My relationship with alcohol

A gentle place to start

You do not have to wait for things to get worse

You do not need to choose a label or compare your drinking with anyone else to ask for help. If alcohol is taking more than it gives, that is enough reason to look at what is happening.

Notice the pattern

Think about when you drink, what you hope it will do for you, and how you feel afterwards. Be curious rather than critical. This is a reflection exercise, not a test or diagnosis.

Look beyond the money

Consider your time, relationships, energy, commitments and how you feel about yourself. You can still be working and caring for others while struggling with alcohol.

Choose one next step

Talk honestly with a GP, counsellor or alcohol support service. You can say: "I am worried about my drinking and I would like help understanding my options."

Before you change your drinking

If you drink heavily or regularly, need alcohol to feel steady, or have had withdrawal before, speak with a doctor before stopping or sharply reducing. Alcohol withdrawal can be life-threatening. Shaking, sweating or feeling unwell after cutting down needs prompt medical advice. Call 000 for seizures, severe confusion or hallucinations.

Australia: Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline 1800 250 015 (free, confidential advice). Lifeline 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support). Call 000 if there is immediate danger or a medical emergency.

Make it personal

Write a few words. You can leave questions blank or talk them through with someone.

What do I hope alcohol will give me?

What actually happens when I drink?

What is alcohol costing me beyond money?

What would I like more of in my life?

Who could I talk to, and when will I contact them?

You do not have to do this alone.

Australia: Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline 1800 250 015 (free, confidential advice). Lifeline 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support). Call 000 if there is immediate danger or a medical emergency.

Safety and support sources: healthdirect.gov.au/alcoholism; adf.org.au/insights/safely-withdrawing-alcohol/; lifeline.org.au/131114; medicarementalhealth.gov.au/provider/national-alcohol-and-other-drug-hotline-16469. Checked 1 October 2026.