



A National Gateway to Self-Determination

funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities

It's My Future!

Planning for What I Want in My Life

A Self-Directed Planning Process

Developed by

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The National Gateway to Self-Determination

The National Gateway to Self-Determination (SD) is a consortium of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Missouri, Kansas, Oregon, New York, Illinois) in partnership with a National Self-Determination Alliance (including self-advocates, families, and numerous national partners). The overall goal of this project is **“to establish a sustainable, evidence-based training system that enhances self-determination training programs that lead to quality of life outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities throughout the lifespan.”**

There are a number of important beliefs upon which this SD initiative is founded. They include:

- SD is best considered in the context of a ***social-ecological framework***
- Development of SD is a ***lifelong process***
- Scaling-up SD training activities must occur within an ***evidence-driven*** framework
- The development of SD is a means to obtaining an ***improved quality of life***
- People with developmental disabilities ***must be equal partners***

The purpose of this White Paper and the others in the series is to fill existing gaps in the SD literature related to these beliefs. If you would like to see a complete listing of the White Papers in this series, please visit the National Gateway to Self-Determination website: www.aucd.org/ngsd

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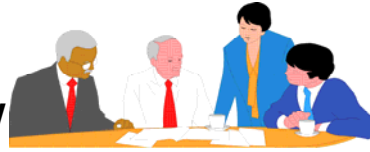
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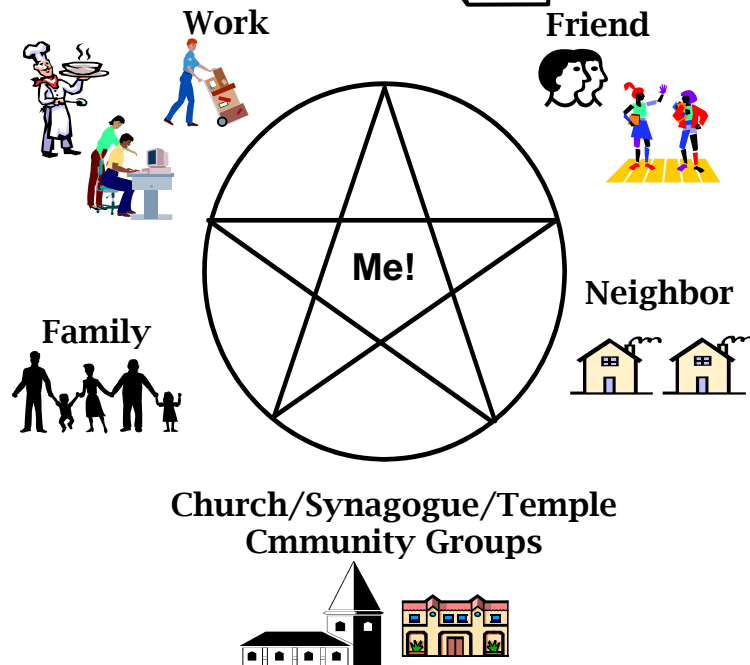
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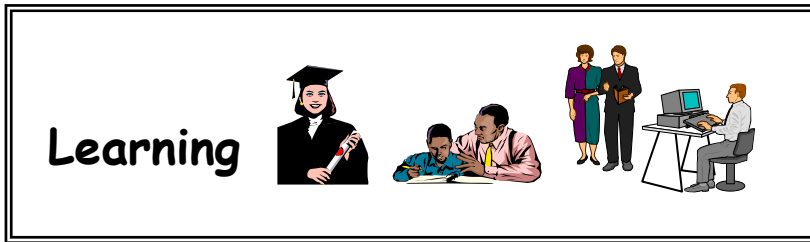
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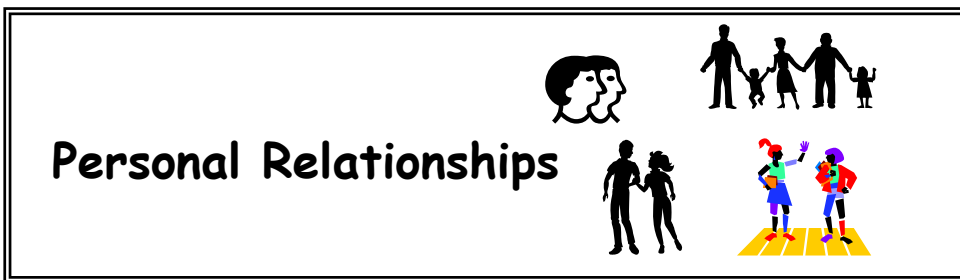
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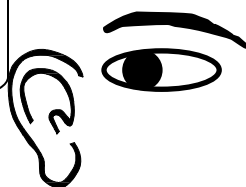


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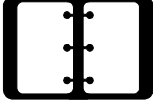
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It's Your Future!

Planning for What I Want in My Life

Getting Started

Have you ever sat in your yearly planning meeting and wondered why
everyone else did all the talking?

Do you sometimes feel like your planning meeting is useless because
nothing ever changes?

Have you ever felt that all anybody talks about is your health or
things you're not doing right?

Do you have *dreams* and ideas of what you want in life, but
your dreams just never come up?

At the end of your meeting do you feel like
you never got to talk about what you
want?

If you answered “yes!” to any of these questions, then this book is for you!

Starting today ...this book will help you get ready for your next planning meeting. You will have a chance to learn some things...things that will help you be **more in charge, more in control** at your next planning meeting so that you will be able to get more of the things you want in your life. You will learn how to make more of your own decisions about things that are important to you. And set some goals to reach the things you want.

Hey, **It's Your Future!**

Think about it. Who really knows best what you like? Who knows what you want in your life? Is it all of those other people--the staff who provide you with different services, people in your family, people where you go for training, your boss, a neighbor, a close friend? **Or is it you?** Sure, many of those other people believe they know what's best for you. But aren't you the one who knows what your dreams are? And, as an adult, shouldn't you be speaking up for yourself about what's important to you?

That's right. And this book will help you become

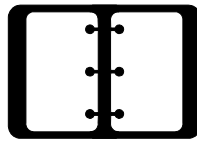
MORE INDEPENDENT in life.

This is the **BIG GOAL** of this manual and the activities presented here.

Helping you become more independent – more able to make decisions, set goals, and get others to help you plan and work toward the things you want in your life.

Everything you need to get started is right here. You'll talk about the things you like to do, places you like to go, the things you want in your life. You'll find out more about yourself. You'll learn more about making decisions and setting goals. To help you learn and practice this type of planning, you will "meet" another self-advocate named Chris. You'll see examples of how Chris does planning with the new things you are learning. This will make it easier for you to see how to do this kind of planning for the things you want in life.

You'll create a *Life Visions Book*.



That's a book of your own with pictures and notes about your interests and goals. You'll learn how to use it to help all those other people on your planning team hear you at your next planning meeting.

You'll be able to say and really mean **"It's My Future!"**

Do the activities in this book. Have fun with it. Do it all...or just do the parts that YOU need to help you be an active part of your meeting. If you do, you will be more ready than you've ever been before to plan for the things that are important – to help make your future be full of what you want it to be.

The information in this manual is organized by topic not by sessions. That means you can start today and work as far as you feel like. Then, mark your place, so next time you can start where you left off.

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You may want to work through the entire manual starting at the front and working to the back. But, if you have already done a lot of planning and would rather pick out a topic that is of special interest to you, you can go directly to that section. Use the Table of Contents at the front of the manual to find the page number of the section you want.

Choose Your Support Person

It will help if you have a support person to be with you as you do the activities in Here are just some of the things a support person could do to help you...if you want or need this kind of help:

It's My Future!



- read along with you as you go through this manual and help with questions you may have

- help you collect a file of pictures  that you can use as you create your

Life Visions Book

- help you get copies of newspapers, directories of services or other materials where you can find information on community resources



- assist you with role-playing when you practice making telephone calls to gather information on community resources

- be there to help you with activities where you need to write or take notes ...**if and when** you want that kind of help



- help you get a copy of your last year's habilitation plan

Ask someone you trust to be your support person as you work on **It's My Future!**

Choose someone...

- ✓ who you care about and who cares about you.
- ✓ who believes in your right to set goals for the things in life that are important to you.
- ✓ who is willing to assist you as you do the activities here and who will help you find community resources you may need or want.
- ✓ who says "You can do it!" ... and means it.
- ✓ who understands the system of services in your area and can help you advocate for yourself for the things that are important to you.

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- ✓ who will encourage you if you get bogged down while working on these activities.
- ✓ who will give you as much time as you need to help you complete your planning.

Choose someone who really believes in you!

Remember...this is **YOUR** experience, and it's up to **YOU** to ask for the help you may want when and where you want it. Just be sure the person you choose to assist you is someone you trust will support you in the ways you want to be helped.

At times during **It's My Future!** you'll need to look at a copy of your last plan...so be sure to ask your support person:

"Please help me get a copy of my plan from last year's planning meeting."

Tips on Using This Manual

Finding Your Way Around

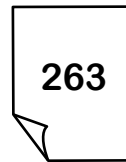
As you do the activities here sometimes you will be asked to turn to another section of the manual. The best way to find the section you want is to go to the very beginning of this manual to the

Table of Contents



"What's In This Book"

All the sections are listed in the Table of Contents. Beside each section name, there is a page number for the page where that section starts. For example, if you are trying to find the Appendix (the last section that has lots of extra information) and the section Making Telephone Calls, here's what it looks like in the Table of Contents:



**Making Telephone Calls
to Get Information**



That shows you that the Appendix starts on page 263, and Making Telephone Calls starts on page 265.

Helpful Hints

As you do the activities here, you will see the following pictures and symbols that are meant to give you certain messages. Here is what each of them means –

Every now and then you will see this symbol.




He's a statue sitting on a rock somewhere overseas. But, when he shows up, sittin' and thinkin', it means you can take a break and think, too. Don't just skip over the parts where he shows up. Slow down, stop and take a minute to really think about the question.

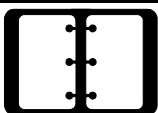
This guy is called "THE THINKER."

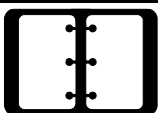
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Every now and then you will see this symbol:  This is called a “clapper” and you know what it is used for...when a movie or television show is being filmed, they snap the clapper down when it is time for the actors to begin. It’s time for **ACTION!** When you see the clapper, it will mean that there is some action you will be asked to do.




Whenever you see this symbol  it will remind you to turn to your *Life Visions Book* and to add a worksheet or pictures that show your dreams, goals, interests.



Sometimes you will see a star like this.  It is there to point out that the next thing you read will be **Something good to know**, some tip that may make your planning easier or more successful. Be sure to notice what the "tip" is all about.



Every so often you will see this symbol.  It's an overhead projector. When you see it, this means there will be a short review...a question on something you have just done. It's a chance for you to show off what you have learned. Take a moment to answer the question. If you need to go back and find the answer, that's fine, too. See if you can the question without looking at the answer that will be below it. If you answer correctly, you will know if you are learning the important information that is here for you. When you have answered the question, check your answer to see how you did. Put a check in the box beside the words **Got it!** If you didn't get the answer the first time, you may want to go back and review a little more.

Blank page for your notes:

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It's All About Me!

GOAL: You will learn that your planning meeting is to help you as an individual person. You will start creating your own *Life Visions Book*.

Have you ever had the experience of someone asking you what you want to do? Things like...



Or maybe they asked where you wanted to go eat, and you began to think of all the different kinds of restaurants you might like and the different kinds of foods – like

Burgers and fries	Italian food	Chinese food	Pizza
All-you-can-eat buffet	Subs & hoagies	Seafood	A salad place

Maybe you knew exactly what you wanted and you said so...right away! But maybe you really couldn't say. Maybe all the choices sounded good...or none of them...right at that moment anyhow.

Well, sometimes it can be like that with your interests and your goals. It takes time to think about what you really like and want. It takes getting to know yourself.



Just for example, have you ever thought about some of these questions?

(hey, if you don't remember what that little picture means...turn to Helpful Hints on page **16**.)

Do I like being with other people?



...or being by myself?

Do I like just listening to my favorite music?



...or do I like to get up and dance!



Do I like taking trips to new places?...

or being close to home in my own neighborhood?



Would I be good working in an office?



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...or would I prefer a job working outdoors?



It can take time to figure out what you **most** like to do.



It takes thinking about—

What you have done in the **past** and

what you are doing *NOW*.

It takes thinking about—

What you **like right now** about your life and

What you would like to *change*.

It means trying out some *new things* so you can see if you like them better than what you've already been doing.

It also means figuring out **what you are good at** – your abilities and preferences.

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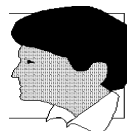
It also means learning about the **things you need** – the supports you may need to help you do the things you want in life. These include community resources and people in your own support circle.

These are the kinds of things you need to think about. That's because your planning meeting is all about **YOU** . . .

and you need to have thought about what **YOU** want!

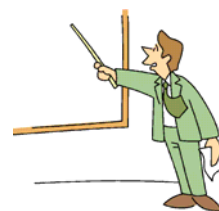
See, the first step to getting what you want in your life is

Knowing **A LOT** about yourself.



The second step is

Making decisions & setting goals for things you want in life.



The third step is

Getting **everyone else**



to know that stuff about you,

so they can help you reach your goals.

It's My Future!

will help you with all of those steps by doing the following things:



1. You will do some **checklists** of things you do or don't like or want. These will help you think about what you really like and want in different areas of your life.

2. You will practice **making decisions & setting goals.**

3. You will learn how to **talk about** your interests and desires so that the people on your planning team will hear you.

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4. And you'll create your own book  *My Life Visions Book.*

It's a book of pictures and notes that will help you tell the people on your planning team about your goals and what is important to **YOU** . That way, you will be able to show people, as well as tell them...about your interests and dreams, and they can help you start reaching for your goals! (Hey, you've heard that saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words.").

Right now...turn to the back of the manual to the **Appendix**
and the section called **Creating *My Life Visions Book***

(HINT: You can use the Table of Contents at the front of this manual to find the page number for that section)

There, you can start to create your book. Once you have done that, come back here and continue on the next page....

What is My Dream?



GOAL: You will consider the BIG QUESTION...What is my dream?

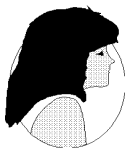
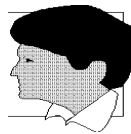
What is the main topic of your planning meeting? It's **YOU!**

So, to be successful at planning for your life, you need to know a lot about **YOU!**

Here's a little question....it's really the

BIG QUESTION

Are you ready for it.....?



What is your *dream*?

It's a huge question...and it's the one that should be at the very center of your planning for your life. That way, all the decisions you make and the goals you set can help you move closer to your dreams and to achieving the things you want in life.

Really, that is what your planning meeting should be about – your dreams and hopes for your life.

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is meant to help you name your dreams and begin to set goals.



So...before we go a step further, spend some time right now thinking about your dreams.

Consider these questions. Just think about them. You don't need to answer them right here, but you

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may want to jot down a couple of words, draw or find a picture that shows a dream of yours. (There is space on the next page, your Dream page, where you can do that. Or you can use a blank sheet of paper if you prefer.)

What do I like about my life...right now!

What is important to me?

What kind of work do I dream of doing?

What can I learn from other people?

Where do I see myself living? What kind of place is my dream home?

Do I want to travel to other places? Where?

Who do I like being with? Who do I want to spend more time with and get to know better?
Is there a special person in my life?

Do I plan to get married?

Do I want to have children?

What kinds of activities do I want to do for fun?

How can I reach out to or help other people in my community?

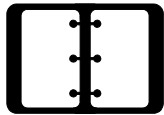
Do I have a religious faith? Is that important to me?

What do I want other people to know about me?

You can see that all of these are **BIG QUESTIONS.**

They can be exciting to think about...maybe scary...sometimes depressing. But they are the kinds of questions that can help you plan what you want out of life.

You may have a dream or several dreams right now that are important to you...if so, use the next page and jot down a **note** or put **pictures** in one or more of the clouds.

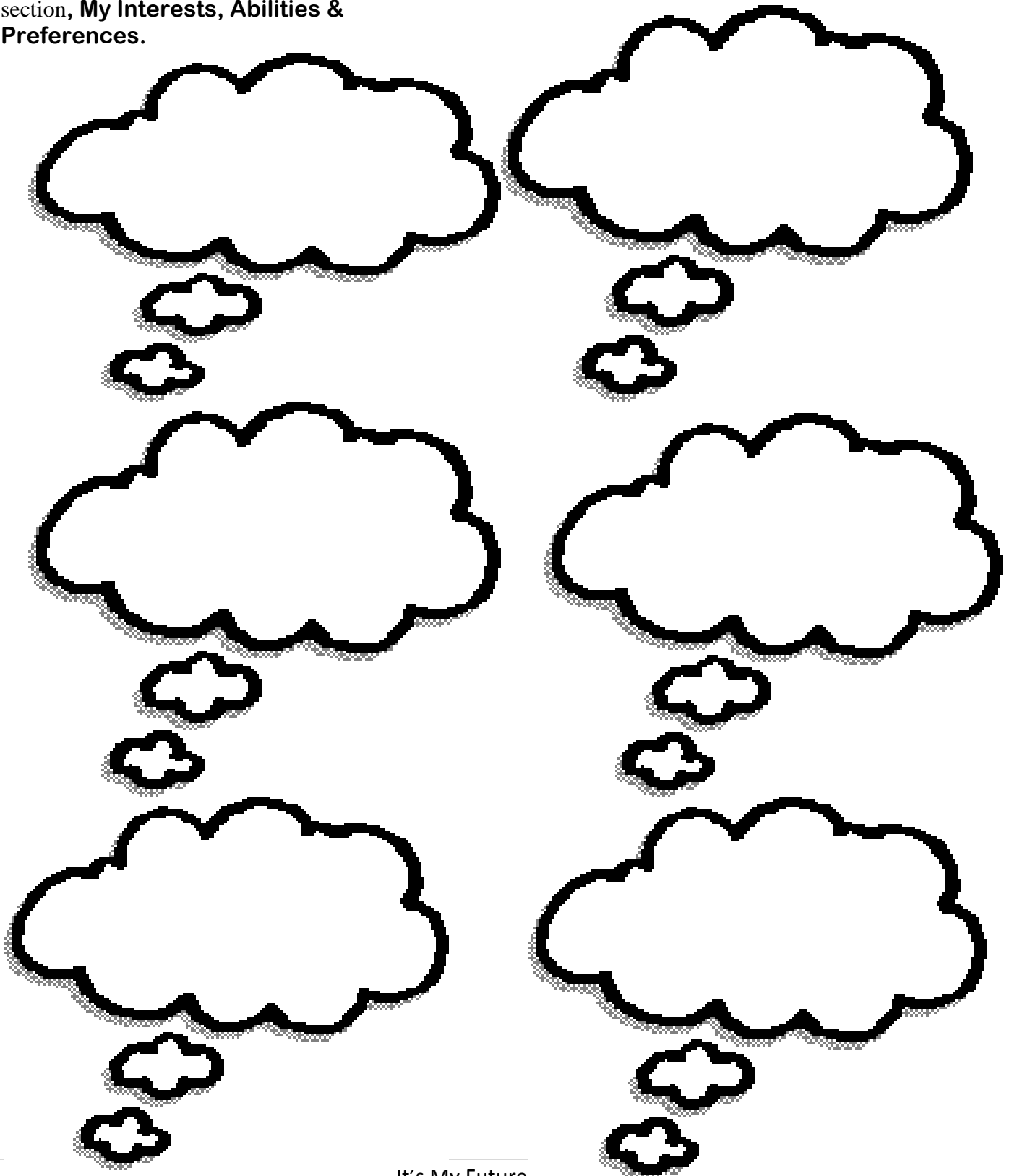


Put your *Dream* page in your *Life Book* right now! That way you can look at it again and do some more thinking about it. Your dream can become one of the things you want to

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make plans for. Go ahead and do that now...then come back here and continue with the next section, **My Interests, Abilities & Preferences.**



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Blank page

It's My Future!

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My Interests 😊, Abilities 👍 & Preferences

GOAL: You will name things you like to do – your interests. You will name things you are good at – your abilities. You will see how these can help you with planning for things you want in different areas of your life.

We said before that to be successful at planning for your life,

you need to know **A LOT** about YOU!

You need to know a lot about the things you like, things you're good at, things you prefer, things you want in life.



Think about this – are we all exactly alike?

Well, we are all people and we have a lot in common. BUT we're also all individuals.

That means each person, including you, is *unique*. No one person is exactly like another!

Each of us is *unique* – meaning each of us has our very own interests, abilities, preferences, talents, weaknesses, things we like and things we don't like.



ACTION!

To help see the *unique* things about you, go to the next page. Take a few minutes and choose your favorites from this list...

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Circle

the ones you like best.



Some Unique Things About Me

The food I like best is...

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. A hamburger | 5. fish | 9. tacos |
| 2. pizza | 6. salad | 10. a cheeseburger |
| 3. ice cream | 7. french fries | 11. fried chicken |
| 4. spaghetti | 8. strawberries | 12. chocolate |

Or...(you fill in the blank)

My favorite music is...

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. rock 'n' roll | 4. Gospel | 7. show tunes |
| 2. jazz | 5. blues | 8. rap |
| 3. country 'n' western | 6. classical | 9. pop |

Or...(you fill in the blank)

I like to watch these kinds of movies...

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Comedy (lots of laughs) | 6. Mystery ("who dunnit") |
| 2. Westerns (Cowboys) | 7. Science fiction (space aliens) |
| 3. Adventure (lots of action) | 8. Horror (scary stuff) |
| 4. Romance (lots of love) | 9. Musicals (singing & dancing) |

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5. Drama (an interesting plot with a real message)

One of my favorite movies is...

I like these things about myself...

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. I am a good friend | 6. I am kind to other people |
| 2. I am a great ball player | 7. I am happy |
| 3. I can cook well | 8. I can use a computer |
| 4. I am good with children | 9. I am great at telling |
| jokes | |
| 5. I have curly hair | 10. I can sing |

or... (you fill in the blank) _____

Something I would like to change about myself is...

Something I am proud of having done is ...

I get angry about things like...

If you asked my friends about me, here's what they would say about me...(ask your friends to help you with this)

Sometimes things happen that make me feel disappointed. One time I got really disappointed when...

A new skill I have learned is...

