The Link between Alcohol Abuse and Depression in College

Julie Hersh is the author of Struck by Living: From Depression to Hope, published in 2010. In addition to the book, Julie Hersh maintains a blog by the same name on the Psychology Today website. On her blog, she examines and highlights important aspects of mental health.

A recent conference at the University of Michigan Depression Center, titled Depression on College Campuses, made important connections between the use of alcohol and illegal substances and depression, which could lead to other problems, such as poor academic performance. Depressive episodes have become increasingly common among college freshmen, likely due to poor dietary and sleep habits combined with the stress of relocation. Perhaps researchers have overlooked the role that heavy alcohol consumption plays in this equation.

During her freshman year of college, Julie Hersh suffered from depression and believed for a long time that increased exercise and other lifestyle changes would allow her to take control of the disease. In retrospect, however, she points out that her depression lessened as she began to drink less after her freshman year due to association with a new group of friends. College students today must understand the risk involved with alcohol abuse from every angle, including mental health