

Øystein Skjælaaen

# Getting high and why

## Meningen med rus

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The meaning of altering consciousness

Some people visit a pub in the morning, others shoot heroin in a park. Some go on a wine trip to Tuscany, others take mdma and dance in the woods. Why is it that in our culture some forms of intoxication are accepted, while others are forbidden?

Through all times and all over the world, people have sought to get high. Today it is part of most people's lives. Getting high gives a break from work and routines and can give us freedom and community – it helps us. But everyone knows someone for whom alcohol and drugs no longer gives pleasure, only pain, shame and sadness. The use of substances has become a means of coping with everyday life.

Øystein Skjælaaen has researched and worked with intoxicants, but also shares his own experiences. Through meetings with people and their stories, *Getting high and why* challenges our perceptions of the importance of getting high in society and for individuals.



Photo: Joseph Pessar

Øystein Skjælaaen (b. 1977) holds a PhD in sociology and wrote his thesis on beer for breakfast among alcoholics. Skjælaaen is also a musician, playing in several bands.

### Foreign sales

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'An important book on a theme that (...) concerns us all. It is easily read and recommended for everyone.'

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'(...) elegantly formulated and thought provoking about getting high'

Aftenbladet, 5 out of 6 stars

'Some books have the power to make changes. Skjælaaen has written what can become such a book'

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