

Preparing for  
**Adulthood**



# Person-Centered Planning



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# Introduction



Person-centred planning has been used in the UK since the early 1980s, mainly among families but also by community and academic organisations. For example, from 1983, the University of East London ran family leadership programmes which taught the importance of person-centred planning to enable children to be included in their local communities and to have the same rights as all other children. At the University of Bolton, the further education teacher training programme introduced person-centred planning as a way of giving the graduates the confidence to include adult students with learning disabilities in mainstream classes. They learned about person-centred planning as well as Circles of Friends, the social model of disability, positive approaches to behaviour in the classroom, peer support and learning through relationships.

In the UK, we learned about person-centred planning from people in the United States and Canada who were trail blazing person-centred approaches to support marginalised people who had traditionally been institutionalised. Parents of disabled children also used person-centred planning to enable their children to be included in mainstream education.

In 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government issued the Section 7 Guidance on Service Principles and Service Responses. This was the first time that public services had been required to use person-centred approaches to support people with learning disabilities. It also required Services to plan together to support transition planning for young people moving from Children's Services into Adult Services. This was built on with the introduction of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. The principles of the Act focus on what matters to people who require support and put them at the centre of decision making about their own lives.

Organisations like [Helen Sanderson Associates](#) and [Inclusive Solutions](#) developed resources and training to support people themselves, families and people working in the system to learn how to have different conversations enabling people to have more choice and control over their lives. Helen Sanderson Associates were commissioned by the Department of Education between 2004 and 2008 to provide training for people working in schools, colleges, and local authorities.

# 1. Approaches to Person-Centred Planning

Person-centred planning is a holistic, joined up, problem solving approach which supports people to have the lives they want. It assumes that everybody has gifts and talents and can make a contribution. It explores what is important to a person from their own perspective, what is important for them to keep healthy and safe and what needs to happen to enable the person to make changes that lead to their best life. This is an alternative to traditional types of planning which are based on the medical model of disability, set up to assess need, allocate services and make decisions for people.

Person-centred plans are usually developed using either MAPS, PATH, or Essential Lifestyle Planning. Each has characteristics which make them more relevant in particular situations but all are concerned with the same questions:

- Who is this person?
- What is great about them?
- What is important to them?
- What support do they need to live the life they want?

Essential Lifestyle Planning is probably the most flexible approach and has been used in adult social care now for many years. It has more recently been the approach used to develop Education, Health and Care plans in England. It is used to facilitate a conversation using the following set of questions:

- What do people like and admire about you?
- Who are the important people in your life?
- What is important to you – now and in the future?
- What is important for you – now and in the future?
- What is working for you now?
- What is not working so well?
- What actions need to happen to achieve your dreams and aspirations?
- Who will do what to make sure those things happen?

This conversation ideally takes place in a planning meeting with the person and the people closest to them.

[The ALN Code of Practice](#), published in 2021 sets out the requirements of the [Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2018](#). There are clear principles of practice within the Code which set out how children, young people and their parents should be involved in the process by using person-centred practice.

[Chapter 4](#) of the Code describes the importance of supporting children, their parents, and young people to participate meaningfully which will help them to:

- feel confident that their views, wishes, and feelings are listened to and valued, even if they find it difficult to get these across,
- have an awareness of their rights and the support and services available to them, and
- develop a sense of responsibility for, and control over, their learning.

[Chapter 22](#) details how IDP meetings can be held using a person-centred approach under the following headings:

- a) What do you like most, admire or appreciate about the learner?
- b) What has happened since the last review? (Where applicable)
- c) What do you think, from your perspective, are the learner's aspirations for the future?
- d) What do you think is most important in the learner's life at the moment?
- e) What do you think is important for the learner to help them develop and progress?
- f) What do other people need to know or do to help the learner?
- g) What is going really well from your perspective at the moment?
- h) What is not going so well at the moment from your perspective?
- i) Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

In 2015, the Welsh Government published three supporting documents to help schools and colleges to implement person-centred practice.

