



ABOUT THE POWER OF EXPECTATIONS

or...

Who said alcohol is fun?

Honestly, the most common reason for people to use alcohol is to:

Make out  
Have fun with friends  
Dance  
Be talkative  
Or simply – to relax

But can all that fun stuff fit into a bottle? Is alcohol a magic drink that can provide all that on purely chemical basis?

**Not really!**

There are no real medical proofs that it is alcohol that makes us feel all the fun. What actually happens when we use alcohol is that we are so strongly convinced that alcohol will make us so free and happy that just the sole expectation makes us drunk.



*It's the people who make the party awesome,  
not the drinks, bro.*



We could say that one does not get drunk on alcohol but drunk on expectations.

Many people talk often about **placebo** effect in the connection to medical drugs. It's a phenomena that makes that something, for example a pill, can make us feel better or worse just by us expecting the effect. What many people do not know is that alcohol has a very similar effect.

What matters the most when it comes to the feeling of being tipsy is that one **believes** that s/he has used alcohol and not the actual action of using alcohol.

The best way to prove it is a **blind test**. It goes like this:



As a laboratory does not really make the most party-like impression, we chose a place where it is very usual to use alcohol. For example a bar or a club. This environment made the test persons believe that they were served alcohol but in reality they had alcohol free drinks. And here it gets exciting.

Despite the fact that the test persons had not had a drop of alcohol they experienced drunkenness/tipsiness. That is the placebo effect by which we **get tricked**.

In 1998 a psychology professor Roland Gustafsson made an analysis of 176 vast scientific studies that looked deeply into blind tests and other experiments on effects of alcohol. He did not find out any evidence that alcohol leads to weakened inhibitions and impulsive behavior.

But why are our brains programmed and believe that alcohol will bless us with inebriation that makes is believe that everything is much fun. It is not so weird..

As we are daily bombed with pictures telling us that cool and fun equal alcohol. Testing of beer in morning programs, school graduation celebrations with Champaign and a grandma getting giggly from a little shot of whisky at the Xmas Eve

**It is simply a norm to use alcohol and a picture of alcohol doing wonders with us is everywhere around us and is inherited from generation to generation.**



Who said Alcohol is fun ??





But as said, it is not proven that there is a chemical reaction that gives us all those fun effects that we associate with the use of alcohol. It is the other way around.

The only thing that is confirmed by evidence is that **alcohol impairs** our **motoric system** which leads to stumbling, dropping stuff, throwing up, confused speech...

BUT

wait a moment... **those are not the reasons why we use alcohol!**





IOGT International is the premier global interlocutor for evidence-based policy measures and community-based interventions to prevent and reduce harm caused by alcohol and other drugs.