A hero I like or someone I admire is...

Now, think about it. Would anyone else's answers look exactly the same as yours?

Oh, sure, some of your friends might have the same favorite music, and a lot of people like the same food. But you are the **only person** who will answer exactly the way you did on all the questions.

So...it makes sense that your plan is going to look **different** than everyone else's. To be sure your plan really is about you and the things you want, it needs to be...

about YOU....about your abilities, your interests, your dreams for what you want in your life.

A good place to start in getting ready for your planning meeting is to have a good idea about the things you like and the things you are good at – your interests and abilities. It also helps to think about the things you have already learned, the experiences you have had.

How do you begin to figure out your interests and abilities, to know what things you have already learned and experienced? Good question.

You think about them. 

Let's start by thinking about the things you **like** to do best. Things you really like to do. These are things that you do just because you want to, not necessarily because you are good at them.

Oh...you can be good at them. That's no problem. But, don't leave something that you like to do off the list just because you aren't that great at it. These should be things you do because you like them. These are your **interests**.

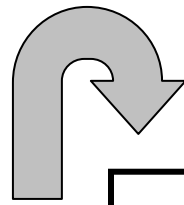
I'll give you an example. I like to sing. Especially in the car, with the radio cranked. I *really* like to sing. But, other people don't like to listen to me sing. That's because I'm really not very good at it. But, it is still something I like to do. I prefer it. So I would put it on this list.



ACTION!

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OK, on the next page...in the top box,
write a list of things you really **like to do**.



Then turn to the page after that list.

Blank page

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My Interests  **Things I Really Like to Do**

Leave this next box blank—you'll come back to it. Go to the next page.

My Abilities – Things I Do Best



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Blank page

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OK, now we'll look at another list about you.

This one is a list of things you do well. Things you do the best. Not necessarily what you like to do the best...but what you're really **good at doing**.

These are your **abilities**.



Your abilities could be things you learned at home like gardening, cooking, taking care of pets, or playing a musical instrument. Or, these could be things you have learned on a job or in school. They could be hard to learn, like working on a computer, or easy to do but requiring lots of practice to do well, like shooting a basketball.

Remember my example about singing. I love to sing but I'm not very good at it, so it would not go on this list of things I do best.



So let's get started. Think about the things you do best. Don't worry. This is what **You** do best. That doesn't mean you have to do it better than everyone else. Just the things you do best.

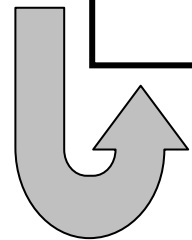
I'll wait while you list these. And, don't give me that stuff about it being hard to think of things. I know you have abilities.

Look back at the last page. Use the box at the bottom of that page and list the things you **do best**.

Betcha thought of several different things you do best!



Something good to know:



If you have had a hard time thinking of things you are good at – your Abilities, it can help to ask people who know you well. Ask people you feel close to...

"What do you think I do best?"

If you agree with them, be sure to write those things down on your list!

OK, now take a look at the two lists. Sort of compare them. See where they seem "alike." Are there some things that came up in both lists? If so, these items can help you see what your preferences are.

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Preferences are like **choices**. Your preferences can help you decide what goals you want in different areas of life.



To help you see how your preferences can help you with life planning, look at this.

Let's say these are some of my interests and abilities:

My Interests 😊	My Abilities 👍
1. Traveling	1. Being a friend
2. Working on computers	2. Listening and talking to other people
3. Flowers	3. Gardening
4. Watching videos	4. Working on the computer
5. Recycling to make extra money	5. Learning new skills

One item that is on both my Interests list and my Abilities list is working on the computer. I also listed that I am good at learning new skills. So maybe I should be thinking about trying to prepare for a **job** in an office where I can learn to use the computer for office work.

How about Flowers and Gardening? The fact that I like flowers and am good at gardening may mean that I would really like to **live** in an apartment or house where I could have a garden.

Another idea...I've listed Traveling as an interest. I've listed Being a Friend and Talking and Listening to People as an ability. Maybe for **fun & leisure**, I would want to try to organize a trip with a couple of friends.

I've got Recycling as an interest, especially because I can make some extra money at it. I've listed Talking and Listening to People as something I'm really good at. Maybe I would enjoy volunteering at a local recycling center as a way to be more involved in **my community** and make some **new friends**.

See how this works?

You look at **what you like** and **what you're good at**. Then you explore some. Find out what is out there for working, living and leisure time. See how your interests and abilities match with what is out there.



ACTION! So let's look at your lists. How do your two lists match up?

Flip back a few pages to your **Interests & Abilities** lists.

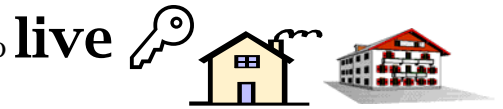
Circle any item that shows up on both of your lists. If you do have an item that's on both lists, circle that item with a highlighter or a colored marker so you can see it really well.

What **connections** do you see? Talk with your support person and other people you trust for ideas on how your lists relate to each other. Talk about ways that your lists relate to –

- the kind of **job** you have now...and the kind of job you want



- where you live now...and the kind of place where you want to **live**



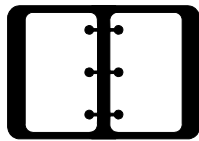
- the **community activities** you may want to do



- **fun & leisure** activities you'd like to do



- **friends** you'd like to meet or be with

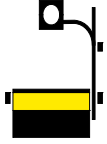


Now, clip out that list...**My Interests & My Abilities**, and put it in your *Life Book*.

See if you can find some pictures that would do a good job of showing one or more of the activities on your **Interests & Abilities** lists! Add those pictures to your *Life Book*, too.

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Okay. Here's a quick review. See how you do! Don't forget to ✓ the box when you get the right answer.

1. Are we all exactly alike?

Your Answer: _____

Got it!

Answer: No, each of us is an individual and is **unique**.

2. Circle the answer that best completes this sentence.

To be successful at planning for my life, I need to know a lot about ...

my neighbors

myself

Got it!

Answer:

myself

3. Circle the answer that best completes this sentence.

My interests are the things I really like to do.

Got it!

My abilities are ...

the things I am really good at.

OR

the things I need to learn.

Answer:

the things I am really good at.

Check your answers...if you got the questions right check **Got it!** .

If you missed some of the answers, you can always review the last few pages, if you like.

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My Supports

GOAL: You will consider what "supports" are and what kind of supports might be helpful to you.

You've already seen that when you start planning for things you want in life, it's important to think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences. It's also very helpful if you consider what kinds of Supports might be most helpful to you. What exactly do we mean by "supports?" Well, everyone has



and
Limitations.

Strengths are the **things someone is good at** – kind of like "abilities." You might be very good at mechanical things, or you might be a great athlete, you might be very smart with computers, or you could be a fantastic gardener. Strengths are also **qualities**...like you may be very kind toward other people, or you are honest, or you may have a lot of courage.

Limitations are the **things a person is not good at or has difficulty doing.** Limitations can be things related to having a disability – like not being able to walk, or having a hard time with learning, or having trouble seeing. Limitations can also be things like this...you may not be any good at singing, or you may not have any patience, or you may be "all thumbs" with tools...meaning not able to fix things, or you may not read very well.

Where do "supports" come in? Well, a person usually doesn't need supports for their strengths. But a person may need supports if they are trying to do things that are harder because of their limitations. People who know their limitations and are able to tell others when they could use a little help have a better chance of being successful in the things they want to do in life. That is especially true in a job – if you don't let people know when you need a little help, they think you can't do the job or that you just aren't trying. It's a good idea to let people know you need a little help before you get frustrated or quit. Think of it this way...**sometimes you need something else to be your best. That "something else" is a support.** Kind of like a car...without gas, a car is not gonna go anywhere!

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ACTION! Here is a list of things that could use something else to be their best.

Below the list are possible "supports" for each one. If you want, you can come up with your own instead of just using the supports in the list.

This thing is better with...	this thing...
Peanut butter	
TV	
Hammer	
Camera	
Staples	
Macaroni	
Bride	
Spaghetti	
Picture	
Coffee	

- Meatballs
- Nails
- A remote control
- A coffeemaker
- Groom
- Film
- A frame
- Jelly
- A stapler
- Cheese

Some of the things on the list are OK on their own. But with support they are much better! And some can't be used at all on their own...they need to be matched up with the other item if they are going to be useful at all. Think about just a few of these –

- ◆ **Peanut butter and jelly**

You can eat peanut butter alone. Or you can eat jelly alone. But they sure are better together!

- ◆ **TV and the remote control**

You could use the TV without the remote control. Hard to believe that just a few years ago, people really had to get up off the couch and walk all the way over to the TV to change channels! But what if all you had was the remote but no TV? Wouldn't work at all!

- ◆ **Camera and film**

Here's one where each part depends on the other. A camera has to have film to take pictures, and a roll of film without a camera is useless.

If that activity seemed a little silly, forgive us... but you get the idea. A lot of things in life work better with some type of support.

And people do, too!

We all depend on a lot of other people for a lot of things. Here's just one example...

For a hamburger you buy at a fast food restaurant...you depend on the rancher to raise the cow, the butcher to grind the meat from the cow, the supplier to get the meat to the restaurant, the cook to grill the hamburger, and the server to bring it to the counter!

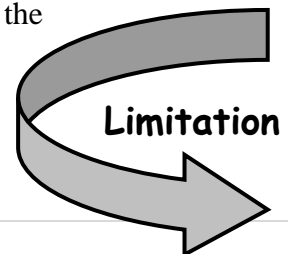
Every one of us depends on a lot of other people, businesses, organizations and things. It's like this...

We use support from people, businesses, organizations and things for ...

Everyday Living

What are some of the supports you would find helpful in **YOUR** everyday living?

I thought of five ways a person's disability might make learning a little harder. They are listed below. I also thought of several supports the person could use to get around the



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Limitation	Support
Reading directions	Someone else reads the directions out loud...or get a tape recording and listen to the directions.
Balancing a checkbook	Get help from a staff person, family member, or a bank employee...or get a computer program that balances the checkbook.
Cooking a meal	Eat out all the time.
Filling out a job application	Get the job application first; get some support filling it out and take it to the interview completed.
Learning tasks in a new job	Have a job coach assist me for a while...get pictures or a tape to remind me of the tasks in the order I need to do them.

These were just some examples I thought up. Some are good. Like filling out the job application first. Some are probably not that great...like eating out all the time!

But they are all supports.



ACTION!

Turn the page for another activity that can help you think about the kinds of supports that might be useful to different people at different times. See if you can find supports that seem appropriate for each person. You can choose from the list of supports below the list of people.

HINT: There could be more than one support that might be helpful to the person.

Person	Situation	Supports
Marie has trouble with people understanding her.	Marie is going to the store to buy some shoes.	
Mike is learning to handle his own money.	Mike has just moved into his own apartment.	
Shanika uses a wheelchair.	Shanika is waiting to catch the bus.	
Albert has trouble reading.	Albert is making macaroni & cheese from a box.	
Glenda has trouble hearing.	Glenda is making a phone call.	
Hassan has trouble remembering directions.	Hassan is starting a new job.	

Someone to read the directions out loud or pictures instead of a written recipe

Someone to help with writing checks to pay bills

A job coach to help with learning tasks or a coworker to show them around & help them learn how things are done

Pictures of what the person wants...or pad and pencil to write notes

A lift-equipped bus

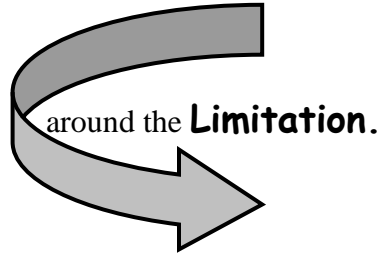
A TDD (text telephone)
Answers are on the next page.

HINT:

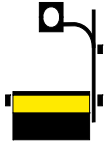
Person	Situation	Supports
Marie has trouble with people understanding her.	Marie is going to the store to buy some shoes.	Pictures of what Marie wants...or pad and pencil to write notes.
Mike is learning to handle his own money.	Mike has just moved into his own apartment.	Someone to help Mike with writing checks to pay bills.
Shanika uses a wheelchair.	Shanika is waiting to catch the bus.	A lift-equipped bus.
Albert has trouble reading.	Albert is making macaroni & cheese from a box.	Someone to read the directions out loud or pictures instead of a written recipe.
Glenda has trouble hearing.	Glenda is making a phone call.	A TDD (text telephone)
Hassan has trouble remembering directions.	Hassan is starting a new job.	A job coach to help Hassan learn tasks or a coworker to show him around & help him learn how things are done there.



ACTION! How about **YOU** ? See if you can think of five things that might be hard for you to do. Write those here. Then, write down some **Supports** you could use to help yourself get...



<i>My List</i>	
Limitation	Support



Time to "show off" what you know with a review question. 😊

Question: Why do people use supports?

Got it!

Your answer: _____

Answer: To help us be better at things..to help us get around our limitations.

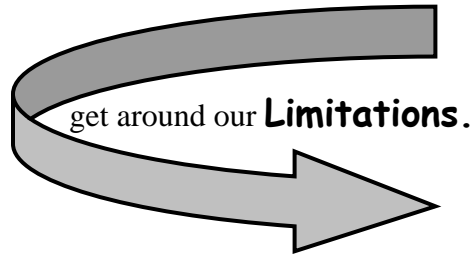
You may have used other words in your answer, but if your answer was close to this one, give yourself a up beside the question. You **Got it!**

Blank page

Community Resources

GOAL: You will consider what community resources are and how you find them.

In the last section, we were talking about **Supports** – different kinds of help that any one of us may need to



Supports are just one kind of something even bigger....**community resources.**

There are many different kinds of community resources. You probably have used a lot of them in your lifetime, if you're like most people.



Here's an activity that will help you think about community resources you may have used at one time or another. I'm going to list some things that might happen every day. Decide which place might be a **community resource** for that activity. NOTE: Some of the choices may seem a little on the silly side, but we're just trying to show examples of the many different places, services, supports and people that can be called community resources.



ACTION!

When you turn the page, you'll see questions with **3** choices under each one.

Circle the one you think fits best —

the one you think is the best place to go for what is needed.

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Community Resources

1. If ...you wanted to borrow a book to read, you would go to:



a health club

a library

a bank

2. If ...you wanted to fly to another state, you would go to:



an airline ticket office

a grocery store

a nightclub

3. If ...you wanted to catch a bus to the mall, you would go to:



a drug store

a bus stop

a clinic

4. If ..you wanted to rent a video to watch with friends, you would go to:



an art gallery

a café

a video store

5. If ...you wanted to volunteer helping people who are sick, you'd go



to:

a hospital

a movie theater

an arcade

6. If ...you wanted to learn how to be a leader in your own life, you would go to:



a self-advocacy group

recycling center

a travel agency

7. If ...you wanted to play softball, you would go to:



a fast food restaurant

a park

a mall

8. If ...you wanted to take a karate class or an aerobics class, you would go to:



a hardware store

a library

a community recreation center or health club

9. If ...you wanted to get your teeth cleaned, you would go to:

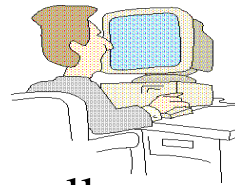


a dentist

an animal shelter

a bank

10. If ...you wanted to learn how to use a computer, you would go to:



a pet store

a community college

a park

11. If ...you became very sick, you would go to:



a doctor

a bakery

a shoe repair place

12. If ...you wanted help in finding a job, you would go to:



a police officer

a nurse

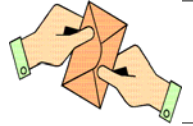
an employment counselor

13. If ...you wanted to cash your paycheck, you would go to:

\$

a bank a skating rink a sporting goods store

14. If ...you wanted to mail a letter, you would go to:



a church a library a post office

15. If ...you wanted to buy a gift for a friend, you would go to:



a community college your favorite store a bus stop

Obviously, this list could go on and on. You use a lot of **community resources!**

And every one of those answer choices—even the answers that didn't fit the problem—is a **community resource** for some type of problem or need.

HINT: Turn the page for the answers.

Community Resources – Answers

1. If ...you wanted to borrow a book to read, you would go to:

a health club

a library

a bank

2. If ...you wanted to fly to another state, you would go to:

an airline ticket office

a grocery store

a nightclub

3. If ...you wanted to catch a bus to the mall, you would go to:

a drug store

a bus stop

a clinic

4. If ...you wanted to rent a video to watch with friends, you would go to:

an art gallery

a café

a video store

5. If ...you wanted to volunteer helping people who are sick, you'd go to:

a hospital

a movie theater

an arcade

6. If ...you wanted to learn how to be a leader in your own life, you would go to:

a self-advocacy group

recycling center

a travel agency

7. If ...you wanted to play softball, you would go to:

a fast food restaurant

a park

a mall

8. If ...you wanted to take a karate class or an aerobics class, you would go to:

a hardware store

a library

a community recreation
center or health club

9. If ...you wanted to get your teeth cleaned, you would go to:

a dentist

an animal shelter

a bank

10. If ...you wanted to learn how to use a computer, you would go to:

a pet store

a community college

a park

11. If ...you became very sick, you would go to:

a doctor

a bakery

a shoe repair place

12. If ...you wanted help in finding a job, you would go to:

a police officer

a nurse

an employment counselor

13. If ...you wanted to cash your paycheck, you would go to:

a bank

a skating rink

a sporting goods store

14. If ...you wanted to mail a letter, you would go to:

a church

a library

a post office

15. If ...you wanted to buy a gift for a friend, you would go to:

a community college

your favorite store

a bus stop

Did you notice that there were lots of **different kinds of resources** in that exercise?



Think about it...there were

- ☑ **places...** like a video store, a park, a community recreation center, a community college, a school, your favorite store,
- ☑ **services...** like an airline ticket office, a hospital, a bank,
- ☑ **supports...** like a self-advocacy group, an employment counselor,
- ☑ **people...** like a dentist, a doctor, an employment counselor.

So...Community resources can be any of these
different kinds of things:

places



where you buy things, find information, learn new things, do activities...
like stores, schools, community recreation centers, a library.

services

you may need...



like medical care, banking, the public bus system, an apartment locator, or a travel agency.

supports

Some are designed specifically to help a person who has a disability. These could include...
–organizations like People First and other self-advocacy groups, The Arc, Easter Seals, Independent Living Centers, and
–things like job coaching, supported living assistance and other things that help a person live more independently.



Other community resources that are supports are not especially for any one group...they can be used by anybody.

people



like a friend, a counselor, a minister or priest or rabbi, a doctor, a member of a club you belong to, a neighbor, a coworker.

Some people are paid for their services and support (like a counselor, staff member, or doctor).

Some people support you just because you are important to them (like family and friends).

As you prepare for your planning meeting, you will be **making decisions & setting goals** for things you want in your life. In all areas of life, for every decision and goal you make, there will be **community resources** you will want to find and include in your planning.



Think about these examples...

If you are setting a goal related to finding **a job**...

what are some **community resources** you might need to help you?

Well, here are just a few community resources and the kinds of services you might use –

- ☑ The **vocational rehabilitation agency** in your area is a good resource to help you decide what kind of job you'd be best qualified for and to help find job openings.
- ☑ The **Workforce Development Center** in your area can help you prepare a resume, let you use their computer and fax machine, and help you with some job leads.
- ☑ Some **community colleges** and other **vocational training agencies** can often help if you need training.
- ☑ An **employment agency** might help you find a temporary job that could become permanent or could lead to a permanent job somewhere else.
- ☑ Most **supported employment programs** can help you practice filling out an application and being interviewed, help you find a job and follow up with you as long as needed.
- ☑ That same employment program might be able to offer an employer **On-The-Job training funds** and/or a **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**. These are two very real resources that may make the employer more interested in hiring you.
- ☑ Another group of resources would be the many different **employers** in your area who have jobs for which you may qualify – places like **grocery stores, doctors' offices, dry cleaners, offices, drug stores, libraries, movie theaters, health clubs, hospitals, churches,** and others.
- ☑ The newspaper **want ads and job lines** would be a resource.
- ☑ So would **your friends, neighbors, family members and others** who may know of job openings or who might help you practice interviewing.

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- ☑ **A computer** is a great resource (maybe you own one or can use one at the library or an employment program). The computer will help you have access to the **Internet** which has lots of employment-related web sites where you can find information about jobs in your local area.
- ☑ You might need **a job coach** to assist you in learning the job duties, learning to ride the bus to work, how to deal with coworkers, and how to punch in and out on the time clock.
- ☑ If you get a job that requires a uniform, you might get it directly from your employer or you might need to go to a **uniform store** or a regular clothing store to buy your uniform.
- ☑ You might need other clothes, so **stores** in your community, **thrift stores** or **churches and missions** that provide free clothes through a "**clothes closet**" could all be resources.

Look at all those different kinds of resources...and that's just for one area of life, finding a job!



Something good to know:

Did you notice something about that list of community resources for work? Some are

resources specifically for people with disabilities

and others are

resources that anybody or everybody uses.

It's important that you learn about some of the useful **community resources** that provide services specifically to people with disabilities...

BUT, you should use the **community resources** that everyone uses as much as you can.

In fact, you may find that you will not need any of the agencies that provide **community resources** just for people with disabilities. You may be able to get what you need from places most people go everyday.

Then again, you may decide that you want support from all of them. One thing is for sure. These folks...the ones at the **community resources**...will not come knocking at your door to see if you want to take part in activities or want some help! It was different when you were in school...then, someone else (the school district) was responsible for making sure you got the services you needed.

But as an adult, **YOU** are the one who will have to find the **community resources** that can provide the opportunities and services you need to be able to get what you want.



There's another question we should consider here...**how do you go about finding community resources?**

There are lots of them out there, but how do you find the ones **YOU** need—how do you even know what's out there? I'll bet you can think of some people to ask and some places to look to find this information.



ACTION!

Use that same example – If you set a goal to look for a job, how would you find some of those **community resources** that could help you get that job?



Who would you ask for help?

What about starting with **people you know**? What about people who work in places where you think you'd like to work. You could talk to them and find out who is in charge...whom you need to talk to.

What about **staff at an agency where you get services**?

What about **friends of yours who are working**? You could ask them where they got help to find a job.

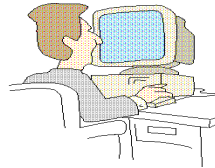
How about **family members or people you know in the community**...like a neighbor, someone at your church or other faith community?
Anyone else?

