

# The Social Psychology of College Drinking Behavior and Implications for Counseling

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## Abstract

Alcohol abuse among college students comes with consequences that can be academic, social, emotional, sexual, and physical in nature (Smith & Berger, 2010). Despite the penalties, college students are prone to engage in risky alcohol consumption behaviors. Social cognitive theory, developed by Albert Bandura (1989) provides a framework for understanding drinking behaviors among college students. Triadic reciprocal determinism posits a reciprocal influence exists between a person's environment, personal factors, and behaviors. Prior research helps to understand the reciprocal influence between these three areas as they relate to college students and Greek membership (Capone, Wood, Borsari, & Laird, 2007; Phua, 2011), student housing (Hummer, LaBrie, & Pedersen, 2012), social norms (Read, Wood, & Capone, 2005), alcohol expectancies (Wood, Read, Palfai, & Stevenson, 2001; Wardell & Read, 2012; Iwamoto, Corbin, Lejuez, & MacPherson, 2013), emotional intelligence (Ghee & Johnson, 2008; Claros & Sharma, 2012), self-efficacy (Kuther & Timoshin, 2003), and alcohol use. Implications for utilizing motivational and cognitive-behavioral interventions to reduce problematic alcohol use are considered.

Several studies have been conducted identifying problems for college students related to alcohol consumption. Murphy, Hoyme, Colby, and Borsari (2006) examined the impact of alcohol use on quality of life in college student problems using the Quality of Student Life Questionnaire (Keith & Schalock, 1994). The results suggested higher levels of alcohol use problems were significant predictors of lower general life satisfaction in college males and females (Murphy, Hoyme, Colby, & Borsari, 2006). However, a surprising finding from this study is the absence of a direct negative relationship or correlation between the amount of alcohol consumption and quality of life. Hypotheses by the authors addressing this finding include the idea that consequences of alcohol problems may be dependent upon the dose. As dosage goes up, so do alcohol problems. The implications of this finding indicate that

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students receive a benefit from consuming alcohol when the dosage is not at a point that results in negative consequences. The notion that college students benefit from drinking alcohol is not uncommon in the existing literature. Murphy et al., (2006) identified social belonging for college men is greater in those who consume large amounts of alcohol together. This is also evident in college women. Smith and Berger (2010) conducted a qualitative analysis utilizing a grounded theory approach and semi-structured interviews to identify common factors in drinking among college women ( $n = 10$ ) who met criteria for high-risk use of alcohol. Criteria used for high-risk alcohol use was based on the national standardized binge drinking definition (4 or more drinks in a row at least one time in the last 2 weeks) and reported negative consequences associated with drinking. The results from this study identified three common factors in which all ten of the participants discussed matters relating to these factors. The three factors identified include motives, the relational ritual, and consequences. The motives for drinking include being merry, meeting others including men, and managing mood. The relational ritual factor included drinking before going out with a close network of friends, going out, and telling alcohol-related stories after going out. These two factors are related to the benefits of drinking alcohol. It is implied college students are able to bond with one another and enhance their social experience through the use of alcohol.

The third factor in the Smith and Berger study (2010) was consequences related to drinking. All ten of the participants in their study spoke openly about five different negative consequences related to consuming alcohol including academic, social, emotional, physical, and sexual costs. Academic consequences were identified as missing class and grades slipping. Social consequences included getting into trouble or fighting with friends. Mood consequences were related to acting in a way that was identified as being emotional which includes mood swings. The physical consequences encompassed blackouts, hangovers, and general pain related to hangovers such as puking and purging. The consequences related to sexual behavior included becoming intimate with random partners and being the victim of a sexual assault. It is again evident in the literature that consuming alcohol has benefits, but does not always come without consequences for college women who drink four or more drinks in a row.

