

HOLMES'S COMPLETE GUIDE



THE EASY, MINDFUL AND PAIN-FREE WAY

TO STOP DRINKING ALCOHOL

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO SOUND LIKE YOU'VE READ THE BOOK

ABOUT HOLMES'S COMPLETE GUIDE

"In this robust manual, Holmes offers an easy and painless way to quit drinking alcohol permanently. The core of this process is a style of cognitive behavioral therapy with a focus on the incremental reduction of drinking and an increase in mindfulness—through meditation, self-assessment, and self-monitoring—to identify harmful patterns. To aid in this, the book provides numerous tools, from graphs and tables for recording habits to diagnostic tests like the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test, the DSM-5, and others...

The book promises "a radical alternative to the public perception...of drinking" as well as "a revolution in alcohol awareness." In the latter case especially, the guide succeeds." - Kirkus Reviews

ENDORSEMENTS

"Fact-based", "highly entertaining" and a "great self-help book". "As well as a 'must-read' if you want to totally abstain from drinking alcohol." **The Independent Review of Books**

"Incredibly useful in terms of my work as a psychotherapist with clients with alcohol addiction", "deeply rooted in the latest academic research and packed with very useful references, this book is very easy to read and very entertaining."

Oksana Georgiou MBACP MBPsS

"Empowering, Entertaining and Effective" 5-Star Amazon Review

#1 Amazon Bestseller in Substance Abuse, Alcoholism and Drug Dependency categories in 'Top 100 Free' launch giveaway in 48hrs.

SUMMARY

Title: Holmes's Complete Guide To Stop Drinking Alcohol;
The Easy, Mindful and Pain-free Way

Author: Mark Holmes

Publisher: Addiction Help Agency Ltd.

Release date: September 1, 2021

ISBN: 978-1-7399589-1-6

Retail Price: £21.79 (Paperback) 375 pages.

Available at: Amazon

ABOUT MARK HOLMES



Former School Principal, Holmes was a self-confessed high-functioning alcoholic for over thirty years and spent years researching alcohol to find a way to control and eventually stop drinking alcohol, training as a Cognitive-Behavioral Therapist (CBT), and culminating in his CBT-inspired 375-page #1 Amazon Bestseller in Substance Addiction describing how he succeeded.

In 2020, Holmes founded the Addiction Help Agency Ltd., with the dream of helping others find a way to be happy permanently clean and sober as an online Therapist, Writer, Public Speaker, Vlogger and YouTube Personality a.k.a. the Alcohol Quit Guru. Holmes has an MA from UCL, and is a Fellow of The RSA..

CONTACT MARK HOLMES

Phone: (+44) 07596335734

Location: London, England

Website: www.addictionhelp.agency

mark.holmes@addictionhelp.agency

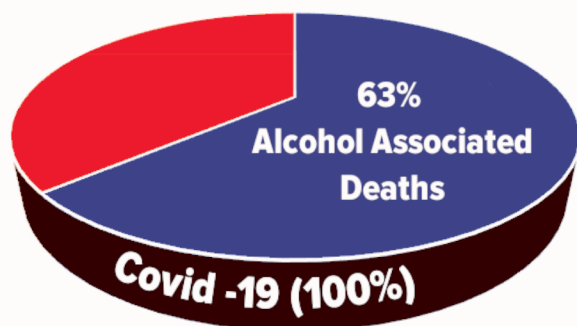
Facebook: MarkHolmesAuthor

YouTube: Crazy Sobriety Vlog

WHY HOLMES'S MESSAGE IS IMPORTANT

ALCOHOL IS OVER HALF AS BIG A PANDEMIC WORLDWIDE AS COVID-19 IN 2021.

