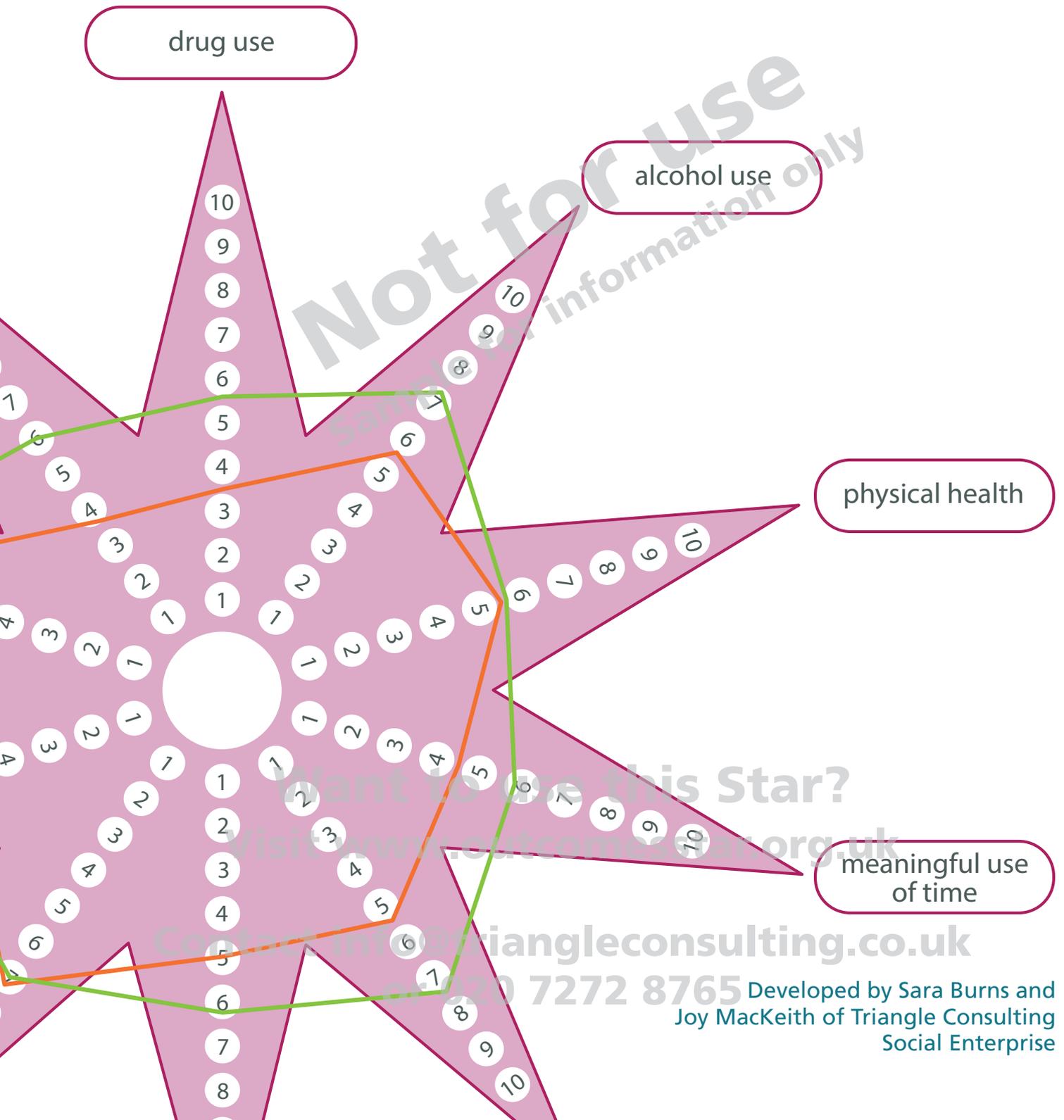




Drug & Alcohol Star™

The Outcomes Star for drug and alcohol recovery



Want to use this Star?

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Contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk

on 01223 7272 8765

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Please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk to enquire about buying a licence and training.

Licences are also available for those wishing to translate the document into other languages.

The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Star Chart, User Guide or Quiz and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of the Outcomes Star over its long evolution and we would like to thank all the clients, workers, managers, funders, academics and commissioners who have generously given their time and expertise.

The original commission for an outcome measurement system came from St Mungo's, with financial support from the London Housing Foundation, and Triangle recognises their vital roles in the development of the Outcomes Star. We would also like to acknowledge Kate Graham's important contribution to the development of the suite of Stars, both as a founding partner of Triangle and as co-author of the original Outcomes Star (now called the Outcomes Star for Homelessness).

We would particularly like to thank the following people and organisations for their contribution to this version of the Star:

- NORCAS for working in collaboration with Triangle on the development of the Drug and Alcohol Star
- Aquarius for additional input into the Drug and Alcohol Star
- Alcohol Concern and all the organisations who collaborated in the development of the original Alcohol Outcomes Spider in 2005 and the Alcohol Star in 2010 (both of which have helped inform this version), especially Aquarius, East Midlands Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) and alcohol services in the East Midlands.

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Introduction to the Drug & Alcohol Star™

We are here to help you with your recovery from alcohol or drug misuse.

The Drug & Alcohol Star helps us focus on what needs to change.