<https://gov.wales/developing-person-centred-organisation>

<https://gov.wales/person-centred-practice-education>

<https://gov.wales/person-centred-reviews-toolkit-guidance-education-providers>

NDTi has refreshed a suite of person-centred planning materials which can be used when planning with children, young people and their families. The tools are specifically designed to find out what is important to a young person and the support they need. They can in fact be used in any planning situation and for many years have been used with people of all ages and with a range of labels and needs.

We hope you find the materials useful and help to support children, young people, and families to have more choice and control in their lives.



## 2.The Main Tools

### Like & Admire

It is important to start a planning conversation with an introduction to the person being supported to plan. This tool helps to ask about the person's positive qualities, respecting and affirming their individuality and appreciating how they contribute to the communities they are a part of.

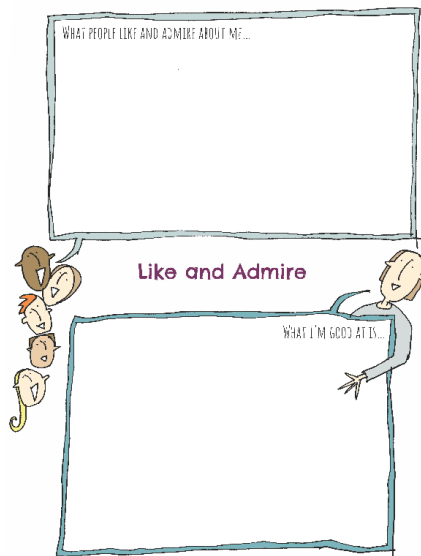
This is about strengths and abilities, recognising that regardless of disability everyone has positive characteristics that we can recognise and celebrate.

Using [this tool](#) is a great way to start a review meeting. It gets the focus on the person, reminding everyone why they are there and keeps the person at the centre of the discussion.

It's great when people's friends are asked this question. Peers often say different things to families and paid staff and this can be enlightening. Parents and carers often find this positive approach to talking about their young person's qualities is a welcome change from concentrating on what isn't going well or about difficulties with service provision or meeting needs.

This tool is also effective when discussing someone who may be experiencing challenging times. It reminds people that everyone has positive characteristics and even if behaviour is a concern, this is not who they are as a person.

What we like and admire about someone is an inclusive question to ask. We all have qualities that people like and admire and although we don't always recognise them ourselves, sharing what we value, respect, and enjoy about others at the start of a conversation has an impact on the type of discussion that follows.



## Relationship Map

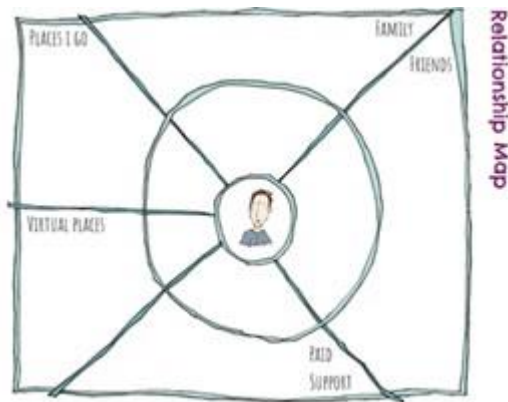
We can learn about and record the important people in someone's life by having conversations and using the [Relationship Map](#)

One of the Preparing for Adulthood Pathways is about friends, relationships, and community. We often work with young disabled people who want better social lives and friends to do things with. Often young people dream about having boyfriends, girlfriends and about one day getting married or living with a partner.

Developing a person-centred plan is designed to find out what is important to a person, and this almost always includes important people in their life. We can learn about and record the important people in someone's life by having conversations



and using the relationship map. It is a good way to start thinking about who is already in a person's life and how those relationships might be supported and how new relationships can be developed.

