Just the other night, I was at a campfire with some of the least interesting people in the world. They had funny stories and commentary, but it was funny in an overdone way. At one point, the conversation lulled, and we all started telling embarrassing stories about our lives. We heard a story of somebody who got too drunk and did something stupid. We then heard a story about how somebody got too drunk and did a different stupid thing. Fascinating stuff.

I am not as cool and interesting as these people, so I didn’t have a good story about getting too drunk and doing something stupid. I had to tell the story about how I had diarrhea on a road trip once and released my bowels on the side of the road multiple times in one glamorous evening. The pain of that night still haunts me.

This is a difficult stage of the summer. I have covered all the biblical deadly sins and still have columns to write. It’s a nightmare — or it was, until I realized that there are some deadly sins of Berkeley that weren’t mentioned in the Bible.

This week, we are covering the sin of being the person who talks about how drunk he or she was last night.

Nobody cares.

Nobody cares about how many shots you took. Nobody cares about how you threw up in the trash can without being seen. Nobody cares about how your dance moves were insane. Nobody cares about the person you made out with who ended up being ugly. Nobody cares that your friends had to help you walk home. Nobody cares about the different places you threw up and how many times. Nobody cares
about the position in which you fell asleep. Nobody cares about the position in which you awoke, cradling the toilet. Nobody cares about your hangover. Got it?

What I’m trying to tell you is that your drunk stories are not original or unique. People have been telling these same morning-after stories for generations. I hear them all the time.

Quite frankly, I’m remarkably unimpressed by the fact that sometimes you go out and get belligerently drunk.

Please understand that I’m not trying to say stories about diarrhea are any better. They’re actually probably much less fun to hear.

The fact is that if you spend large amounts of your time reliving those great times when you were too sloppy drunk to walk, it leads everybody to believe that that is the only noteworthy thing you do, which would certainly be sad.

And to the people who are doing other noteworthy things with their lives, it swiftly gets old listening to people’s stories about their wild nights out.

The biggest problem is that in general, when people tell me about how drunk they were and how they danced with a person they shouldn’t have danced with and threw up all over their friend’s apartment, they do it with this bizarre tone of pride, as if their pain and suffering validate them as cool or as a person who doesn’t quite play by the rules. It’s indicative of the fact that a self-deprecating sense of humor is all the rage in this day and age. Just look to Louis C.K. for a good example.

Good self-deprecating humor includes looking at yourself, finding your problems, recognizing them and laughing them away.

“I was so drunk, I slept embracing a bucket. Ha ha ha ha.”

Then people laugh — positive reinforcement — and we realize that self-deprecating humor is great! It’s relatable and hysterical.

But for the sake of argument, let’s say that getting belligerently drunk — to the point where you need help getting home, don’t remember what happened or threw up in multiple places over a long period of time — is a bad thing. It hurts you and is unpleasant for the people around you.

And when the stories of last night are told with self-deprecating humor, it shows that the storyteller is aware that he or she did something wrong or stupid but is willing to laugh about it.
I happen to be a great believer in laughter. There are certain people out there who can bring laughter to any situation, and they are angelic. Laughing about your own shortcomings or terrible life choices is an important skill, without which you will definitely struggle to survive this life. But often, as with the person revealing his or her previous evening’s mistakes, laughter takes the place of worthwhile introspection that leads to positive change.

They say the first step to healing is recognizing that you have a problem. The use of self-deprecating humor is wonderful because you must recognize that you have a problem in order to use it. That said, almost nobody goes to the next step of attempting to fix his or her problems.

How many people have used the phrase: “I am never getting that drunk again”?

Spoiler alert: You are.

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