The Star looks at ten areas of your life:

1. Drug use
2. Alcohol use
3. Physical health
4. Meaningful use of time
5. Community
6. Emotional health
7. Accommodation
8. Money
9. Offending
10. Family and relationships.

The Journey of Change

For each core area there is a ten-point scale. These scales are underpinned by a Journey of Change comprising five stages, described on the next two pages.

How does it work?

To complete the Star, look at each of the ten scales one by one and talk them over with your keyworker. Together, you can agree where you are in each area, mark the number on the Star Chart and connect the points to create a picture of the areas of your life that are working well and the areas that are causing difficulties.

You can use your completed Star to start thinking about the actions you want to take and the support that would help you to take them. You and your keyworker will come back to the Star at regular intervals. This will help you build a picture of your progress.

It's not just down to you

The Drug & Alcohol Star focuses on the things that you and your worker can do to support your recovery. However, it is important to recognise that there may be conditions which affect your recovery but are beyond your control. These may include lack of access to housing or work and/or not having the services you need. Using the Star may help you identify those external factors as well as the things you can change.

The Journey of Change

For most of us, recovery from problem drinking or drug misuse is a process. It means understanding the triggers, the effects of misuse on ourselves and others and how we can make changes. This isn't easy but it can help to understand how change works. Everyone makes changes in their own way but the pattern is often similar.

Stuck (1-2)

At the beginning of the journey we may feel **stuck** – we don't feel able to face the problem or accept help. We take a step forward to 2 when we have moments of wanting things to change but when these are not yet consistent enough to accept support.

Accepting help (3-4)

From **stuck** we move to **accepting help**. At this stage we want to get away from the problem. We probably hope that someone else can sort it out for us and we go along with some of the things they suggest. We do this some of the time at 3 and more consistently at 4.

Believing (5-6)

Then we start **believing** that we can make a difference ourselves in our lives. We look ahead towards how we want to be living. At 5, there is an internal shift towards believing in a positive future for ourselves and taking responsibility for making that happen. At 6, we start to take the initiative and try new things to achieve our goals. This stage is a tough place to be and it can help to have plenty of support.

Learning (7-8)

The next step is **learning** how to make what we want a reality, building on what works for us and increasing our confidence in a future without alcohol or drug misuse. By 8, we have achieved our goals and mostly got where we need to be, but it is hard at times so we still need support.

Self-reliance (9-10)

As we learn, we gradually become more self-reliant. At 9, we need occasional support but, at 10, we get to the point where we can manage without help from a drug or alcohol service.

The Journey of Change is summarised on the next page. It isn't necessarily a case of moving from the first stage to the last. We all start in different places and can move forwards or backwards as things change. Wherever you are, placing yourself on the Journey of Change can help you to see where you have come from, what your next step is and how we can best help you.

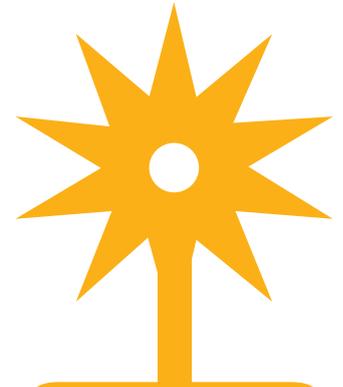
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The Journey of Change

Key points

- At 1 and 2, you are causing or risking harm to yourself or others
- At 3 and 4, this harm is reducing because you are accepting help
- At 5, there is an internal shift towards taking responsibility and at 6 you are taking action for yourself
- By 8, you can manage this area but need ongoing support to maintain it
- By 10, you don't need support from a specialist service



Self-reliance

10

I can manage without help from the project

9

Learning

8

I'm learning how to do this

7

Believing

I can make a difference. It's up to me as well

5

6

Accepting help

4

I want someone else to sort things out

Stuck

Leave me alone

1

2

3

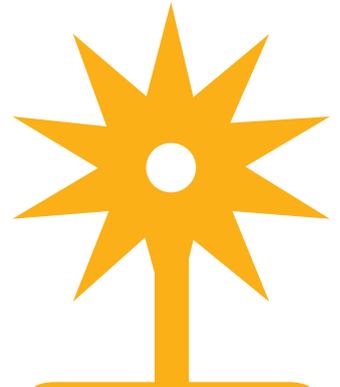
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1 Drug use