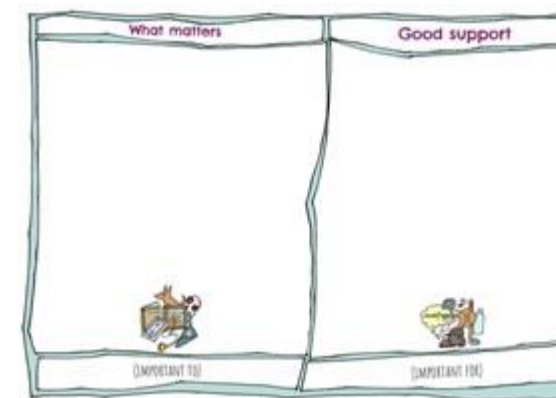


## Important To / Important For

Working in a person-centred way requires that we see the person first – what matters to them, not just what the matter is with them.

Historically, services which support people with disabilities and additional needs have just focused on what is important for them, to keep people healthy and safe. However, we now have enough evidence to demonstrate that this approach does not support people to have the lives that they would choose. We need to learn both what is important to the person and what is important for them and find the balance that works for them. The things that are important to most people are the small things that we aren't even aware of ourselves, but if we don't have them, it has an enormous impact on our lives. When we get down to it the things that are really important to us apart from the people we love, are usually about routines, our clothes, food and our favourite TV programmes or music.

Once we have found out what is really important to somebody now and for the future, we can work out how to make sure we support the person to achieve their aspirations as well as taking account of what is important for them from other.



## Working / Not Working

This tool helps people to sort out what is working and what is not working from different perspectives and to work out ways to build on what is working and to reduce or stop the things that aren't working.

To develop outcomes and actions, we must start by finding out about what is going well in a person's life and what they would change if they could - looking at things both from their perspective and from others' perspectives. This tool helps people to sort out what is working and what is not working from different perspectives and to work out ways to build on what is working and to reduce or stop the things that aren't working. It is a really simple way of working out what is happening in someone's life from more than one perspective, it can help to identify whether what is important to them is present in their life, and whether they are being supported in a way that makes sense to them. Problems surface where there are areas of disagreement in people's lives. By looking at what is working and not working from different perspectives, it is clear where there is agreement

and where there is difference. Finding what is working and not working from different perspectives is a key part of a person-centred review and is a way of making sure there is a golden thread from a person's aspirations to the outcomes set in their plan.

What's working?	What's not working?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP, DEVELOP OR GROW?	WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CHANGE OR LET GO OF?

Once we know what is important to and for a person, what is working and not working for them, we can begin to think about the outcomes that will take them towards their aspirations. Traditional planning has been planning **FOR** a person and has often focused on “service targets” rather than what is important to a person. A person-centred approach to planning enables us to genuinely find out what is important to a young person now and for their future.

Many young people say that they want to have fun with friends outside of school or college but that they do not really have friends. Once we know what the young person wants to achieve, have explored what is working around this now and what the barriers are, we can agree that we will work towards something like:

“By next summer I will be going out to eat once a week with a friend.”

We can then work out what needs to happen to achieve this outcome, including the support they will need. This is what is called a “holistic” outcome because the outcome will not be delivered through one kind of provision or service but by everyone working together. For example, the school, college or family may be able to identify other young people with similar interests and support both to do some planning around what sort of things they might both like to do. If the young person receives support from social care, they can be supported to recruit a personal assistant with a similar interest. A speech therapist may support the

development of a communication profile so that the new personal assistant has what they need to know to get the relationship off to a good start and other health professionals may need to give advice to make sure that the young person's health support needs are met when they are out.

## One Page Profile

A one-page profile can be seen as either a summary and placed at the front of a plan or a tool in its own right. It is a tool that helps those who support young people to better understand what matters to them, what they are good at and how to provide great support.

The one-page profile is the foundation of personalised support. It gathers key information about a person so it can be quickly shared and understood. A one-page profile describes a young person's character, gifts and talents; what is important to them; and the best way to support them. A one-page profile should be developed with and by the people who know the young person well. Other person-centred thinking tools can help to gather information to put into the one-page profile.

