

# *Journaling for Sobriety*

LEARN HOW TO UNLOCK THE WISDOM WITHIN  
YOU SO THAT YOU CAN SUCCEED AT SOBRIETY.

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**SOBER  
SISTAS**

## Hello darling Sobersista,

There are a number of excellent benefits of journaling. It's wonderful for your mental health. Giving yourself the gift of writing your innermost thoughts down on paper is extremely cathartic and helps you get the clarity you need about your feelings and emotions.

It's a wonderful record of your progress. To be able to look back over my journal and see how I felt at my Day One and how I felt at Day Thirty was thrilling. Being able to mark my progress every day gave me the confidence and motivation to continue.

Sometimes, we aren't ready to reveal the deepest parts of ourselves consciously, but once you have been journaling for a little while it can be a real revelation to read your words back and spot a hidden theme that keeps jumping out at you.

Journaling is wonderful for helping you to check-in and get clear about where you are. If you take a relaxed attitude to how you write and let your pen and heart do the work, you will be able to look at your thoughts and see the state of your life right now. This is hugely beneficial in helping you to make decisions about how you want life to be going forward.

Journaling can be a really useful planning tool too. It's wonderful to be able to explore, in the privacy of your own journal, what your hopes, dreams and wishes are and how you might go about achieving them. I often start sentences with 'I wonder what would happen if....' and just let it roll forward. I know we always have all the answers we need and this is a great way to watch them unfold.

*Much love always, Jules xx*

JOURNALING FOR MY SOBRIETY

## ABOUT FOUNDER JULES RUTHERFORD

I gave up drinking in 2017 on the day I read back my journal entries and realised that I had been writing about alcohol for months without realising it.

Since then I have been helping women realise their own truths by showing them the power of journaling to supporting them in their own journey to sobriety.



## Using journaling to support your sobriety

Your journal will be your critical support tool for helping you succeed. Our relationship with alcohol is often complex and when you are drinking it can be challenging to have 2 or 3 clear thoughts in a row.

If you can get the journaling habit it will help you get those thoughts out of your head right at the moment you're thinking them. Once they are out you can forget about them and go back to them later when you want to understand better what you've written.

Here are a number of different types of journaling for you to consider:

**Prompted** - use the prompts in this course and create your own as you need them to address a specific issue. To create a prompt to understand yourself better just put "*The reason I...*" before the problem you are having and then let your pen do the work. For example: "*The reason I drink when I am cooking dinner is...*"

If you want to solve a specific problem with a prompt just put "*I can...*" before the thing you want to solve. For example: "*I can cook without drinking because...*"

**Stream of Consciousness** - Let your heart guide your pen and allow the words to flow. No structure is required, just write what you need to. There are no rules to this. You don't even have to write sentences! You can write anything that occurs to you. Some people set a timer for how long they want to write and I have known others who write for a set number of pages and finish when they get to the end of them.

**Counting** - record the number of days you've been sober and the amount of money and/or time you have saved.

**Learning** - record a strategy or tactic that is helping you remain sober so that you can refer back to it when you need to.

**Planning** - plan for trigger events like birthdays, weddings, holidays etc., so that you are prepared for every eventuality.

## Top Tips

The following is a list of tools and tips that will help you get the most out of your journaling practice.

**Buy a beautiful journal** – they are relatively inexpensive and now that you're not drinking you can afford a gorgeous one! Buy one that looks so good you just want to spend time with it every day.

**Buy lovely writing implements** – a pen that feels lovely in your hand, a pencil that flies over the paper or coloured pencils can all make you feel like you are creating something beautiful as you write.

**Find a time that is good for you** – it may be that early morning is best for you or last thing at night before you go to bed, whatever works for you.

**Find a place** – find somewhere to write that is comfortable and where you won't be disturbed.

**Silence** – Spend a few minutes in silence before you begin or meditate. You can also do some intentional breathing by breathing in deeply through the nose, holding the breath for a few seconds and then breathe out through the mouth. Do this 3 times.

**Aim for the Positive** – It's important to get all of those important negative thoughts out of your head and on to the paper. However, once you've done that, try and write something positive about what you've written. For example, if you write "*I will never be able to give up.*" Add after that something like: "*But I'm here and I'm working at it so eventually I will succeed.*" This helps to retrain your brain to see the positive in everything you are achieving.

