



## SCENARIO 1 LAWRENCE & MANAGER:

### Notes for the person who will role-play 'Manager'

#### Background information

You are the manager of a graphic design company. Lawrence, one of your staff members, is seconded to work offsite for 2 months interstate. As Lawrence's manager, you know he is a committed and a hardworking employee, so you are surprised to hear from another manager offsite that there has been concern with Lawrence's performance and wellbeing. Lawrence has had a number of unexplained absences from work lately. He has even missed important meetings by confusing scheduled times, or forgetting altogether. In your video conference calls with the graphic design team, you notice that Lawrence is anxious, easily agitated and evasive in his responses. In your most recent weekly one to ones over Zoom, he appears dishevelled and you notice a number of wine bottles and empty beer cans in his room. It is just past noon, so you ask casually if he has had a big night. Lawrence's response is dismissive. His tone is pessimistic, and he displays little eye contact with you throughout the work-focused conversation. He makes a comment about how everyone is probably drinking more right now to 'cope' and this is how it is for him too. When you hang up you wonder how the remote working and time away from his family and supports might be impacting on Lawrence. After a few days, you decide to reach out to Lawrence on Zoom to have a MHFA conversation.

#### START OF THE PRACTICE CONVERSATION

Lawrence agrees to a catch up over Zoom. You notice that he seems tired and edgy.

#### You start the conversation.

- Begin by sharing some positives about Lawrence as a worker
- Ask how he is finding working remotely, and being away from his usual supports
- Share some of the things that have you concerned for Lawrence (i.e. missing appointments, becoming easily frustrated with his peers, etc)
- Even if Lawrence deflects or is evasive in letting you know how he really is, keep trying to make him feel comfortable in speaking with you
- When Lawrence opens up, engage him further about how he might be thinking and feeling as you work through some of the steps in ALGEE



## SCENARIO 1 LAWRENCE & MANAGER:

### Notes for the person who will role-play 'Lawrence'

#### Background information

You are a graphic designer, who has been seconded to work interstate from another office for 2 months. After a couple of weeks, working remotely starts to take a toll on you. You miss your family, social connections and sports commitments during the week. You have been feeling sad, even on edge sometimes and you get easily frustrated by your colleagues. You are finding it hard to get up in the mornings and this has resulted in you missing a number of meetings and days of work. Usually you only have a couple of beers on the weekend during social occasions, but lately you have started to drink on weeknights, and can now easily have a couple of bottles of wine and several beers in one evening. This is a change for you, as you would usually only drink on the weekends for social occasions. In your last one to one over Zoom, your manager notices the empty bottles in the background and makes a joke about having had a big night. A few days later, your manager asks to check in with you again over Zoom. You are worried he might say something about the drinking and missing work.

#### START OF THE PRACTICE CONVERSATION

This conversation takes place via video, on Zoom. You are feeling tired and edgy.

#### Your Manager will start the conversation.

- If / when your manager asks about how you are: You admit that you have struggled a bit and are feeling lonely and flat, but play it down and say it's just temporary.
- If / when your manager persists in encouraging you to talk more about the impact of working remotely: You deflect this by saying 'everyone's got it rough right now.'
- If / when your manager expresses concern about your well-being and substance use: You start to deflect, but then open up about your feelings and be honest about your reasons for drinking.

#### Other things you could say:

- "I'm probably drinking more but I'll be ok. I just need to cut back a little'.
- "Things will get better. I'll stop drink once I'm home."
- "I find it really hard to sleep here - my sleeping patterns are all mucked up."



## SCENARIO 2: LAWRENCE & COLLEAGUE

### Notes for the person who will role-play 'Lawrence's colleague'

#### Background information

You and your colleague Lawrence are graphic designers. You have both been seconded to work interstate for 2 months. You know Lawrence fairly well and know him to be a committed and hardworking person. Lately he has had number of unexplained absences from work and has even missed important meetings by confusing scheduled times or forgetting altogether. He is anxious, easily agitated, and becoming more reclusive. When you ask him one day how he is spending his time outside of work, he says "The same as what I have been doing since I got here, have a couple of drinks till I pass out". This strikes you as being out of character for Lawrence, who doesn't usually drink during the week. Your secondment finishes early, and on your way home you think that perhaps the remote working and time away from family and supports might be impacting on Lawrence. After a few days, you decide to reach out to Lawrence by calling him on Skype.

#### START OF THE PRACTICE CONVERSATION

Lawrence appears tired and on edge when you reach out to him over Skype. In the background you notice a number of empty wine bottles and beer cans.

#### You start the conversation.

- Start with casual chit chat about your mutual sports interests
- Ask Lawrence how he is, and specifically how he is coping with being away from his familiar supports and lifestyle
- Despite his evasiveness and attempts to downplay how he is feeling and coping, persist in your attempts to be available for Lawrence
- Validate Lawrence's feelings and experiences when he opens up about his mood and stressors.
- When he admits to drinking more to cope with his feelings, acknowledge this, offer him some support, and give him information or resources he may find helpful
- Encourage Lawrence to think about how he can access professional supports to talk about his mood and substance use
- Talk with Lawrence about some self-care strategies he could try to support himself, such exercise and relaxation strategies



## SCENARIO 2 LAWRENCE & COLLEAGUE

### Notes for the person who will role-play 'Lawrence'

#### Background information

You are a graphic designer. You and your colleague James have been seconded to work interstate from another office for 2 months. After a couple of weeks, working remotely starts to take a toll on you. You miss your family, social connections and sports commitments during the week. You have been feeling sad, even on edge sometimes and you get easily frustrated by your colleagues. You are finding it hard to get up in the mornings and this has resulted in you missing a number of meetings and days of work. Usually you only have a couple of beers on the weekends during social occasions, but lately you have started to drink on weeknights, and can now easily have a couple of bottles of wines and several beers in one evening. When James tries to check in with you, you are evasive about this but admit that you have been drinking more since starting your secondment. James finishes his secondment earlier than you. After he returns home he asks to catch up with you on Skype.

#### START OF THE PRACTICE CONVERSATION

James starts the conversation. You've had a big night so you're feeling tired and on edge.

- Talk with James about your mutual interests, even though you aren't really interested in the conversation
- Try to avoid responding to James when he asks how you are coping being away from your familiar supports and lifestyle
- James will be persistent and reassuring, and eventually this will help you to feel comfortable to open up about how you have been feeling, and why you might be drinking more to cope
- When James offers some options for help-seeking by giving you resources and encouraging professional supports, listen and seem open to exploring some of the options he suggests