Many young people with additional learning needs use their one-page profile to help them communicate with new people. For example, they take it to medical appointments or college interviews. They find it an effective way of communicating to new people about themselves.

They can be used at points of transition to help receiving settings develop a clear picture of the child or young person.

The diagram shows a hand-drawn template for a 'One Page Profile'. It consists of a rectangular frame divided into four sections. The top right section is labeled 'One Page Profile' and contains the text 'WHAT PEOPLE LIKE AND ADMIRE ABOUT ME'. The middle section is labeled 'WHAT MATTERS TO ME (IMPORTANT TO)'. The bottom section is labeled 'HOW BEST TO SUPPORT ME (IMPORTANT FOR)'. There is a small empty square box in the top left corner.

## What Matters Island

This [template](#) is designed to help young people talk with their family, carers and any paid supporters to coproduce a summary Preparing for Adulthood plan.

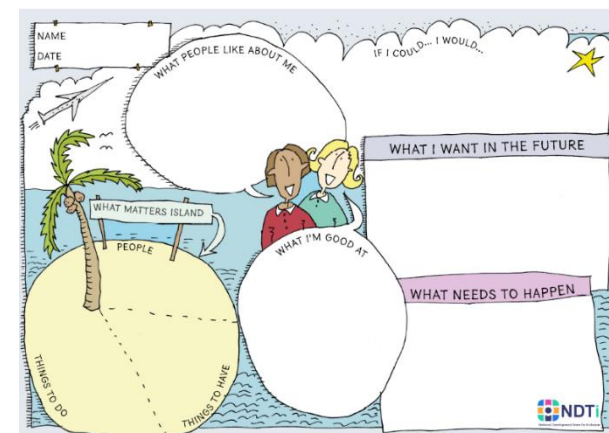
### Introduction

This template is designed to help young people talk with their family, friends and any paid supporters to coproduce a summary Preparing for Adulthood plan. It isn't a one-page profile, although could inform one or complement an existing profile.

What Matters Island is all about the young person. It's really important the young person is at the centre of planning their own future. The template can be used at home with family, at school, college, or other settings. The most important thing is that the young person is there, and their thoughts and ideas are captured.

Young people might want to ask those who are important to them to come and help them do their What Matters Island, such as family and friends or they might also want to think about who else might be important for them to have there, like paid supporters, the ALNco or transition worker for example.

It is important that What Matters Island can be understood by anyone the young person chooses to share it with later. Young people may want to write or draw on their own What Matters Island, whatever makes sense to them. Some young people ask for help from someone else to do the writing. There is also a version that can be type into which is available to download.



## How to use the What Matters Island

What Matters Island template works best in the following order:



1. Name and date
2. Who would you like to take to your island? Family, friends, pets?
3. What would you like to take with you? We also think about what are the things that keep you happy and safe. For example, it might be your favourite bit of tech, but you also need to take your medication too.
4. What would you like to do when you are there? How will you have fun and enjoy yourself? How will you relax?
5. List all the things that you are good at. Once you have had your turn you might want to ask the other people in the room what they think you are good at.
6. Now list all the things that people like about you. The people helping you can share all the things they like about you too. You could ask them, what do you appreciate about me? Or perhaps, why do you think I am amazing?
7. If I could, I would. Before we had smart phones and sat navs to help us to get to where we wanted to go, people used the north star. As long as they knew which star in the sky was the north star they could always get to where they wanted to go. If they got lost and needed to get back on track, they would look for the north star. So, what is your north star for your life? Your aspiration or dream for your future? If you could do and be anything in the future, what would it be? Say to yourself, "if I could, I would...". If you don't know or get a little bit stuck, it can sometimes help to take a look at your [What Matters Island](#) and think about the important people and things you do that matter to you. Then look at what you are good at and what people like about you. Can you find and make any connections? Does this give you any ideas?