Smith and Berger (2010) explained that negative academic consequences were a common experience among college women in their study. In a study by Porter and Pryor (2007), the effects of binge drinking were investigated relating to academic consequences and student engagement. Porter and Pryor identified the prevalence of binge drinking behaviors that ranged from 30% in women's colleges to 56% in males attending coed colleges. The results from their study suggest that heavy episodic drinking behavior has a significant negative effect on overall GPA as well as student engagement. Ordinal logistic regression was used to predict the probability of GPA change and heavy episodic drinking. In the highest level of binge drinking, the predicted change in GPA was  $-0.11$  ( $p < .01$ ). Findings also indicated that one of the strongest predictors of positive educational outcomes is the level of interaction between students and faculty. Heavy episodic drinking at the highest level as evidenced by drinking at least five or more drinks on at least four different occasions in the last two weeks was shown to have a significant effect on the interaction level between male students and faculty members at research institutions. Given that student-faculty interaction is a significant predictor of academic achievement (Porter & Pryor, 2007), this finding can be seen as a problem for males who binge drink at a high level in research institutions.

The negative consequences of problematic alcohol use can exist on several levels for college students. The consequences can vary in nature, but appear most prevalent in the realms of academic functioning, social functioning, and physical health (Smith & Berger, 2010). Despite the consequences of drinking, college students appear to experience benefits related to alcohol use. This includes enhanced relational bonding and social functioning. Given the benefits of alcohol use and the negative consequences, it is important to review the literature related to theory that can adequately explain drinking behaviors among college students so proper interventions might be developed

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

Albert Bandura developed a psychosocial theory of development known as social cognitive theory 1986. This theory was created to help explain human development

across the lifespan. Some of the major tenets of social cognitive theory are: a) people learn through observation; b) learning does not always lead to changes in behavior, and c) a triadic reciprocal relationship exists between a person's environment, their behaviors, and their mental processes (Bandura, 1989). Social cognitive theory assists to explain learning and provides insight into how people may choose to behave.

A major tenet of social cognitive theory is a triadic reciprocal relationship exists between a person's environment, their behaviors, and their mental processes or personal factors. Bandura asserts that not all three of the reciprocal determinants have to be of equal strength, but the strength of the determinants can vary based on other factors (Bandura, 1989). In the model of reciprocal determinism, the influence that personal factors have on behaviors relies heavily on the thoughts, feelings, and actions of a person. Expectations and beliefs are examples of cognitions that influence a person's behavior.

The environment has a direct influence on a person's cognitions as their expectations and beliefs are directly affected by social influence and persuasion. A person's environment affects their cognitions as perceptions of social norms are constructed. Social norms, which are consistent with the environment, act to shape the cognitions about their environment and self. As the environment influences a person's cognitions, their behaviors are then subject to be affected by their cognitions. A two-way causal relationship then exists between the environment and their behaviors. An environment helps to shape a person's behavior, which in turn reinforces the norms of the environment. Bandura refers to this concept as people being the products and producers of their environment. The theory of reciprocal determinism may help explain the influences behind college students behaviors related to drinking.

### **Social Cognitive Theory and College Drinking Behavior**

Much research has examined the influence of peers on the behaviors of an individual. This research extends into behaviors related to drinking among college students. Prior investigations have examined the influence of peers among college students who transition from high school to college, who live in certain housing arrangements, and who are a part of the Greek system. Prior research has provided

insight into the impact of peer influence as well as the influence of perceived norms on college drinking behaviors (Read, Wood, & Capone, 2005; Capone, Wood, Borsari, & Laird, 2007; Phua, 2011).

The transition from high school to college is a major milestone in the life of a young adult. The adjustment can be difficult as students may move to a new city and faced with several new tasks. One of the new tasks can be developing a peer group. Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development contends that a person who is eighteen years old and adjusting to college would be transitioning from a stage of developing one's identity into a stage of developing one's community. These stages are known as identity vs. role confusion and intimacy vs. isolation, respectively. As a person transitions into the latter of these two stages, they would be interested in developing close, interpersonal relationships. It is at this junction people may feel motivated to fit in with a particular peer group. The desire to fit in with a peer group may lead to conformity to the group's social norms.

Research on drinking behaviors of students transitioning from high school to college has provided evidence of the effect of peer influences on drinking behaviors. The effects of the environment are clear in several different studies. A study by Capone, Wood, Borsari, and Laird (2007) investigated the effects of gender and Greek affiliation on alcohol use and alcohol-related problems in the first two years of college as it relates to selection, socialization, or reciprocal influences. The authors propose gender and Greek affiliation are both associated with increases in alcohol use and alcohol-related problems. Males in the Greek system were identified as being the greatest risk for increased alcohol use and alcohol-related problems over the first two years of college.

