

# **Can Trait Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Protect Undergraduate Students from Drinking to Cope and Alcohol-Related Problems?**

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**Background and Objectives:** Undergraduate students report high levels of alcohol consumption, psychological symptoms, and drinking to cope with their psychological symptoms. Building on the work of Bravo and colleagues (2016), the present protocol describes two alternative coping strategies, trait mindfulness and self-compassion, and how they may influence associations between psychological symptoms, drinking to cope, and alcohol-related problems.

**Method:** Undergraduate students (N = 200) will complete self-report measures assessing psychological symptoms (depression, anxiety, stress), drinking motives, alcohol-related problems, and levels of trait mindfulness and self-compassion.

**Expected Results:** We expect mindfulness (specifically, the non-judging facet) and self-compassion to influence associations between psychological symptoms and drinking to cope, such that students with high (versus low) levels will report decreased drinking to cope and alcohol-related problems.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** Although results will be correlational and further experimental studies are needed, findings can provide a preliminary understanding of how trait mindfulness and self-compassion may protect undergraduate students from drinking to cope and alcohol-related problems. Since mindfulness and self-compassion skills can be taught, results (with replication) can be translated to students (e.g., during orientation week) and used to inform mindfulness-based and self-compassion focused interventions.