



Alcohol Consumption During the Holidays

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The holiday season is upon us. The malls are abuzz with shoppers, the weather is crispening, and the mood is becoming increasingly festive. This time of year involves a lot of celebrating, gift exchanging and over-indulgence. This can also be a difficult time of year for people coping with betrayal trauma and sex addiction. The holidays can be a reminder of happy times or they can be a trigger. One of the biggest triggers about this time of year is the alcohol consumption that occurs at many, if not most, celebrations. Here are some things to be aware of before you go into your next holiday party.

Don't drink and drive

Safety is always first. Despite this being a tired old adage, it is still important. If you are going to consume alcohol, whether it's just one drink at a company happy hour, or a number of drinks at a family gathering, make sure you have a sober ride home. Nowadays, there are numerous ride sharing apps that serve as safe options to get you home if you have chosen to partake.

Don't drink and text

This one has also become a classic. Just because you have some liquid courage in your system, doesn't mean you should say all of the things you've been meaning to say to your significant other but didn't have the guts to say when you were sober. If your significant other is someone whose trust you've betrayed or if your significant other is struggling with recovery from sex addiction, they can be hurt either way. If you need to have a serious conversation with them, do it when you are clear-headed and sober. Don't do it while you are inebriated as you may have some repair work to do when you sober up.

Alcohol lowers inhibition

Of course, this is why some people enjoy it. However, you have to consider that you are more likely to behave inappropriately when your inhibition is lowered. This is a huge trigger for partners of sex addicts. If an addict is attending an office holiday party (whether +1's are invited or not) and where there is an open bar, partners often become anxious about inappropriate behavior with coworkers while the addict is consuming alcohol. If impulse control is a problem while sober, it will definitely be worse when inhibitions are lowered. Consider being a designated driver and skipping the alcohol at your holiday party for your partner's sake. They may not explicitly ask you to, but they will appreciate your initiative to help them feel safe. Also,

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if you and your partner have not disclosed to your family or friends that you are struggling with sex addiction, letting it slip in conversation after a few cocktails at the family holiday party is not ok. Make sure you discuss what, when, and to whom you will disclose your personal information before you go to the party. Just because you have come to terms with it, doesn't mean your partner has. You both have to be in agreement and feel comfortable with what and how this is shared.

Alcohol impairs emotional regulation

When alcohol is consumed, emotions can become heightened. We all know that one guy who likes to pick fights when he gets drunk. For partners of sex addicts, knowing that the addict in their lives has been drinking can put them into a guarded headspace. This also applies to someone with a sex addiction, whose partner can become volatile if he/she is drinking. If a person tends to become argumentative when alcohol is involved, it may be a cause of stress and a trigger for their partner just to know that a fight may be on the horizon during the holiday festivities. If you want to reassure your partner, have a conversation about your plans to drink or not to drink so that he/she can ease some of their worry.

Alcohol and sex addiction don't mix

Anyone who has one addiction is prone to other addictions. This is known as cross-addiction. People with addictions tend to go to extremes with whatever they do. That is what makes an addiction. If you know you already have a sex addiction, you should know that you can easily develop a cross-addiction with alcohol (or any other substance, for that matter). Alcohol consumption during the holidays is often a social activity. When people gather, consume alcohol, have heightened emotions and lowered inhibitions, trouble is not too far away. A celebration is not a suspension of boundaries or rules. It is simply a time to celebrate with the ones you love.

So have fun and enjoy this holiday season! Just be considerate of the needs of your partner during this time and do your best to make safe and healthy choices for both you and for your relationship. Happy celebrating!