They Still Don’t Trust Me

Session 03 / Adults 18+ / Recovery Has to Survive Tuesday
Use Jordan, a safe personal example, or pass. Keep your pages private. Writing does not mean you have to contact anyone.

01 Today I choose: fiction / my situation / listening / a pass.

02 What would make this topic more manageable today?

03 One thing I want to understand or practice:

Jordan and Avery

After several broken promises during past substance use, Jordan wants their sister Avery to lend them her car. Avery says, I am not ready to lend it. Jordan hears, Nothing I do will ever count. Jordan wants to argue, list everything they have changed, or stop speaking to Avery. There is no immediate danger in this fictional example.

What belongs to Avery

Avery decides whether to lend her car. Jordan’s progress does not make that decision for her.

One possible response

I returned your car late without calling, and that disrupted your plans. I understand why you are not lending it today. I will arrange another ride.

What remains possible

Jordan can ask about transport elsewhere, seek support for disappointment, and follow through on an honest commitment. The response does not guarantee trust.

Who gets to decide?

Sort these statements: my action / my request / someone else’s decision. More than one category may apply. Discuss your reasoning with the facilitator, or work privately.

01 “I will ask about another ride.” What can Jordan choose, and what can they not guarantee?

02 “Avery needs to lend it if she respects my progress.” Whose decision is this? Rewrite it.

03 “I can discuss a concern. I will pause if we start insulting each other.” What action is within Jordan’s control?

One specific repair

Use Jordan or a situation that feels safe to think about. You do not need to accept blame for something you did not do. Avoid names and identifying details.

01 What specific action am I responsible for? What impact can I acknowledge?

02 What realistic action or repair can I offer? What would promise too much?

03 My words, leaving the other person free to decide:

My limit and my next step

A request can receive a no. An honest limit explains what you can do. Include responsibilities that still need attention.

01 What can I offer? What can I not honestly promise or agree to?

02 One next action and when I will take it:

03 If they say no or do not respond, what will I do? What support could help afterward?

Practice the words

Choose a willing partner or work privately. Use fiction. Your listener offers clarity, not a verdict about your family.

01 My short repair or request:

02 If I hear “I am not ready,” I could say:

03 After practice: What will I shorten, clarify, or stop promising?

The unsent message

Alternative to pair practice. Write or draw a specific acknowledgment and realistic offer. Leave the other person’s answer open. You do not have to send or share this.

01 My unsent message, sketch, or draft:

02 What can I honestly offer? What support would help if the answer is hard?

After the conversation

Optional follow-up. A reply, forgiveness, or renewed contact is not the score. Respect no-contact requests and restrictions. Seek appropriate help for safety concerns.

Progress is progress

A small honest commitment can matter while the relationship remains unfinished.
www.progresscounselingprograms.com

01 What did I do or practice? What did I learn?

02 What responsibility or support still needs attention?