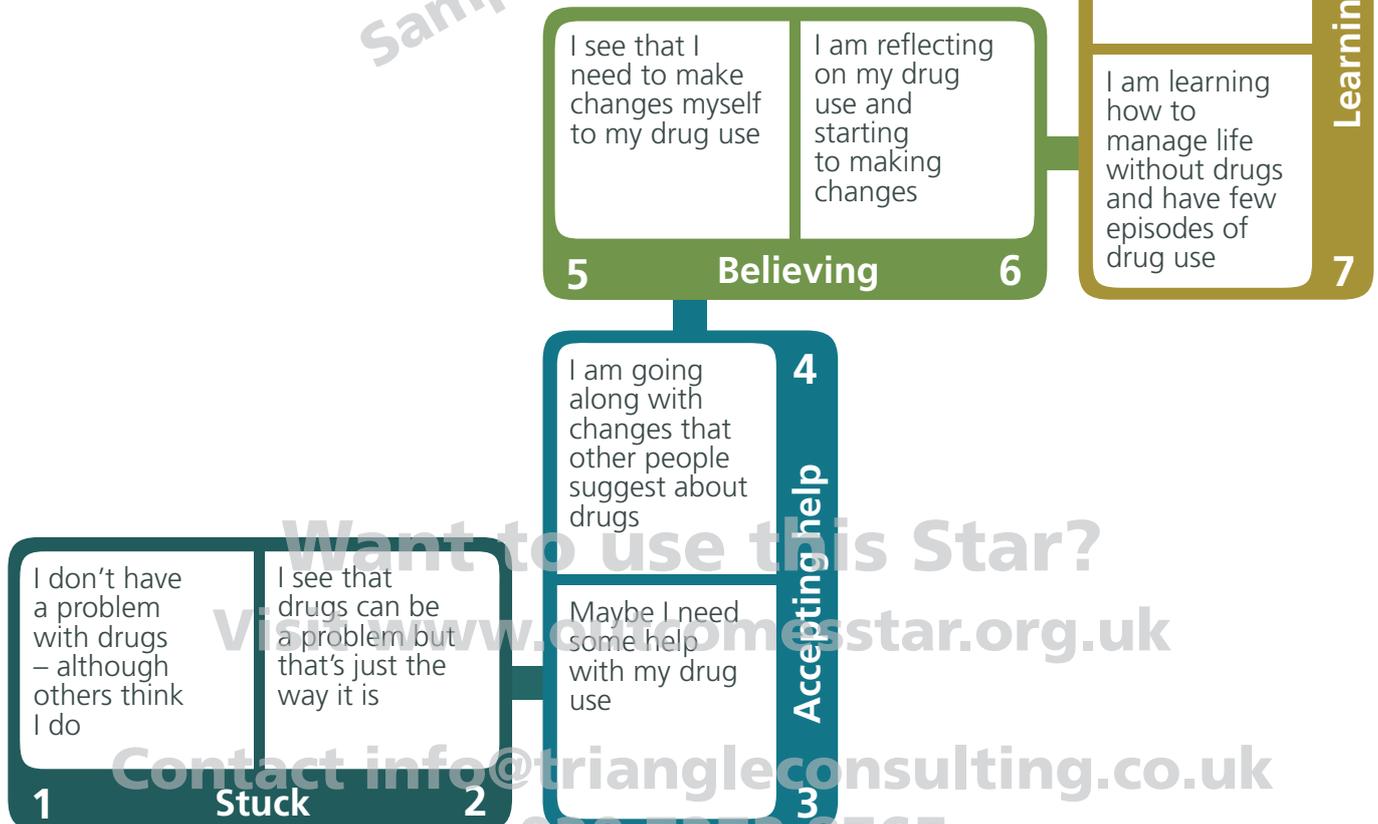
This scale is about misusing drugs, whether prescribed or not. If this does not apply to you, simply choose 10 and move on to the next scale.



Key points

- **Being at a 3 or above means you are taking steps to stay safe, for instance, protecting yourself against infection or overdose**
- **Between 5 and 7, the main shift is towards you taking responsibility for making changes and learning to manage a wider range of situations without misusing drugs**
- **Being at 8 or above means you have stopped using illegal drugs and misusing prescribed drugs**
- **Being at 10 means you are also not using methadone or other prescribed substitutes**

Where are you on your journey?



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1 Drug use (detail)

Self-reliance

10 I don't use illegal drugs or misuse legal or prescribed drugs

- You don't use any illegal drugs or prescribed alternatives such as methadone
- Any use of prescribed drugs is as directed by a doctor and does not damage your health, well-being or relationships
- If drugs have been an issue in the past, your family, friends, GP or self-help groups (for instance NA) provide any ongoing support you need and you can access extra help in the future, if needed

9 I am not misusing drugs but need occasional support to maintain this

- You are using strategies to avoid relapse
- You don't need much support but appreciate knowing it's there

Learning

8 I am not misusing drugs but need support from the service to maintain that

- You mostly manage feelings and situations that have led to drug use in the past
- You have few or no episodes of drug use
- If you use methadone or other prescribed substitutes you are working towards abstinence from them
- You need regular support from the service to maintain this

7 I am learning how to manage life without drugs and have few episodes of drug use

- You are learning for yourself how to deal with triggers and high-risk situations and your confidence is growing
- Any problematic drug use is infrequent or moderate and you are able to learn from lapses, with support

Believing

6 I am reflecting on my drug use and starting to making changes

- There is a sense that you are 'up for it' in relation to addressing drugs issues
- You are reducing your use of drugs or may stop completely for periods
- You are reflecting on situations or people that could trigger your use of drugs and sometimes avoid these

5 I see that I need to make changes myself to my drug use

- You recognise that addressing drugs will require change on your part
- You are actively exploring and considering options to help you with this

Accepting help

4 I am going along with changes that other people suggest about drugs

- You mostly follow harm-reduction measures by this point if not before
- You may agree to a plan of support but your workers or advisors are taking the lead and without them you could slip back
- You attend appointments around drug issues fairly regularly

3 Maybe I need some help with my drug use

- You are concerned about the harm caused by your drug use, and sometimes follow advice to reduce harm
- You want to make changes in relation to drugs but do not believe it is possible
- You often miss appointments that relate to your use of drugs

Stuck

2 I see that drugs can be a problem but that's just the way it is

- As 1, but you have glimmers of awareness about the harm caused by drugs
- You do not engage with support or consider change