Further research has found similar results suggesting that males in the Greek system are at the greatest risk for alcohol use. Phua (2011) studied the effects of peer norms and popularity on smoking and drinking behaviors among college fraternity members. Further support was established for the notion college males in the Greek system pose the greatest level of risk for alcohol and smoking behaviors. Phua identified popularity was another predictor contributing to increased alcohol use.

Despite the role of popularity in the increased use of alcohol and cigarettes, another mediator was identified. Conforming to peer norms was found to mediate the effect of popularity. Phua proposed popular members of the Greek system were more likely to drink and smoke more because of conformity to the group's norms regarding alcohol and tobacco use. It is evident in the studies by Capone et al., and Phua the Greek environment imposes a heavy influence on the drinking behaviors among college students.

Alcohol use among students who are actively engaged in Greek life is significantly higher than students who participate less or not at all (Cashin, Meilman, & Presley, 1998). A study designed by Cashin, Meilman, and Presley sought to compare reported drinking behaviors, consequences, and beliefs about alcohol use among students based on their participation in Greek life activities. A 2x4 ANOVA was used to analyze involvement in Greek life and gender (independent variables) and average number of drinks per week (dependent variable) in a sample of 25,411 students from 61 universities. The results from this study provide evidence of a significant main effect for degree of involvement in Greek life ( $F = 456.28, p < .001$ ) and gender ( $F = 1506.52, p < .001$ ) on average number of drinks per week. A significant interaction effect was identified for Gender X Involvement ( $F = 67.15, p < .001$ ). The findings from this study indicate males from the Greek system who are leaders and actively involved are at the greatest risk for heavy alcohol use (5 or more drinks in one sitting). One way in which this study differed from previous studies was by providing evidence that more involvement in Greek life was positively correlated with increased drinking and negative consequences associated with drinking.

The transition from high school to college has been the subject of much research as drinking tends to increase during this period. Schulenberg and Maggs (2002) hypothesize the increase in drinking is the result of increased independence and decreased parental involvement. Given the increase in drinking during this transitional period, it is important to identify the influence of peer groups on drinking behaviors. The role of perceived norms and the influence of the peer group have both been shown to have a significant role in predicting alcohol use. Hummer, LaBrie, and Pedersen (2012)

conducted a study to examine first-year college students' perceptions of alcohol use among other students on the same floor in their dormitory. The findings from this study demonstrate first-year college males and females both overestimated alcohol use behavior and permissive attitudes towards alcohol use among their peers. The implications from this finding suggest that perceived norms among peers were strongly related to individual drinking behavior and individual permissive attitudes towards drinking. Students who perceived their peers to drink more than reported were shown to engage in greater levels of drinking.

The role of social norms in one's choice to engage in drinking behaviors can be attributed to different sources among college students transitioning from high school including active and passive social influences (Read, Wood, & Capone, 2005). Active social influences refer to situations in which alcohol is actively offered. This is important to distinguish because college students are apt to find themselves in an environment where alcohol offers are unconcealed. Passive social influences refer to social modeling and social norms. The findings from Read et al., provide evidence for the effect of Bandura's triadic reciprocal determinism theory on the drinking behaviors among college students. The environment and personal factors were shown to have an effect on students drinking behaviors as active alcohol offers and perceived social norms resulted in greater alcohol use.

Additional research has focused on drinking behaviors during the transition from the last month of high school to the first month of college in females. LaBrie, Huchting, Pedersen, Hummer, Shelesky, and Tawalbeh (2007) examined drinking behaviors in this population and were able to report several findings. College females' drinking behaviors during the first month of college are significantly predicted by their previous drinking history while in high school. This finding suggests females who drink in high school are more likely to increase alcohol consumption during the first month of college. Even after controlling for several factors such as prior drinking history and family income, LaBrie et al., identified the intention to pledge to a sorority among college females significantly predicted an increase in alcohol use. This finding provides further evidence for the reciprocal effect of one's environment and personal factors on their

behavior. This study provides evidence that the perception of drinking behaviors in the Greek system influences college females' choice to engage in elevated drinking behaviors over the first month of college.