**Don't stress** – if you don't manage to write every day. Journaling should be a pleasure, not a punishment.

**Don't stress** – if what you think you're writing is 'nonsense'. It's all good no matter what it is.

**Don't stress** – if your spelling and grammar goes out of the window. No-one is going to mark your work.

Here are some additional ways of journaling:

**Bullet List** – This is great when time is short but you just need to get stuff out of your head onto paper. It can be one word or a sentence, but just enough to get whatever is stuck out of your head.

**Drawing, Doodles and Pictures** – Journaling doesn't have to be all about writing words. You can doodle, create pictures or create a mind map. This is particularly good if you are stuck creatively and need an outlet. Creating a mini picture of where you are in your life or where you want to be can be a really useful tool for those of you who prefer visual cues.

**Gratitude** – I love this and do this every day. Writing down every day the things that you are grateful for is superb for setting your mind, heart and soul up for the day. You can limit yourself to a certain number every day by choosing your top 3, or you can list as many as you can think of.

## Dealing with your Feelings and Emotions

It's important to recognise that 'stuff will come up' that you will need to deal with. Most of us drink to mask those difficult emotions that we don't want to face. Without alcohol to blot them out, old traumas are likely to come to the surface and make you feel very uncomfortable.

It's critical that you make sure you are getting ALL of the support you need to help you deal with your emotions. Journaling can only be one tool amongst other strategies that can support you, like talking therapies, medication prescribed by your doctor and community support like Sobersistas.

If you do write down stuff that is difficult for you, make sure you read it back to yourself when you are feeling calmer and stronger. It's very likely that there will be some nuggets of gold in the words that you've written that will give you some clues about what you need to do.

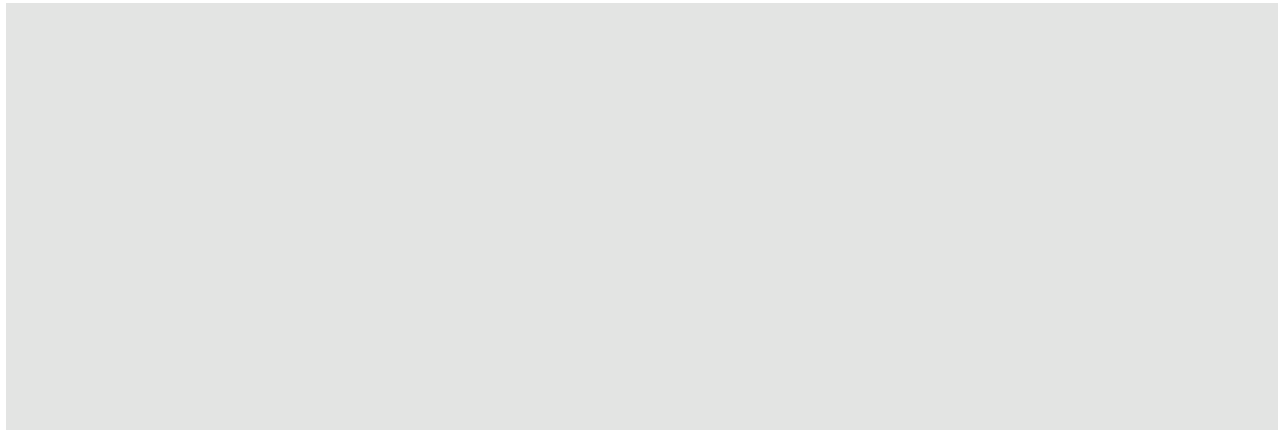
## Be Kind To Yourself!!!

Whilst it is human for us to beat ourselves up for our mistakes, it's important to try and recognise that feeling ashamed or disgusted with yourself does not help you unless you use those feelings to motivate you to change your behaviour. **TIP:** In your journal create a list of self-care activities that you love to do that will make you feel better.

