

Navigating Relationships

This activity sheet contains a number of exercises and tips for you to use when ready. You are welcome to save and print these as a collection or simply print individual exercises as needed.

Is it time for you to change your relationship with alcohol?

To start with, you can begin to be curious about your relationship with alcohol and how it is affecting your life. Take a look at the activity below to see which areas of your life alcohol is causing problems for you.

Which areas of your life have alcohol and drinking caused problems for you?

- Partner Relationship
- Friends/Social life
- Relationship with Children
- Work satisfaction and performance
- Enjoyable activities
- Health

The good news is that for a lot of people changing their relationship with alcohol, these things above become the reasons to make some life changes. These things become the motivation and fuel to start looking at how life can be done differently. They become the reason to reach out for additional support, or to make a stronger commitment to a 30 day reset. For some, they are the reason to make the first appointment with a GP to get a health assessment. Others focus on their family, and how reducing drinking will allow them to spend more quality time with their kids or partner.

What would be your strongest reason for making changes to your relationship with alcohol? Write it down below.

NOTE: If you did find some reasons, we encourage you to reach out for additional support to keep the momentum going. Download the [Daybreak app](#) and make a post to share your discoveries, or reach out to a Care Navigator on Daybreak

Discovering your Values

Making decisions from a place of what is meaningful to you is a much more powerful way to move through change. When we are clear about what we value, we are better able to make decisions that benefit us. We are also better able to hold fast to the decisions we have already made. Essentially, our values are our “WHY”, our reasons for getting up in the morning.

When it comes to changing your relationship with alcohol, knowing your values gives more power to make the changes you want to make.

How much do you feel this area of your life is important to you? Give each area a rating out of ten.

Partner Relationship (/10)

Friends/Social life (/10)

Relationship with children (/10)

Work satisfaction and performance (/10)

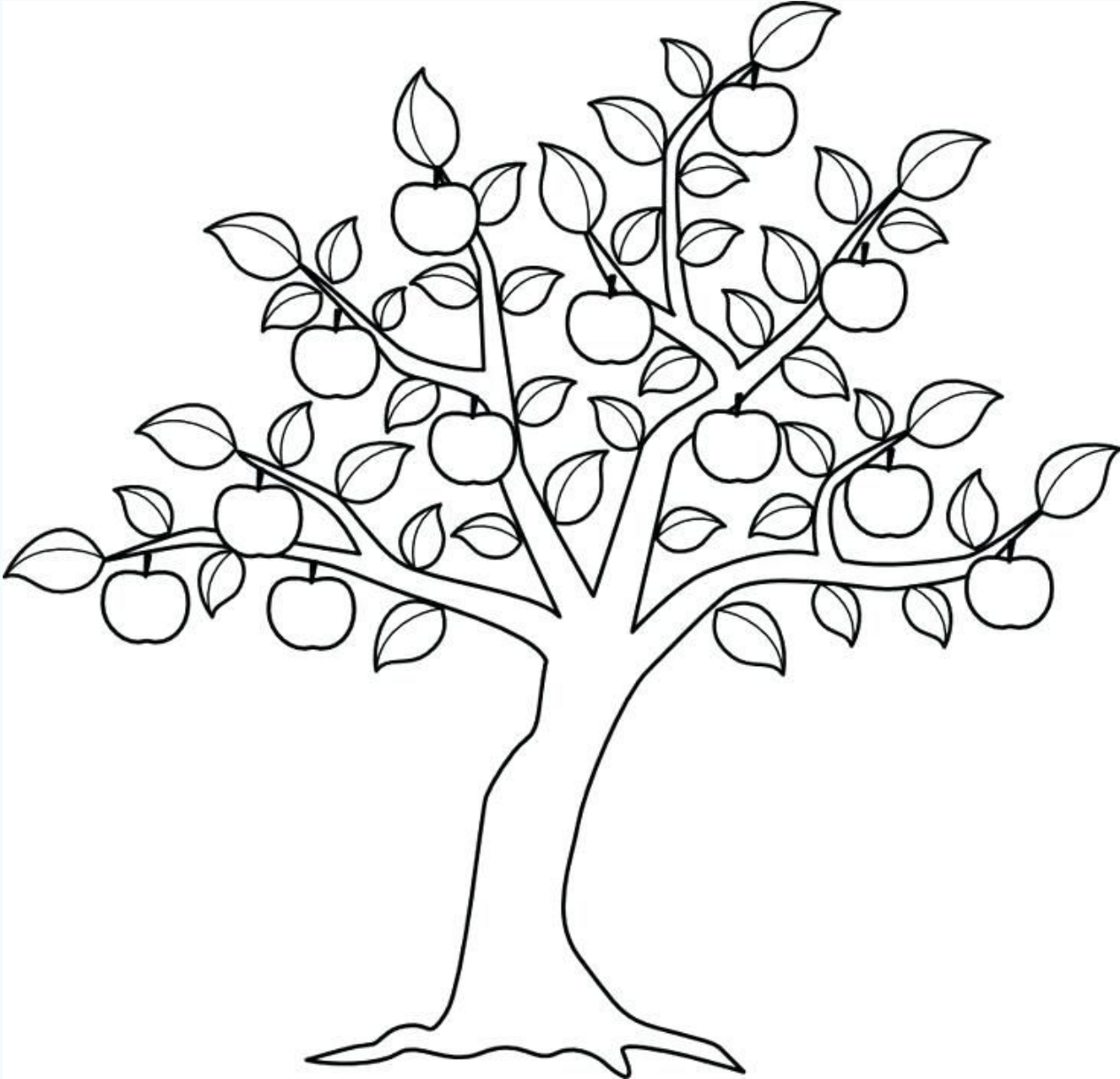
Enjoyable activities (/10)