The study by LaBrie et al., adds to the study conducted by Capone et al., as drinking behaviors in Capone's study were found to be greatest in the Greek system. It is apparent in the study by Labrie et al., that college females perceive the environmental influence of the Greek system and engage in behaviors that are believed to be congruent with the desired or intended environment. This finding provides support for the notion the Greek system is among the greatest risk for elevated drinking in first year college students. The evidence of the effect of perceived social norms and peer influences on individual behavior is apparent in college students as they transition from high school to college and especially for those who intend to pledge to the Greek system. These findings are consistent with prior research on a false consensus effect in which students commonly overestimated the commonality of their own drug or alcohol use on their peers (Wolfson, 2000). False consensus occurs when people choose to identify with others based on having similar behaviors of their own. An understanding of the false consensus effect helps to explain why college females who intend to join a sorority may drink more.

### **The Influence of Positive Alcohol Expectancies on Alcohol Use**

The effects of peer influence and social norms are evident not only in first year college students, but in students at all stages in their college career in various environments. Wardell and Read (2012) examined the role of social norms and positive alcohol expectancies (PAEs) in college students between the ages of 18-24 over the first three years of students' college careers. Positive alcohol expectancies include items such as mood management, social lubrication, and performance enhancement. It was hypothesized that PAEs are more stable whereas norms are more dynamic and change over time. The results suggest positive alcohol expectancies do indeed remain more stable over time and social norms tend to be more dynamic indicating a reciprocal influence between quantity of drinking norms and drinking quantity. Peer perceptions are also related to this concept as people who are at a greater risk for a substance use



disorder, misperceive alcohol use norms to a greater extent than those who are not at risk (Lewis & Mobley, 2010). As perceived norms of quantity and positive expectancies increased, so did the amount of alcohol used by college students. The reciprocal influence was evident as norms related to quantity increased when the quantity of alcohol consumed increased as well. These findings demonstrate further evidence of the triadic reciprocal influence between individual factors, environments, and behaviors.

Positive alcohol outcome expectancies have been researched to identify whether they act as a mediator between social influences (active and passive) and alcohol use. Wood, Read, Palfai, and Stevenson (2001) found strong evidence for perceived positive alcohol outcomes acting as a mediator between socio-environmental factors and individual drinking behaviors. It is again hypothesized personal factors play a mediating role between one's environment and one's behaviors. Evidence from this study suggests that PAEs influence college students' decisions to drink alcohol as the results indicate the use of alcohol is increased when the positive expectancy value of one's expectations are increased.

A connection between the roles of social norms and PAEs is evident in the articles by Wardell et al. (2012), and Wood et al (2001). According to Wardell et al., the reciprocal determinism theory, developed by Bandura, helps explain the role of social norms as they influence college drinking. However, the effect of positive alcohol expectancies was not deemed to have a reciprocal influence with alcohol use. PAEs influenced alcohol use, but not the converse. Wardell and Read (2012) hypothesized norms and PAEs differ in their nature. Norms are dynamic and fluid changing over time, whereas PAEs are more concrete and stable. Wood et al., found a reciprocal influence between PAEs and alcohol use, whereas Wardell et al., did not. One hypothesis regarding the stability of PAEs is PAEs are stable for people by the time they reach college. Wardell et al., proposed that PAEs are more fluid in younger adolescents who are experimenting with alcohol. By the time young adolescents reach college, the PAEs have been solidified and are not as subject to changing. The existing body of literature has additional support for the reciprocal influence of social norms and alcohol use,

whereas the support for the reciprocal influence between PAEs and alcohol use is not as well documented.

The role of positive alcohol expectancies in college men has also been researched to identify whether PAEs mediate the relationship between masculine norms and alcohol use. Iwamoto, Corbin, Lejuez, and MacPherson (2013) identified the masculine norms of playboy and risk taking were both associated with higher levels of alcohol use when controlling for Greek involvement. These two norms were also positively correlated with positive expectancies. Findings from this study suggest positive expectancies work to mediate the relationship between masculine norms and alcohol use. Seeing that PAEs may be more stable by the time students reach college, it is evident in this population that PAEs are related to alcohol use. These results are consistent with Bandura's theory on social learning and the role that positive alcohol expectancies play in mediating the association between personal factors and problems resulting from alcohol use (Borsari, Murphy, & Barnett, 2007).