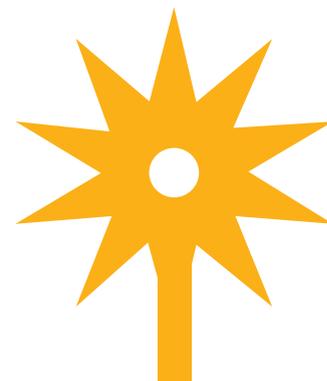
1 I don't have a problem with drugs – although others think I do

- Your drug use is at harmful or risky levels
- Your life may be orientated around drugs or your use is seriously affecting other people
- You don't think this is a problem or you are not ready to talk about it

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2 Alcohol use

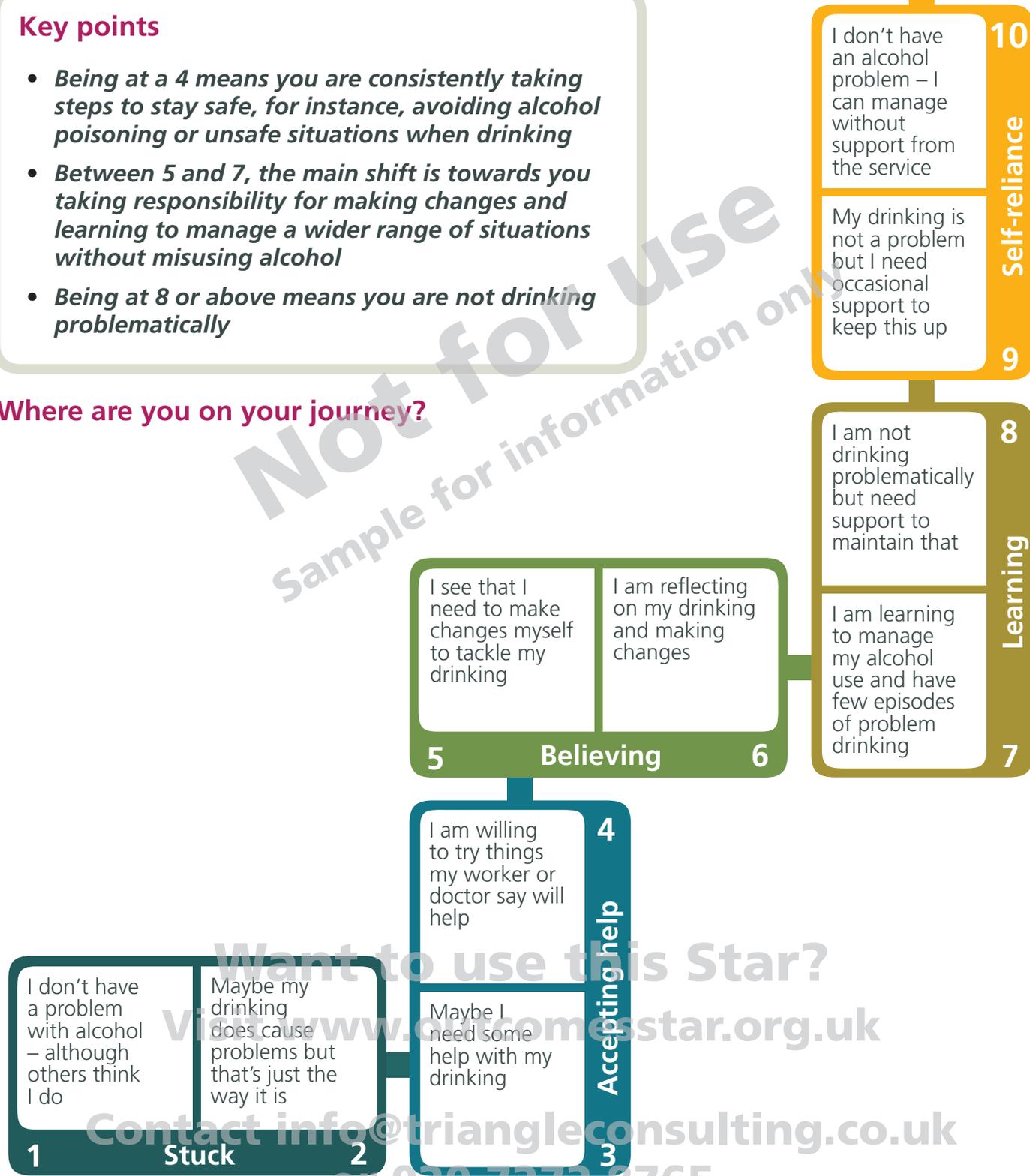
This scale is for how you deal with any problem drinking. If this does not apply to you, simply choose 10 and move on to the next scale. At 10, you might be abstinent or controlling your drinking so that it doesn't result in problems for you or others.



Key points

- **Being at a 4 means you are consistently taking steps to stay safe, for instance, avoiding alcohol poisoning or unsafe situations when drinking**
- **Between 5 and 7, the main shift is towards you taking responsibility for making changes and learning to manage a wider range of situations without misusing alcohol**
- **Being at 8 or above means you are not drinking problematically**

Where are you on your journey?