Where would you look?



You could start off by checking out **places where you already go**, if you think you might like to work in one of those places. Talk to people there...find out who is in charge and what kinds of jobs there are, what skills you may need, how to apply.

You could check out your **local cable TV** listings. There is usually at least one station or program that shows job openings in the area.



You could use **the Internet** to find resources.

Many public libraries have computers you can use for free...and the librarians might be able to help you learn how to search for things on the Internet.



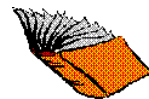
What about checking **your local newspaper**?

There are the want ads that list job openings. There's also the business section (and sometimes a weekly special section) that has news about companies moving into your area or other information about local employers who may be hiring.



How about the **phone book**?

You could check the **yellow pages** under "social service agencies" or "employment agencies." You could look in the state government pages for information on how to contact the vocational rehabilitation agency in your area. You could look up the chamber of commerce in your town or city.



What about a **local directory of social service organizations**?

Lots of communities have one. It's often available from your local United Way or your local library.



There are many places you can look and people you can ask to help find community resources... not only for **Work** interests, but also all the other important areas of life like **Living, Learning Personal Relationships, Community Activities, Transportation**, and others.

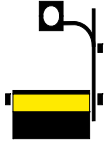


Something (else!) good to know:

Community resources are an important part of planning for the things you want

in **any area of life.**

It's My Future! has sections on some of the major areas of life such as Work, Living, Learning, Personal Relationships, Community Activities. At the end of each section, there is a list of some **Community Resources** specific to that area of life. These lists are just a beginning...you will need to talk with people about the local resources in your community.



Let's check this out...

Question: Read this statement and fill in the blank.

Some community resources are just for people with disabilities.

Other community resources are for _____

Got it!

Answer: Some community resources are just for people with disabilities.
Other community resources are for everybody.

Question: List a few community resources that you think you could use right now.

_____ **Got it!**

Answer: (This time there is no one answer. If you mentioned some type of place, service, support, or person in the community, then you are right!)

How'd you do on these questions? If you got 'em, give yourself a beside your answers!

My Planning Meeting/ My Planning Team



GOAL: You will consider what happens at your planning meeting and who attended your last meeting. You will create a personal Support Circle of people you care about and who care about you. You will choose people you would like to invite to attend your next meeting. **NOTE:** You will need a copy of your last habilitation plan.

It's time we talk about that important event...your next planning meeting. No matter what has happened in the past, this year's meeting is going to be different, because **YOU** are going to be ready to talk about what is important to you.



Something good to know:

Laws in each state in the U.S. may be a little different, but you probably have a planning meeting every year or maybe even two a year. In between your regularly scheduled meetings, you probably have a right to call a meeting if there is something important that you feel can't wait – something that has to do with your goals and the supports you are receiving.

NOTE: It's important to use your rights responsibly! Don't just call a meeting every time you think of something. Call a meeting when it's something really important to you...or when there are several things you want to make changes in.

Find out what the rules are about planning meetings in your state or if your state even has any rules. How can you do that? Well, it may be as easy as asking your case management staff. However, sometimes you might not be able to get the information the first time you ask... so you can also get the information by calling places like – your local or state chapter of The Arc, your local self-advocacy group, the state or local Protection & Advocacy agency, your state's Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

Another good way is to call your local school district and get the name of the person in charge of the Transition Planning Council. This council is a group of people from the school district and other community agencies who work to help students with disabilities move from school into adult life in the community. Some of these councils also provide services for adults in the community.

If you want to find out what your rights are, turn to the "Phone List" in the Appendix at the back of this book. Ask your support person to help you find the numbers for at least one or two of the local agencies in your area.

Another thing...what you call your meeting may be different than someone in the next state over or even in another agency right in your state. Some of the names used are –

Individual Habilitation Plan or IHP
Individual Program Plan or IPP
Service Management Plan or SMP
Person-Centered Plan or PCP

Individual Support Plan or ISP
Individual Program of Services or IPS
MAP
Personal Futures Plan



ACTION!

Write down what you call your meeting:

Name of my meeting:

What are some of the reasons planning meetings are held:

- To look at progress that has been made in achieving goals set at your last meeting
- To make changes in your plan if your goals change
- To make plans for your life in areas like –

Work



What kind of job you want to have, training that may be helpful, job coaching or other supports that may help you be successful

Living



Where you live, the kind of living arrangement you want, the skills you may need to develop, the supports you may need

Fun & Leisure



How you choose to spend your free time

Personal Relationships



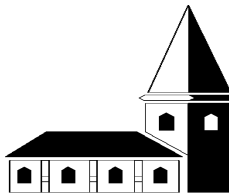
Friendships with other people, relationships with family, dating, marriage & family

Learning



The education you want, training that might be helpful with your other goals in life, classes in things that interest you, skills you want

Community



Involvement in your community—this might include participation in a faith community (church, synagogue, temple, mosque or other), voting, participating in a club, volunteering your time for an organization that interests you

Transportation



How you will get around the community to the places you need and want to go (walking, bicycling, using public transportation, agency vans, personal car or other)

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Health



What kind of medical services and/or therapies you may need, lifestyle changes that may help you have better health (like exercising and eating food that is good for you)

Financial \$

Where you get the money you live on, how your money is handled and by whom

Plans often use different names for some of these categories. For example:

Work might also be called Vocational/Educational/Employment, Work/Day Program/School, Prevocational/Vocational

Living might be called Home Situation, Residential/Daily Living

Learning might be called Education, Training, Active Treatment, Day Program

Recreation & Leisure might be called Community, Other Programs/Services

Personal Life might be called Relationships, Personal & Social Adjustment, Socialization, Other Programs/Services

Health might be called Hygiene, Grooming, Personal Safety, Dietary

There may also be a category called **Other Program/Services** which could include social/friendships, recreational, respite, rights and other areas.

Some plans may not even use these headings.

Some will refer to your visions or *dreams* and how much progress is being made in helping you achieve them.



and how much progress is being made in helping you achieve them.

Now we're going to take a look at the copy of your plan from last year. Have you got it?

OK, this is a "two-parter." What you want to do first is – find the page that has signatures of all the people who attended your meeting...got it?

Look at the names of the people who attended your meeting this past year. Keep that list handy. Now look at the list on the next page.

People at My Last Planning Meeting

Put a 4 in the box beside each description, **IF...** there was a person at your **last meeting** who fits that description. You can write the names if you like.

Me

Someone from my family



My friend(s)



My case manager/service coordinator

My vocational services staff

My residential services staff

Psychologist

An advocate for me

My boss from work

My job coach

My neighbor

My dog (Just joking! 😊 Actually, I mean your dog only if you use a service dog.)

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Something good to know:

There's a famous saying you may have heard –

"It's not **what** you know, but **who** you know."

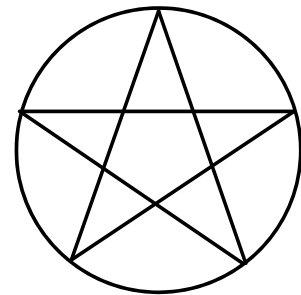
It means that people are your connection to lots of things in life. This means that getting what you want in life depends a lot on the people you know, the connections you have in the community.

If you are going to plan for things you want in life, you want to have a circle of people you care about and who care about you. You want to have a circle of people who can listen to your ideas and give you feedback as you set goals and who can help you as you work toward your goals.

Now, sure, you have a planning team. But sometimes your planning team may be mostly people on the staff or from your family. It's important to have other people in your circle, too. People from different parts of your life, different places in the community.

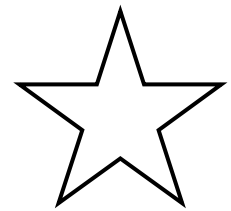
It is important to build your circle of people...
all through your life.

Turn a couple of pages until you see
the worksheet that has this circle on it.



It's called "**My Support Circle.**"

Start by writing **Y**our name in the middle of the



Then write the name of at least one person in each of the
five areas. Fill in as many names as you want.

NOTE: Some of the people who came to your meeting last time are people who are part of your Support Circle. If you want to write any of them onto your Support Circle, that's fine...but think of other people, too...people you care about and who care about you...people you feel could be part of your Support Circle.



Think about each area...who are the people you feel are or could be in your Support Circle?

Start with **FRIEND**. Who is a close friend of yours? Write that person's name in the circle. How about other friends? Write the names of any other friends you might like to have as part of your planning team. It can be good to have friends with you. They know you as well as anyone, and sometimes it's easier to talk to them. Of course, you should only invite them if you feel comfortable with them there.

Next, go to **FAMILY**. Who do you feel close to in your family? Is there someone in your immediate family like your mother, father, sister or brother? Or is there someone in your extended family like a cousin, aunt, uncle or grandparent? If you have no family or are not close to your family, you can write in another friend's name, if you like. Again, just as we said about friends, you should only invite family if you feel comfortable with them there. Write these names in the circle.

Now, look at **WORK**. If you are working, is there a person to whom you feel close at your job? If you are not working, think of any work-related activity you may be doing like an educational program, training activity or volunteer work. Is there someone who you would like to have be part of your planning? Write those names in the circle.

Do you have a **NEIGHBOR** or several neighbors who you talk to and who you trust? If so, write those names in the circle.

In the section for **CHURCH/SYNAGOGUE/TEMPLE & OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS**, write in the names of people you know and people you like and trust. Think about people at your church or other faith community, people in a community group you are part of, people you know from other places where you spend time.



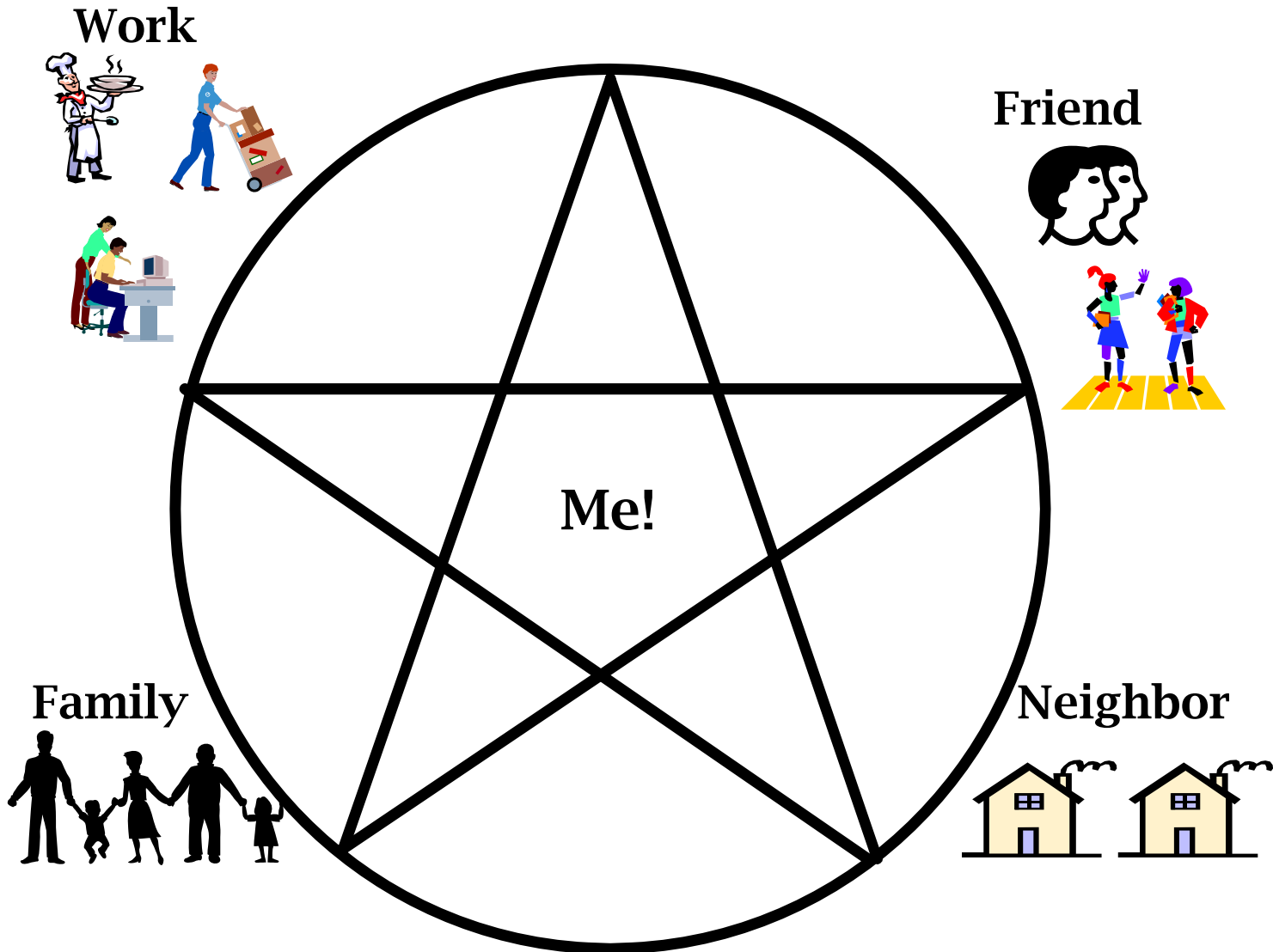
Something good to know:

Some self-advocates who fill out a Support Circle only have one or two names on it. They can't think of anyone for some of the blanks. These might be just some of the reasons –

- Some people may not have any family still living...or family members are very far away or are not involved in the person's life.
- Some people do not do any activities out in the community...and haven't really had a chance to meet and develop friends.
- Some people are doing activities but have not yet made any close friends.
- Some people have moved a lot and haven't made new friends.

If you can't think of people you are close to, don't worry. It takes time to develop friendships and to get close to other people who you trust. Also, you can keep adding to your Support Circle all your life. But, if you have blanks in your Support Circle, it is a good reminder that you may want to think about ways to meet friends and develop those other areas of your life. This could be something you want to spend time talking about at your planning meeting.

My Support Circle



**Church/Synagogue/Temple
Community Groups**



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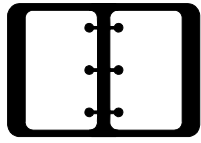
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Invitation List for My **Next** Planning Meeting

Now that you have just named some people you feel are part of your Support Circle, it would be a great time to start deciding who you want to invite to be part of your next planning meeting. Are there people on your Support Circle who you would like to invite? Who else? Write the name of each person you would like to invite to your planning meeting on this list...

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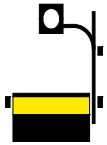


Now, open up your *Life Book*. Put your Support Circle sheet and your Invitation List right after the Title Page.

That's a good place for those lists, because the people in your life are very important to helping you reach your goals.

Keep your Support Circle sheet handy in your *Life Book* so you can refer to it easily and also add names of other people you think of later who may be important in your life.

And...as you get closer to your planning meeting, you will want to look at your Invitation List again and see if there is anyone else you want to add.



Okay. Let's look back...

Question: Name at least two areas of your life you want to talk about at your next planning meeting.

Your answer: 1. _____ **Got it!**
2. _____

Answer: There is no one answer for this question. If you mentioned something having to do with Work, or where you Live, or Learning, or Personal Relationships, or Community Activities, or Transportation, or Health, or Financial...then give yourself a because you **Got it!**

Question: Read this statement. Decide if the answer is Yes or No, then circle your answer.

It is important to think about who you want to invite to your next planning meeting.

Yes OR No Got it!

Answer:

Yes

If you got that answer, give yourself a up above. If not, take a look at the last few pages again.

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Decision Making with ***DO IT!***

Learning to Use ***DO IT!*** to Make a Decision

GOAL: You will learn the parts of making a decision. You will see how some decisions can be made on your own and some with the support of other people. You will learn a decision-making process and will practice it by making a decision about a **Fun & Leisure** activity you want to do.

Today we're going to talk about something that's a **BIG PART** of setting goals for things you want in life. That is –

learning how to **make decisions.**

Making decisions is a part of everyone's life – big decisions about important changes we may want to make...like moving or getting married or getting a job. And smaller decisions...like what to do over the weekend.

Most of us want to make our own decisions...and to make **good** decisions, too.

But we aren't just born with the knowledge of how to make decisions...or how to make **good** decisions.

Decision making is something we **learn**. And, like other skills, we need to **practice** making decisions if we are going to learn to make good decisions.

Why is it so important to make good decisions? Well, it's because the decisions we make (or that other people make for us) can have a **very big** impact on our lives.

See if you agree with this statement:

“If you want to learn how to make good decisions, you have to **make decisions.”**

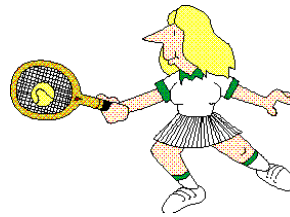
Makes sense, doesn't it?



I mean, if you wanted to learn to play tennis,

you'd have to get out on the court and play...right? If you just sat on the sidelines and hoped you'd get good at tennis, you'd never learn to play at all! Oh, you might learn a rule or two just by watching someone else play, but you wouldn't learn how to actually swing your racket and hit the ball...

...unless you were out there swinging!



It's that way with anything new that you want to learn. You have to **practice** to get good at it.

And it's the same thing with decision making. You need to learn how to make a decision...and then you gotta get out there and practice!

Now, a decision is more than just making choices.

A decision is a process. A process means that there are a lot of steps that have to happen before everything is finished. One of the steps in making a decision is making a choice. A choice is when you select something you want or prefer. But... **there's more to making a decision than just making a choice.**



Consider this story –

You go into your neighborhood mall and head straight for the *Baskin-Robbins*TM ice cream store. There are two people in front of you, and they have this little kid who has his nose stuck up against the glass. You walk down to one end of the counter and check out what flavors there are. You walk slowly from one end of the counter to the other.

Now, if they had Fudge Brownie® you would stop directly in front of that and wait to order. But, they don't always have that, so you have to check it out. Sure enough, no Fudge Brownie®. So, you go back to the end of the counter and check out the ice cream again. You were set on getting Fudge Brownie® so you think you want something close to that.

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Like Rocky Road®. They have that. You look up, and the little kid and his parents are paying. You look up to the sign on the wall above the counter and check out how much a double-dip in a waffle cone costs. You check your money, look at the sign again and figure out you can't pay for the double-dip in a waffle cone, but could get a single-dip in a waffle cone or a double-dip in a cup.

The person behind the counter turns and asks you what you want. You look at the sign one more time, look down at the ice cream, and order a single-dip of Pralines and Cream® in a waffle cone.

You're allowed to change your mind, right?

You made some choices when you got the ice cream. Where? Well, let's look at where you made those choices. Remember a choice is selecting something you prefer or want.



order a single-dip of Pralines and Cream® in a waffle cone.

Right. You chose the Pralines and Cream® ice cream. You chose the waffle cone. But look at that story again. A lot of things happened that didn't involve making a choice.

You had to **get some information** before you made your choice. Where? Let's look:

You walk down to one end of the counter and **check out what ice cream is there.**

... you go back to the end of the counter and **check out the ice cream again.**

You ... **see that the little kid and his parents are paying.**

You look up to the sign on the wall above the counter and **check out how much a double-dip in a waffle cone costs.**

You **check your money, look at the sign** again...

...and **figure out** you can't pay for the double-dip in a waffle cone, but could get a single-dip in a waffle cone or a double-dip in a cup.

You **look at the sign** one more time.

Look at all the things you did before you even made a choice!

You checked out what kinds of ice cream were in the store.

You learned what the price of the double-dip waffle cone was.

You figured out how much money you had.

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You saw that the family in front was leaving and knew that you were next in line to order.

If you hadn't had that information you might have ordered a double-dip of Fudge Brownie® (which they didn't have!). What would have happened?



Right, that person behind the counter would look at you like you were a space alien, and he'd tell you that they don't have Fudge Brownie®. Then you would have quickly chosen something else you probably wouldn't like, because you didn't have time to see what else they had so you could pick a second choice. When you got the cone, you would discover you didn't have enough money and have to ask the person to put one dip back...not a good decision, right?

So, part of making decisions is **choosing** the things you like and want. 😊

Another part of making decisions is...

getting all the information you need to make those choices.



Another part is **figuring out what might happen** if you choose a particular thing.



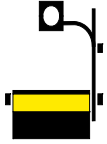
The last part of making a decision is just doing it!



Taking action!

So, making a decision means getting information, making choices, figuring out consequences and acting on your decision.

You do this all the time, you know? Sometimes with good results, sometimes with bad. Making decisions is really easy most of the time. Sometimes it's hard because you have so much at stake. You probably make decisions all the time without thinking about how you're doing it!



Okay, check this out...

Question: Read each of these two statements.

Circle the statement you believe is true.

Got it!

Making a decision is just the same thing as making a choice.

OR

Part of making a decision is choosing, but other parts are:

- getting all the information you need,**
- figuring out what might happen if you choose a particular thing and**
- taking action.**

Answer:

Part of making a decision is choosing, but other parts are:
–getting all the information you need,
–figuring out what might happen if you choose a particular thing and
–taking action.

If you got that answer, give yourself a up above. Otherwise, look over the last few pages again.

* * * *

Just remember these two words – ***DO IT!***

That's the name of our decision-making process. It's a way to make decisions that helps you remember to get all the information you need, think about what choices are out there for you, figure out the consequences of each choice and take action.

It helps you remember because each letter in ***DO IT!*** stands for one of those steps in the decision-making process.

Like this:

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Define your problem

That's where you thought to yourself "what kind of ice cream do I want?"

Outline your options

That's where you checked out **what kinds of ice cream the store had**.

You found out **how much** single and double dips **cost**.

You also checked **how much money you had** with you to spend.

Identify the outcome of each option

That's where you thought about **what would happen** if you asked for a kind of ice cream they didn't have. You also thought about **what would happen** if you ordered something that cost more money than you had.

Take action

That's where you **made your decision and** went ahead and **ordered** your ice cream cone.

! Get excited!

That's where you enjoyed your ice cream cone!

Remember a minute ago I said you make decisions all the time? We all do. Well, sometimes each of us makes decisions completely on our own. But other times we need other people to help us make a decision.

Consider this...suppose you woke up really sick one day. You get to the hospital. You're walking all doubled over because you're hurting. **Really** hurting! A doctor checks you out and says that your gall bladder is inflamed. Do you want to have it taken out or not?