Mood and Mental wellbeing (/10)

Physical Health (/10)

What is the most important area to you right now?

Values Tree



If you like, you can spend some time thinking about what is important to you in more detail.

Print out this tree, grab a cuppa and spend some time finding out more about your values. Most people find this to be a really interesting and useful exercise to start connecting with what is most important to them. Once you have your tree, follow the instructions below to fill it out with some of your ideas.

How to create a Values Tree

With the tree you can go into as much or as little detail as you like.

You can start at the bottom. If you can only think of one or two things per section at a time, don't worry about it. The nature of this exercise is that as you complete each step, it unlocks more memories and ideas for other parts. You can skip around and fill things in at any time. The most helpful thing in the beginning is to just write stuff down and see where it takes you. You might be surprised.

- **ROOTS:** Write down any values that you have from your childhood and family of origin. They could be values that the people who grew up with had. This about what your parents, grandparents, or any other relatives valued. For example, they could be things like hard work, or giving back to the community, taking care of your health, saving money, the love of learning, making sure you have fun along the way. You get the idea. The values can affect any or all aspects of life.
- **TRUNK:** Jot down any values that have come from friends, your partner, parenting, work, religion, school, travel, books, and any other sources.
- **BRANCHES and LEAVES:** Write down any values you're wanting to grow in your life.
- **GROUND:** Write down the things you are valuing right now in your day to day life. Whatever you are spending your most time on right now.

What are some of the key things that came up for you? How might you start to make these values more of a priority in your life?

(NOTE: Sometimes chatting with a counsellor can help you get clearer about what is going on for you. Check out the service recommendations in your Personal Snapshot Report, or log in to [Daybreak](#) to speak to a Care Navigator)

How to have Difficult Conversations with Friends

Although it is uncomfortable, these changes in relationships are a normal part of life, and it doesn't always mean that you have to lose your friendships and social groups. These situations are just going to require you to work through how you feel and develop a way of dealing with them that fits you and your situation.

What is going on in my relationships?

Have a think about your current relationships. Tick any situations that are affecting you and your relationships right now.

- I am drinking and having conflict in my friendships
- I am drinking and don't have much social contact
- I have decided not to drink and don't know how to tell my friends
- I have decided not to drink and feel lonely as all my friends drink
- I have decided not to drink and want to start making new friends

All of these situations can be tricky to navigate whilst you are making decisions about what is best for you right now. First of all, congratulations on taking the step to look at how your social relationships are going right now. Knowing how things are is the first step to making changes that benefit you in the long run.

How to have a difficult conversation

No matter where you are with your relationships, one simple step to start with is to come up with a script on what to say. Let's give it a go now!

Imagine a specific social situation in which you are having some difficulty right now. Then write a script in which you stay in control of the situation and resist pressure to drink. If you are feeling isolated, you can also imagine a situation where you reach out to someone for help. Remember, you might not get the response you are looking for, but the key here is to focus on what YOU are doing, rather than how the person reacts. You might also like to come up with a few responses so you are ready when the time comes to speak out.