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2 Alcohol use (detail)

Self-reliance

10 I don't have an alcohol problem – I can manage without support from the service

- Alcohol is not a problem for you or, if it has been a problem, you have now reached your drinking goal and have strategies to maintain it effectively
- If you drink alcohol, it is in moderation and does not damage your health, well-being or relationships
- Family, friends, your GP, self-help groups (e.g. AA) provide any ongoing support that you need
- If you need extra help at any time, you are aware of this and know how to access support

9 My drinking is not a problem but I need occasional support to keep this up

- You are using strategies to avoid relapse, with occasional difficulties
- You don't need much support from the service but appreciate knowing it's there

Learning

8 I am not drinking problematically but need support to maintain that

- You have new ways of coping with the feelings and situations that led to drinking and are not drinking problematically
- This is not easy and you are not totally confident, so you need regular support from the service to maintain this

7 I am learning to manage my alcohol use and have few episodes of problem drinking

- You are exploring your triggers for excessive drinking, reflecting on the causes and have come up with ways of dealing with triggers
- You have probably reduced your drinking substantially and are able to learn from lapses with support
- You have ways to maintain your progress and are increasingly confident in your ability to do so

Believing

6 I am reflecting on my drinking and making changes

- You are reducing how much you drink or are stopping completely for periods
- You are making other changes to avoid drinking triggers and support your recovery

5 I see that I need to make changes myself to tackle my drinking

- You have taken on board that controlling or stopping drinking means that you need to make changes
- There is a sense that you are 'up for it'
- You are able to make choices about your drinking goal and the support you need to achieve it

Accepting help

4 I am willing to try things my worker or doctor say will help

- You mostly follow harm-reduction measures
- You may agree to a plan of support but your workers or advisors are taking the lead. Without them you could slip back
- You attend most appointments

3 Maybe I do need some help with my drinking

- You are fed up with the negative consequences of your drinking
- You want change but do not believe it is possible
- It may seem like there are good reasons for your drinking or that others are to blame
- You often miss appointments
- You may have just come out of detox and doubt you can keep it up

Stuck

2 Maybe my drinking does cause problems but that's just the way it is

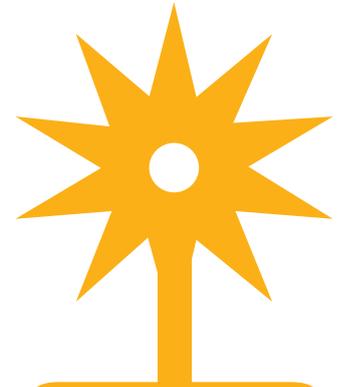
- As 1, but every now and then you are worried about your drinking
- You are not ready to make changes and don't engage with support

1 I don't have a problem with alcohol – although others think I do

- Your life is orientated around drinking but you don't want to talk about it
- Other people say your drinking is a problem, but you don't think it is
- Drinking may be seriously damaging your health

3 Physical health

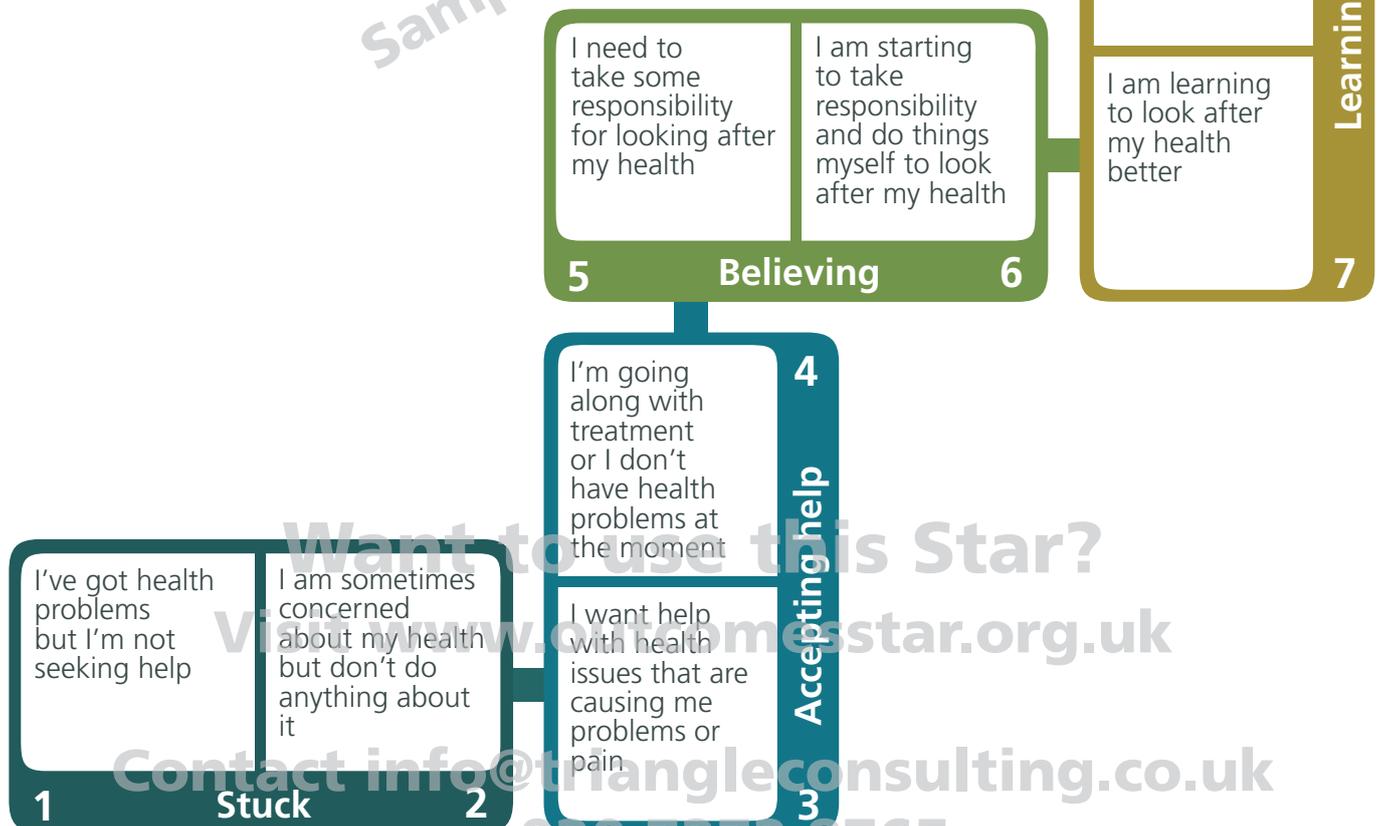
This scale is not about how good your physical health is but about how well you look after your health and manage any health conditions you have. This includes going to the doctor as needed, following treatment advice, maintaining dental health and trying to make healthier lifestyle choices, such as eating well, addressing any issues with sleeplessness and taking exercise.



