

# A Gentle Guide to Navigating Tough Conversations in Early Recovery



Freedom Room

**The Freedom Room Wellness & Recovery**

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# Focusing on Self & Safety

## Lead with Self-Care & Honesty



Start by checking in with yourself. Acknowledge your feelings and where you're at. Share honestly about what you're able to handle in the conversation.



Don't feel pressured to engage if you're feeling overwhelmed or unsafe. It's okay to say, "I need a moment" or "I'm not able to talk about this fully right now."



## Stay Gentle & Patient with Yourself



Keep your tone soft and try to breathe if things feel intense. Remember, recovery is a process, and communication skills take time.



Don't beat yourself up if you don't respond perfectly. Avoid getting defensive or blaming yourself for past difficulties.

# Focusing on Self & Safety

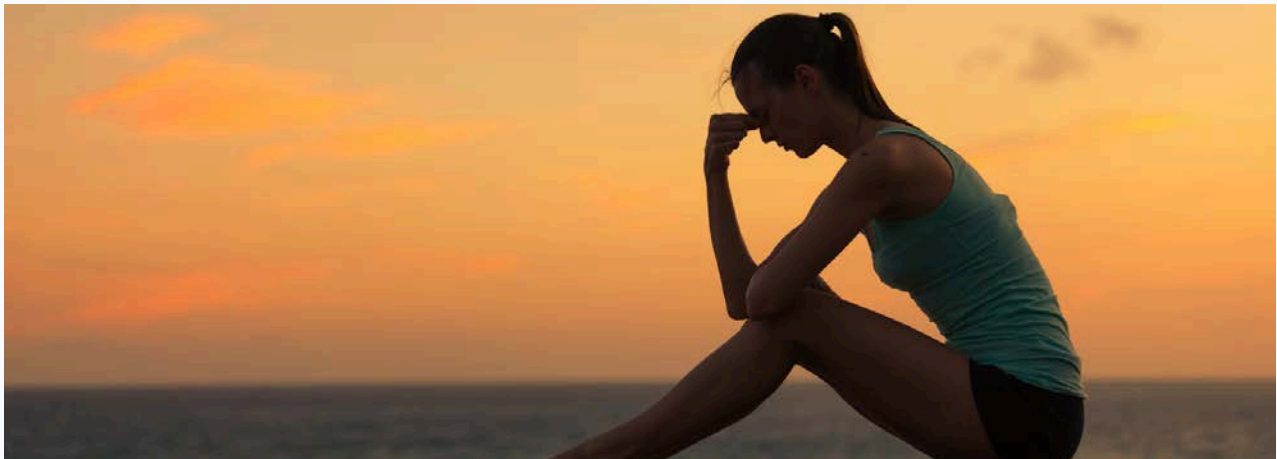
## Prepare with Self-Awareness & Flexibility



Think about the main points you want to touch on and how you're feeling about them. Be open to the conversation going in unexpected directions.



Don't Stick rigidly to a plan if it makes you feel more anxious or disregards the other person's feelings.



## Seek to Understand Your Own Feelings First



Try to understand your own perspective before focusing on the other person's. Ask yourself, "What am I truly feeling here?"



Don't feel pressured to immediately understand or agree with the other person if your own emotions are still unclear.

# Focusing on Self & Safety

## Own Your Feelings & Reactions



Recognize your emotions as valid, even if they feel intense. Focus on managing your reactions in the present moment.



Don't Stick rigidly to a plan if it makes you feel more anxious or disregards the other person's feelings.



## Respect Your Own Boundaries & Needs



Value your own perspective, even if it differs from others. It's okay to have different experiences and viewpoints.



Don't diminish your own truth to avoid conflict or please others.

# Engaging with Others

## Be Clear & Kind



Use simple and direct language when expressing yourself. Focus on the specific issue at hand.



Don't generalize or exaggerate, which can escalate things. Avoid using absolute statements like "You always..."



## Focus on Small Steps Forward Together



If possible, try to find a small, manageable step you can take together to improve the situation.



Don't feel pressured to solve everything at once. Avoid dumping all the problems on the other person without suggesting any collaborative solutions.

# Engaging with Others

## Set Gentle Boundaries for Yourself



Be clear about what you are and are not able to discuss or commit to right now. It's okay to protect your peace.



Don't say yes out of guilt or make promises you aren't sure you can keep, especially if it jeopardizes your recovery.



## Listen with Intention (to the best of your ability)



Try to give your full attention, make eye contact if comfortable, and gently reflect back what you hear.



Don't Get distracted or interrupt frequently. It's okay if your focus wavers – just gently bring it back.

# Engaging with Others

## Apologize Honestly When You've Made a Mistake



Take responsibility for your actions and explain briefly how you'll try to do things differently.



Don't offer insincere apologies or apologies that shift blame ("Sorry if you felt that way").



## Aim for Small Clear Agreements



If appropriate, agree on small, concrete actions and any follow-up needed



Don't leave things vague or unresolved, as this can create more stress in early recovery.

# Engaging with Others

## Take Time to Reflect & Be Kind to Yourself



After the conversation, take a moment to process how it went and acknowledge your efforts, no matter the outcome.



Don't judge yourself harshly or dwell on perceived failures. Remember, every conversation is a learning opportunity.

## Important Reminders for Early Recovery



Your recovery is your priority. Don't let difficult conversations jeopardize it.



It's okay to ask for help. Talk to your sponsor, therapist, or support network before and after challenging conversations.



You don't have to have every difficult conversation right now. Sometimes, it's best to postpone until you feel more stable.



Progress, not perfection, is the goal. Be patient and compassionate with yourself as you learn and grow.

# Do you need some extra support with your recovery?

Here's how The Freedom Room can help:

- **Personalized Counseling** - Our experienced counsellors provide one-on-one support, helping you address the root causes of your drinking, develop coping mechanisms, and build a strong foundation for lasting sobriety.
- **Group Sessions** - Connect with others who understand your struggles. Share experiences, gain strength from shared stories, and build a supportive community that encourages your progress.
- **Workshops and Therapy** - Gain valuable knowledge and skills through interactive workshops and individual therapy sessions, which will empower you to make informed choices and develop healthy habits.

Taking that first step towards recovery is often the hardest but also the most crucial. Contact The Freedom Room today. We're ready to listen, offer guidance, and walk alongside you as you reclaim your life from the grip of alcohol.

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