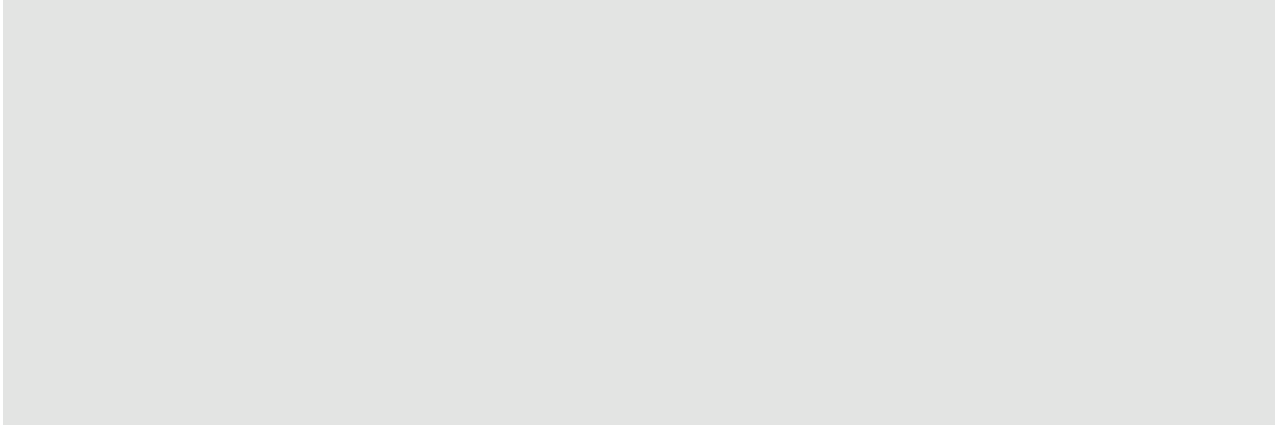
## Daily Practice

Use this format every day. It will help embed your habit and begin to reveal what you need to know about your relationship with alcohol. You don't have to do all of them every day, just choose the ones that feel right. Try them out now.

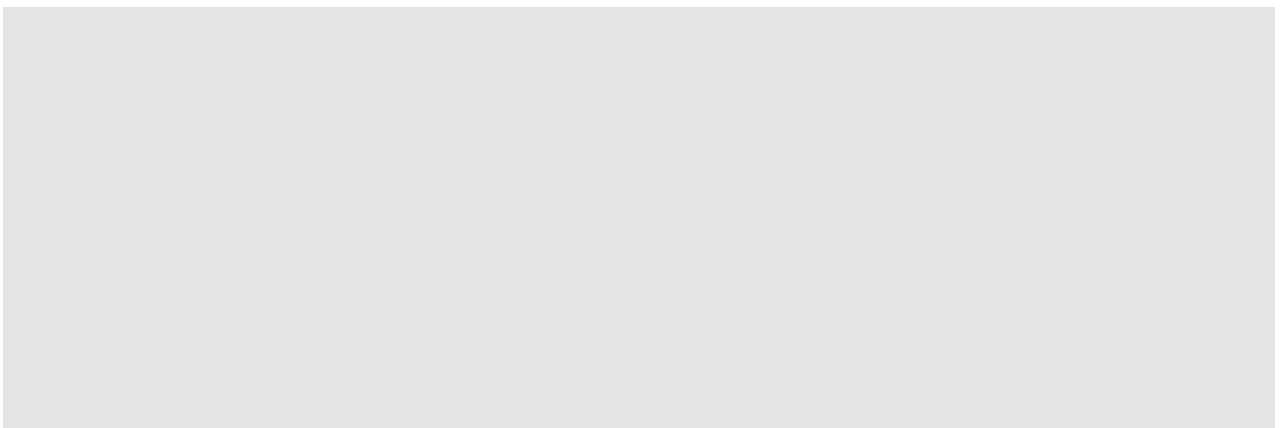
**The three (or more) things I am grateful for today are:**



**I drink alcohol because....**(Do this every day until you are crystal clear about **WHY** you drink.)



**My 'Big Why' for giving up drinking is.....**



**Today I feel...**

**Yesterday was a good day because...**

**The things that could have gone better yesterday were... (remember to note what you can do differently next time).**



## Establishing a Regular Practice

It's useful to establish a regular practice where you review the week and month that's now behind you. It's amazing how our minds create a different view of many challenging situations when some time has passed.

As time passes, you often have more information or have calmed down and can now see someone else's point of view.

You can also review what action you took and assess whether it worked for you. This can be invaluable in making sure you can make a different plan for avoiding alcohol in the future.

## Weekly Practice

Answer these prompts on your most relaxed day of the week.

