



## **The Christmas Party**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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It is exciting! You have a new outfit and had taken extra care to make sure you are all "spiffed up". You are looking your very best. Just a little fragrance and minimal but perfectly-chosen jewelry make the final touches and you are ready to go.

Everyone's been chatting it up for weeks. It's the annual Christmas Party.

Eyes turn as you walk through the door. You look good and feel good.

There's a relaxed atmosphere as everyone smiles and laughs easily. No one is talking about work tonight. Not a care in the world right now. You're here to party.

Until everything goes wrong! The two drink limit that you promised yourself disappears quickly. It's amazing how quickly you feel the effects. Maybe you should have had something to eat earlier but you really didn't know that the food was going to be served so late in the evening.

First a pleasant confidence but then you start to think that perhaps you are losing just a little control. Did you really say that? Whoops. That wasn't a very pleasant stare you just received.

Just a little tipsy. Dang. Who left that "whatever it is" right in my pathway?

Think it's time for a visit to the bathroom. Thought I knew where it was but... hmmm.

Wow. I didn't know that's what my coworker thought about me. That hurts. Why does it kind of feel like I am in a dream? The lips are moving but I'm not really hearing what is said. What are they talking about?

Oh no. Looks like a fight is in the making. I can't stand it when people who can't hold their liquor drink too much.

Euuuuw. My head hurts. I don't want to sit up. I think I am going to be sick. What day is it? How on earth did my outfit get so dirty... and what's that awful smell?

Where's my partner? Where's my car?

What day is it? How did I get home? What happened? I just don't remember.

I really don't want to go to work. Not sure if I embarrassed myself. How will everyone treat me? Will they tell me what I said and did? Or will they make up stories because they think that's funny? I really don't want to be the office joke.

How did I lose control? I swear I'm never going to let this happen again.

The Christmas Party - will you lose your memory, your relationships, your driver's license, your dignity or worse? Are you willing to give up respect from others and respect for yourself?

The choice is yours. You have the ability and the power to make a difference in your life and the life of others. Consider what has prevented you from being your best in the past and then make a decision to improve in that area.

Why not choose alcohol-free fun this year? There will be a lot fewer questions and regrets. You will likely be thankful that you made this choice.