8. What I want in the future | When we think about Preparing for Adulthood it can help to think about 4 key things that can happen. Things that are positive and possible:



- What job do you want to do when you are an adult?
  - How are you going to be as independent as possible? You might want to think about your home, where you would like to live and who you would like to live with if anybody? How are you going to travel and get to places you want to go?
  - What friends and relationships would you like? How can you be part of your community where you live?
  - How are you going to be as healthy as you can be? This includes being physically and mentally healthy. We often call this your wellbeing.
9. What needs to happen? What are the first steps towards what you want in the future? Make a list of what needs to happen next. You might need to do some things and other people in the room might need to help to. It might help to think about – who is going to do what, by when. It can be really helpful to share your What Matters Island. If you have a review meeting where a group of people meet with you about your plan, you can share your what matters island with them.



## Some top tips for doing your What Matters Island

1. Invite people who are important to you and for you, to help you do your What Matters Island
2. When you meet, it can be helpful for people to take on key roles: -
  - A facilitator. Someone who makes sure everyone follows the order of the What Matters Island above and that everyone takes turns and has their say. You might want to do this or ask some else to.
  - A timekeeper. Someone who can keep an eye on the time and makes sure you move through the What Matters Island on time. You might want to do the whole island in one go or break it up into a number of conversations.
  - A note taker or artist. This could be you or you might ask someone to help.

3. Capture your thoughts and ideas on the What Matters Island in whatever way works best for you. You might want to hand write, draw, or use the computer. You might want to ask for some help from someone else in the room too.
4. Have fun – you might want to have your favourite music on in the background? Take a break halfway through. You might want to share some food to celebrate once you have finished your What Matters Island.
5. Share your What Matters Island with the people who are important to and for you.

Six months afterwards, have a chat with people who are important to and for you. This might be at your next review if you have one. Did everyone do what they said they would to help you towards what you wanted to do in the future? What else needs to happen?

We hope you find the What Matters Island Helpful and you enjoy using it.

## Vocational Profile

A [vocational profile](#) is a way of gathering information. It is a discovery document, which is specifically related to work and supporting someone to find a job. It is a person-centred approach to finding out what a young person wants to do and provides an opportunity to understand what a person is interested in and to explore why. If we do not complete a vocational profile, then we do not know enough about a young person in relation to their aspirations for work and to get the best match of a job for them.

It is not intended that young people complete a profile by themselves, but for someone to support them to work through it until it is complete. It should be done through a conversation or series of short conversations, ideally with a job coach or other person who is going to support the young person on a work experience, a work placement, a supported internship or to get a job. Job coaches are usually employed by supported employment organisations, but increasingly they are working in colleges and local authorities.

The vocational profile should be a live document and, if at all possible, kept online and updated after any kind of work experience or work placement.

It can be used from school year 8 or 9 as part of the school curriculum. It could also be used by a job coach within a supported employment organisation.



The vocational profile will capture details of where someone lives and who they live with, information that helps us understand what support a person might need to get a job. It helps to identify areas for development such as learning how to travel independently, telling the time and using money. In the new Preparing for Adulthood vocational profile, the questions in section 4 are specifically designed to gauge what support a person might need in the workplace.

Doing a vocational profile is an opportunity to find out what a young person is interested in, what their skills and talents are, and it is a way of opening doors to what is possible. It should be a motivating conversation not one that leaves young people feeling they cannot succeed.

### Useful Tips for Completing a Vocational Profile

- Ensure that the focus is on the young person's voice and their interests and motivations but also involve parents and/or other family members.
- Adopt a one-step-at-a-time approach to completing the profile.
- Consider what the best environment may be to start profiling e.g. time of day and provide clear instructions that the young person will be able to understand.