Come up with a few firm responses that are short, clear and simple (e.g. ‘No thanks, I’m not drinking tonight’, ‘I’m doing an alcohol-free month’, ‘I’m cutting back to get healthy’, ‘I’ve been having some difficulty lately and I need some more support’).

Script

Person makes offer (imagine a specific person and situation):

My response:

Person persists:

My next response:

Person continues to persist:

My next response:

The Social Universe Activity

People sometimes struggle with deciding whether someone is an acquaintance or a friend. Things also change in relationships as people change. It's helpful to re-evaluate your friendships from time to time so that you know who you can rely on for certain things. There are friends you can call to share a laugh with or do something fun, and friends with whom you can share more deeply with, or rely on to help you out when you need it.

We need all types of friends in our lives. When we know what kinds of friends are around us, we can gain the support we need.

For example, with acquaintances we can practice new coping strategies and communication styles. They can also be a sounding board for new ideas as they are less emotionally invested in the outcomes. Closer friends can be there for you when you want to talk about more intimate things, or get some help with something.

Try the social universe circles activity to have a deeper look at your social relationships.

PART ONE: MAKE YOUR CIRCLES

STEP 1:

Grab a pencil and a sheet of paper. You don't need to get fancy, but you'll be referring to your circle later on so you might want to spend some time to make it look nice. You might even change your circle over time, as relationships grow, change and move on. So definitely take a bit of time to do this.

STEP 2:

Draw a small circle about a couple of centimeters wide in the middle of your paper and write your name (or simply "me") in it. Then draw another circle around that one, about 2 cms from it, and a third one around the second. (You can add more circles if you need to as you go along.) You're drawing your social universe, and everything revolves around you.

STEP 3:

Next, think of the names of the people who are important to you and write them down in the circles around “you.” The people closest to you go in the first circle; more distant relationships go in the outer circles. Take some time to think about how close each relationship is for you.

Think about putting any and all of the following people - your friend, your mum’s friend, your partner, your kids, your hairdresser/beautician/barber, anyone in your sports team, or people you see at a community or club, work colleagues, any health professionals you see. All of these people may have a place in your social universe.

STEP 4:

Here are some questions to get you started thinking about where these people fit in your circle:

- Who did you spend time with on the weekend?
- Who do you work with?
- Who did you call in the last week?
- Who did you see in the last week?
- Was there anyone you spent time thinking about?
- Was there anyone who was getting on your nerves?

TIP: Just because you have a mum or a sister, it doesn’t mean they have to be in your inner circle. Sometimes family is not the best support or the best company. And sometimes they are not in our lives at all. And there is no need to feel guilty about who you put on your circle and where. It might be just the way you like it. If it’s not, you’ll figure out if it’s something you’d like to change. And if so, that can be something you might like to speak with a coach about.