Key points

- *At 1-2, you have significant health problems that are not being treated*
- *At 4, if you have a health problem, you consistently get treatment*
- *At 8, you are taking care of any health conditions you have and you're making some healthy lifestyle choices, with support*
- *At 10, you do that without support, though you may or may not feel well*

Where are you on your journey?



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3 Physical health (detail)

Self-reliance

10 I look after my physical health well without support

- You have an independent and responsible approach to your physical health
- Your diet is mostly OK, you take exercise, do what you need to do to sleep well enough and keep unhealthy habits to a minimum
- You may or may not actually be in good health or feel physically well but you are managing any conditions as well as possible to maximise your health

9 I look after my health well but need occasional support to keep it up

- As 10, but you need occasional support to reinforce and maintain healthy habits

Learning

8 I look after my health well but I need support to keep it up

- You consistently access healthcare and take prescribed medication by this point, if not before
- You are making positive changes in your lifestyle with support, for example changing your diet, exercising more consistently or stopping smoking

7 I am learning to look after my health better

- You see the link between getting treatment, healthier choices and feeling better
- As a result, your motivation to care for your health is increasing
- You may be feeling physically healthier or sleeping better
- Change is difficult, so you need support

Believing

6 I am starting to take responsibility and do things myself to look after my health

- You attend health appointments on your own (or with friends or family)
- You may try changing diet, exercise, addressing sleep problems or other lifestyle changes
- You don't keep up changes for long but begin to sense what might work for you

5 I need to take some responsibility for looking after my health

- You actively want to look after your health, though not sure how to put that into practice
- You engage in discussions about health and actively explore options

Accepting help

4 I'm going along with treatment or I don't have health problems at the moment

- You see a doctor regularly, if needed, but only if someone else organises it
- You may be feeling better as a result of the treatment you are receiving

3 I want help with health issues that are causing me problems or pain

- You want to do something about any pain or discomfort you are in
- You will see a doctor or nurse but only if someone else takes you – you probably wouldn't go alone
- Although you are getting help with major problems, you are not very interested in addressing less severe or less obvious ones

Stuck

2 I am sometimes concerned about my health but don't do anything about it

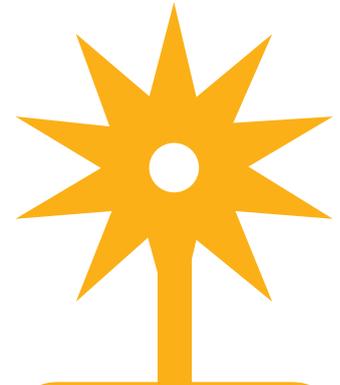
- You occasionally discuss health briefly or ask for help but then refuse support when offered
- You don't believe it is possible to feel better

1 I've got health problems but I'm not seeking help

- You don't go to the doctor or seek help even for pressing health problems, for instance ulcers or liver disease
- Because of your drinking and/or drug use you are putting yourself at risk, for instance of violence, BBVs or unwanted pregnancy
- You don't want to discuss your health, or it feels too difficult to even think about it

