategies and champion alcohol-free spaces to foster a healthier, more inclusive social environment. By taking conscious steps toward resisting peer pressures, students not only improve their individual lives but also contribute to a cultural shift within campus communities.

Embracing and advocating for a lifestyle that is reflective of one's values can facilitate self-discovery and long-term satisfaction throughout the college experience and beyond. Ultimately, every choice made in these formative years' shapes not just the collegiate journey but sets the stage for the future. Thus, by following these strategies, students can ensure their college years are not defined by others but by their own aspirations and choices.

Key words: RESISTING, PEER GROUP INFLUENCE, PRESSURE, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION, COLLEGE STUDENTS.

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