1. This was a good week because
2. The things I could have done differently are...
3. My plan for next week is...

## Monthly Practice

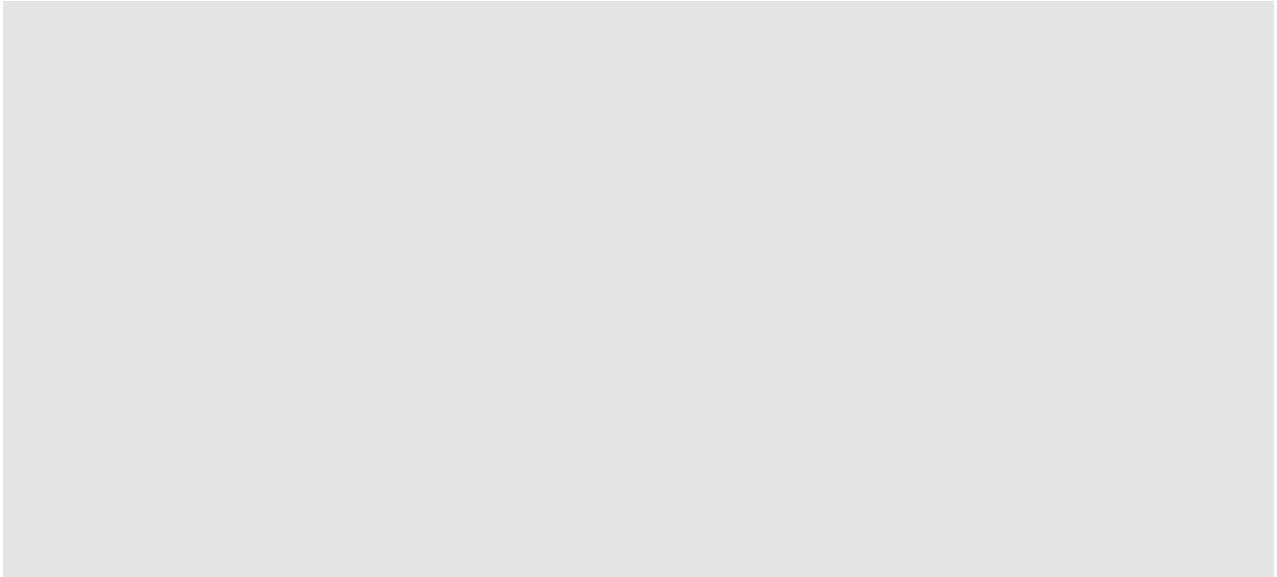
Answer these prompts once a month, preferably when you aren't hormonal and/or more likely to be negative.

1. This month I have had \_\_\_\_\_ sober days.
2. Over the last month, I have learned all these great things about myself...
3. My plan for next month is...

## Crisis Journaling

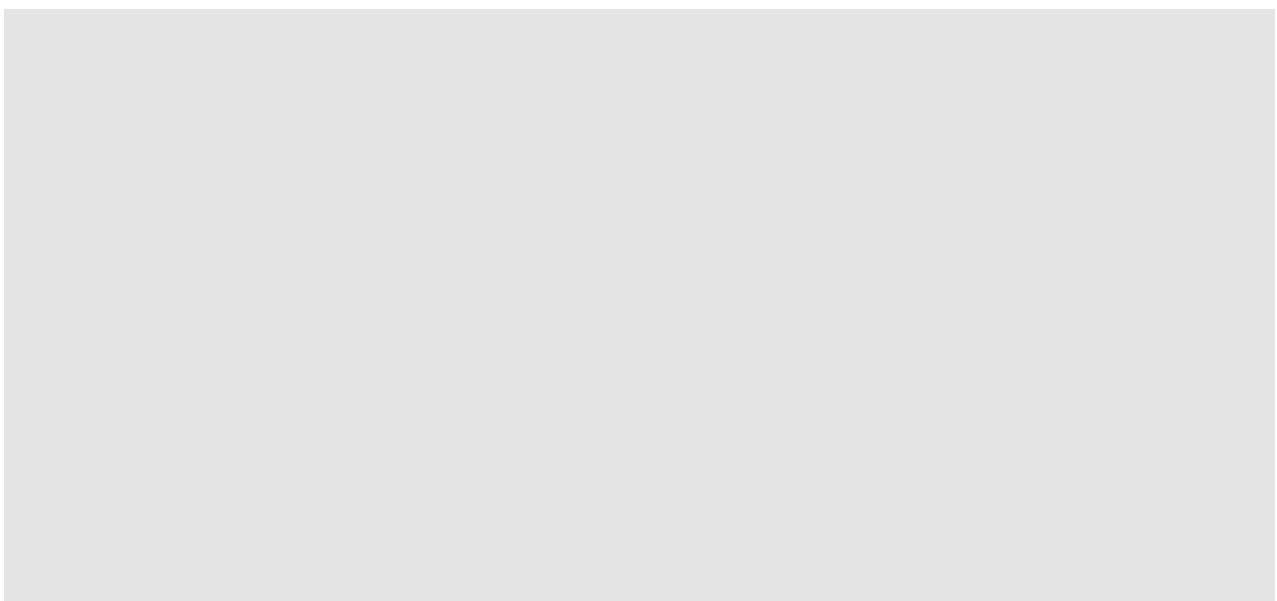
When you are having a bad day, or have a hangover, or are feeling like you want to drink, take out your journal and answer the following prompt:

