

THE PROOF LEDGER · TESTIMONY

The Testimony

You will not be asked to stop drinking.
You will be asked to listen.

A 20-MINUTE EXERCISE · ISSUE NO. 003

Make room to listen

A concern from somebody else can be hard to hear. So can a question you have kept bringing up with yourself. This exercise gives you room to look at either, without deciding in advance that one person is right.

You can keep every answer private. Skip a prompt that does not fit. You are not being asked to stop drinking, admit to hiding anything or reach a particular conclusion.

If you may be dependent on alcohol or have withdrawal symptoms, get medical advice before cutting down or stopping. Sudden withdrawal can be dangerous. Severe shaking, confusion, hallucinations or seizures need emergency medical help.

This exercise does not assess or treat withdrawal. Guidance: [NHS alcohol-use disorder](#).

STEP ONE

What was said?

Think of a recent comment or question about your drinking that stayed with you. Write the words as accurately as you can. If you cannot remember them, mark your version as a recollection.

WHO SAID IT, AND WHEN?

WHAT THEY SAID

If nobody has said anything, use a question you have asked yourself. You do not need to imagine an accusation or find evidence of a secret.

STEP TWO

What you said back

Write your response, then what you were feeling. You may have agreed, disagreed, gone quiet, changed the subject or wanted more time. Describe what actually happened.

WHAT I SAID OR DID

WHAT I WAS FEELING

WHAT I WISH I HAD BEEN ABLE TO SAY

STEP THREE

Your own question

Is there a concern or question you keep returning to? When does it come up? There may be a connection with what someone else said, or your experience may be different.

WHEN IT COMES UP

WHAT IS USUALLY HAPPENING JUST BEFORE

THE QUESTION IN MY OWN WORDS

STEP FOUR

An optional conversation

If it feels safe and useful, choose someone you trust and ask what they have noticed. Tell them why you are asking if you want to. You can ask for a pause, disagree or end the conversation.

If that conversation would feel unsafe or unhelpful, skip it. Private reflection or a conversation with a qualified professional is another option.

WHO I MIGHT TALK WITH

WHAT I WANT TO ASK

WHAT THEY SAID, AND HOW I UNDERSTOOD IT

YOUR NOTES

What do you make of it?

Read your notes without making yourself prove a predetermined point. Agreement is useful information; so is a difference between your own experience and somebody else's interpretation.

WHAT FEELS TRUE TO ME

WHAT FEELS UNCERTAIN OR DOES NOT FIT

WHAT I WANT TO UNDERSTAND BETTER

Choose what feels useful

You can leave this here for now, return to a question later or seek support. You do not need to make a public declaration or wait for a crisis before taking your own concern seriously.

The Proof explores familiar habits and the choices that help you feel present in your own life. Alcohol is one place to begin that conversation.

ONE NEXT QUESTION OR CHOICE

For a private seven-question look at drinking, [try the free Reassessment](#). Explore the other free guides at [jointheproof.com](#). No paid program or challenge is required.