4 Meaningful use of time

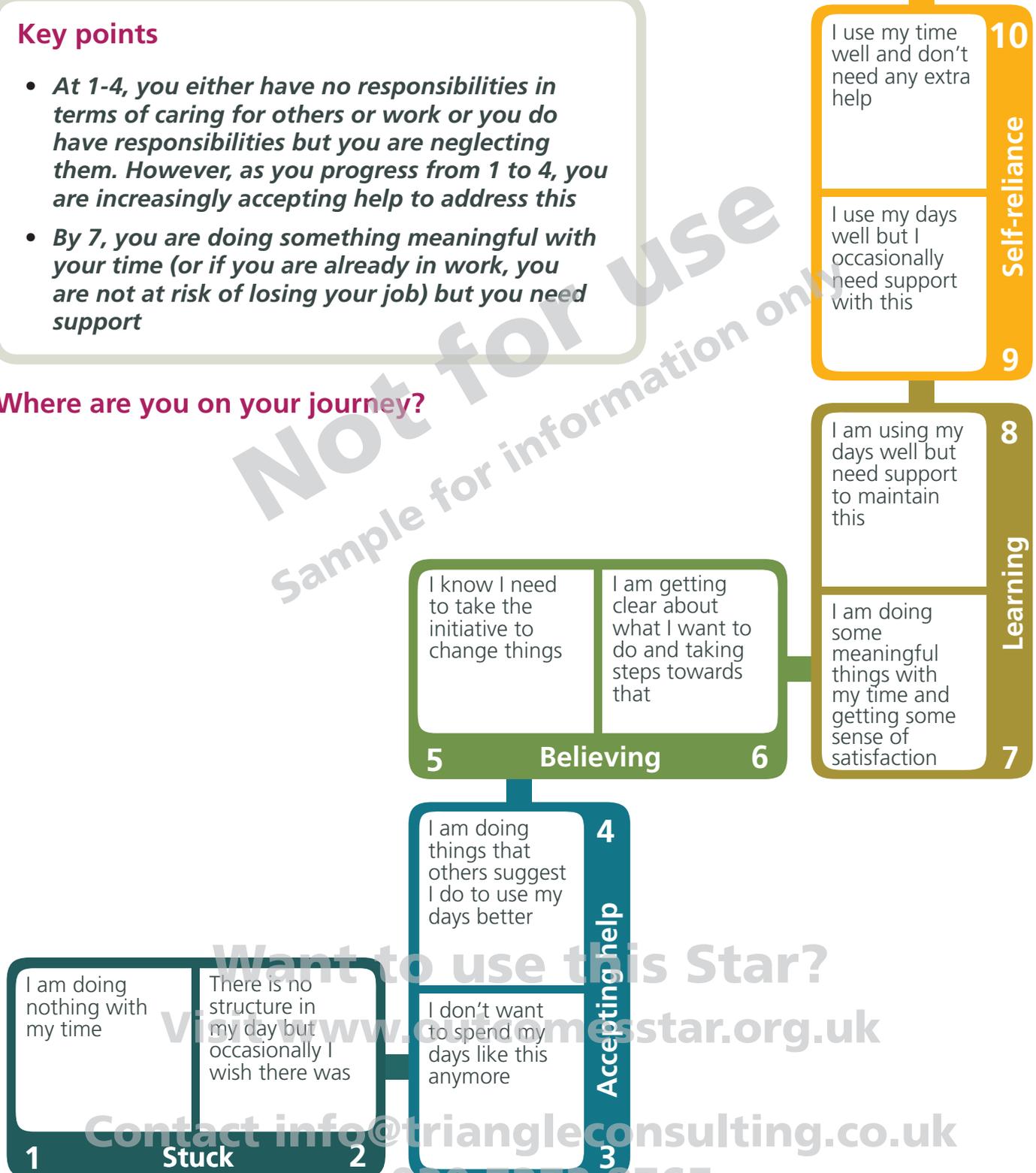
This scale is about how you spend your weekdays – whether you work or are a full-time parent or carer; or in training, education or voluntary work; looking for work or actively enjoying your interests – or whether your time is orientated around drinking and/or drugs.



Key points

- *At 1-4, you either have no responsibilities in terms of caring for others or work or you do have responsibilities but you are neglecting them. However, as you progress from 1 to 4, you are increasingly accepting help to address this*
- *By 7, you are doing something meaningful with your time (or if you are already in work, you are not at risk of losing your job) but you need support*

Where are you on your journey?



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4 Meaningful use of time (detail)

Self-reliance

10 I use my time well and don't need any extra help

- You are engaged in a regular activity which works for you, for instance paid employment, full-time parenting, voluntary work or training
- You are able to change jobs, advance and progress, organise training or activities, or address changes affecting your days, such as your children getting older, without the support of the service – friends, family and colleagues give you any support you need

9 I use my days well but I occasionally need support with this

- As 10, but you need help occasionally, for instance if circumstances change or a course comes to an end and you need to make new arrangements

Learning

8 I am using my days well but need support to maintain this

- You are engaged in a regular activity that works for you, for instance paid employment, full-time parenting, voluntary work or training
- You may encounter difficulties but with support you can learn from these

7 I am doing some meaningful things with my time and getting some sense of satisfaction

- You are learning what sorts of activities you enjoy and getting closer to doing the things you want to do
- You run into problems at times and you need help to get through them
- If you are working, you are not at significant risk of losing your job due to alcohol or drugs and are learning how to manage work stress and other triggers

Believing

6 I am getting clear about what I want to do and taking steps towards that

- You are exploring possible training courses, work, volunteering or ways of managing your existing job with support
- You are setting and meeting short-term goals
- You have some sense of the direction you might want to go in but it's hard to put that into practice so you need support

5 I know I need to take the initiative to change things

- You are actively considering the future and your options for work, training, education or other activities
- If you are in work and problems with work are contributing to your problem drinking or drug misuse, you are aware of that and talking about how to make changes

Accepting help

4 I am doing things that others suggest I do to use my days better

- If you are working, you are at high risk of losing your job due to drinking or drugs
- If you have other responsibilities, such as parenting, you are at high risk of neglecting those responsibilities
- You follow through on actions agreed with your worker but need lots of encouragement to do this

3 I don't want to spend my days like this anymore

- You are doing very little or nothing with your time but are fed up with living like this and want to change
- You want help but don't have a sense of what else is possible
- You agree with your worker to do things but after the meeting you lose motivation and don't follow through