PART TWO: ASK YOURSELF 4 QUESTIONS

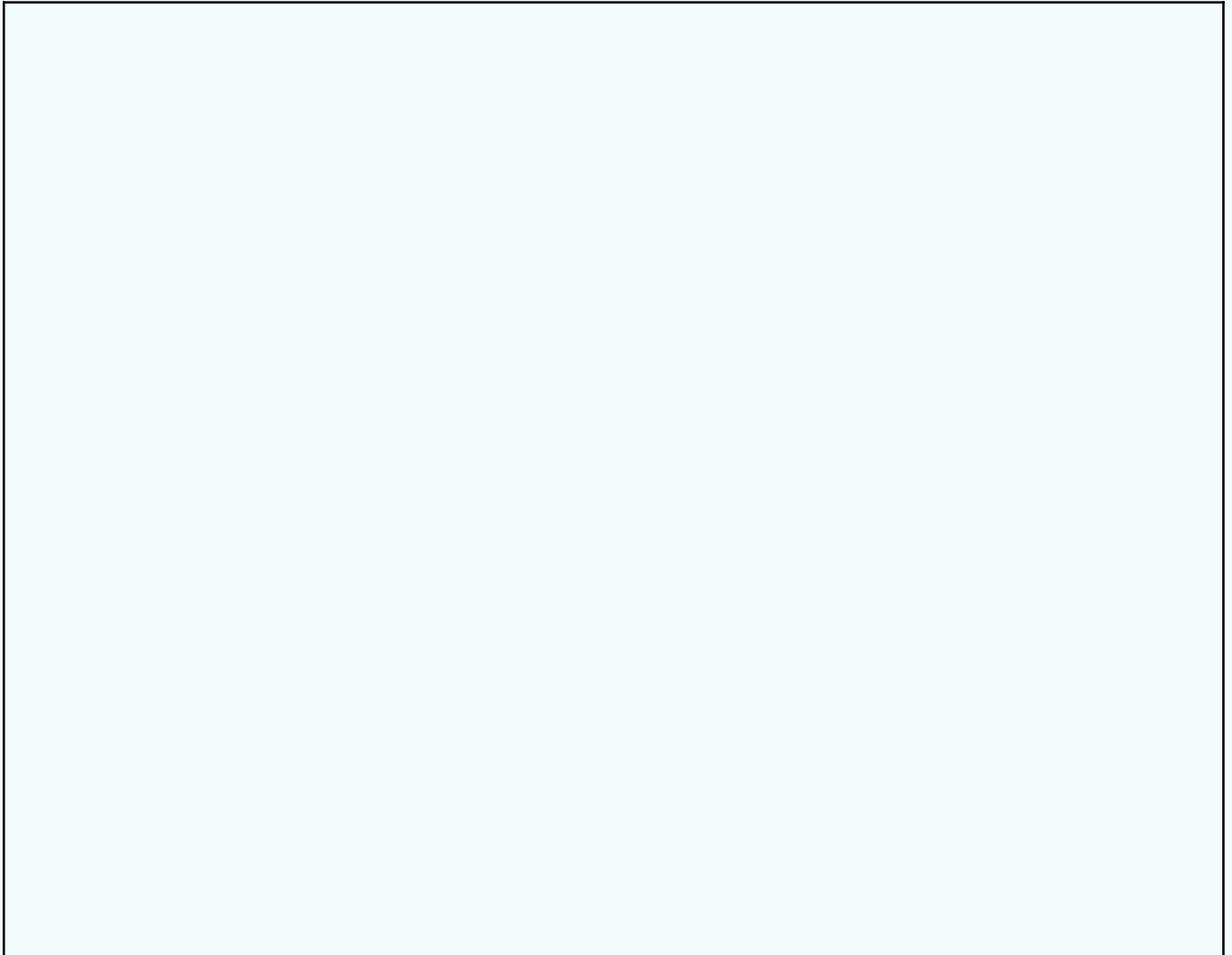
The next step is to choose a few of the most important relationships and explore them in more detail. Remember, these relationships don’t need to be the ones that make you feel good. In fact, it’s the stressful, hurtful and disappointing relationships that are often the most important to explore, because they’re the ones that are most likely connected to your drinking.

The 4 questions:

1. How would I describe the relationship?
2. What do I like about the relationship?
3. What don’t I like about the relationship?

4. What would I like to be different about the relationship?

Generally, these questions will give you a better idea of who you can count on right now and who you might want to keep some distance from as you start to make changes to your drinking. Jot down any thoughts you have here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their thoughts in response to the question above.

(NOTE: Sometimes chatting with a counsellor can help you get clearer about what is going on for you. Check out the service recommendations in your Personal Snapshot Report, or log in to [Daybreak](#) to speak to a Care Navigator)

Is My Drinking Affecting My Parenting?

Parenting is one of the most rewarding and challenging tasks in life. But throw alcohol into the mix and it can become even more difficult if you're also going through a lot of stress, and difficulties with your children.

There are many ways in which parenting is especially challenging when heavy drinking is involved. Have a look through the situations below and see which ones resonate with you.

Which situations are the most difficult for you and your children right now?

- Having difficulty getting up in the morning to get them ready for school
- Sometimes not being able to drive them to where they need to be
- Children having to take care of you when you are hungover
- Not being able to be consistent with rules/discipline
- Yelling more often at the children
- Children taking advantage of blackouts/hangovers to get their own way
- Children berating you or threatening to move out/stay with others
- Other parent using your drinking to undermine your parenting

All of these situations can be tricky to navigate, especially when you are beginning to support yourself to make changes. We want to congratulate you on a big step of being able to look at how parenting is for you right now.

Rather than thinking of your concerns about parenting as something you have to 'fix', a great first step is to think about how reducing drinking can benefit your children and your relationship with them. Write a few ways below.

If doing any of these exercises brings up tough stuff for you, please talk to a trusted family member, friend, GP or one of the services there to support you. You can find some of these contacts on our Get Help page.