How should you know? You don't even know what a gall bladder is or does. So, what do you do?

Right, you look at your doctor and ask her what she would do. You probably talk with members of your family, think about it and then do what the doctor suggests. Quickly. Because you're **really** hurting.

In that case you let someone else make the major part of the decision for you. You didn't just let the doctor do it all by herself. But she had a lot of information and skills you didn't, so she was in a better position to make a good decision.

Sometimes it's that way. Someone else has a lot of information that can help you make better decisions.

But, say you wake up one morning and you look in the mirror and you don't like the way your hair looks. You know...too-long-short-out-of control-what-happened-while-i-was-sleeping-i-look-so-weird-i-gotta-do-something-about-this. You feel you just gotta do something about it.

Now, do you want other people making that decision about your hair? Oh, you might ask your roommate, or your spouse (if you're married), or a close friend, or a member of your family what they think...but you probably will just go ahead and fix your hair the way **You** like it.

So, in your own life, there are decisions you want to make entirely by yourself. Then there are decisions where you can use a little support...and others where you can use a lot of support.



Spend a few minutes thinking about some decisions you need support to make and some you don't. Think about some decisions you have made lately. Or that someone else has made for you. Just to help you think about this, we put together a list of sample decisions you may have experienced making.

On the next page you will see a list of decisions. Look at each decision and decide if it is a decision ...




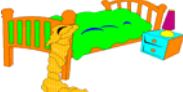





you can make on your own.




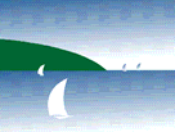




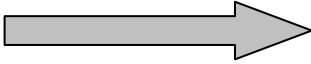
you can make with a little help.

or a little of both – on your own plus a little help.

Put a check  in the column that matches your answer.

Decisions – on my own or with help?

Decision	On my own	With help	A little of both
What to eat for lunch today 			
What movie to see 			
When to do my laundry 			
When to go to bed 			
What kind of job to look for 			
Who to date 			
How short to cut my hair or how to style it 			
Where to live 			
What to do this weekend 			
How much to spend for a new Walkman or some CDs \$			

Decision	On my own	With help	A little of both
Whether to wear glasses or get contacts 			
Whether to have a roommate 			
Who to vote for in the election for President 			
What picture to hang in my bedroom 			
Whether to get married 			
Whether to have children 			
Whether to have surgery if I were really sick 			
What to do during the winter holidays 			
<p>Count the checks in each column and write those numbers in the boxes here.</p> 			

Are you surprised at how many decisions you can make on your own? Were you surprised at how many decisions you would like some support in making? Did you have a hard time deciding which decisions you could use some support to make and which ones you can make on your own? Were there some that could change depending on the time...or on how you feel at the time...or on who else is involved?



Consider this... A woman I read about said:

“I have made some bad choices, I have made some so-so choices, and I have made some good choices. The most important thing about all of them is.....”

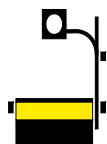
Well, what do you think the most important thing about all her choices was?

It wasn't that they were all good. She said some of her choices were bad, meaning they didn't work out the way she wanted.

“The most important thing about all of them is that *they are mine -- all of them.*”

Anne Wilson Schaefer

That's kind of how it is with everyone. You make some good decisions and you make some bad decisions. It's all part of life—learning how to make a good decision. Everyone makes bad decisions now and then. But most of the time you can learn from your mistakes and do much better at making a decision the next time. The important thing is they are **Your decisions**, and you can learn how to make better decisions the next time.



Okay. Let's look at what you've just done...

Question: What is the first step you take when you are going to make a decision? HINT: It's the first step of **DO IT!**

Your answer: _____ **Got it!**

Answer: *Define* your problem. You state clearly what you are going to make a decision about.

Trying Out the Decision-Making Process ***DO IT!***

Now that you have heard about the decision-making process ***DO IT!*** you will have a chance to see how it works...for you. You'll also see how to set a goal based on the decision you make.

When you get ready to make decisions and set goals for things you want in life, a good place to start is to think about

Your **Interests** - Things You Like to Do

Your **Abilities** - Things You Do Best

Your **Preferences** - Things You **Like to do** and That You **Do Best**

Earlier you spent some time making lists of your Interests, Abilities and Preferences. You put those lists in your *Life Book* where you can look at them again...and add to them as your interests and abilities change over time.

Then you looked at your two lists and circled the items that were on both of your lists. Those "double" items are your **Preferences**, the things you like to do that you are also good at doing.

The things you like to do and the things you are good at doing can help you think about your preferences or choices for different areas of your life.



ACTION!

First, pull out of your book the copy of the ***DO IT!*** worksheet. It's on the next page. Then return here...

Keep the worksheet nearby since you will be using it a lot during the next several pages.

We will practice making a decision alongside another self-advocate named Chris, whom you will "meet" in just a moment. We selected the area of **Fun & Leisure** just for this practice session.

Once you have learned how to use ***DO IT!*** you may choose other areas of life in which you want to make decisions.

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DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

(write the name of the new Fun & Leisure activity you want to do)

Outline your options

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

Options for Fun & Leisure - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities do they have: _____

What does it cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities do they have: _____

What does it cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities do they have: _____

What does it cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

First, look at your **DO IT!** worksheet. You can see that the first thing to do in beginning to make a decision is to –

Define the problem

That means to state **very clearly** what it is you are going to make a decision about.

For this practice session you will be **making a decision about a new Fun & Leisure activity you would like to do.**



To get started... Consider some examples of the kinds of things people do for fun –

traveling, backpacking, rock climbing, canoeing, camping, cross-country skiing, snow skiing, water skiing, bike riding, horse-back riding, skating, rollerblading, walking, jogging, running, going on picnics, softball, baseball, basketball, football, soccer, volleyball, swimming, aerobics, playing Frisbee®, weight lifting, helping organize and going to block parties, community fairs, festivals or parades, ping-pong, tennis, performing in a play or a musical at a community theater, painting, drawing, sculpting, going to the zoo, sewing, crocheting, cross-stitch, needlepoint, latch-hook, knitting, quilting, shooting pool, visiting museums, reading, writing, computing, going to ball games and other sporting events, dancing, singing, playing a guitar, playing the piano or some other musical instrument, bird-watching, gymnastics, growing plants, playing cards, raising animals, listening to music, collecting things, fishing, hunting, going to the movies, handball, racquetball, volunteering to help out some organization I am interested in, going to garage sales.....

I had more, I just ran out of breath. The list could probably go on and on.

OK, it's your turn...think about your interests. What would **YOU** like to do in your free time?

HINT: If you are having a hard time thinking of something you would like to do, look over some of the pictures in the picture files.

What is **1** new activity **YOU** want to do for fun?

Got it in mind? OK, now say **very clearly** what you are going to make a decision about. Next, you're going to write this down.

On your **DO IT!** worksheet look for the part that says –

Define your problem – “I will make a decision about

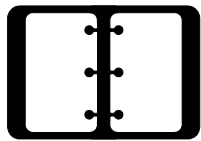
“

”

(write the name of a new Fun & Leisure activity you want to do)

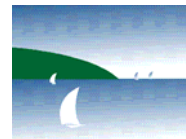
Hey, this is easy – we already wrote the first part for you! OK, write in the name of a new Fun & Leisure activity you are interested in.

Great job! You've now taken the first step. You've **Defined** your problem.



Add a picture to your *Life Book* that shows this activity.

As you work on making a decision, it helps to have a picture to look at.



The picture reminds you of your interest. If your support person has helped create a collection of pictures from magazines, computer graphics or other sources, look through the Picture Collection and find a picture that shows the activity you'd like to do.

If you would rather just draw a picture of the activity...or write it down in words, that's fine, too—just be sure to add this to your *Life Book* behind the page that says Fun & Leisure.

NOTE: The picture is also good because it helps you tell about your interest...

to other people



When you show them your *Life Book*, you are starting the process of getting Other People— people on your planning team and others who care about you—to help you work toward one of your goals.

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Now meet Chris – the other self-advocate who's going to practice making a decision, too.

Chris grew up in a small town near the Gulf. Chris' family raised dogs—black Labradors—and Chris helped care for them. Chris really liked to go to the beach not far from home, be in the water, go fishing, collect shells and just hang out. Chris recently moved to a group home in a city. Chris works on a landscaping crew several hours every day. The employer has a van that picks up everyone on the crew. Chris hasn't learned how to use the public transit system yet. Chris wants to raise dogs or maybe help out at an animal shelter. But right now Chris mostly misses the beach and has been thinking about finding a place to go swimming.

Chris needs to take the first step and **Define the problem.**

Chris states the problem very clearly like this –

"I will make a decision about finding a place to go swimming."

OK, the next step is to – **Outline your options.**

Outline means "make a list."

And, options are community resources.

Community resources can be **people**
or **places**
or **services**
or **supports.**

So, in this step you will...

Make a list of community resources.

First, see how Chris does this. What **community resources** fit Chris' interest?

Places where people swim

How does Chris find out about options – places – for swimming? Here are some ways –

Ask staff at the group home. They mention the YMCA (HINT: You may have a YMCA or a YWCA in your community – both men and women are members and able to use either one.)

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Look in a phone book for health clubs.

Ask the supervisor on the landscaping crew. The boss says there is a park and rec. center with a pool on the other side of town.

A friend at church mentions a water park that has all kinds of pools and slides, even a wave pool.

Remember what we said earlier –

"It's not what you know, it's who you know."

That saying is still true. It's **friends**  **and people Chris knows** who help Chris start the process of finding options – places to swim.

How does Chris "make a list?"

With some help at the group home, Chris uses the phone book to get numbers and addresses. Chris finds four of the places people mentioned.

Chris writes the list on a **DO IT!** worksheet...like this –

Outline your options

1. YMCA – 5000 Center Street, 444-0000
2. WorkOut Health Club - 2101 Main Street, WORK-OUT or 967-5688
3. Get Fit Health Club – 151 Superman Court, 222-1111
4. City Park & Rec. Department – Pleasant Hills Rec. Center, 333-PARK



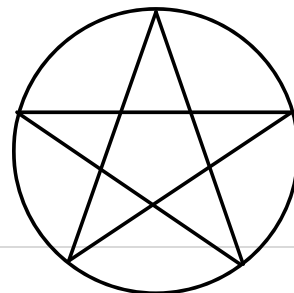
ACTION! It's your turn now... **to find options.**

Remember, options means all the things you can choose from. In this case, options would be **community resources** that are different **places** where you can do the activity you are interested in.

Where will you look for **options**? Who will you talk to?

A good place to start is with people

in your **Support Circle**



It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or a few pages back in **My Planning Meeting**.

Also, think about other people you may know who are already doing **Fun & Leisure** activities. Are there friends you can ask? Is there a particular staff person you feel would be helpful? What about neighbors? People from your church or other faith community? People at other places where you go?

Also...you can look at the list at the end of this section called...

Community Resources – Fun & Leisure



ACTION!

When you have come up with the names of some places that could be options for the activity you want to do, then it's time to

***O*utline your options.**

Remember, outline means "make a list."

Get your ***DO IT!*** worksheet and find the part that looks like this –

***O*utline your options**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write down each of your options –

those places where you think you might be able to do the activity you like.

Write these on your **DO IT!** worksheet. You may find lots more than three...Chris found four. But, for now, let's just look at 3 options.

Once you have your list of options, ask yourself...

"What do I need to know about each of them?"

I mean just having the name of the place isn't going to tell you anything about the activities there.

Let's see how Chris handles this.

First, Chris thinks about –

interests - the things Chris **likes to do**
abilities - the things Chris is **good at doing**
people, places, services or supports Chris **needs**

Remember...every one of us is an individual, and every of us has our own particular abilities, interests and preferences. We also have our own individual needs for supports. By thinking about these things, Chris is able to ask better questions by calling (or visiting) each place to get more information.

Chris thinks it through like this –

"I like swimming, but I haven't had a chance to go swimming in a long time. I know how to float OK, but I'm really **not very good at swimming**. I mean, back at the beach it was more like playing in the waves than really swimming. I really want to swim...I better **take a class** so I can be able to swim."

By really thinking about it, Chris realizes a need for support – a class. Now Chris knows what question to ask those swimming places –

"Do you have a beginner's swim class?"

Chris figures "There are three things I need to know about each place."

1. Do they have classes?
2. What does it cost?
3. Can I get there?

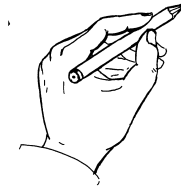
Here are the questions Chris decides to ask:

1. Do you offer a beginner's class for adults? When? What does it cost?
2. Is there a membership fee, too?
3. Where are you located?



Then Chris phones each place and asks for someone who can answer some questions.

Chris asks the same questions at each place, and then writes down the information about each one.



This will help Chris reach a good decision.



ACTION!

OK, it's your turn to figure out what questions you'll need to ask the places on your list.

You already know **your interest** – it's the activity you said you want to do.

What about **your abilities** – is there a skill involved in doing the activity?

Do you already have that skill...or is it a skill you will need to learn?

Now, here's an important one – **your needs**. Every single one of us has certain **needs and kinds of supports** that can help us be successful in getting to do the things we want in life. What needs do you have that relate to the **Fun & Leisure** activity you are making a decision about? Are there certain supports that would help you? Knowing what supports you may need will help you decide which options are the best ones for you – which **community resources** offer what you really **need and want**.



What do you **want to know** about each place?

What **supports do you need?**

What **questions will you ask** each place?

If you need help figuring out how to ask or if you want to write the questions down, ask your support person for a little assistance.

Now, turn over your **DO IT!** worksheet. On the back is your **Options FACT SHEET**. You can use it to write down the information you get when you make your phone calls to each place. You can see there are spaces for you to fill in the name of the place, and information like the name of the person you talk to when you call, the activities that are offered, the dates and times they are offered.

HINT: Be sure to keep your worksheet in your *Life Book* so you'll have it ready to use when you continue, after making your phone calls.



Something good to know:



It's a great idea to practice making phone calls before you actually make them. (same idea as practicing interviewing for a job before you actually interview). Practicing can help you be more successful in getting the information you need. Take some time to do this now...ask your support person to help by role-playing a few calls with you before you make the real calls. After you have practiced role-playing phone calls a few times, then go ahead and make calls to the options on your list. It's always OK to ask for a little help from your support person when you do this.

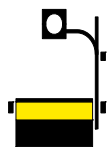



ACTION!

Turn to the **Appendix** in the back of this manual, and find the page on

Making Telephone Calls to Get Information.

When you have finished that activity return here...



Here's a good place to do a quick review. Read the statement below.  the answer you think best completes the statement.

Question: Options are community resources. Options can be ...

people

places

services

supports

Got it!

Answer:

people

places

services

supports

Options can be any of those! Give yourself a if you **Got it!**

So far...you and Chris have each finished first half of **DO IT!** to make a decision about a **Fun & Leisure** activity you each want to do. You already...

Defined your problem and
Outlined your options.

Now that you have made some phone calls and found out some information about each option, you're ready to...

Identify the outcome of each option and
Take action...meaning "pick the best one" for you!

Get your **DO IT!** worksheet out...the one you have been working on.

Any option you choose is going to have outcomes. **Outcomes** — that means what you expect to happen if you choose that one.

Like, if you watch a comedy – a funny movie or a sitcom on TV – the **outcome** you expect is that you will laugh and enjoy yourself.

Each one of those options on your list will have outcomes if you choose that option. In fact, they will have **lots of outcomes**. You should think about what will happen—what the

outcome will be—if you choose that option. Then you think about the next option and what will happen if you choose that one....and then you think about the third option. You get the idea!

Look again at your **DO IT!** worksheet. Find the place that looks like this –

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

This is where you think about each option and ask yourself –

"What would happen that's good 😊 if I choose Option 1?"

Then you ask it the other way –

"What would be bad or negative ☹️ if I choose Option 1?"

It helps if you **write the answers down** on your **DO IT!** worksheet (you can ask your support person if you want a little help doing this).

If I choose this one, then...

But...at the very least – **say your answers out loud.**



OK, do that now. Start by thinking about your Option 1.

What would be good about choosing this one?

What would be bad...or not so good...if I choose this one?



Then think about Option 2.

What would be good about choosing this one?

What would be bad...or not so good...if I choose this one?



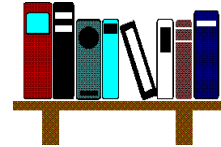
Do the same with Option 3.

What would be good about choosing this one?

What would be bad...or not so good...if I choose this one?

Look back at all three options. Then, if the outcome of an option doesn't seem worth it, or doesn't make sense...

you can "put it on the shelf."



Kind of like a book or a videotape that you don't need right now...but that you just might want to look at again in the future. You just set it aside on the shelf for now.



Something good to know:

You might be wondering... "why not just throw the option

I don't like into the trash?



Here's why:

Most of the time it's good to just "put it on the shelf."



That's because something might change, and you just might want to look at that option again later. Maybe your first choice doesn't work out...or maybe something else changes so that this option looks better, after all.

Now, sometimes there will be options that you will want to trash—like if the place went out of business! No point in keeping it on the shelf. Or if you find out the place does not offer what you are looking for.

But, in general, just put the options you are not too interested in "on the shelf."

Take a look at how Chris sees the positive and negative outcomes of the options below, which ones get "trashed," which ones get "put on the shelf" and which one Chris chooses to try first.

Here's what Chris found out from the phone calls:

Option 1. YMCA

- a. Beginner's class on Saturday mornings - \$20 for 6 sessions, but the class is full right now.
Special Friends Swim Club for people with developmental disabilities Thursday afternoons, \$3 per session. Water Aerobics, every afternoon, \$3 per session or \$24 for 12 sessions
- b. Membership fee is \$40 a year
- c. Located in downtown, near a bus line

Option 2. WorkOut Health Club

- a. Beginner's class on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, cost is included in membership fee
- b. Membership fee is \$200 to join, then \$40 per month
- c. Located east of downtown, on a bus line

Option 3. Get Fit Health Club

Phone has been disconnected. The place went out of business!

Option 4. City Park & Rec. Department

- a. Beginner's class starts soon - Wednesday nights - \$25 for 12 lessons.
- b. Membership fee is \$10 a year for city residents, plus \$20 a month for unlimited swimming
- c. Located on the northside – about 15 miles from downtown; not sure if there's a bus that goes there

Here's Chris' list of positive and negative outcomes:

	Positives 😊	Negatives ☹️
Option 1: YMCA	<p>Has a beginner's swim class; I could get on the list for the next class.</p> <p>Also offers Water Aerobics. It meets more than once a week. I like that.</p> <p>Doesn't cost too much.</p> <p>Probably can probably get a ride from the group home, since they are already taking two other people to the Y now. I could also ask for help in learning how to ride the bus there.</p>	<p>Class is full; Have to wait to get into a class later on.</p> <p>I'm not sure what Water Aerobics is...or if I would like it.</p> <p>I'd need to arrange transportation to get there.</p>
Option 2: WorkOut	<p>Has a beginner's class.</p> <p>Class doesn't cost extra.</p>	<p>Membership costs a lot!</p> <p>I can't afford it!</p>
Option 3: GetFit		<p>Went out of business!</p>
Option 4: City Park & Rec.	<p>Has beginner's class.</p> <p>Membership cost is very low.</p> <p>Class doesn't cost much either.</p> <p>I could ask for help in learning how to ride the bus; I've been wanting to learn ever since I moved here.</p>	<p>Class meets only once a week.</p> <p>A lot farther away from where I live.</p> <p>I'd need to find transportation to get there.</p>

Chris looks at these options and starts thinking about them. First, Chris tosses out the club that

went out of business! NOTE: This one Chris really can toss into the trash can!



That leaves Options 1, 2 and 4:

Option 1:

The Y's beginner's class is full right now. Bummer. But there are two other possibilities—the Special Friends Swim Club just for people with disabilities and Water Aerobics. Two other residents from Chris' group home go the Swim Club, so that would be easy to get to. But Chris is not that keen on just being in a club only for people with disabilities... "I mean I want to meet other people, too."

Chris is not so sure about Water Aerobics. "What exactly is Water Aerobics? Chris was going to toss that one out but decided to ask the Y what that class is. "Who knows? It might be something I'd like doing. It could be fun, and I could get into the beginner's class later when it opens up again."

So, Chris leaves the Y on the list.

Option 2:

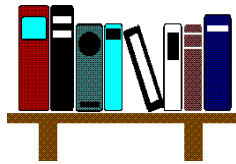


Another definite "trash can" here. The WorkOut club is way too expensive. Chris doubts there'd be any way to pay for this...even if the group home did agree to help. So, out it goes!

Option 4:

Chris considers this one – "The City Park & Rec. Center looks good. They've got a beginner's class open right now. And I could learn to ride the bus. Only bad thing is I'd have to learn to ride two buses – and transfer – because the center is pretty far away. I want to learn to use the bus...but I'm not sure about this one."

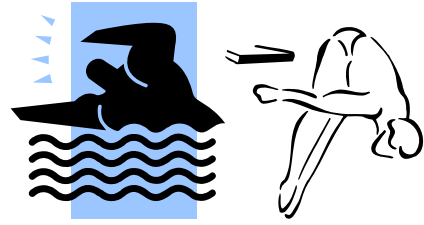
Chris puts this one "on the shelf."



Chris looks at all the positive and negative outcomes...and

Takes action

Chris decides on the Y. The Y looks like the best option for right now, so Chris decides to check out the Water Aerobics class.



Now there's just the matter of getting a new swimsuit!
Is that all there is to Chris' decision? Not exactly.
Think about it...just making a decision doesn't make it happen.

You have to turn your decision into a **GOAL** with steps you can take to reach your **GOAL**. That's what you and Chris will do in our next section.



ACTION! But right now it's your turn to pick the option you want and complete the process of making your decision!

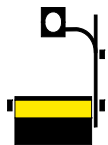
Look at your outcomes. Think about the outcomes that are positive. What about the negatives? Which option seems to have the most positive outcomes? Take some time to think these through. Talk to your support person, if you want.

Now that you have thought about which option has the most positive outcomes, you are ready to...

Take action

Write the option you choose on the bottom line of the **DO IT!** worksheet.

Congratulations! You have made your decision. And, like Chris, you are ready to turn this decision into a **GOAL**. Our next section in **It's My Future!** will guide you in the process of setting a **GOAL**. Then you will move on...to pick an area of life about which you most want to make a decision and set a goal for now.