**The most loving thing(s) I can do for myself in this moment is....**



This prompt can be useful for specific and recurring situations.

**The most loving thing(s) I can do for myself when \_\_\_\_\_ happens is...**



## You're Amazing

Journaling can have an amazing effect on how you see yourself if you can get into the habit of writing positively about yourself. Spend a few minutes reading the Positive Character traits on the next page. As you read, mark the ones that you know apply to you.

Don't overthink it. Just allow your intuition to guide you to the ones that feel right. Once you have done that, choose 3 that have the strongest association to you. For each one, write a sentence or two about how you demonstrate that quality in your life.

\_\_\_\_\_ **I love this about me because...**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I love this about me because...**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I love this about me because...**

# Positive Character Traits

Kind	Generous	Open-Minded
Intelligent	Modest	Positive
Hardworking	Serious	Responsible
Loyal	Independent	Cooperative
Attractive	Trusting	Frugal
Down-to-Earth	Resilient	Tolerant
Goofy	Cheerful	Innovative
Creative	Self-Directed	Balanced
Accepting	Reliable	Helpful
Strong	Relaxed	Motivated
Friendly	Listener	Insightful
Flexible	Brave	Funny
Nurturing	Decisive	Patient
Thoughtful	Enthusiastic	Realistic
Confident	Forgiving	Honest
Optimistic	Humble	Selfless
Respectful	Sensitive	Practical
Determined	Organised	Mature
Skilled	Courteous	Focused
	Grateful	

## Affirmations

I always add the same affirmations to the end of any journaling session I do. It's like my mantra and they remind me of the good things in my life and I know that, by writing them, I am putting myself in the best possible state of mind for the day. Here are mine:

"All is well. Life is good. Health, wealth and abundance are mine. I am enough. I am loved and loving. I release all blocks and know I deserve all good things now."

You can choose one of mine, or all of them if you wish. However, they will have a much more powerful effect if you choose or create your own.

Mine weren't always the same as this. Over the years I have changed and refined them as my circumstances change or I need something more focussed for a particular period in my life. For example, the one above about releasing blocks is there because, as I write this, I am in the process of setting up a membership group on my website and I occasionally get blocked by my own imposter syndrome! It may not stay there forever, but it's working wonders right now!!!!

## How to create your Affirmations

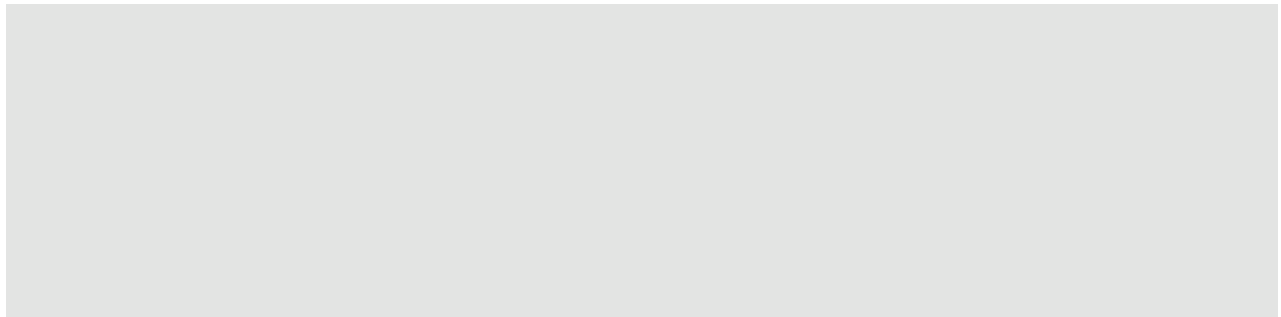
Affirmations need to be in the present tense because it helps to re-train your mind and bring it into a positive state. Your inner voice is incredibly powerful and you listen to it all day long. If you are saying negative things to yourself, that's how you will feel. They need to be written in a way that what you desire has already come true.