**Alcohol associated deaths as %
of all Covid -19 deaths**



"Since 31 December 2019 and as of week 2021-33, 212 418 662 cases of COVID-19 have been reported, including 4 436 327 deaths." [ECDC]

"Alcohol is associated with 2.8 million deaths each year worldwide"

[The Lancet]

4,436,327 (Covid-19 deaths)

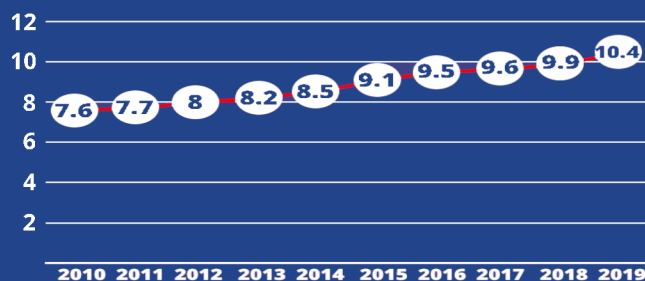
/ 2,800,000 (Alcohol associated deaths)

= Alcohol deaths are 63% of Covid-19 deaths worldwide.

ESTIMATED ALCOHOL DEATHS IN THE US 2010-2019

An estimated 95,000 Americans (approximately 68,000 men and 27,000 women) die from alcohol-related causes annually (NIAAA) or 9.9 per 100,000 in 2018 (KFF) - [See graph opp. for 2019 figure.] In the UK in 2018 there were 7,551 alcohol-specific deaths, but even higher than US at around 11.9 per 100,000 people. This is the second-highest level since the records began in the UK in 2001.

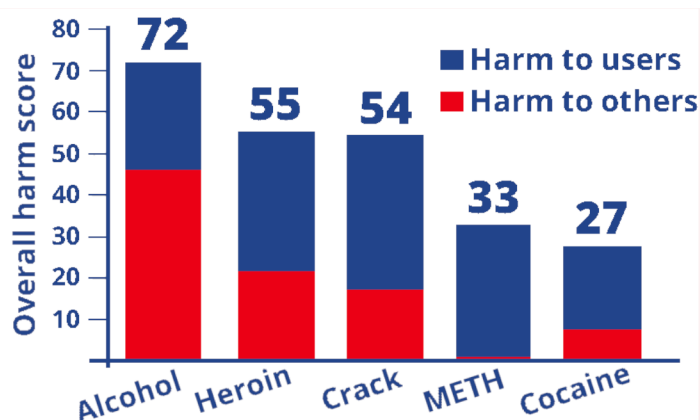
Alcohol Deaths Per 100,000



ALCOHOL IS MORE HARMFUL THAN HEROIN AND CRACK COCAINE

"Overall, alcohol was the most harmful drug (overall harm score 72), with heroin (55) and crack cocaine (54) in second and third places." in Drug Harms in the UK: A Multicriteria Decision Analysis, Nutt et al (2010)

Alcohol is "the top risk factor [for deaths and disability] among the world's population aged 15-49 years" (Global Status Report on alcohol and health 2018).



AN INTERVIEW WITH HOLMES

1) Why is it **so hard** for people to **stop drinking alcohol**?

They're quitting wrong. **Quitting** alcohol is not a 100m sprint it is a *marathon*, and requires insight into the race and preparation. Yet most people who quit seem to suddenly decide to run the race, not knowing which race, the night before, or the morning after (!) relying on willpower alone! But how far is willpower alone going to get you in a marathon after years of decidedly "not training"? Probably as far as around the figurative block! You need The Three P's to stop drinking alcohol: **Perspicaciousness**, **Preparation** and **Perseverance**. Sobriety isn't the dream; The dream is what dreams sobriety can make come true that drinking can't.

2) What is different from **Holmes's method** to stop drinking alcohol to any of the other numerous popular "quit-lit" books out there in 2021?

Firstly, they're all wrong. They claim alcohol is a depressant. It is not. New research proves it is a **biphasic stimulant sedative**. If they don't know what alcohol is, how can they know how best to stop you drinking it? The "quit-lit" genre got lazy, stopped doing its homework, and everyone jumped on the bandwagon.

Secondly, *Holmes's method* is based on the facts. It has the most up-to-date current research with **over 300 academic references**.

Thirdly, *Holmes's method* is inspired by a recognised therapeutic method, **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy**, which has **saved millions of lives**, whereas many of the popular "quit-lit" books are merely the product of the author's imagination and lack any therapeutic methodology at all. The argument is, "But if they work, what is wrong with that?" What is wrong is that they don't work *permanently*, because they are wrong, and they damage people's lives. People will quit and relapse, in **repeated cycles of quitting/relapsing**, damaging their self-esteem and *hope in a solution* because they believed in these popular charlatans, which is far worse than merely losing the investment of their time and money in these books.

