
PUT ON YOUR BEER GOGGLES

Three Things Every College Student Should Consider Before Breaking Out the Beer Bong
(371 words)

No one told him that drinking would make him lose lots of money and many memories. Throughout college, Toren Volkmann partied his way around the world, pounding beers and slamming shots. As Toren Volkmann said, “Put on your beer goggles and don’t ask why.” He graduated with a BA in psychology and a competitive spot in South America with the Peace Corps. He never envisioned he would become the “I Told You So” poster boy for drug education.

Like thousands of other college students, Toren (26-years-old) was swept into the heavy drinking culture that permeates so many aspects of university life. Studies show that binge drinking is the most widespread health problem on college campuses in the United States.

“Few students think about the problematic effects of continuous heavy drinking,” says Toren, coauthor of FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT (New American Library-Penguin, \$14.00 www.frombingetoblackout.com). “Then suddenly, the party ends and they find themselves a feverish, shaky, paranoid halfwit, struggling to think, sleep, relax or eat.”

Written together with his mother Chris, FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT reveals how the family missed the signs of Toren’s addiction and describes the agony of the ensuing discovery, along with tips for surviving sober in alcohol-laden youth culture. Both the book and their workshops are designed to educate college students, youth and families about alcohol choices and the consequences of heavy drinking.

Here Chris and Toren share three things every drinker should consider before breaking out the beer bong:

1. What's really happening to your brain every time you drink heavily? It is essential to understand how damaging alcohol is to your body and brain.
2. What's your family history with alcohol? Heredity plays into the demise of a heavy drinker.
3. The process of alcoholism is stealthy. It creeps up little by little. It's progressive and the damage it causes to relationships and behavior becomes chronic

“Don’t let drinking ruin your life,” says Toren. “If you are struggling, get help. Asking for help is okay and sobriety can be a new beginning.”

Purchase your copy of FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT at major bookstores, debuting August 2006. FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT, New American Library, 2006, ISBN-0-451-21909-0, \$14.00