For example, if an affirmation said 'I want to be free of alcohol.', then every time you write it down you are telling yourself that you're not free. If you write, 'I am free of alcohol.', your super, clever, helpful brain will listen and start reprogramming for you.

## Create your own Affirmations

If you're struggling for inspiration, use Google. You can type things like 'affirmations for freedom', etc.

Think about your future. How do you want to feel? What do you want life to be like? Write your affirmations as though every dream you ever wished for yourself has already come true.



## Design Your Own Journal Prompts

When you're on your sobriety journey it can be helpful to have a number of prompts that are specific to you and your circumstances. For example, when you feel triggered after a successful spell of not drinking you might want to use: *The reason I was triggered today was...*

It might be that you want to create some around your children, parents or friends. You might want to think about work situations and people or your relationship.

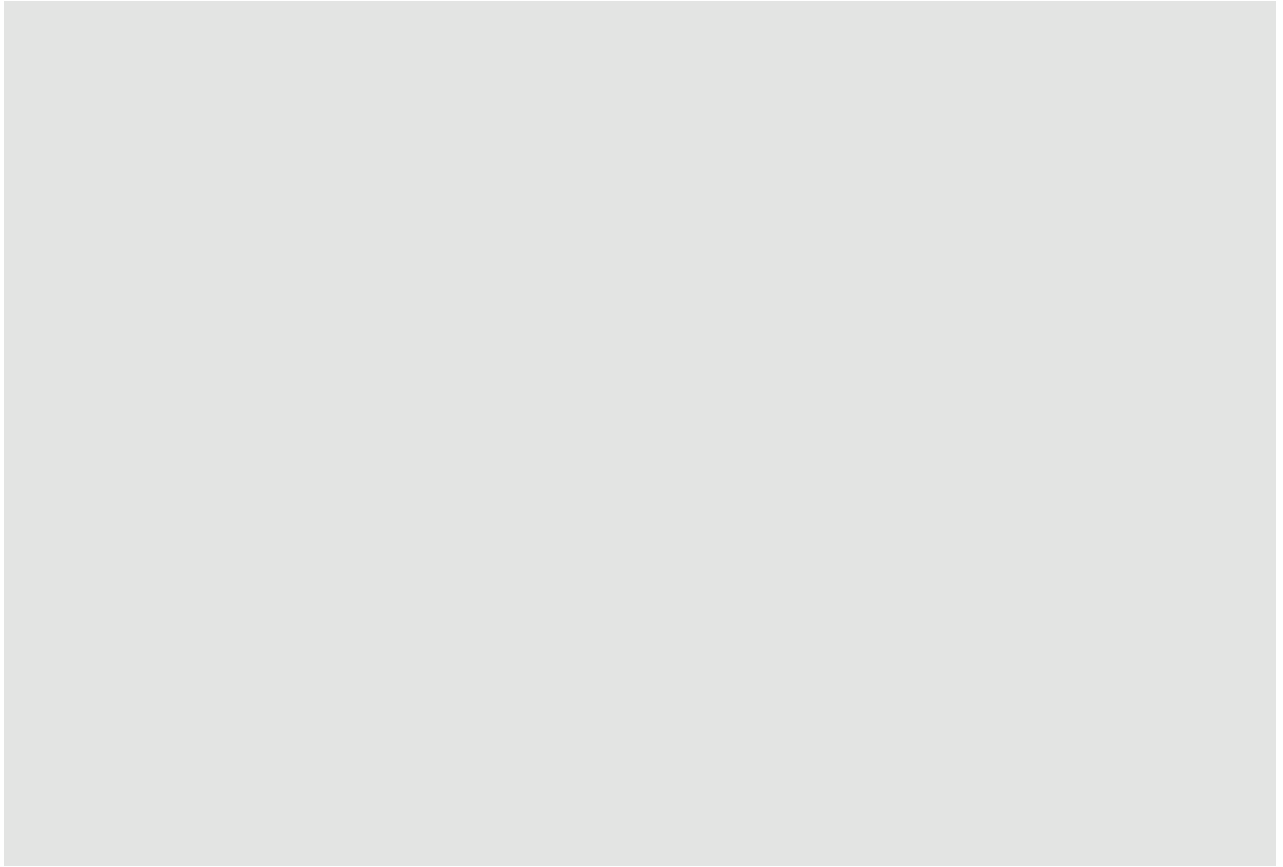
You also might want to think about more internal subjects like your negative self-talk or your lack of belief in being able to give up.