### **The Role of Personal Factors in Drinking Behaviors**

Personal factors such as psychosocial and social cognitive variables are both shown to have an effect on college drinking behaviors (Kuther and Timoshin, 2003). Psychosocial predictors for drinking include levels of self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, social support and assertiveness. Social cognitive predictors refer to expectation, evaluation, and norms (parental and peer). Previous studies identified mixed results for the role of expectation in alcohol use. Positive alcohol expectancies have been found to predict alcohol use in college students, but conclusive evidence for a reciprocal influence does not exist. The conclusions from this study provide evidence for the influence of social cognitive predictors, especially expectations of the likelihood of positive and negative consequences on increased alcohol use in college students. Psychosocial predictors accounted for 1% of the variance in self-reported drinking with social support being the only significant predictor (Kuther & Timoshin, 2003). This notion provides further support for social cognitive factors such as expectation, evaluation, and norms being factors leading to increases in drinking behavior.

Kuther et al. (2003) examined the roles of negative alcohol expectancies to determine their effect on alcohol use. Their findings suggest college students who evaluate negative consequences in a more positive light tend to drink less. These results appear to be counterintuitive, but consistent with prior literature, as perceived negative consequences of drinking have provided mixed results (Kuther, 2002). Alcohol use and self-efficacy were also related as people who perceived less control over their drinking displayed lower levels of self-efficacy. This was also related to negative consequences as measured by the Comprehensive Effects of Alcohol Questionnaire (Fromme, Stroot, & Kaplan, 1993). The Comprehensive Effects of Alcohol Questionnaire measures students' perceptions of positive and negative consequences as they relate to drinking along with the likelihood of these consequences occurring. Reliability indices for expectancy and value were calculated using test-retest analyses. The reliability ranges were  $r = .66-.72$  (positive expectancy),  $r = .59-.78$  (positive value),  $r = .75-.81$  (negative expectancy), and  $r = .53-.65$  (negative value) (Fromme, Stroot, & Kaplan, 1993). Students who become more familiar with the negative consequences of drinking begin to perceive these consequences as neutral and no longer negative. This in turn leads to perceptions of lessened control over drinking and a diminished level of self-efficacy. Social cognitive predictors for drinking appear to have a significant effect on alcohol use among college students. Self-efficacy acts as a mediator between evaluations of negative consequences of drinking and self-reported levels of drinking suggesting college students begin to view negative consequences in a more favorable light when they feel less control over their drinking.

Emotional intelligence is another personal factor that has been researched as having an influence on alcohol use. Ghee and Johnson (2008) found emotional intelligence held a mediating role between peer norms and alcohol use. The authors suggest college students with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrate less of an association between the variables of peer norms and alcohol use. The opposite was evident as well. Students with lower emotional intelligence demonstrate a greater relationship between peer norms and alcohol use.

The findings from Ghee and Johnson's study are consistent with a study by Claros and Sharma (2012) that the self-efficacy variables of perception, utilization, regulation, and management of emotion were significant predictors of alcohol and marijuana use. High scores of emotional intelligence are positively associated with abilities to successfully cope with life's stressors. Claros and Sharma identified students with higher scores of self-efficacy were associated with lower scores on the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT). The four factors of emotional intelligence (perception, utilization, regulation, and management of emotion) may help students to be aware of peer norms and make choices related to alcohol use that result in fewer or less severe consequences.

Self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and other personal factors influence the choices that college students make with regards to drinking. Merrill, Read, and Barnett (2012) researched the role of subjective evaluations of recently experienced consequences and the effect that may have on college students' decisions to drink throughout college. The results from this study suggest that students drank less, which correlated positively with fewer alcohol related consequences, when they evaluated their recent consequences as being negative. Merrill et al., hypothesized college students who choose to view their consequences as being aversive are more likely to engage in behavioral changes to avoid risks. These results are consistent with some of the prior literature on the effects of negative alcohol expectancies, but they don't parallel the findings from Kuther et al., (2003).

Kuther et al. (2003), found that students who view negative consequences in a more positive light tend to drink less than their peers. Merrill et al., (2012) identified negative subjective evaluations of consequences tend to lead to less drinking as subjective evaluation scores across weeks were associated with lower alcohol consumption ( $p = .01$ ) and fewer alcohol consequences ( $p = .002$ ). The result from these two studies both lead to the same result which is less drinking, but the means to achieve this result are different. In one case, a favorable interpretation of negative consequences leads to less drinking and in the other case, a less favorable interpretation of negative consequences resulted in less drinking. A connection may be

made between the consideration of negative consequences and reduced alcohol use. This connection may help to inform the development of further risk reduction and alcohol-based treatments for college students.

