



College Senior Recommends “Establishing Limits Before Drinking”

Personal Details:

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How are you exposed to binge drinking?

Well, as a college student, I’m exposed to binge-drinking all the time. Sorority parties, frat parties, keggers. Seems like there are parties to go to every weekend...if you want to do that.

Based on your experience, what are the risks associated with binge drinking?

It seems that there are a lot of risks. There’s no doubt that bad things can happen if you drink too much. As a woman, I’m always concerned about being a victim of a sexual assault or a rape. Binge-drinking obviously increases the chances of that.

Can you describe a specific situations you’ve been in that highlights these risks?

When I was a freshman, some friends and I went to a fraternity rush party. I’d had a rough week of studying and I was anxious to put the week behind me. I drank too much, way too much, at the party. I woke up about 3 a.m. in a bedroom of the party house. I didn’t know how I got there or when I got there, but I quickly figured out that I must have passed out. I immediately checked my clothes to make sure I hadn’t been assaulted. Thankfully, my friend Holly had been checking in on me to make sure I was OK. And I was OK, but I realized I may have been lucky with that, considering how drunk I’d been.

What lessons did you learn?

Well, I learned quickly to moderate my drinking at parties. I didn’t like the idea of being so vulnerable.

Does binge-drinking and being drunk make people cool and attractive?

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You might think that when you're drinking, but you won't be thinking that when you sober up. When you realize that you were so drunk that you can't remember what you did or you realize all the dumb things you said or did when you were trashed, you won't think that's so cool. Just a couple weeks ago, I went to a party. I only drank one beer that night, because I had a job interview the next day. But some of my friends drank way too much, and watching them, I was reminded that it wasn't cool at all to be as drunk as they were. They may have thought it was cool, but to the people who weren't drunk, it wasn't cool at all. To be honest, it was a bit embarrassing.

What do movies/TV get wrong about drinking?

I'm a criminal justice major and I watch a lot of crime stories, like *Law & Order SVU*. That show does a pretty good job of showing the consequences of drinking too much. On the other hand, situation comedy shows seem to glorify drinking and partying, and they seem to leave out of the consequences that follow.

What does the term "Drink Responsibly" mean to you?

It means that I need to look out for my own welfare by not drinking too much. Being on a college campus, we know that bad things can happen when a person doesn't drink responsibly.

What drinking-related advice would you offer high school or college students?

Don't succumb to peer pressure, especially when it comes to drinking or drugs. When I first got to college, there were times when I felt compelled to get drunk, just because my friends were doing or because so many other people were doing it. Be strong with that. Don't get drunk just because everybody else is doing it. And, if you're going to a party, don't be afraid to establish some limits for yourself before you get there. One of my roommates has a problem not being able to stop drinking once she starts, so what she does, is she sets drinking limits for herself before she even goes to the party. For example, if she plans to be at the party for about three hours, she will set a limit of four drinks during that time period. She even goes so far as to jot that down on a piece of paper. Writing her limit on a piece of paper seems to make it more real for her. This seems to work well for her...she swears by it.

