

ALCOHOL MYTHS AND FACTS

DISCUSSION LEADER'S OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Good morning my name is _____. Today we will be talking about Alcohol Myths and Facts.

The **ground rules** for this discussion are:

- (1) No personal attacks on anyone's opinions
- (2) Allow each participant to express themselves
- (3) Make head calls at your leisure, just don't interrupt the group
- (4) Keep your language clean as not to offend others
- (5) PARTICIPATION BY ALL!!!!!!

Gain Attention

Misuse of alcohol can lead to dangerous and high risk behavior. It is generally anticipated that alcohol consumption is usually a part of entertainment events promoting a good time. Alcohol consumption however, has its consequences.

Key points for this discussion will be:

- (1) Describe common myths
- (2) Differentiating Myths from Facts

Learning Objective: After this guided discussion, you will gain a better understanding of the consequences associated with alcohol consumption.

DISCUSSION

During this discussion we are going to cover common myths pertaining to alcohol consumption.

(Facilitator should read each myth out loud and allow the group to respond then read the fact)

Myth: Learning to "hold" liquor is the best way to combat alcohol abuse and misuse.

Fact: Drinking increasingly larger amounts of alcohol to get a "buzz" or get "high" is developing tolerance. Tolerance can be defined as a decrease in response to alcohol with a single exposure.

Myth: Beer doesn't have as much alcohol as hard liquor.

Fact: A 12-ounce bottle of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a standard shot of 80-proof liquor (either straight or in a mixed drink) or 5 ounces of wine.

Myth: Anyone can sober up quickly if necessary.

Fact: It takes hours to eliminate the alcohol content of two standard drinks. Nothing can speed up this process-not even coffee or cold showers.

Myth: It is not a big deal to drink when you are underage.

Fact: Underage drinking is illegal and the consequences include fines, jail time and/or community service. Plus, individuals who drink underage are more likely to experience social and legal problems, physical and sexual assaults, and are at a higher risk for suicide and homicide. Various studies also indicate the serious health effects of long term alcohol use, thus starting at a younger age may increase the likelihood of negative health issues.

Myth: Beer and wine are safer than liquor.

Fact: Alcohol is alcohol. It can cause you problems no matter how you consume it. One 12-ounce bottle of beer or a 5-ounce glass of wine (about a half cup) has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of liquor. Alcopops—sweet drinks laced with malt liquor—mimic soda pop, but have effects of a “wide awake drunk” and often contain more alcohol than beer!

Myth: Traffic fatalities happen regardless of alcohol.

Fact: During the holidays (Christmas & New Year's) 2-3 times more people die in alcohol-related crashes; 40% of traffic fatalities involve a driver who is impaired by alcohol.

Myth: I don't feel drunk or even under the influence - it has worn off- I am fine.

Fact: It's easy to misjudge alcohol's lasting effects. The truth is that alcohol continues to affect the brain and body long after downing the last drink. Even after the drinking stops, alcohol in the stomach and intestine continues to enter the bloodstream, impairing judgment and coordination for hours. It is important to remember that tolerance plays a role here.

Myth: I can sober up quickly or quicker than most.

Fact: There's no way to speed up the brain's recovery from alcohol and no way to make good decisions when you are drinking too much, too fast. Judgment, coordination, and vision are the first impacted and you need these to function effectively.

Myth: I know alcohol well.

Fact: Underestimating the effects of alcohol leads to missed opportunities, losses, injury, shame, remorse, financial setbacks, and even death.

KEY POINT 1

1. Even the smallest amount of alcohol consumption has its risks.
2. Low risk drinking mitigates those risks.

KEY POINT 2

1. Know your limit.
2. Learn how to make low risk drinking choices and know how to drink at low risk.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

Remember alcohol is classified as a depressant; it may initially “act” as a stimulant. People who drink may temporarily feel upbeat and excited. But they should not be fooled. Alcohol soon affects inhibitions and judgment that can lead to high risk decisions. As more alcohol is consumed, reaction time suffers, behavior becomes poorly controlled and sometimes aggressive tendencies arise. Know the risks, choose wisely and drink at low risk.

Closing Statement: Today we have discussed Alcohol myths and facts, I am confident that you now have a better understanding of the impact of alcohol consumption and what it means to drink at low risk.

END OF DISCUSSION

RESOURCES

1. MARINE CORPS ORDER 5300.17
2. MCRP 6-11B W/Ch. 1, Marine Corps Values: A User’s Guide for Discussion Leaders
3. MAPIT Guide. Retrieved from http://bhini.usmc-mccs.org/uploads/MAPIT_Guide.pdf.
4. MARINE CORPS SUBSTANCE ABUSE COMBAT CENTER <http://www.mccshh.com/SACC.html>.