Take a few moments to think about the kind of topics that affect you and your drinking. Remember to start them as if you were asking yourself a question.

Here are a few suggestions:

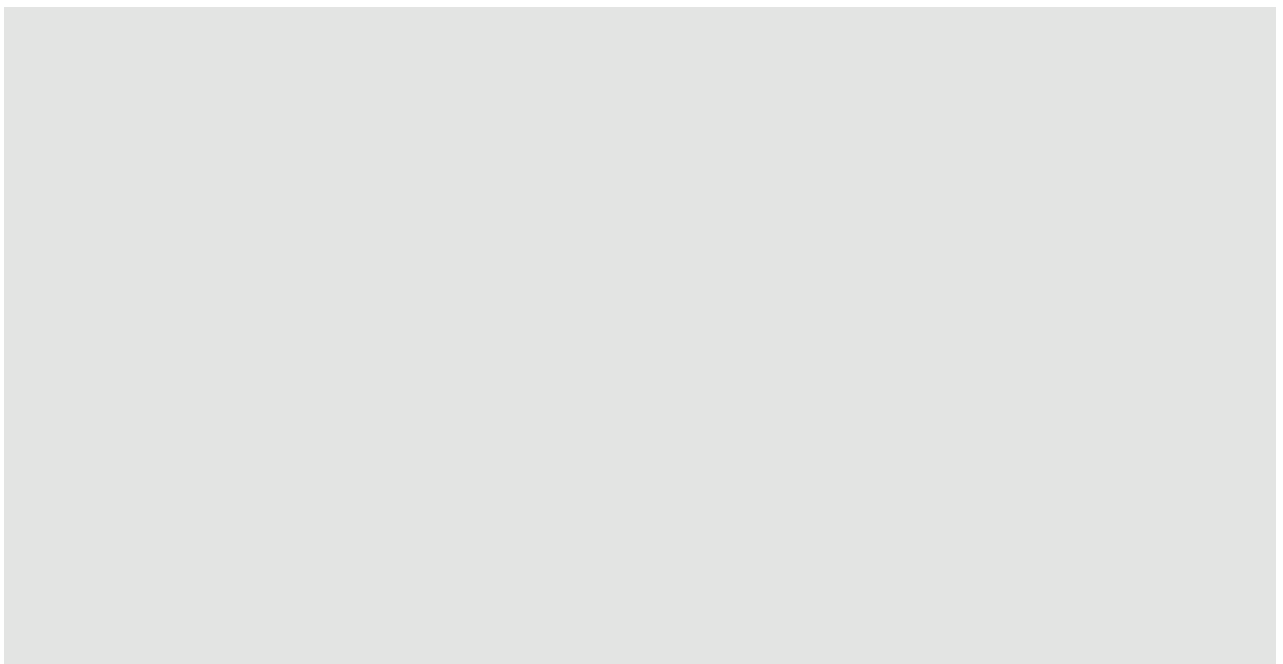
- When the kids are driving me crazy, it's important that I...
- When my friends try to push alcohol on me I will say...
- When my partner brings alcohol home for me I will...
- When everyone at work is going to the bar I will...

## My Journal Prompts



### *And finally...*

Take a moment to reflect on what you learned while working through this workbook. What did you learn? Were there any surprises?



# Thank you!

I really hope that you've found the support you need from this short journaling workbook. Journaling is a wonderful starting point in finding out who you really are and what you truly want from life.

Uncovering your deepest desires can sometimes feel scary but don't forget that nothing happens now without your without your willingness to take action.

There are so many good things about being sober that it's too long a list to include here and even if I did it would be missing the good things that are unique to you. I promise you though, the list is endless!

Thank you for taking this leap of faith into a wonderful future that is yours to claim today.

*Much love always, Jules xx*

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MORE HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR YOU HERE:  
simply point your camera at the QR code



*In one leap  
you can be  
free.*