Okay. Let's look at what you've been learning... Fill in the blanks to complete the questions below:

Question: To *I*dentify the outcome of your options, you ask yourself:

What would be _____ 😊 about choosing this option?

What would be _____ 😞 about choosing this option?

Answer: What would be good 😊 about choosing this option?

Got it!

What would be bad 😞 about choosing this option?

If you got one or both of those right, give yourself a ✓ because you **Got it!**

Community Resources - Fun & Leisure

Here are just a few ideas on ways to find out about options when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of **Fun & Leisure**.

Local newspaper — Your local newspaper probably has some kind of **Entertainment section** that shows movies, fairs, sporting events, and may have coupons for discounts at some restaurants and special events. There may also be a **Living section** that lists all kinds of clubs and organizations of people who share interests in many different hobbies or community issues.

Special events and attractions — The **chamber of commerce** or the **convention & visitors bureau** (if you are in a larger community or city) will have lots of brochures on special events and things to do in your area. The **public library** will also have fliers, posters, and information on special events and on organizations that you might be interested in — talk to a librarian for some help finding these.

Community Park & Recreation Centers — Check out whether there is a Park & Rec. Center in your area. These are great places for basketball, softball, aerobics, fitness training, martial arts, sometimes tennis and swimming. Centers often have other activities including dance, arts & crafts, workshops on a variety of things having to do with recreation. If you don't know where the centers are in your community, talk to friends and neighbors. Or look in the phone book in the business pages under "Government - City" or "Government - County" and then "Department of Parks & Recreation."

Clubs and special interest groups — There are lots and lots of organizations of people who like the same thing...like bike-riding, stamp-collecting, trains, computers, boating, gardening...you name it! The public library can help you find these kinds of groups.

Service clubs — There are many organizations like Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Jaycees, Civitan other service groups that meet and do projects to help other people. The public library or newspaper is a good place to find out where these groups meet.

Neighborhood associations — Some communities have very active associations of people who all live in a certain neighborhood. They get together to help improve the appearance and the safety of the neighborhood. They may sponsor

"Neighborhood Watch" programs for crime prevention, and they may do projects like holding a block party or arranging a neighborhood clean-up day. Again, ask one of your neighbors or talk to a local real estate agency to find out if there is an association for your neighborhood.

Self-advocacy groups — You may be interested in meeting other self-advocates and doing fun & leisure activities together. If you aren't already familiar with what's happening in your area, the local chapter of The Arc should be able to help you find out about a group in your area, and The Arc of the U.S. has a national directory of self-advocacy groups. If you have access to a computer and can get on the **Internet**, there are ways to connect with other self-advocates in different parts of the U.S. and other countries. Check out the website of Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), the national self-advocacy organization at <http://member.aol.com/netsabe>. Or you can e-mail SABE at netsabe@aol.com.

Chapters of The Arc – If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the national headquarters:

The Arc of the U.S.
1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 650
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

1-800-433-5255 ... or on the Internet at www.thearc.org.

Independent Living Centers — These centers exist to help people with

all types of disabilities get the help they may need to live more independently. Among their many different activities, some centers also have recreational activities. You can find out if there is a center in your area by looking in your phone book under "social services." Or you can contact the main office of your state vocational rehabilitation agency.

Transportation – Transportation seems to always be a real concern whenever you want to do something in the community. Some people work out rides with other people they get to know over time. Or, it may be important to you to be able to depend on using public transportation. You can contact the company that provides services in your local area. Some provide "travel training" for customers with disabilities who want to learn to use the fixed route system.

Learning to Set a Goal

GOAL: You will turn your Fun & Leisure decision into a **GOAL.**

Last time both you and Chris reached decisions about a **Fun & Leisure** activity each of you wants to do. You...

Took action - meaning you "**picked the option best for you.**"

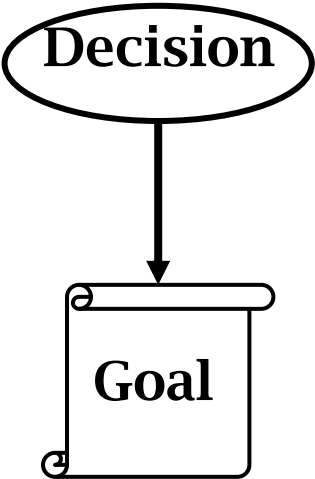
Chris picked the YMCA's Water Aerobics class as the "best option." Does just wanting to take the class make it happen? You decide...

Circle Yes or No Got it!

If you circled **No**, you are right (give yourself a). Just wanting to do something doesn't make it happen. Both you and Chris have to "do something" with the decisions you reached.

You "do something" by **setting goals.**

Your decision leads right into setting a goal.



Objectives are action steps that help you reach your goal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Your **decision** is... the **outcome** you want to happen.

It's the option you chose when you **Took action!**

Your **goal** is... **what you plan to do** to make that outcome a reality.

Your **objectives** are... the **action steps** – the things you do to reach your goal.

Let's let Chris give us an example...

Chris makes this decision...	I will lose some weight (the outcome Chris wants)
Chris might then set this goal...	I will drink water instead of sodas (this is one thing Chris plans to do to lose weight)
and these objectives... (we'll call them steps)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I will have a big glass of water before I get really thirsty.2. I will stay away from the soda machine.3. I will hang out with friends who drink water or diet drinks. <p>(these are action steps Chris will take to help reach the goal)</p>

See how this fits together?

The **steps**... ...having water before getting thirsty, staying away from the soda machine

help Chris reach the **goal...**

...drinking water instead of sodas

which helps Chris achieve the **decision outcome...**

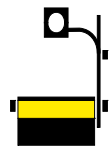
...losing weight.



Something good to know:

You will often have **more than one GOAL** to help make your **decision outcome** become a reality. Check this out...

In Chris' example of losing weight, **GOAL #1** was drinking water instead of sodas. But Chris might also have a **GOAL #2** to eat more vegetables and less fried food and a **GOAL #3** to begin an exercise program that Chris will do four times a week.



Let's check this out... Read the statement below and decide if it is True or False.

Then **circle** your answer.

Question: My **goal** is what I plan to do to make my **decision outcome** happen.

True

OR

False

Got it!

Answer:

True

If you got that answer, give yourself a up above. Otherwise, look over those last few pages again.

* * * *

Let's get on with setting your **GOAL** for the **Fun & Leisure** activity you decided you want to do.

Pull out your copy of the GOAL PLANNER at the end of this section. Keep it nearby, because you will be using it in a few minutes.

First...let's see how Chris uses the **GOAL PLANNER**.

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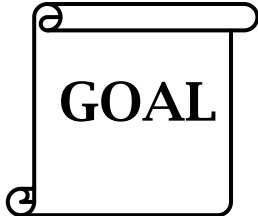
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GOAL PLANNER

**Decision
outcome**

To swim at the Y

(Chris writes the outcome from **Take action** on the **DO IT!** worksheet)



GOAL

Within two months, I will be able to attend the Y

so that I can take the class in Water Aerobics.

(Chris writes one goal, something to plan for, that will help make the decision outcome a reality)

Here are **steps** I need to take:

Become a member of
the YMCA

Get transportation to
and from the Y

Find out what the
Water Aerobics class
is and see if I would like it

Chris writes **3 steps**—things to do—to start working toward the goal.

Chris picks **1** step to **start working on first** and then makes a list of smaller steps.

Here is the **step** I will work on first:

Find out what the Water Aerobics class
is and see if I would like it

1. Call the YMCA to find out what Water Aerobics is and what supplies I need

2. Ask the Y if and when I can visit the Water Aerobics class

3. Be sure I have the right kind of supplies (swimsuit, towel, etc.)

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4. Decide what day I will go visit and then arrange a ride with someone

You can see how Chris' plan all fits together...

Chris' **decision outcome**...

To swim at the Y

is supported by Chris' **goal**...

Within two months, I will

take the class in Water Aerobics.

which is supported by Chris' **steps**...

Become a member of
the YMCA

Get transportation to
and from the Y

Find out what the
Water Aerobics class
is and see if I would like it



Something good to know:

Hey, back up for just a moment. Did you notice that Chris put a timeframe in the goal? Chris said "**Within two months I will....**" That's an important part of goal setting – knowing **when** you're going to do something. Also, knowing when you're going to **start** and when you want to be **finished**.

In the **Appendix** there are five short tips on writing **goals that work**. When you want a little break...be sure to turn to the **Appendix** and find the section called **Goal-Setting Tips**.

Notice that Chris has listed three steps. Now, here's where it gets interesting. Each of those

steps involves other smaller **steps**.



Think about it...Just look at the first **step** Chris listed...

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Become a member of
the YMCA

What are some of the smaller **steps** – things Chris will need to do – to become a member of the Y?

1. Ask the service coordinator or other staff person at the group home to find out if there could be any assistance to help me pay the membership fee.
2. Check back with the staff to see what they found out about getting help with the fee.
3. Make arrangements to pay the fee – by cash or by writing a check.
4. If paying by check, figure out if I will write a personal check or if the residential program will write the check.
5. Deliver the fee to the Y – take it in person, or I could mail it if I'm paying by check.
6. Fill out the Y's membership application. (Remember to take my important personal information along so I can fill out my home address and phone number and the name and phone number of someone who could be contacted in an emergency.)

And for the **step...**

Get transportation to
and from the Y

there's another group of smaller **steps**, that might include things like:

1. Figure out what days and times I want to go to the Y.
2. Talk to the staff to see if they can help with transportation...and at the times I need to go.
3. Check to see what public bus route would get me there.
4. Find out if the bus company...or some other agency can help me with travel training.

There is one other **big step** remaining...

Find out what the
Water Aerobics class is
and see if I would like it

This is the **step** Chris decides to start with first. Why did Chris pick this step as the first one to start working on? Well, here's what Chris has to say about that...

"There's no point in paying all that money to join the Y until I'm sure I'd like it there. I mean I might find out that the pool is going to be shut down soon for repairs...or the locker rooms aren't easy to use...or Water Aerobics isn't fun...or that the beginner's swim class won't be opening up again 'til next summer.

Or, maybe I like the Y fine, but I can't get there because transportation isn't working out.

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I think I'll start with the step of just checking out the Water Aerobics class before I work on those other steps."

So...by starting with that step, Chris can find out if going to the Y is a good thing before going to all that trouble of joining and getting transportation. Then, if things don't work out, Chris can still go back to one of the other places in the list of options Chris outlined...remember the City Park & Rec.? They had beginner's swim classes, so that would be another place Chris could check out.

HINT: See why it's a good idea to put options you don't choose "on the shelf"



...instead of in the trash?



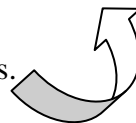
OK, so let's look at the **step** Chris decides to take first...

Find out what the Water Aerobics class is and see if I would like it

Below that step Chris lists four smaller **steps** to help with checking out the Water Aerobics class:

1. Call the YMCA to find out what Water Aerobics is and what supplies I need
2. Ask the Y if and when I can visit the Water Aerobics class
3. Be sure I have the right kind of supplies (swimsuit, towel, etc.)
4. Decide what day I will go visit and then arrange a ride with someone

These smaller **steps** become a "TO DO" list for Chris.



As Chris does the things listed here, Chris will be able to achieve the bigger **step** of finding out what Water Aerobics is like. And, all along the way, if Chris feels the need for some help on the **steps**, Chris can talk to people on the planning team or Support Circle.

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Well, we've been talking about Chris all this time...now it's your turn to plan **YOUR GOAL!**



ACTION!

Go ahead and get that **GOAL PLANNER** so you can start writing on it. Be sure to ask your support person for any help you may want.

On your **GOAL PLANNER** in the space that looks like this...write down your own –



(Remember, that's the outcome you had under **Take action** on your **DO IT!** worksheet)



Now here's where that "thinker" comes in again!

Spend a little time thinking about...

1 GOAL that will help you reach your decision outcome.

There are probably lots of goals that relate to your desired outcome...but just pick **1 GOAL**, something to aim for that will help you move toward that outcome you want.

When you have that **GOAL** in mind, write it on your **GOAL PLANNER** in the space that looks like this...



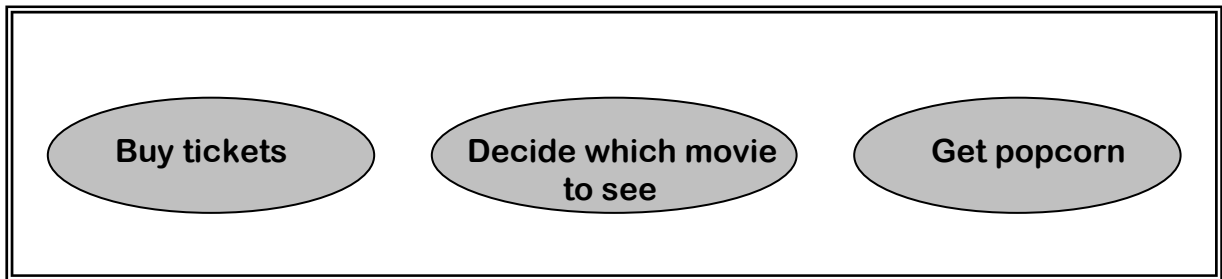
Keep working down the page. Next you will figure out some **steps** you'll need to take to reach your goal. Write those in the space on your **GOAL PLANNER** that looks like this –

Here are **steps** I need to take:

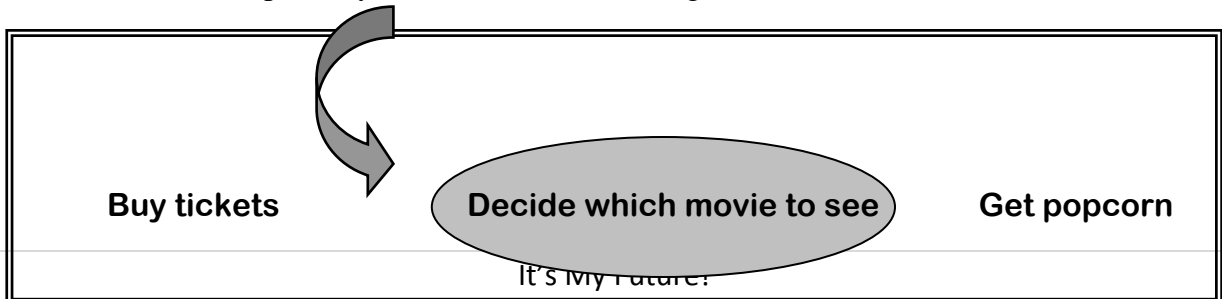


Some more thinking now... what is the step that makes most sense for me to do first.

Think of it this way... suppose you want to go see a movie. Here are some steps you'll take –



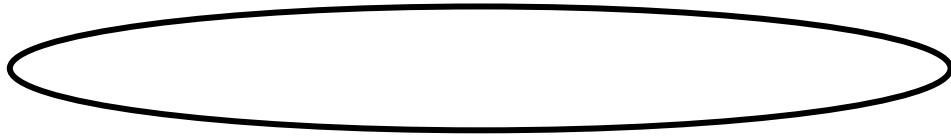
Which one of those steps really has to come first?... Right!



Same thing when you think about any goal...ask yourself "which step does it make sense to take first?"

OK...back to your **GOAL PLANNER**. Figure out which step should be first. Write it in the space there that looks like this –

Here is the **step** I will work on first:



Then on your **GOAL PLANNER** list those smaller **steps** that will make that **step** happen –

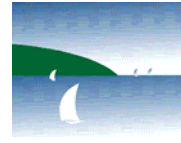
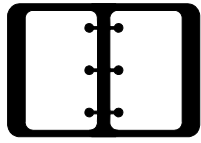
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Something good to know:

It's fine to get help on this. In fact it's really the job of your planning team to help you identify the steps that will help you reach your goal, including supports that you may need. The more you can do in thinking about these things before your planning meeting, the more useful your meeting will be.

Be sure to talk with people in your Support Circle about the goals you have in mind. And use your *Life Book* to show them pictures and notes of things you want in your life. This is how you will be better prepared to get the most out of your planning meeting.



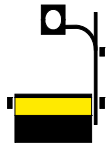
If you have not yet put some **pictures** in your *Life Book* about the **Fun & Leisure** activity you have decided to do, then this would be a great time to do that.

You want your *Life Book* to be a way to keep your goals where you can see them.



Your *Life Book* is also a way to show **Other People** your interests, dreams and goals.

OK, you've spent a lot of time learning processes and tips on decision making and goal setting. The rest of our time together will be all about **YOU!** Using the things you are learning to practice making decisions and setting goals. Oh, you'll still have a chance to hear about other self-advocates and how they set their goals, but each time **YOU** will be adding to your own list of goals...and adding to your *Life Book*.



the

Okay. Let's check out something we just learned. Read the statement below. Fill in the blank with the answer you think fits.

Question: After I pick **1 GOAL**, then I figure out some _____ I'll need to take to reach my goal.

Got it!

Answer: After I pick **1 GOAL**, then I figure out some steps (or things I'll need to do) to reach my goal.

If you got that right, give yourself a because you **Got it!**

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GOAL PLANNER

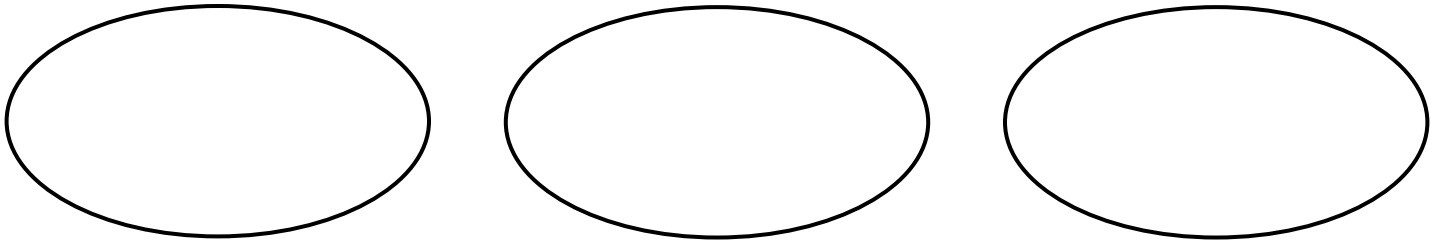
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

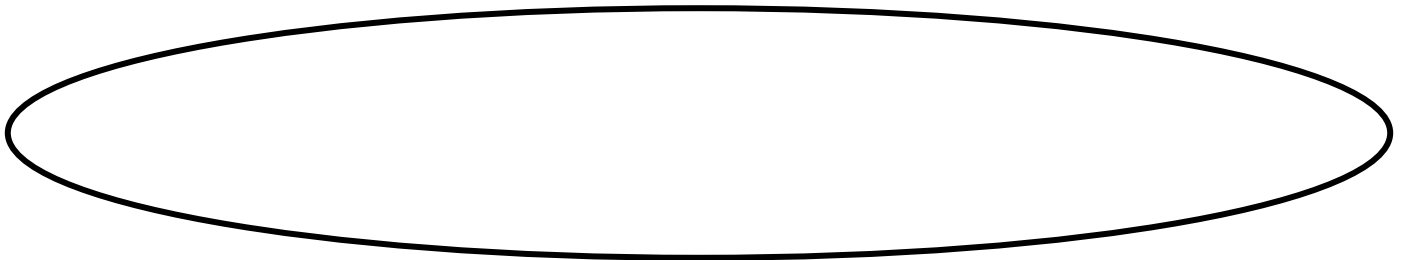


(I write one goal—something to plan for—that will help me make my **decision outcome** a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Blank page

Choosing Decisions to Make

GOAL: You will see how some decisions are most important at different times in a person's life. You will choose one area of life in which you feel you need to make a decision.

You've learned the decision-making process ***DO IT!*** and you've practiced it by making a decision about **Fun & Leisure** activities. You can use this process for **any type of decision** you want to make about things that are important to you in life.

Use ***DO IT!*** in the same way, with the same steps, for any decision you want to make—

Define your problem

You think about a problem or issue you want to consider.
You state it clearly.

Outline your options

You think of different options...
or community resources that would work for you.

Identify the outcome

You think about "what will happen if I choose this option."

You consider each option - each community resource...
1 at a time.

Then you see if choosing that option would be

good 😊 ...or not so good for you ☹️

You ask yourself that question...

"What will happen if I choose this option?"

for each one of the options...

until you find the one that has the

best outcome...for you

Take action

You pick the **1** option that you think will have the best results for you.

That is your  **decision outcome.**

Then you turn your **decision outcome** into a **GOAL**.

Today you will choose an area of your life in which you want...or need...to be making a decision.

At different times in a person's life, there are different important decisions he or she should be making.



ACTION! Go to the next page and see if you can pick out some of those important decisions that you (or anyone) might make at different times in life.

Circle the **MOST IMPORTANT** decision

you think a person should consider in each of these stages or situations in life.

Important Decisions at Different Times in Life

1. An important decision at age 15 or 16 might be "Do I want to..."

Learn to drive?

Take a vacation?

Eat dinner now?

2. An important decision when graduating from high school, vocational training or college might be "Do I..."

Write a letter?

Find a good job?

Listen to the radio?

3. An important decision when dating might be "Should I..."

Consider getting married?

Watch a video?

Go to the store?

4. An important decision if I am unhappy with where I live might be "Do I want to..."

Do laundry?

Find a good dentist?

Find a new place to live?

5. An important decision if I am feeling lonely might be "Should I...

Clean house? Have breakfast? Make some new friends?

6. An important decision when I am in my sixties might be "Do I...

Go to the post office?

Consider whether I want to retire from my job
and find some new activities?

Buy a new outfit?

7. An important decision if I am often bored might be "Should I...

Get a job or a new job?

Find a new activity that's fun?

Volunteer with an organization I'm interested in?

Now, go to the next page to see how your answers compare
to the ones we chose...

Important Decisions – Answers

1. An important decision at age 15 or 16 might be "Do I want to..."

Learn to drive?

Take a vacation?

Eat dinner now?

2. An important decision when graduating from high school, vocational training or college might be "Do I..."

Write a letter?
radio?

Find a good job?

Listen to the

3. An important decision when dating might be "Should I..."

Consider getting married?

Watch a video?

Go to the store?

4. An important decision if I am unhappy with where I live might be "Do I want to..."

Do laundry?

