Building Connections

Workbook

Thinking about the people in my life.

YAI

Seeing beyond disability.

Introduction

We all do better when we have support.

In this workbook you will think about people in your life.

People can be family, friends, professionals, or people in your community.

You will think about activities you enjoy.

Everybody is different.

There is no rule about the relationships someone should have.

You choose what matters to you.

Introduction

Many people feel lonely.

Relationships can be difficult.

It can feel hard to think about this.

If this feels hard for you, talk to someone you trust.

You will think about people who are there for you.

People you care about.

People who value you.

You will think about how to find relationships you want.

Introduction

You can fill it out all at once or one part at a time.

It's ok if you do not an answer every question.

You can complete it on your own or ask for help.

A guide for people offering support is at the end.

You can use this workbook to prepare for support meetings.

My Circle of Support

We all do better when we have people who support us.

Think about the people who support you.

Who is there when I have questions?

Who is there when I want to talk?

Who is there when I need help?

Names of people who are there for me:

Activities I Enjoy

What do I like to do?

What am I interested in?

What music do I like?

What do I like to watch?

Activities I Enjoy

How do I like to be creative?

How do I like to move my body?

Activities I enjoy and want to do more:

Activities I want to try:

My Support

People I Have Fun With

Circle your answer. I like to hang out with…

… one person at a time.	☉ Yes	○ No
… a group of people.	☉ Yes	○ No
… at big events.	☉ Yes	○ No

Who do I contact when I want to have fun?

Who do I enjoy spending time with?

Names of people I have fun with:

I Am Valued by Others

People who value me:

How I am there for others:

What do people like about me?

How am I a positive role model?

My Alone Time

Circle your answer.

How do I feel when I am alone?

I mostly enjoy being alone.	Yes	No
I often feel bad when I am alone.	Yes	No

What do I enjoy doing when I am alone?

What do I do when I feel sad and lonely?

Activities I like to do alone:

Parts of My Life

Parts of My Life

My family

My friends

Social media I use

Parts of My Life

Professionals who support me

People at work or program

People in my neighborhood I know

Parts of My Life

Parts of my life where I have good support:

Relationships I wish for:

My Circle of Support

My Circle of Support

Some people are closer to me than others.

People who are close to me:

People I deeply care about and who deeply care about me. Write names:

People who support me:

They support me in one part of my life, like work, school, or home. These could be doctors, social workers, teacher and more. Write names:

People I say hi to:

People I know but are not close to me. I may chat with them about the weather, but we do not share personal stuff.

What Is Missing?

What relationships do I wish for?

Circle your answer. I wish for…

… more friends.	☐ Yes	☉ No
… a girlfriend or boyfriend.	☉ Yes	☐ No
… getting to know people in my neighborhood.	☐ Yes	☉ No

Relationships I wish for:

Who Do I Reach Out To?

Who Do I Reach Out To?

If I wake up feeling unwell and I think I'm sick.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If a door broke in my apartment.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If a doctor said I am sick, but I do not understand.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I feel angry, upset, and frustrated and need someone to talk to.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

Who Do I Reach Out To?

If a support staff has treated me unfairly.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I need help unclogging my toilet.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I feel lonely and anxious and need someone to talk to.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I need help to change a lightbulb.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

Who Do I Reach Out To?

If a kid in the neighborhood calls me names when I walk by.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I had an argument with a friend.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If a family member yelled at me.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

If I am behind in paying my internet, electricity bill, or rent.

Name of person I talk to

Who else can I talk to?

Next Steps

Next Steps

Activities I enjoy:

Activities I want to try:

Next Steps

People in my life I am grateful for:

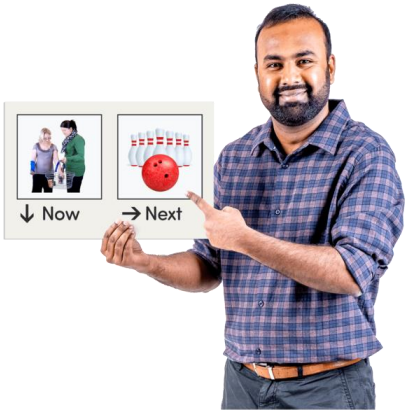
Relationships I wish for:

Next Steps

Communities or groups I am a part of:

Communities or groups I would like to join:

Next Steps



What is my goal?

Think about 3 steps to take.

1. Step I can take:

2. Step I can take:

3. Step I can take:

Next Steps

What worries me when thinking about my goal?

What problems did I have in the past trying to reach my goal?

What could help to solve these problems?

Next Steps

Who will I ask for support?

Name of first person:

I will ask this person to:

Name of second person:

I will ask this person to:

Name of third person:

I will ask this person to:

Guidelines for People Offering Support

Why was this workbook created?

A New York State survey revealed that many people with developmental disabilities face social isolation, with over half expressing a need for more social opportunities. In focus groups, participants cited discrimination, transportation issues, and difficulty finding relevant events as key barriers to socialization.

How can it be used?

This workbook helps people assess their social networks, recognizing strengths and areas for growth. It aims to guide them in identifying steps to build desired relationships. It's a useful tool for support meetings and developing socialization outcomes.

Responses in the workbook must be kept confidential, and the workbook belongs to the participant. While individual responses are private, generalized data can reveal common needs and trends.

How to offer support

Support people should respect the participant's preferences regarding social interaction, without imposing their own values. It's crucial to validate the participant's experience with active listening techniques, especially when recalling challenging relationships or feelings of loneliness. Professional support staff must adhere to mandated reporting requirements.

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