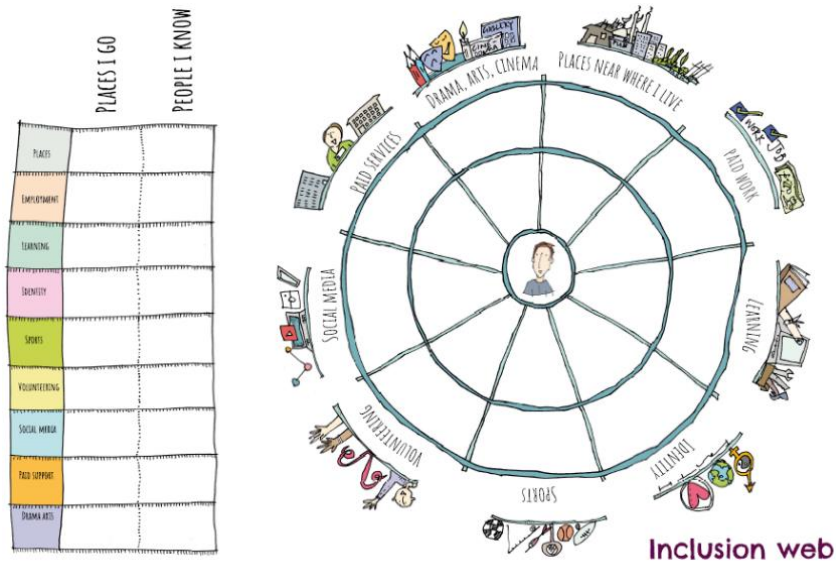
This PfA vocational profile can, of course, be used as a basis for you to develop a bespoke version for your local area. As well as the vocational profile, we have also produced a summary sheet that could be attached to the Individual Development Plan or other plan.



## 4. Additional Tools

Sometimes people find it difficult to express their aspirations, what matters to them and what support they need. Their friends and supporters can use a number of tools aimed at discovering more.

### Inclusion Web



The Inclusion Web builds on the Relationship Map tool.

The Inclusion Web can be used to:

- help a person to get to know another person better by asking good questions and recording what is learned on a chart.
- help to plan and build an included life full of positive roles and relationships in the wider community beyond the health and social care system.
- see at a glance how things have changed over time, by repeating the exercise and comparing the charts.
- generate numbers and apply statistics to find out if your efforts have been effective.

## Good Day / Bad Day

This tool helps with understanding what is important to and for people, to have the life that they want.

The Good Day / Bad Day person-centred thinking tool helps us to sort out and understand the important aspects of a person's day to day living. This tool helps with understanding what is important to and for people, to have the life that they want. It is particularly useful if a person you know is having more bad days than good or is moving to a new setting where people won't know what a good day looks like for a person.

Asking people to describe what happens on a good or bad day, what routines help towards a good day or what events can lead to a bad day enables us to understand what is important and meaningful to the individual.

Often there are quite simple things that happen that can make a day good that we may not have thought about, for example, a person whose day is good if they get the seat they like on a bus, or a day is bad if the canteen runs out of ketchup. They may be things that can be regarded as small or unimportant but are actually really important to the individual.

There could be more complex situations that lead to bad days, such as an increase in mental health needs or not getting the right support at the right time. This simple tool can highlight where there are barriers to having good days that require careful thought and planning by people's circles of support.

## Perfect Week

This tool helps us to see what different aspects of living make up a really great week for a person.

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
MON			
TUES			
WED			
THURS			
FRI			
SAT			
SUN			

Leading on from Good Day / Bad Day is the perfect week person centred thinking tool. This helps us to see what different aspects of living make up a really great week for a person. It can be used to describe what happens now in a person's week or what they would like their week to look like in the future.

The perfect week tool is useful in transition review meetings, where there may be people attending who do not know the person well or are meeting them for the first time. Perfect week can be used to show what range of activities an individual would like to be doing when they leave their current setting.

By spending time completing this template before a review meeting it can support the person to advocate for themselves and prepare them for this discussion. It can also support staff to advocate on behalf of a person if this template has been prepared beforehand.