Find a good dentist?

Find a new place to live?

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Go to the post office?

Consider whether I want to retire from my job
and find some new activities?

Buy a new outfit?

7. An important decision if I am often bored might be "Should I...

Get a job or a new job?

Find a new activity that's fun?

Volunteer with an organization I'm interested in?

Now, we admit it! We threw in that last question that had **3** right answers.

That's because **sometimes** there are situations in which a lot of different decisions might all be worth considering.

Look at that example... I mean, if you are bored all the time, any one of those answers could be a good decision to make –

– to get a **new job** *OR* to get into some **new activity** *OR* to make some **new friends** –

because all of those decisions have to do with adding **new things**—activities or people—to your life.

Like we said... sometimes in life there are situations in which a lot of decisions might all be important ones to consider making.

...but in most situations in life, there probably is

1 important decision to consider...**first**.

Let's look.

See how those other questions did have one decision that best fit the ages and stages of life that were given? Just consider a few of them. I mean, it makes sense that –

if you are **finishing school or training**, an important decision would be considering what kind of **job to look for**....or

if you are **unhappy with where you live**, an important decision might be considering **moving**....or

if you are **nearing the age when people retire**, an important decision would be considering **whether YOU want to retire**.

That's what we mean about **important decisions a person should make** at certain points in life.

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Well, now it's your turn to think about where **YOU** are in **your life** today so you can think about what decision you might need to be considering. What is happening in your life right now in those different areas of life that are part of your planning? Is there one area of life you have a strong desire to set a goal in...or are there several areas of life you are interested in making changes in?

Work
want



The kind of job I might

Living



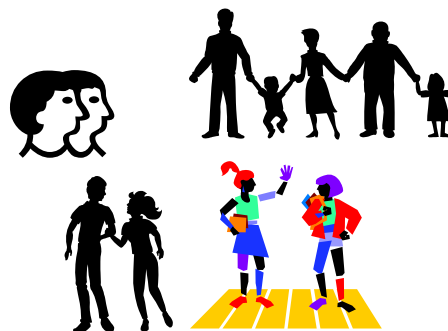
Where I want to live

Fun & Leisure



Activities I want
to
do in my free
time

Personal
Relationships



People I would like
to have in my life.

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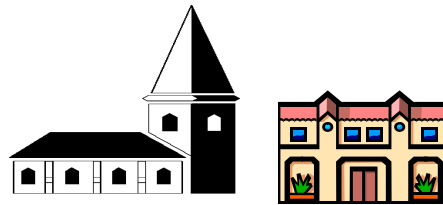
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Learning
like



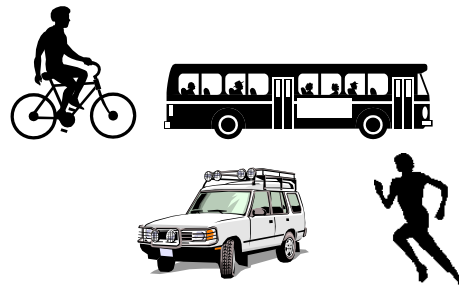
Things I would
to learn to do.

Community



Faith community,
organizations,
clubs

Transportation



How I will get around
the community

What is one area of life that you feel you should be considering first?

Put a **circle** around that one area above...or if you are interested in several areas, then write **1** beside your first choice, **2** beside your second choice, and so on.

HINT: You've already done this for the area of **Fun & Leisure**. But if that's the area you choose to do more planning in, you can get another set of planning forms (a **DO IT!** worksheet, an **Options FACT SHEET**, and a **GOAL PLANNER**) from the back of the manual in the section called Creating My Life Visions Book. If you need to review the process, you can turn again to the sections on Decision Making and Learning to Set a Goal.

Now...turn to the Table of Contents in the front of this manual and find the name of the area of life that you are interested in working on first...there you will find the page number you need to turn to

Work

Living

Learning

Personal Relationships

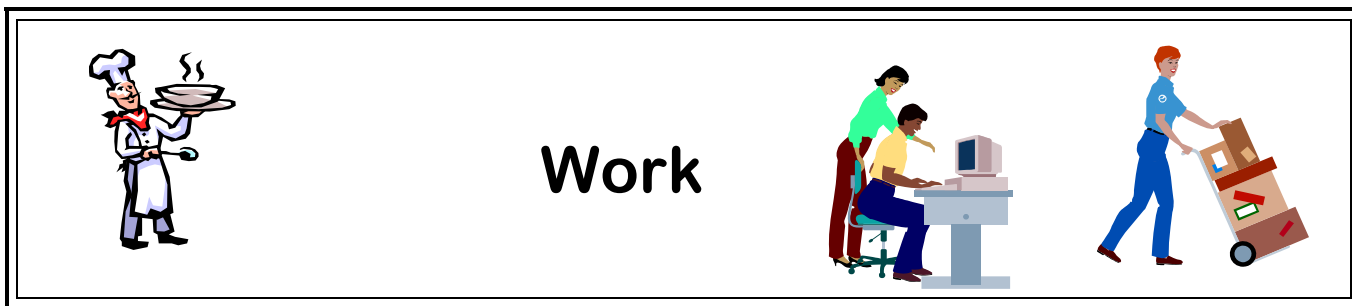
Community & Transportation

See you there!

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Making a Decision & Setting a Goal

GOAL: You will consider things you would like in a job. You will make a decision and set a goal related to **Work**.

Work is one of the most important areas of life. A good job can mean you have the money you need to live on, for savings, money to buy the things you want and need.

Work is a way to use your abilities along with other people to do something bigger than any one person could do. Often in a job you are part of a team with other workers all helping to make something happen...whether you're working in a store or serving in a restaurant or providing care to people in a hospital or seeing that mail is delivered or products manufactured in a large company.

Work is a way to meet new people, make new friends and acquaintances, have new experiences, learn new skills, maybe even travel to other places. For most people, having a job they like is one of the most satisfying things in their life.

People often identify themselves by what job they do. When two people meet for the first time, it's not long before one person asks the other "What do you do?" – meaning "what kind of job do you have?"

Having a job you like may mean you can do other **B I G** things you want in life – like

Living where you would like

Buying a house

Getting married

Having children

Taking a vacation

Giving money or time to organizations you care about

Think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences

On the next few pages there is an exercise to help you think about your Work...and your Education & Training interests. Be sure to ask your support person for any help you might need or want to do



this.

ACTION! Turn the page and let's get started!

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Things I Would Like in a Job



Circle things you would like doing at a job. For each number, choose one or more.

I would like to work ...

- 1. Alone Beside other people As part of a team
- 2. Outdoors Indoors Some of both
- 3. Morning Afternoon Night
- 4. Part-time Full-time In more than one job

If you've had jobs in the past, continue here. If you have not had jobs, turn the page.

Jobs I have had	Things I liked about the job 😊	Things I did not like about it ☹️

Here's a list of some kinds of work. **Circle** the ones you might be interested in doing or doing again. Under each section, choose as many kinds of work as you would really like to do:

Working with my hands

1. Building/putting things together
2. Repairing broken things
3. Sewing or mending
4. Gardening/plant care
5. Doing laundry/dry cleaning
6. Painting
7. Cleaning (vacuuming, mopping)
8. Stocking shelves
9. Making beds
10. Caring for animals

Working in an office

1. Sorting/delivering mail
2. Answering telephone calls
3. Using a computer
4. Making copies
5. Filing papers
6. Making telephone calls
7. Typing
8. Cleaning (emptying trash, vacuuming)

Helping other people

1. Greeting people
information
2. Selling
3. Cleaning (hotel, hospital)
4. Giving people
5. Cooking
6. Serving customers

Working with people of this age ...

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. Children | 3. Adults |
| 2. Teenagers | 4. Older adults |

Working in ...

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Office dealership | 13. Garage or car |
| 2. Video or music store | 14. Hotel or hospital |
| 3. Restaurant or club | 15. Doctor's office |
| 4. Grocery store | 16. Child care center |
| 5. Bank | 17. Adult care center (day program or nursing home) |
| 6. Factory | 18. Airport, rail or bus station |
| 7. Mall/department store shop | 19. Office supply/print |
| 8. School | 20. Discount store |
| 9. Library/bookstore | 21. Community rec. center |
| 10. Health club | 22. Sporting goods store |
| 11. Hardware store | 23. Laundry/dry cleaner |
| 12. Beauty salon/barber shop | 24. _____ |

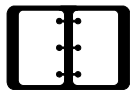
or....you fill in the blank!

Here's what would be **fun or interesting** about jobs I might like –

Skills I have now	What jobs match my skills?	What other skills would I need?

Jobs I would like to try

(On this page make a list or paste pictures of jobs you would like. You can also use the back of this page if you need more room.)



Don't forget to add this exercise to your *Life Book* in the **Work** section.

More on jobs I would like to try...

Now...let's look at an example of planning in this area. We'll see what steps Chris takes to make a decision and set a goal.

Here are some of Chris' interests and abilities:

My Interests	My Abilities
1. Watching videos	1. Taking care of my dogs
2. Taking walks	2. Working on the landscape crew
3. Rock music	3. Cooking...a little
4. Swimming	4. I'm a friendly person, good at talking with people.
5. Playing with my dogs	5.

Chris works on a landscaping crew, but wants to have a different job. But...what kind? Chris circles some of the things that might relate to a different kind of job. Let's see what kind of jobs might fit Chris' list –

Chris has some skills and experience caring for dogs. Maybe a job with an animal hospital or animal shelter/humane society would be a good match. For sure, Chris would know how to feed and water the dogs and walk them. But Chris might need to learn how to clean the kennels. Chris might get into some kind of training in caring for animals that might lead to a better job with a veterinarian's office or animal hospital or maybe a big pet store.

But Chris thinks some more about it. Chris also loves videos and has seen practically every video in the video store. Well, maybe not every one! Chris is pretty good at talking to people and likes that, too. Maybe a good match would be a job in a video store helping people find movies and helping put the movies in order on the shelves. Maybe there would be some on-the-job training to learn how to run the computer where people check out and pay for the videos they want.

HINT: Chris is already beginning to make a decision using ***DO IT!***



You have thought **A LOT** about your interests and abilities from the activity you just completed. You've come up with some ideas about jobs you might like. (If you want to go back and add other jobs and pictures to your list, do that. If you are satisfied with the list you have, keep **DOING IT!**)

Make a decision using **DO IT!**

You may want to use the **DO IT!** worksheet that is near the end of this section. Follow the steps that are listed there. You can ask your support person for help, if you feel you want some help filling in your worksheet.

Find community resources that might fit your interests

Where do you look for community resources to help you with your decision making about **Work**? A good place to start is the list of ...

Community Resources – Work

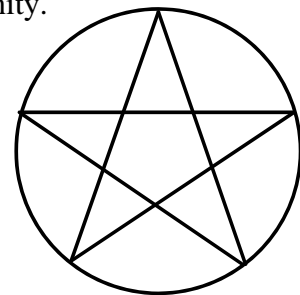
It's right at the end of this section. The resources you find there will be helpful when you start to

Outline your options as you develop your decision.

You will want to find where these resources are in your own community.

Start by talking with someone
in your Support Circle

HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or back in the section called **My Planning Meeting**.



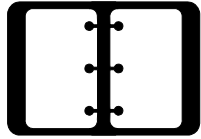
Also, talk to other people on your planning team. They could help you use the phone book, newspaper, library, social service directory to get the local phone numbers and other information you need.

You can use the **Options FACT SHEET** on the flip side of your **DO IT!** worksheet to jot down information you collect from talking to people or making phone calls.

Turn your decision into a goal

On the page after your ***DO IT!*** worksheet is a **GOAL PLANNER**.

Follow the **GOAL PLANNER** step by step to work through the process of turning your decision outcome into a goal.



Be sure to take all the activity sheets from this section, especially your **GOAL PLANNER** and put them in your *Life Book* in the section for **Work**. Also, don't forget to add pictures of your **Work** goal, too.

When you have set a goal for **Work**, consider what other areas of life you want to think about for your planning meeting. Then...

check the table of contents at the front of ***It's My Future!*** for the page number for the area of life you want to consider next.



If there are no other areas of life you are interested in planning for right now, and if you have finished all the planning you want to do for your upcoming planning meeting,

...then you are ready to turn to page **203** to the chapter called –

Communicating Effectively.

There you will continue your preparations for your meeting – by learning how to communicate successfully with your planning team.

After that chapter, there are chapters on –

Planning My Successful Meeting and Being a Good Leader at My Meeting.

These will also help you get ready to have a successful planning meeting. Good luck! And, remember, you can always come back to this manual if you decide you want to do some more planning later.

Blank page

DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

(write the name of the kind of Work/Job you want to do)

Outline your options

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

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A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Options for Work - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Kind of job(s) or services: _____

Qualifications:

How do I apply: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Kind of job(s) or services: _____

Qualifications:

How do I apply: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Kind of job(s) or services: _____

Qualifications:

How do I apply: _____

GOAL PLANNER

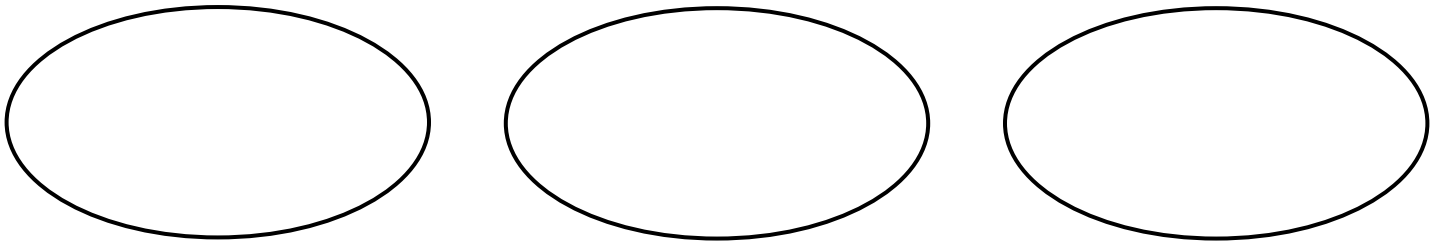
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

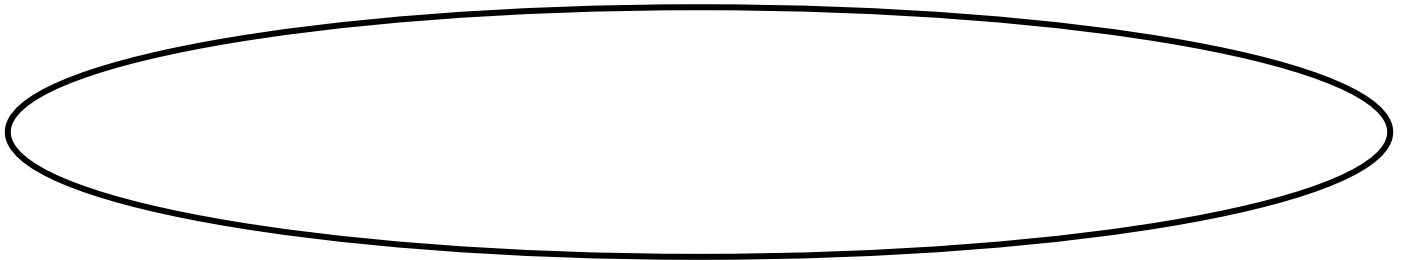


(I write one goal—something to plan for—that will help me make my **decision outcome** a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Blank page

Community Resources – Work

Here are just some of the kinds of resources that may be helpful when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of Work–

Vocational rehabilitation agency — This agency is a good resource to help you decide what kind of job you'd be best qualified for and to help find job openings. If you are not already in contact with your local vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency, ask the person who is providing you support to help you get in touch with them. You can also check the phone book under the government pages – look under the listings for your state government and check for the word "rehabilitation."

Workforce Development Center — This service can help you prepare a resume, let you use their computer and fax machine, and help you with some job leads. Check the phone book under the listings for your state government.

Local community colleges and other vocational training agencies — These would be good resources if you need training to help you prepare for the kind of job you want.

Employment agencies — There are many employment agencies that may be able to help you find a temporary job that could become permanent or could lead to a permanent job somewhere else. These services are free to the job seeker.

Supported employment program — This service can help you practice filling out an application and being interviewed, help you find a job and follow up with you as long as needed. They could also assist you with **a job coach**, if one is needed to assist you in learning the job duties, learning to ride the bus to work, how to deal with coworkers and how to punch in and out on the time clock. If you are not already involved with this type of program, check with someone on your planning team to see if this would be a resource available to you in your area.

PASS (Plan for Achieving Self-Sufficiency) is a program of the Social Security Administration that helps individuals with disabilities obtain training, supplies, equipment, and other things that would enable the person to become gainfully employed. The program has specific qualifications a person must meet. You can find out more by talking with staff at the VR agency or other employment program, or you can contact the Social Security Administration office in your area (check phone book's blue pages under "Helpful Numbers," or call the Federal Information Center at 1-800-688-9889).

On-The-Job training funds and/or a Work Opportunity

Tax Credit — The U.S. Department of Labor funds special programs that make employers more interested in hiring people with disabilities. Contact The Arc of the U.S. at 1-800-433-5255 to find out where to reach the National Employment and Training Program.

Employers in your area — When you are looking for a job, consider different local employers who have jobs for which you may qualify – places like grocery stores, doctors' offices, dry cleaners, offices, drug stores, day care centers, libraries, movie theaters, health clubs, hospitals, churches, etc.

Newspaper "want ads" and job lines — Check your local newspaper, especially the Sunday edition for the job "want ads." Your newspaper or some other organization may also operate a telephone service where you can phone a certain number to hear tape recorded messages about job openings – ask around to find out if there is such a job line in your area.

Your friends, neighbors, family members and other people you know — When you are looking for a job, it helps to tell everyone you know. They can be part of your "network" to find a job. They can help you find out about local employers, find job openings, and practice interviewing.

A computer is a great resource (maybe you own one or can use one at the library or an employment program). The computer will help you have access to the **Internet** which has lots of employment-related web sites where you can find information about jobs in your local area and all over the nation. Here are addresses for just a few of the many web sites:

www.careerpath.com

www.monster.com

www.headhunter.net

www.dfwjobs.com - also connects to many other job-finding web sites

www.fedworld.gov - has listings for all federal government jobs from entry-level jobs on up to higher level jobs

www.careers.yahoo.com

www.ivillage.monster.com - job information of special interest to women

Your area's **Workforce Commission** probably has a web site, too.

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)



Living

Making a Decision & Setting a Goal

GOAL: You will consider things you would like at your home. You will make a decision and set a goal related to **Living**...where you live or want to live...and the skills of everyday living that will help you be successful there.

Today you will do some activities to help you with making a decision and setting a goal about where you live or want to live.

Maybe you have always wanted to move to a different kind of place.

Or maybe you know there is some daily living skill you want and need – like learning to cook or handling your own checkbook. A skill you need to become more independent.

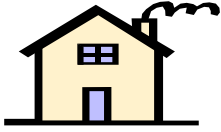
Think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences

This is always your first step as you develop plans for your life. To help you consider your unique abilities and interests, turn the page for an exercise that may give you a chance to think about these now.



ACTION!

Blank page



Things I Would Like at Home



Circle the things that you like most. 😊

1. Being around a lot of people or Being by myself

2. A quiet place or Lots of talking, music, TV

3. Having lots of friends over to visit

or...Having 1 or 2 friends over

or...Not having anybody over

4. Having a room of my own or Sharing a room

5. Cooking for myself

or...Cooking for other people

or...Having other people do all the
cooking

6. Staying up late at night or Going to bed early

7. Sleeping late or Getting up early

8. Deciding how to decorate

or...Getting someone to help me decorate

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9. Going out to eat, see movies, do other fun things
or...Staying home to eat, watch videos, do fun things

10. Gardening/yard work or Having inside plants or Both

11. Having a pet (what kind?) or not having a pet



Here are some questions to think over and answer:

12. What do I like about where I live now?

13. Here is something I would like to change about the place where I live now:

Circle the things you **most** like.

14. I would most like to live:

Downtown in a big city

In a suburb of a big city

In a small town

In the country

15. I would most like to live in:

Apartment
home

House

Townhouse

Mobile

Group home

Where I am now

or...

_____ (you fill in the blank)

16. I would most like to live with:

Myself 1 roommate 2 (or more) roommates
husband/wife

17. How will I pay for the place where I want to live?

Rent it or Buy it or Someone else will pay (Medicaid, parents)

18. Here are things I need to be near (circle all that are important to you):

Transportation

Work

Shopping

Worship

Recreation

Restaurants

Exercise

Adult education

Other? _____

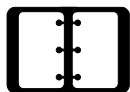
(you fill in the blank)

19. Do I need some supports to help me with medical or health needs? If so, what kind? _____

20. Are there other kinds of help I need? _____

Here's the kind of place I want to live in

(On this page make a list or paste pictures of the kinds of places where you might want to live—or where you live now, if you want to stay there)



Don't forget to add this exercise to your *Life Book* in the *Living* section.

Daily Living Skills

Circle the things you'd like to know how to do...or do better.

1. Using money \$

2. Keeping my own checkbook or savings book



3. Paying bills 

4. Using a bank



5. Using the post office 


6. Keeping my own calendar



7. Managing time 

8. Making and keeping appointments



9. Using the telephone 

10. Getting along with roommates/other people



11. Shopping for groceries



12. Preparing food for myself






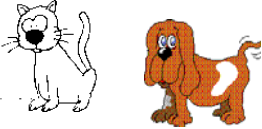

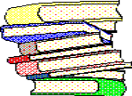






13. Cooking hot food for myself



14. Staying safe



15. Knowing what to do in an emergency 
16. Bathing, brushing teeth, hair care 
17. Selecting clothes to wear and getting dressed 
18. Doing my laundry 
19. Caring for my apartment or house 
20. Caring for a pet 
21. Staying healthy 😊 & getting well when sick/hurt ☹️
22. Following doctor's orders (taking medication, etc.) 
23. Reading  
24. Using the newspaper
25. Using public transportation 
26. Arranging transportation 
27. Learning to drive 

Other skills I want to learn or get better at doing:

Take a look at how Chris did some planning about where to live.

Chris now lives in a group home but wants to have an apartment.