3) In a nutshell, what is **Holmes's method**?

At its core, Holmes's method to stop drinking alcohol is based on CBT and **Mindfulness**. This involves a gradual **intake reduction and meditation development plan** over twelve weeks utilizing **cognitive-behavioral theory** supported by the latest research on alcohol addiction and relapse prevention to achieve *permanent* sobriety.

4) Why do we need another book on how to stop drinking alcohol in 2021?

Firstly, you need **The Facts**, and secondly, you need **The Truth**. Sometimes the two are different.

5) What makes **Holmes** the right person to tell anyone how to quit drinking alcohol?

As a former Principal and British qualified teacher with over twenty-years teaching, lecturing and instructing experience, Holmes knows how to explain complex issues in a simple and easy-to-understand way. Holmes's method is based on the Indian Buddhist tradition of **mindfulness** which is why he is known as the "[Alcohol Quit Guru](#)" on YouTube. Guru is an Indian Sanskrit word: गुरु), and connotes "teacher".

Holmes knows about research from studying for a Master's degree in Education from UCL, The University of London, England, which is why **Holmes's Complete Guide To Stop Drinking Alcohol** contains **over 300 academic references**.

Unfortunately, Holmes knows about alcoholism *intimately* and only too well, because Holmes was a high-functioning alcoholic for over thirty years. However, it was researching a way out of his condition that gave him the inspiration and fortitude to write **Holmes's Complete Guide To Stop Drinking Alcohol**.

Finally, Holmes is an online CBT Therapist at the [Alcohol Addiction Agency](#), which he founded to support others using his methods to happily and permanently overcome alcohol addiction.

6) Why do people become **addicted** to alcohol?

Firstly, it would be abnormal not to begin drinking in today's society. "Normal" is culture dependent, and culture makes us normal, in a process of enculturation which cannot not happen.

"Across studies, drinking was described as something very normal, which everyone does, and is culturally expected." [Morris et al. \(2020\)](#)

Through music, books, movies, not just commercials on TV, although that isn't insignificant either. In the US between 1971 and 2012 advertising expenditure on alcohol increased 400%. [Wilcox et al \(2015\)](#)

Secondly, we have to contend with the ***Ironic Taste Trap***; alcohol initially tastes so bad, we don't perceive it as a threat, and indeed even refer to it as an acquired taste.

Thirdly, of course, alcohol is highly addictive, physically and psychologically. Alcohol is a **biphasic stimulant sedative** so it initially gives you a high or pleasurable reward, immediately followed by a calming sleepy effect. This is not unpleasant physically at light doses, and psychologically the pleasurable effects seem to offer a clear benefit to enhance a positive emotional state or reduce a negative emotional state. Alcohol appears to be the fabled elixir to cure all ills rather than, in fact, the poisonous creator of all ills it actually is.

7) But isn't alcohol **in moderation** good for you?

Firstly, as neatly summarised by Gideon Meyerowitz-Katz in [The Guardian](#), "you can't easily separate moderate drinking from the people who drink moderately." The people who drink moderately tend to be, not *coincidentally*, healthier and of higher social economic status (SES) according to the research:

"Moderate drinkers had better health and SES than heavier or nondrinkers. The positive influence of moderate alcohol consumption on health was observed for men and women when controlling for SES proxies, but was substantially reduced in women and completely disappeared for men when controlling for full SES."
[Towers et al \(2016\)](#)

Secondly, in an Israeli study, 224 people were randomly assigned 150ml of either water, red wine or white wine with their evening meal for two years. This **moderate drinking** showed **no significant health benefits** except improving sleep quality according to the research:

"Across the 3 groups, no material differences were identified in blood pressure, adiposity, liver function, drug therapy, symptoms, or quality of life, except that sleep quality improved in both wine groups compared with the water group." [Gepner et al \(2015\)](#)

It is not surprising that improved sleep quality at a moderate dose was an outcome because alcohol is a biphasic stimulant *sedative*. But what neither study mentioned about moderate drinking is the risk of cancer, "Moderate drinking significantly increased the incidence of male colorectal cancer and female breast cancer." [Yoon-Jung Choi et al \(2018\)](#)

Finally, another [study](#) showed there are **no benefits to health of even moderate drinking** as reported in [Time](#): "Compared to non-drinkers, people who had one alcoholic beverage per day had a 0.5% higher risk of developing one of 23 alcohol-related health problems, including cancer, road injuries and tuberculosis." Which has to make you wonder why the evidence against any significant benefits from the moderate drinking of alcohol is never celebrated in our culture and media as much as the evidence in favour.