The discussions around 'perfect week' can then lead to actions to work towards these activities happening in the future. These could be further education or training, travelling, leisure or sport activities and meeting friends, being with family and living more independently.

Perfect week supports developing aspirations for the future, doing the things you enjoy with people you want to be with - having the life you want.

## Decision Making Profile

The decision-making profile creates a clear picture about how a person makes a decision and how they want to be supported in decision-making.

This tool describes how to provide information in a way that makes sense to that person, this could be how they want you to structure your language, if they want written words, symbols, or pictures or perhaps an audio format.

It breaks the decision-making process into five sections:

- How I like to get information
- How to present choices to me
- Ways you can help me understand.
- When is the best time for me to make decisions?
- When is a bad time for me to make a decision?

Decision Making Profile

HOW I LIKE TO GET INFORMATION	HOW TO PRESENT CHOICES TO ME	WAYS YOU CAN HELP ME UNDERSTAND	THE BEST TIME FOR ME TO MAKE DECISIONS	THE WORST TIME FOR ME TO MAKE DECISIONS

When you are completing a decision-making profile with a person look at their one-page profile and communication chart. See what these tell you about the best times and ways to support the person to make a decision. Talk to the person and those they know well to check this information with them and add to it. It might help to think about a decision the person has had to make in the past and then think about what worked and what did not work for them about how they were supported.

This help us to support a person to understand choices that are available to them and make informed decisions. This is invaluable when thinking about consent and capacity.

Once a decision-making profile has been completed it can be helpful to consider the support a person needs to make certain decisions and the following questions can be helpful:

- Do I fully understand what is important to the person and their communication?
- Am I the best person to support this decision-making?
- Is the information that I have and am giving the person relevant to the decision?
- Am I presenting it in a way that the person can understand?
- I am giving the information in the right place and time.
- Have I given the person the best chance to make the decision themselves?





You can then work with the person to explore: 'important decisions in my life' / 'how I must be involved' / 'who makes the final decision?'.

This then helps us to reflect on how decisions are made and who is making them and to think about how much choice and control a person has in their life and, if the balance is wrong, to make positive changes.

## Communication Passport

This is a helpful tool and is essential to use when people don't use many words to speak.

**Communication Passport**

 AT THIS TIME	 I DO THIS	 IT MEANS	 YOU NEED TO

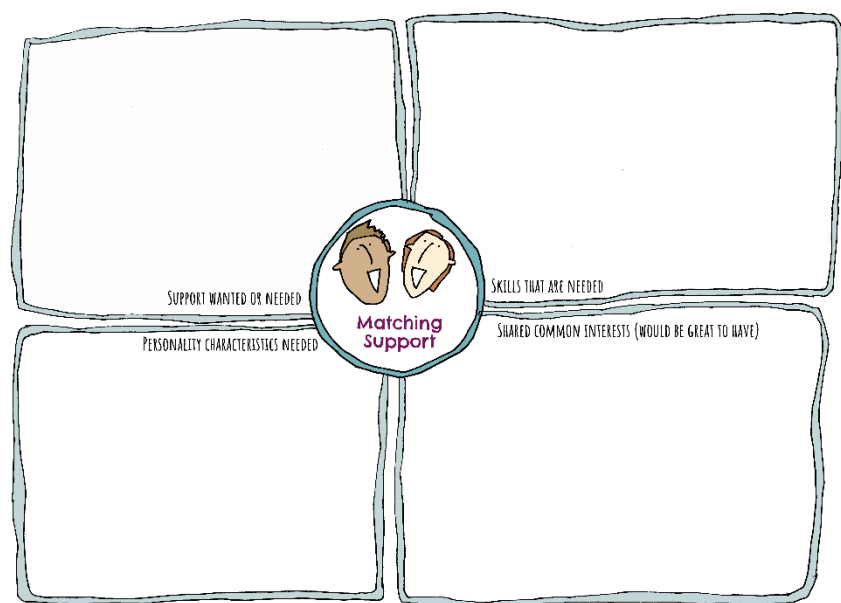
It is also important to use when the ways that people communicate with their behaviour are clearer than the words that they use, or when what people say and what they mean are different. In our experience, most people could benefit from a communication chart. It helps us to focus on what someone is trying to communicate, whether they use words or not. It is easy to assume that someone doesn't have much to say if they rarely speak, but it isn't the case. This person-centred thinking tool helps us to find other ways of communicating well together. It ensures that people are understood. This is so important, especially for people who rely on others for support. Having the

power to communicate and be understood is central to people having choice and control in their life.