Chris thought about these kinds of things –

- 1) finding an apartment that doesn't cost too much to rent
- 2) getting furniture and household supplies
- 3) considering whether to live alone or find a friend who wants to be a roommate
- 4) thinking about supports that would make apartment living a success

Chris spent a lot of time thinking about item #4.... supports. That's because there are a lot of things to do when living in an apartment like:

- paying the rent and the electric or gas bill on time
- budgeting money so there's enough money when it's time to pay the bills or buy groceries
- knowing how to keep from spending too much money on the utilities (electricity and/or gas for heating, cooling, hot water, lights)
- cleaning the apartment
- getting along with a roommate
- getting along with neighbors, like knowing what to do if they are making too much noise or what to do if the neighbors complain that Chris is making too much noise
- buying groceries
- cooking
- letting the apartment's management office know if things need fixing, like the sink is stopped up or the stove quits working
- knowing how to stay safe, how to prevent accidents at home, how to avoid being a victim of a robbery or other crime
- knowing what bus or other public transportation to take or finding other ways of getting to work and other places Chris wants to go

Oh, some things Chris is already doing in the group home – like laundry, some cleaning and cooking. It's just Chris knows that having one's own apartment means being on your own and responsible for a lot more. Some of the things Chris will have to do, or get supports to help learn how to do.

So, Chris spent extra time thinking about what supports might be helpful and how to get them.



You have thought **A LOT** about your interests and abilities from the activity you just completed. You've come up with some ideas about where you live or might like to live in the future. Have you thought of something else to add? (If you want to go back and add other information or pictures to your list, do that now. If you are satisfied with the list you have, continue on here...keep **DOING IT!**)

Make a decision using **DO IT!**

You may want to use the **DO IT!** worksheet that is near the end of this section. Follow the steps that are listed there. You can ask your support person for help, if you feel you want some help filling in your worksheet.

Find community resources that might fit your interests

Where do you look for community resources to help you with your decision making about where you live? A good place to start is the list of ...

Community Resources – Living

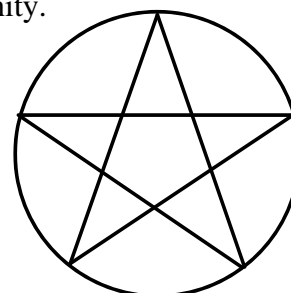
It's right at the end of this section. The resources you find there will be helpful when you start to

Outline your options as you develop your decision.

You will want to find where these resources are in your own community.

Start by talking with someone
in your Support Circle

HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or back in the section called **My Planning Meeting**.



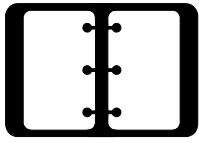
Also, talk to other people on your planning team. They could help you use the phone book, newspaper, library, social service directory to get the local phone numbers and other information you need.

You can use the **Options FACT SHEET** on the flip side of your **DO IT!** worksheet to jot down information you collect from talking to people or making phone calls.

Turn your decision into a goal

On the page after your **DO IT!** worksheet is a **GOAL PLANNER**.

Follow the **GOAL PLANNER** step by step to work through the process of turning your decision outcome into a goal.



Be sure to take all the activity sheets from this section, especially your **GOAL PLANNER** and put them in your *Life Book* in the section for **Living**. Also, don't forget to add pictures of your **Living** goal, too.

When you have set a goal on Living, consider what other areas of life you want to think about for your planning meeting. Then...

check the table of contents at the front of *It's My Future!* for the page number for the area of life you want to consider next.



If there are no other areas of life you are interested in planning for right now, and if you have finished all the planning you want to do for your upcoming planning meeting,

...then you are ready to turn to page **203** to the chapter called –

Communicating Effectively.

There you will continue your preparations for your meeting – by learning how to communicate successfully with your planning team.

After that chapter, there are chapters on –

Planning My Successful Meeting and Being a Good Leader at My Meeting.

These will also help you get ready to have a successful planning meeting. Good luck! And, remember, you can always come back to this manual if you decide you want to do some more planning later.

Blank page

DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

(write the name of something you want to decide about your Living arrangement)

Outline your options

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

Options for Living - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What services they have: _____

Days/times they are available: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What services they have: _____

Days/times they are available: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What services they have: _____

Days/times they are available: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

GOAL PLANNER

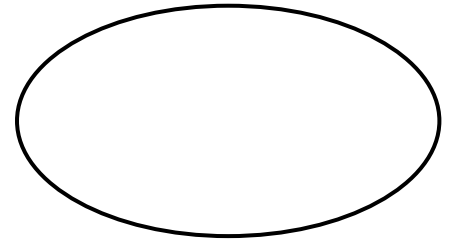
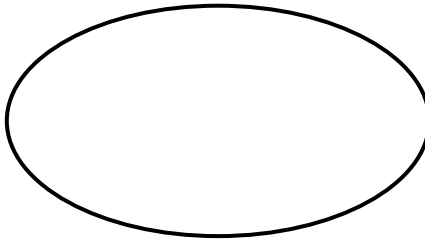
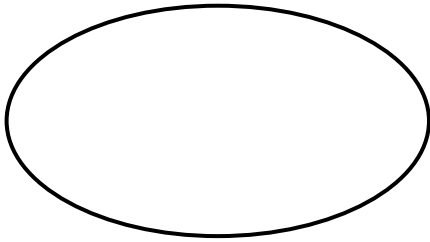
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

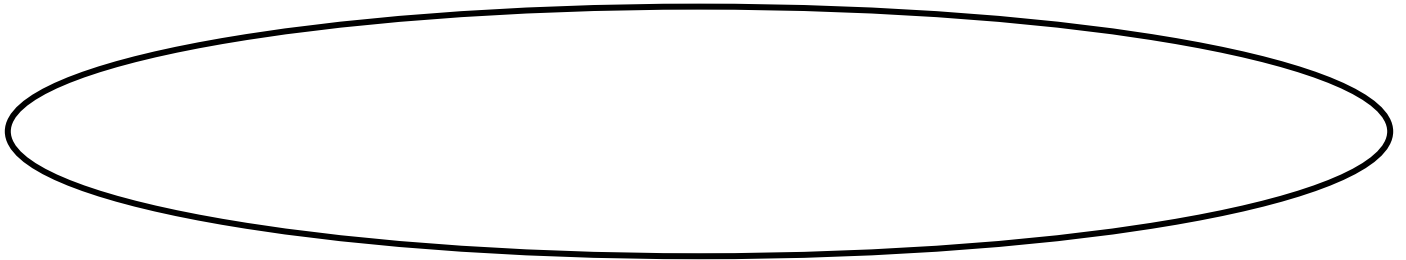


(I write one goal—something to aim for—that will help me make my decision outcome a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Blank page

Community Resources – Living

Here are just some of the kinds of resources that may be helpful when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of Living–

Chapters of The Arc should be able to help you with your goals related to where you live and the skills you want and need to learn. If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the national headquarters:

The Arc of the U.S.

1660 L Street, NW, Suite 301

Washington, DC 20036

1-800-433-5255

or on the Internet at www.thearc.org.

Supported Living programs — These are programs specifically to help people with disabilities have the supports they need to live in the community. Programs like these may be run by your chapter of The Arc or a social service agency serving people with disabilities or a community mental health/mental retardation center. You may already be receiving services from one of these organizations, so you can ask directly about "supported living." Or check with your local or state chapter of The Arc for a referral – If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact The Arc's National Headquarters (see above). You may also be able to find some organizations in the yellow pages under "developmental disabilities."

Home and Community Based Services — These are supports to help people with disabilities live in the community. **Volunteers of America** and **Res-Care** are just two examples of the kind of organizations that may provide these services. You can contact The Arc for referral information on other such organizations (see the first listing above).

Transition Service Center — This is a center that helps students with disabilities as they make the transition into adult life in the community. You can find it in your area by calling the school district where you live.

Independent Living Centers in many cities and communities. These centers exist to help people with all types of disabilities get the help they may need to live more independently. These centers often serve more people who have physical disabilities than people with learning disabilities, but these centers are required by the federal government to provide services to people with ANY type of disability. The services include:

- 1) help with finding accessible housing, transportation, and employment; people available to serve as personal care attendants; interpreters for people who have trouble hearing; readers for people who have trouble seeing;

- 2) independent living skills training - skills like using public transportation, handling your own money and budgeting;
- 3) peer counseling - people with disabilities help each other learn to solve problems, find and use services;
- 4) advocacy - staff help people get the supports they need from agencies in the community, and staff and volunteers work to make changes in the community that make it easier for people with disabilities to live more independently.
- 5) other services - some centers have recreational activities, help with equipment, and other services that people in that area want

You can find out if there is a center in your area by doing one of these things:

- look in your phone book under "social services"
- contact the main office of the state vocational rehabilitation agency (the public library can help you find the address and phone number for that office)
- contact the Rehabilitation Services Administration - Office of Independent Living 202/732-1400
- contact ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization), a national center on independent living - 713/960-9961; 713/960-0145 TDD

Social Security Administration — This federal agency handles cash and health benefits (SSI and Medicare). Call 1-800-772-1213 to be connected directly to your local office (TDD is 1-800-325-0778).

A Home of My Own — This is a special program available in some communities that helps people with disabilities buy their own homes. The program helps people: find and use a real estate agency (realtor) to help them find a house they like and can afford; apply and qualify for a mortgage loan; work with the different funding sources, the realtor, and the title company to complete the purchase of the home. You can contact The Arc to find out if such a program is in your area.

Apartment locator services — These are companies that help people who are looking for an apartment by giving the person names and phone numbers of apartments and sometimes by arranging a time to visit different apartment complexes. These services are free (paid for by the apartment owner/management).

Other services to help with Living — There are so many different things involved in living in the community. Some other services that might be helpful:

Sources for furniture & furnishings — If you will need furniture and other items, and you are on a limited budget, you may want to check out thrift stores, like those operated by Goodwill and the Salvation Army, and garage sales.

Transportation — It may be important to you to be able to depend on using public transportation. You can contact the company that provides services in your local area. Some provide "travel training" for customers with disabilities who want to learn to use the fixed route system that serves everyone. Depending on your disability and age, you might also qualify for the paratransit services that are available in certain circumstances to some individuals with disabilities and to people who are older (over a certain age like 65).

Medical services — You will want to be sure you know where you can get medical care. It would be best to talk with individuals in your Support Circle or on your planning team for information in your local area.

Counseling – Pastoral Counseling & Education Centers, Jewish Community Centers, Catholic Social Service are just a few of the centers that can provide counseling on personal issues and problems. They usually charge based on a person's ability to pay. **United Way**, which in most areas is listed in the phone book, is a good place to call for information on how to find counseling services in your area.

Abuse Hotlines — Sometimes people hurt other people badly – the hurting could be a physical injury, sexual contact against the person's will, emotional or verbal abuse such as someone saying very bad and hurtful things all the time to the person. There are places to call for help if you or someone you know is ever in a situation like that. You can call the National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (that's 1-800-799-7233).

Shelters — There are agencies like the **Salvation Army** that have shelters for people who lose their housing and become homeless. Shelters usually give people a few days or weeks of shelter, but there some programs that give more time so people can find a job and a new place to live. The yellow pages list shelters under " social service agencies."

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Learning



Making a Decision & Setting a Goal

GOAL: You will consider your interests in **Learning**. You will have the opportunity to make a decision and set a goal for something you want in Education & Training.

Learning, Lifelong Learning, Education, Training – There are many names for this area of life. Most people go to school until they become young adults. Some people continue at a community college or a four-year college or university to study for one or more degrees. Some people go to vocational training schools for specialized training in a job skill. Some people go right into a job after high school. Some people take "adult education" or "continuing education" classes at various times throughout their adult life.

Learning is really a part of many areas of your life –

Learning is closely related to **Work**.

The Education & Training you have usually makes a big difference in the kind of job you will get...and whether you will get a promotion or be able to find a better job. Some jobs require a **high school diploma** (or GED). Some require a **high school certificate** – examples of these are child care assistant, customer service assistant, mechanic assistant and others. For other jobs, **special training** is needed—examples here would be computer jobs and jobs like clerical aide, equipment operator, nurse's aide, and others.

Learning is an important part of the **Living** arrangement you desire.

The **daily living skills** you have make a big difference in how independent you can be. For example, if you have learned skills such as cooking, caring for your health, cleaning, caring for your clothes, handling an emergency, and managing your money, you will probably have an easier time reaching the goal of moving into your own apartment.

Learning is related to your enjoyment of **Fun & Leisure**.

Some of the activities you want to do for fun involve certain skills. For example, if you want to **play sports** like softball or basketball or golf or tennis or ping pong, it sure helps if you know how...and if you know the rules of the game. Other things you may want to do in leisure time, like **volunteering** at an organization you like, may also involve a few hours, days or sometimes even weeks of training. Here are just a few examples of places where some self-advocates we know are volunteering – a community theater, a hospital, an animal shelter, a public radio station, a community fair sponsored by United Way, a soup kitchen and mission.

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Learning is also related to Transportation.

For example, say you get a job and need to use public transportation to get there. You might arrange to get some **"travel training"** from the transit system or from a supported employment program or other agency. You might also look for travel training if you wanted to learn how to ride the bus to get to the mall, visit friends, go out to eat, go to the doctor, or go other places.

Learning is a part of having good Health.

Knowing the **best foods to eat**, how to **exercise safely**, when to take prescribed **medications** are just three examples. You might learn some of these health-related things at places like a doctor's office, a supported living program, a health club or community recreation center, or even on a public TV show.

Learning is a part of Personal Relationships.

One example here is: Good relationships depend a lot on how well people communicate – how well they listen to each other, how they say things so other people will understand.

Communication skills make a big difference in how well people get along with each other—whether the relationship is with a parent, a friend, a coworker, a boss, a landlord, a dating partner, a husband or wife, a child. Sometimes people learn how to communicate better by reading a book, listening to a tape, attending a workshop, talking with a minister, priest, rabbi or counselor, or participating in a support group.

Think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences

You have just heard many examples of how **Learning** is involved in so many different areas of life. What about **YOU**? What kinds of things are you wanting to learn right now?



ACTION!

Go to the next page...and let's see!



Things I'm Interested in Learning

If you have already spent time on the **Work** section of **It's My Future!** you have already named some skills you have and skills you would like to learn. Check that list again now (it might be in your Life Book, or it may still be in the Work section – check table of contents for the page number of that section). You can write down the skill or put a picture here –

A skill I want to learn...for **Work**



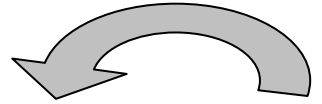
If you have done the section called **Living**, you did an exercise on daily living skills you would like to learn to do or do even better (check your Life Book or the Living section).

A skill I want to learn...for **Living**



What about those other areas of life?
Do you have other things you want to learn?

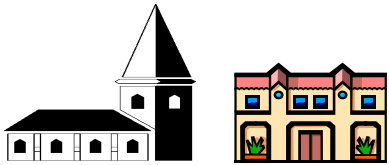
Put pictures or notes
here:



Fun & Leisure



Personal Relationships



Community Activities



Transportation

Other areas...

Your Abilities & Interests lists can give you ideas of things you want to learn.

Chris considers personal Abilities & Interests when thinking about things to learn.

Earlier, Chris planned a goal of moving into an apartment. Chris adds this to "My Interests" list.

My Interests 😊	My Abilities 👍
1. Watching videos	1. Taking care of my dogs
2. Taking walks	2. Working on the landscape crew
3. Rock music	3. Cooking...a little
4. Swimming	4. I'm a friendly person, good at talking with people.
5. Playing with my dogs	5.
6. Having my own place/apartment.	6.

Lots of times, our interests and goals involve learning new things. Thinking about the different goals you are planning can help you figure out what you may want to learn...what to learn that will help you achieve other goals you have.

Take a look at how the things Chris is interested in **Learning** relate to Chris' other goals and interests. Here is Chris' list...



Things I'm Interested in Learning

Work – Learning more about caring for animals

Fun & Leisure – Taking a beginner's swimming class

Living – Learning to handle my checkbook

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It turns out that Chris' interests in **Learning** have a lot to do with interests in other areas of Chris' life.

For example, Chris wants to learn more about caring for animals. Chris already identified an interest in maybe getting a job to **work** at an animal hospital or animal shelter.

Chris wants to take a swimming class. That was an interest Chris had identified before...in **Fun & Leisure**.

Managing money and writing checks is important to Chris. That's because Chris wants to move into an apartment. That's a goal in the area of **Living**.

You might find that you are also interested in learning things that relate to an interest in another area of your life...or maybe not. But chances are good that you will see some connection between things you want to have in your life in **Work, Living, Personal Relationships** and other areas.

Let's see how Chris looks into **community resources**...

Chris uses the list of **Community Resources – Learning** and also talks with people in Chris' Support Circle. Here are some of the ideas Chris comes up with for where to look –

I want to learn...	Here are places where I can learn...
More about caring for animals	Community college; Humane Society; Local animal hospitals & clinics
How to swim	Chris has already found the Y and the City Park & Rec. center have classes
How to handle a checkbook	Group home staff; The Arc chapter; Independent Living Center; Retired Senior Volunteer Program (this is a program where older adults with experience provide help to other people of all ages)

OK... You have seen how **Learning** is related to other areas of life and other interests and goals you may have. You have seen Chris consider other interests and goals when deciding goals for **Learning**.

You've come up with some ideas about things you might want to learn. Have you thought of something else you want to add? Are there other interests and goals of yours that give you some more ideas for **Learning**? (If you want to go back and add other ideas or pictures to your list, do that now. If you are satisfied with the list you have, continue on here...keep **DOING IT!**)

Make a decision using **DO IT!**

You may want to use the **DO IT!** worksheet that is near the end of this section. Follow the steps that are listed there. You can ask your support person for help, if you feel you want some help filling in your worksheet.

Find community resources that might fit your interests

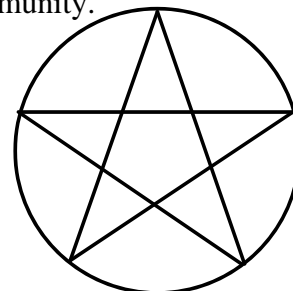
Where do you look for community resources to help you with your decision making about where you live? Like Chris, you can start by looking at the list at the end of this section...

Community Resources – Learning

You will want to find out where these resources are in your own community.

Start by talking with someone
in your Support Circle

HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or back in the section called **My Planning Meeting**.



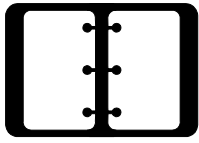
Also, talk to other people on your planning team. They could help you use the phone book, newspaper, library, social service directory to get the local phone numbers and other information.

You can use the **Options FACT SHEET** on the flip side of your **DO IT!** worksheet to jot down information you collect from talking to people or making phone calls.

Turn your decision into a goal

On the page after your **DO IT!** worksheet is a **GOAL PLANNER**.

Follow the **GOAL PLANNER** step by step to work through the process of turning your decision outcome into a goal.



Be sure to take all the activity sheets from this section, especially your **GOAL PLANNER** and put them in your *Life Book* in the section for **Learning**. Also, don't forget to add pictures of your **Learning** goal, too.

When you have set a goal for **Learning**, consider what other areas of life you want to think about for your planning meeting. Then...

check the table of contents at the front of *It's My Future!* for the page number for the area of life you want to consider next.



If there are no other areas of life you are interested in planning for right now, and if you have finished all the planning you want to do for your upcoming planning meeting,

...then you are ready to turn to page **203** to the chapter called –

Communicating Effectively.

There you will continue your preparations for your meeting – by learning how to communicate successfully with your planning team.

After that chapter, there are chapters on –

Planning My Successful Meeting and Being a Good Leader at My Meeting.

These will also help you get ready to have a successful planning meeting. Good luck! And, remember, you can always come back to this manual if you decide you want to do some more planning later.

DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

(write the name of something you are interested in Learning)

Outline your options

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

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Get excited!

Options for Learning - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What classes/services they have: _____

Days/times: _____ Costs: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What classes/services they have: _____

Days/times: _____ Costs: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What classes/services they have: _____

Days/times: _____ Costs: _____

Eligibility (who can use the service): _____

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How do I register or sign up: _____

GOAL PLANNER

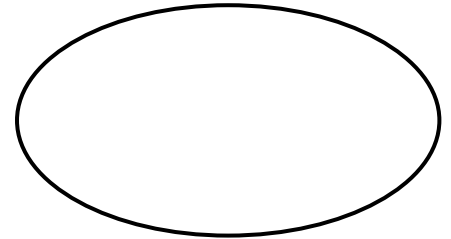
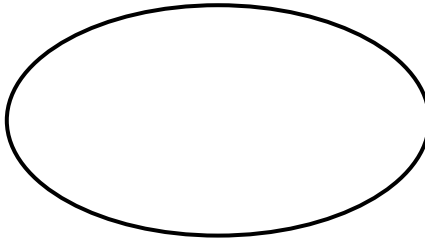
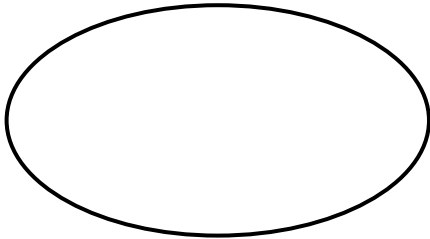
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

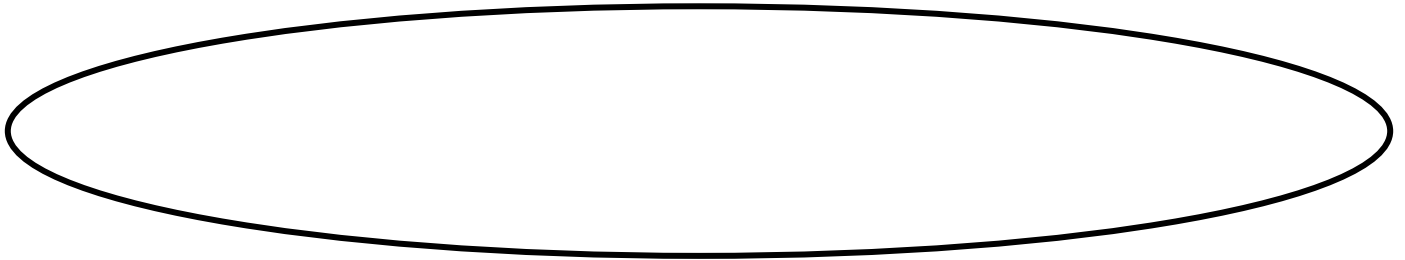


(I write one goal—something to aim for—that will help me make my decision outcome a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

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Community Resources – Learning

Here are just some of the kinds of resources that may be helpful when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of Living –

Chapters of The Arc should be able to suggest resources to help you with your goals related to Learning. If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the national headquarters:

The Arc of the U.S.