Stuck

2 There is no structure in my day but occasionally I wish there was

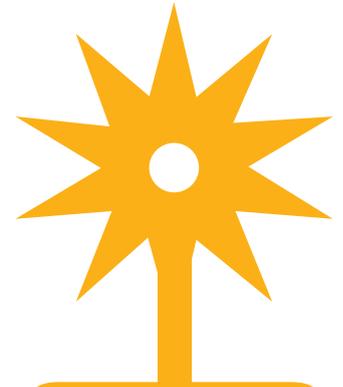
- As 1, but you are occasionally fed up with doing nothing and may talk about this, though not for long and you refuse any offers of help with how to use your time

1 I am doing nothing with my time

- Your life is too chaotic to manage work, training or education or to fulfil the responsibilities you have. Your time may be taken up with drinking or finding ways to maintain a drug habit
- You are not able – or don't want – to think or talk about how you are using your time in the day

5 Community

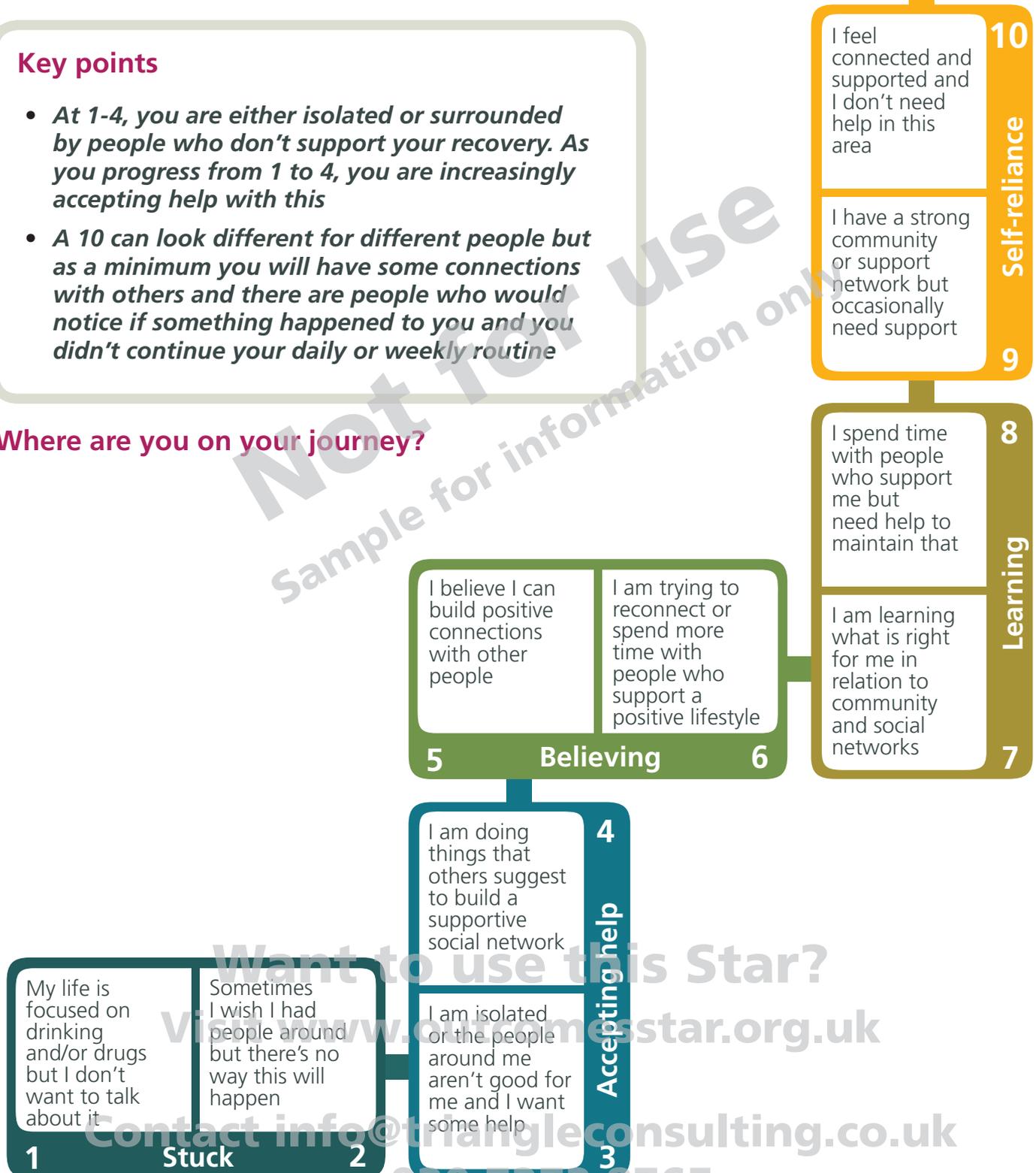
This scale is about feeling connected and having people in your life. These may be friends, people you know locally, being part of a cultural or religious community, or people with whom you share interests or participate in activities. It includes how you feel and cope in social situations without alcohol or drugs.



Key points

- **At 1-4, you are either isolated or surrounded by people who don't support your recovery. As you progress from 1 to 4, you are increasingly accepting help with this**
- **A 10 can look different for different people but as a minimum you will have some connections with others and there are people who would notice if something happened to you and you didn't continue your daily or weekly routine**

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