8) But what if you need alcohol to cope with **chronic pain**?

Sorry, that's wrong. i) Alcohol only has an analgesic effect at doses *far beyond* recommended daily max. levels. ii) Increasing alcohol dosage develops tolerance which can lead to alcohol dependence. iii) **Alcohol withdrawal symptoms increase pain sensitivity** which may cause someone to increase their alcohol intake to reduce pain-withdrawal. iv) If you then combine pain medication with alcohol to reduce pain, it may cause gastric bleeding, acute liver failure or fatal overdose. Yet, sadly, still up to **28% of the U.S. population** use alcohol to relieve chronic pain. [NIH \(May 2021\)](#)

9) If alcohol is so bad, are you suggesting we bring back **Prohibition**, or what should government do?

No, Prohibition was obviously a spectacular failure in the early 20th Century, raising taxes on alcoholic drinks to reduce consumption is universally unpopular and the legal drinking age in America at 21, is already three years higher than the UK. Therefore, government shouldn't take action to limit consumers' choice.

Firstly, the government needs to **educate** consumers, which should happen from Junior/Primary School through to university through to employment. Research shows that children begin forming opinions about alcohol and its effects from a very early age and are particularly vulnerable to becoming life-long addicts after experimentation during adolescence. At University, **students are very vulnerable to peer pressure** to drink alcohol and colleges need to do a lot more to increase alcohol awareness and provide strategies to cope with peer pressure. In the workplace, companies need to provide training on alcohol awareness as part of their wellness and mental health programmes or they may become liable for negligence due to work-related stress.

Secondly, government needs to better regulate the industry, in terms of the four Ps of Marketing. 1) **Product**. Requirement to produce non-alcoholic variation with identical packaging except warning label (see below). 2) **Pricing**. This does not mean minimum price controls per unit of alcohol, which have been introduced in [Scotland](#), albeit with some success, but zero alcohol products given zero or reduced VAT. Therefore, positive rather than progressive alcohol pricing, unlike the CDC which currently advocates [increasing VAT on alcohol](#). 3) **Packaging**. Clear FDA Warning labelling (Size 20% of label) of RDA's for Standard Drinks of Alcohol for Men and Women & Number of Standard Drinks/ml in Product. 4) **Promotion**. If alcoholic drinks were introduced to the market today for the first time the FDA wouldn't approve them as safe to drink, so there would be no adverts at all. Therefore, there should be a total ban on all above-and below-the-line promotion of alcoholic drinks because alcohol is a risk to health, except for non-alcoholic variations. Supermarkets need to be required to display alcoholic products of a maximum 3.5% ABV in a separate sealed-off area, with its own tills, as in, for example, Indonesia. The government should own specialist alcohol retailers to sell drinks stronger than 3.5% like the government-owned [Systembolaget in Sweden, Monopol in Norway and Alko in Finland](#).

10) Isn't there anything good about alcohol? It can't be all bad. [2.8 billion people](#) can't all be wrong, can they?

Alcohol is a **biphasic stimulant sedative** so it will give you an immediate pleasure, buzz, high or sense of reward, which is good, I admit, quickly followed by a sedative effect. There is no point denying this buzz or high, like most "quit-lit" authors who suggest the drinker must be mad because alcohol is a "depressant". Alcohol does, of course, depress the central nervous system, but not before it has stimulated it! The **stimulation** is for many the **main purpose of drinking**! But is that 'good'? Firstly, it is a very short-lived effect. Secondly, it is immediately followed by a **sedative** effect. Thirdly, it **removes inhibitory control**, which rather than a benefit, is a symptom of ADHD. The **effect of alcohol is counter-intuitive**; it doesn't do what you think it will do; what it says on the packet. The commercial featuring the happy dancing partygoer becoming increasingly uncoordinated, blurred in speech, and morose as they drink more is rare. We are sold an illusion and the frightening thing is how good we believe it is.