Excessive alcohol use during college years is a norm perceived as being a part of the entire college experience. Students may hold beliefs that all their peers drink and the overuse or abuse of alcohol is a common experience among other students. Alcohol abuse among college students often results in consequences that can be perceived as positive or negative. Positive consequences may include the belief that students function better socially, may manage their mood better, and have greater social experiences. However positive the experience may be, it is also evident that alcohol abuse comes with negative consequences that are academic, social, emotional, physical, and sexual in nature.

### **Implications for Counseling**

Bandura's theory of triadic reciprocal determinism helps to explain drinking behavior among college students. In his theory, a reciprocal influence exists between the environments, behaviors, and personal factors of a person. This is evident in several studies as alcohol use is related with consequences and higher levels of use among first year students who plan to pledge to a Greek organization and among students who are already a part of the Greek system. This is an environment that poses a risk for college students and has a reciprocal influence on the perceptions, expectancies, and outcomes of college students. An understanding of the students who are at the greatest risk for excessive alcohol use, and what helps to determine this risk may then help to build effective interventions. Using social cognitive theory as a foundation, it is important to build interventions that effectively help students evaluate their environments, their behaviors, and their cognitions or beliefs that lead to risky alcohol use. Given college students who abuse alcohol may lack coping strategies (Britton, 2004), it is important to develop interventions that teach skills to reduce risky behavior and how to consume alcohol in a more responsible manner.

Given the dynamic nature of the reciprocal influence between socio-environmental factors, individual factors, and personal factors, it is important to develop

interventions that address all three of these types of influences. Interventions that address socio-environmental factors can help create awareness for students as to how their environment shapes their behavior. Addressing issues related to active influences such as direct alcohol offers can help students make choices as to what environments will be most conducive for their well-being. Students can make plans that will help reduce the possibility of experiencing negative consequences. This may include having a predetermined time to leave, a predetermined and reasonable set amount of drinks to consume, and having a friend to be accountable in that environment. It is also important to address passive influences such as social modeling and social norms. Social norms interventions are currently a popular way of trying to help college students lessen their drinking by offering them statistics and norms of campus drinking behaviors. Read, Wood, and Capone (2005) suggested it might be best to narrow the scope of the norms presented to college students because they identified social influence factors are stronger as they are closer to the individual. Given these findings, it may be better to offer norms based approaches tailored for specific populations as they relate specifically to individuals. Students interpret these norms with more meaning as they self relate as opposed to norms as they relate to less intimate groups or typical college students on a campus wide level.

Interventions seeking to help college students reduce excessive alcohol use can also be developed to address personal factors and behaviors. Given the role of perceived positive/negative consequences of alcohol use, it may be helpful to address these expectancies utilizing a motivational and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) framework. A motivational approach can help reduce ambivalence to change by engaging the client, focusing on issues that a client may want to change, evoking motivation to change, and planning steps to achieve change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). A motivational counseling approach utilizes open-ended questions, affirmations, reflections, and summaries. The purpose of a motivational approach is to reduce ambivalence to change and building enthusiasm about working towards change. A CBT approach can help identify the connections between personal factors (cognitions) and behaviors related to drinking. A cognitive-behavioral approach may include discovering

triggers for excessive alcohol use, expectations related to excessive alcohol use, past experiences (positive and negative) of excessive alcohol use, and how those in turn lead to engaging in behaviors that are consistent with a social environment in which excessive alcohol use is present.

By practicing safe behaviors related to alcohol use, students may then develop a greater sense of self-efficacy. Since levels of self-efficacy were correlated with levels of alcohol use (Kuther & Timoshin, 2003), it may be important for college students to develop self-efficacy through practicing new skills and experiencing rewards or success related to their new behaviors. Rewards or successes can be experienced through optimal social functioning without the presence of negative consequences. Utilizing Bandura's model of triadic reciprocal determinism, it is helpful to understand college students behaviors related to drinking as they relate to socio-environmental factors, personal factors, and individual behaviors. An understanding of the presence of these three types of influences can then allow for efficient interventions to be developed and utilized so that college students may reduce the excessive and risky use of alcohol.

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