It helps us to focus on what someone is trying to communicate, whether they use words or not. It is easy to assume that someone doesn't have much to say if they rarely speak, but it isn't the case. This person-centred thinking tool helps us to find other ways of communicating well together.

## Matching Support

The matching support tool is a simple way to record what is needed to create the best match.



Getting a good match between the person supporting and the person being supported - whether paid or unpaid - is crucial. The matching support tool is a simple way to record what is needed to create the best match.

It gives a structure to look at which skills and support and which people and characteristics match well together. The matching support tool has four sections. The first is the support that the person wants and needs. The next is the skills required to support them, followed by personality characteristics and finally shared common interests. The most important part of this is personality characteristics.

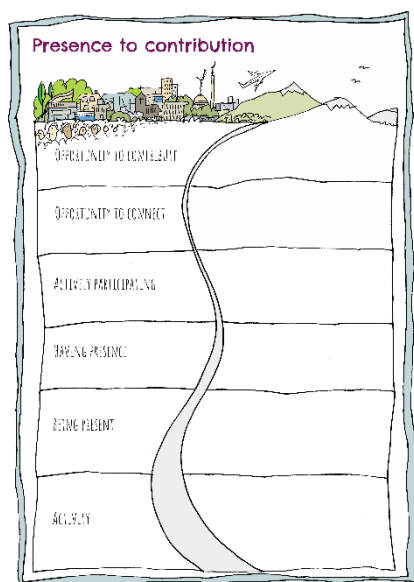
It helps you to think about the paid support that people want and need, to use either in matching to existing staff or for the person specification for recruiting staff or volunteers.

For many people it works better for them to be supported by different people for different things. For example if somebody is looking for a job, the support they need will be from a job coach and very different from when they want to go to the theatre or dancing and different again to the support, they need to prepare meals or for personal care.



## Presence to Contribution

This tool is a way of having a conversation with someone to find ways to enable them to be part of their community.



It is important to support people to do the things they want to do and part of this is to support them to be part of their communities, whatever that means for them.

This tool is a way of having a conversation with someone to find ways to enable them to be part of their community. It enables you to record what the person is interested in (or take this from their one-page profile), what it means to be present for an activity and what they could do to contribute to it more fully. It asks people to think about the places that are important to them, where they go now and how they can develop these interests further. This helps us to think about possibilities in the future and plan actions to make positive change, supporting someone to be a contributing member of their community.

It provides a structure to think about what a person does on a day-to-day basis, so that we can see opportunities for them to make new connections, meet new people and contribute to the community. The starting point can be to use the tool to include the people in their planning meetings. Often young people do not attend their planning and review meetings and this is a lost opportunity. If the young person is not present it is hard to work out how to move on to them having presence, actively participating, gaining opportunities to connect and then contributing. This tool provides the

framework to support people to be more involved in the things they enjoy.

## Coping Strategies

A person-centred planning tool to help children & young people to express their anxieties and concerns.

Things coming up in the next few weeks months

NO PROBLEM 😊

NOT SURE 😐

WORRIED 😞

PLOT THINGS ON THE CHART

WHAT CAN I DO TO MOVE THINGS I'M WORRIED ABOUT UP?

WHAT CAN OTHERS DO TO HELP?

This is a tool that we developed to support young people to think about returning to education after the lockdown ended but can be used for various situations. It helps to express anxieties and other concerns and to think about ways to help address these.



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