1660 L Street, NW, Suite 301

Washington, DC 20036

1-800-433-5255

or on the Internet at www.thearc.org

Self-Advocacy – If your goal is to become better able to speak out on your own behalf or to learn communications skills and leadership skills, self-advocacy groups are a great place to start (if you are not already involved in one). Your local chapter of The Arc or The Arc of the U.S. can give you information on self-advocacy groups in your area. Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) is a national self-advocacy organization that can give you information on conferences and other activities on the national level. SABE's website is <http://member.aol.com/netsabe>, or you can e-mail them at netsabe@aol.com.

GED – There are agencies that help people who did not finish high school to get a high school diploma called a GED or General Equivalency Diploma. You can find out where that kind of help is offered by calling the administrative office of the school district in your community or by asking your public library.

Community colleges and adult education – Community colleges offer regular college courses, and also "continuing education" for adults which usually includes some shorter classes in a wide range of interests. Some community colleges also have educational programs specifically to assist people with mental retardation and related disabilities.

Literacy programs – Adults who want to learn to read can get help through literacy programs operated by different organizations. Sometimes these programs are offered through a local public library.

Public libraries have much information about educational programs in your local area. Lots of organizations publicize their educational events and activities through the public library.

Learning about your Rights – See the **Appendix** for the section called **Protecting Yourself & Knowing Your Rights** (check the Table of Contents to find the page number of that section). Contact The Arc of the U.S. (see

listing at the top of this list) for information on self-advocacy groups and The Arc's publications distribution center (on the Internet at www.thearcpub.com) for materials on learning about voting and your constitutional rights and training in self-advocacy.

AmeriCorps — You may be interested in finding out about AmeriCorps which is a way to volunteer in some type of community service and be paid a stipend (about equal to minimum wage). AmeriCorps volunteers have to meet certain qualifications but are given a lot of training in the areas in which they want to work. AmeriCorps volunteers can also receive help with paying for college or other types of training after they finish their term of service. AmeriCorps is not in every community, but you can find out if there are programs in your area. Contact the **Corporation on National and Community Service** at 202/606-5000 or on the Internet at www.cns.gov/ameriCorps. They can tell you how to get in touch with your state's Commission on National and Community Service to find out what AmeriCorps programs are in your state and your area. You can also ask them about the **VISTA** volunteer program (Volunteers In Service To America) which is similar to AmeriCorps.

Community recreation centers offer all kinds of classes in sports, fitness, safety, and other topics. Check you phone book's city government pages (sometimes these are the blue pages in your phone book).

YMCA and **YWCA** also offer many classes in sports, fitness, safety and other topics.

The **vocational rehabilitation agency** in your area is a good resource for information related to jobs.

Other rehabilitation agencies — There may be organizations in your community that offer various types of training in daily living skills/vocational skills. Look in the yellow pages under "developmental disabilities," or check with your local or state chapter of The Arc for a referral — If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the The Arc's national headquarters (see the first listing above).

Other disability-specific organizations — There may be a chapter of UCPA (United Cerebral Palsy Association) or other disability-specific organizations that provide training in daily living skills/vocational skills. Check the phone book or call the United Way in your area.

Transition Service Center is a center that helps students with disabilities as they make the transition into adult life in the community. You can find it in your area by calling the school district where you live.

Independent Living Centers in many cities and communities. These centers exist to help people with all types of disabilities get the help they may need to live more independently. These centers often serve more people who have physical disabilities than people with learning disabilities, but these centers are required by the federal government to provide services to people with ANY type of disability. The services include:

- 1) help with finding accessible housing, transportation, and employment; people available to serve as personal care attendants; interpreters for people who have trouble hearing; readers for people who have trouble seeing;
- 2) independent living skills training - skills like using public transportation, handling your own money and budgeting;
- 3) peer counseling - people with disabilities help each other learn to solve problems, find and use services;
- 4) advocacy - staff help people get the supports they need from agencies in the community, and staff and volunteers work to make changes in the community that make it easier for people with disabilities to live more independently.
- 5) other services - some centers have recreational activities, help with equipment, and other services that people in that area want

You can find out if there is a center in your area by doing one of these things:

- look in your phone book under "social services"
- contact the main office of the state vocational rehabilitation agency (the public library can help you find the address and phone number for that office)
- contact the Rehabilitation Services Administration - Office of Independent Living 202/732-1400
- contact ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization), a national center on independent living - 713/960-9961; 713/960-0145 TDD

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Personal Relationships



Making a Decision & Setting a Goal

GOAL: You will consider things that are important to you in relationships. You will see how relationships are involved in just about every area of life. You will make a decision and set a goal related to **Personal Relationships**.

"Personal Relationships" is another **BIG** area of life. It includes relationships with –

family members 

boyfriends/girlfriends 

friends 

husbands/wives

roommates 

children 

neighbors 

coworkers/supervisors/bosses 

At various times in life the importance of different relationships changes. Right now, you may be concerned about a relationship with a dating partner or someone you would like to date...or maybe you are wanting to make some new friends...or maybe there is a relationship at work or home that is difficult...or maybe you are trying to have a closer relationship with someone in your family...or maybe you are planning to look for a roommate...or maybe you have been dating someone and are interested in getting married.

For many adults, having a very close relationship with another person, such as getting married is an important goal in life. It is one of the **BIG** goals that takes much thought and a lot of planning. It is also a goal that is very much connected to other things in life. For other adults,

getting married is not a goal that is most important. But there are many other relationships that may be.

Whatever kind of relationship is important to you right now...you can use the same decision-making process ***DO IT!*** to help yourself make a decision and move toward setting a goal.

Think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences

Wherever **YOU** are right now in terms of your relationships with other people, it always helps to do some self-exploration...thinking about your interests and preferences. So, go to the next page for an activity that may help. Consider the statements and questions that are there –

How do **YOU** feel about these things?



Personal Relationships Things to Consider



Circle the statements that are true for you.

1. I want to make some new friends. **OR** I have all the friends I want.

OR I don't want to have friends.

2. I wish I could see my friends more often. **OR** I see my friends often enough.

OR I like being alone.

3. I am dating someone now. **OR** I want to meet someone to date.

OR I would rather not date.



4. I wish I could go out on dates whenever I want. **OR** I am able to go out on a date.

OR I like doing things with a group of friends.

If you are in a serious relationship and want to get married... **OR** if you want to have a roommate, here are some things you may want to consider with your partner or roommate. Do you each have different preferences...or do you agree on things like...

1. I like my place to be quiet. **OR** I like a lot of music, noise, talking.

2. I usually like to stay up late. **OR** I usually like to go to bed early.

OR I stay up late sometimes and go to bed early sometimes.

3. I am an "early riser" in the morning. **OR** I like to sleep late.

OR I get up early sometimes and I sleep late sometimes.

4. I like keeping my place neat. **OR** A messy place is OK with me.

5. Are there some skills of daily living that we might need some extra help with, such as–

Handling money & budgeting?

Shopping?

Cooking?

Writing checks/paying bills?

Personal Safety?

Transportation?

Household work (cleaning, laundry)?

Health care?

Using Leisure Time?

6. What do we each feel about things like...

Where to live & how to pay the bills


Sharing responsibilities

Communication

Using our free time

Handling anger

Supports we may need

7. If marriage is my goal,  there are more things I should talk over with my partner/fiance/fiancee. We'll need to spend time talking together to find out more about each other. We'll find out about the things we agree on and the things we each feel differently about...such as:

Relationship with our families

Sexuality

Whether to have children

Religious beliefs & practices

Health issues/concerns

Jobs

Personal beliefs & values

Personal abilities

Interests, preferences & dreams

8. Have we considered getting some marriage counseling from a marriage counselor, rabbi, minister, or priest before we get married?

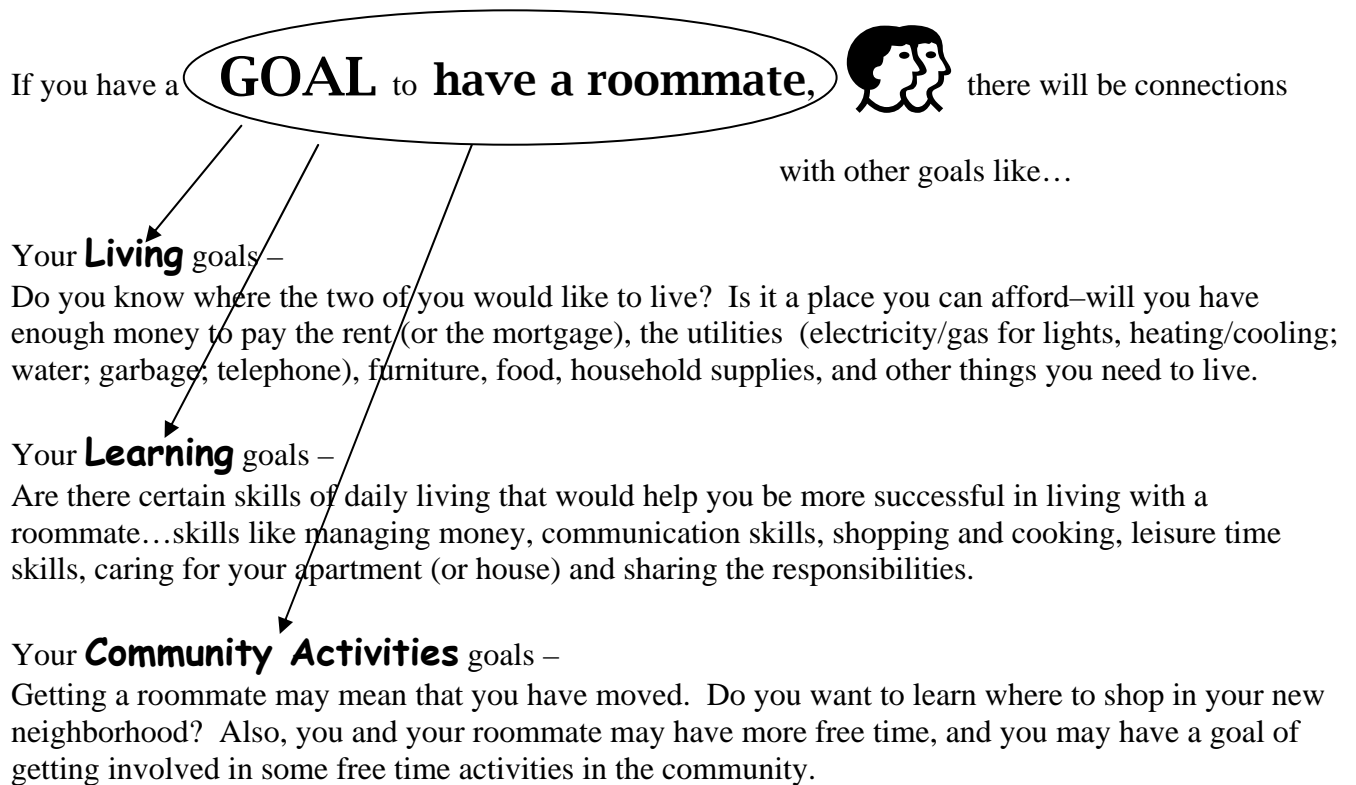
That page of "things to consider" was really just a sampling of questions. There are probably many other questions and preferences you may find when you are considering your personal preferences.

Also, there are many **connections** between the goals each one of us plans in different areas of our lives...if you have already worked through the sections on some of the other areas of life like **Work, Living, Learning**...you have seen how (our "friend") Chris' goals in those areas have a lot to do with each other.

Connections are even stronger between our goals in different areas of life and **Personal Relationships...**

because there are people involved (in some way) in just about **every** area of our lives.

No matter what type of relationship you are concerned about, there are usually **LOTS** of **connections** between your relationship goals and other goals. Let's look at a few examples:



Here's another example...

If you have a **GOAL to get married,** there will be connections to other goals like...



Your **Work** goals –

Do you have a job or are you preparing to get a **job** so you will have money to help support yourself and your future husband/wife?

Your **Living** goals –

Do you know where the two of you would like to live? Is it a place you can afford–will you have enough money to pay the rent (or the mortgage), the utilities (electricity/gas for lights, heating/cooling; water; garbage; telephone), furniture, food, household supplies, and other things you need to live.

Your **Learning** goals –

Do you have the skills you need for the job you want? Are there daily living skills you will need when you get married and have your own place to live? Would it help you and your partner to attend a Communications Skills workshop or a Marriage Enrichment retreat or get some counseling to help learn more about yourselves and each other and how well you will get along as a couple?

Or...if you have a job

and your **GOAL** is a **better relationship with co-workers**

you may find this goal has connections to...

Your **Learning** goals –

You may find that communication skills will be an important part of your goal to get along better with co-workers. Maybe social skills will help you be more comfortable and successful in relating to co-workers at lunch and break time or a get-together after work.

Your **Work** goals –

It's likely that your **Work** goals will be involved, since what you do at work will have an effect on how and where you relate to co-workers.

Well...you get the point! There will probably be lots of connections between your **Personal Relationship** goals and other goals in your life. And, the reason it's important to see the connections is that your success in achieving goals in one area of your life will have an effect on some of your other goals.

After all that talk about how there are lots of things to consider in making relationship decisions, it might be helpful to consider the difference between short and long term goals...

Goals - Short term or Long term?

Goals can be long-term or short-term. Long-term means a long way away, so **long-term goals** are goals that you will reach a long time from now. **Short-term goals** are goals you want to reach in a shorter time.

Think about that example we gave back in the section on **Learning to Set a Goal**. Remember that example about a decision to lose weight and a goal to drink water instead of sodas?

OK, let's say you set a goal for today to just drink water. That would be a short-term goal because you will know at the end of the day whether you reached your goal. You'll be able to see if you have a glass of water nearby...or an empty soda can!

Now here is an example of a long-term goal: You may have a goal to live in your own apartment.

That is a longer time off. Mainly because there are **A LOT** more steps involved. You won't know if you have reached that goal for a while.

When you set a goal you should think about how long it will take you to get there. Here's an exercise to give you some practice in deciding if a goal is short-term or long-term.

Here's one example, then you can flip the page to look at other examples and figure out whether they are

too short...

too **L--O--N--G...**

or just right.

One goal I have is to learn to type on a computer keyboard so I can get a job working in an office.

If I decide that I will set that goal to be finished in one week, I will probably not reach that goal. I can't learn to type in only one week. Even as clever as I am.

If I set the goal for five years, it will be too long. In five years I probably won't even remember I set the goal!

So, I set the goal to learn to type in 6 months. That way I will have time to find out about adult education classes, pick the best one for me and my schedule, register for the class, and arrange transportation. I also count up the time the class will take--classes of this type usually last a semester which is 3 to 4 months. So 6 months should be just about right.



ACTION! Turn to the next page...

Look at each goal and how long it will take to reach the goal...then you decide. Is the time too short, too long, or just about right?

Put a ✓ in the space box under the answer you think is right.

	GOAL	How long it will take to reach	Too short	Too L-O-N-G	Just about right
1.	learn how to use the public bus system	6 years			
2.	learn to tap-dance	2 days			
3.	find a synagogue, temple, church or mosque to join	6 weeks			
4.	take a vacation to Las Vegas	11 months			
5.	learn everything about all the candidates who are running for President	1 day			
6.	get a membership card at the video rental store	2 years			
7.	move into an apartment	1 year			
8.	learn to repair cars	4 weeks			

Well, what do you think? Take a look at what I put and compare your answers. On a couple, we might have different answers, but, depending on the person, each might be right. But, anyway, this gives you an idea about what might be too long and too short.

	GOAL	How long it will take to reach	Too short	Too L-O-N-G	Just about right
1.	learn how to use the public bus system	6 years		✓	
2.	learn to tap-dance	2 days	✓		
3.	find a synagogue, temple, church or mosque to join	6 weeks			✓
4.	take a vacation to Las Vegas	11 months			✓
5.	learn everything about all the candidates who are running for President	1 day	✓		
6.	get a membership card at the video rental store	2 years		✓	
7.	move into an apartment	1 year			✓
8.	learn to repair cars	4 weeks	✓		

OK. If a person is really, really good at dancing, they might be able to learn the basics of tap-dance in two days. Or, if a person wanted to visit five or six different faith communities and attend worship services at each one two or three times before deciding which to join, it would take longer than six weeks to do this. You don't have to be exactly right about when you reach the goal. But the finishing date should be how long you think it will really take to reach the goal.

What's the point of an exercise like this? Just as a reminder that it's good to have some idea of how long it will take to reach a goal...so that you can plan your steps better.

Make a decision using ***DO IT!***

Anyway, whatever personal relationships are most of interest to you now...this is a good time to begin your decision-making process. There is a ***DO IT!*** worksheet at the end of this section. Follow the steps outlined there to...

Define your problem.

Find community resources that might fit your interests

Use the **Options FACT SHEET** on the back of the **DO IT!** worksheet to note down any resources you may want to check out that may be part of your decision. Let's do a quick review on community resources. You have already seen that they can be lots of different things...

places...where you buy things, find information, learn new things, do activities...like stores, schools, community recreation centers, a library.

services you may need...like medical care, banking, the public bus system, an apartment locator, or a travel agency.

supports of different kinds...to help get around a limitation you may have.

people...like a friend, a counselor, a priest, minister or rabbi, a member of a club you belong to, a neighbor, a coworker or boss.

For decision making about a Personal Relationship, there are many different kinds of community resources. Check out the list at the end of this section...

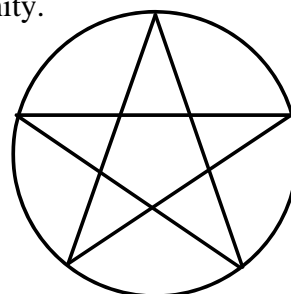
Community Resources – Relationships

The resources you find there may be a place to start when you **Outline** your options as you develop your decision.

You will want to find where these resources are in your own community.

Start by talking with someone
in your Support Circle

HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or back in the section called **My Planning Meeting**.

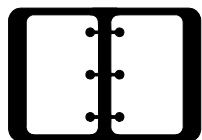


Also, talk to other people on your planning team. They could help you use the phone book, newspaper, library, or social service directory to get the local phone numbers and other information you need to contact these community resources.

Turn your decision into a goal

On the page after your **DO IT!** worksheet is a **GOAL PLANNER**.

Follow the **GOAL PLANNER** step by step to work through the process of turning your decision outcome into a goal.



Be sure to take all the activity sheets from this section, especially your **GOAL PLANNER** and put them in your *Life Book* in the section for **Personal Relationships**. Also, don't forget to add pictures of your **Personal Relationships** goal, too.

When you have set a goal for **Personal Relationships**, consider what other areas of life you want to think about for your planning meeting. Then...

check the table of contents at the front of *It's My Future!* for the page number for the area of life you want to consider next.



If there are no other areas of life you are interested in planning for right now, and if you have finished all the planning you want to do for your upcoming planning meeting,

...then you are ready to turn to page **203** to the chapter called –

Communicating Effectively.

There you will continue your preparations for your meeting – by learning how to communicate successfully with your planning team.

After that chapter, there are chapters on –

Planning My Successful Meeting and Being a Good Leader at My Meeting.

These will also help you get ready to have a successful planning meeting. Good luck! And, remember, you can always come back to this manual if you decide you want to do some more planning later.

Blank page

DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

(write down the Personal Relationship you want to do something about)

Outline your options

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

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Options on Relationships - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Information:

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Information:

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

Information:

GOAL PLANNER

**My decision
outcome**

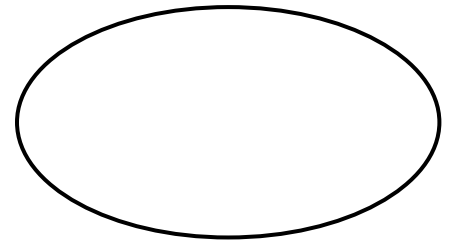
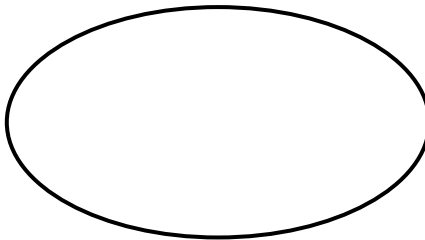
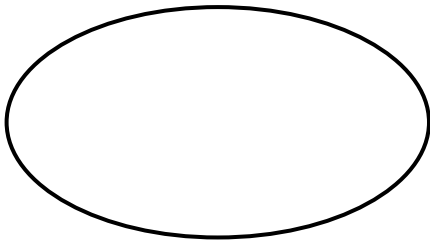
(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)



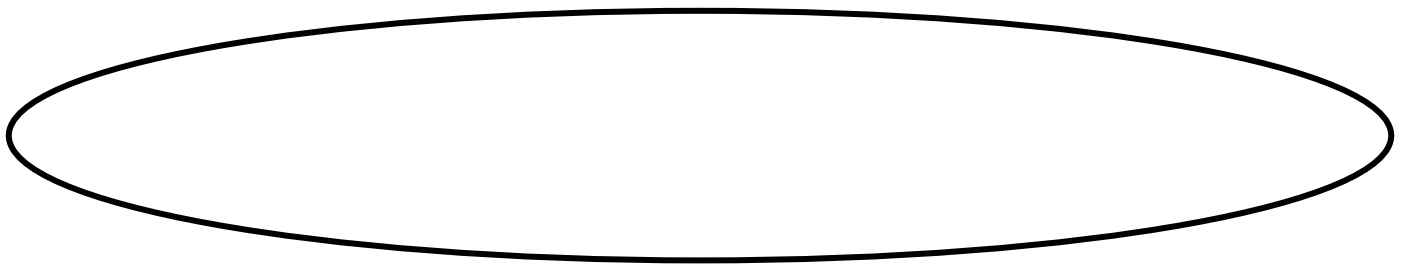
GOAL

(I write one goal—something to aim for—that will help me make my decision outcome a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Blank page

Community Resources – Relationships

These are just a few ideas on the kinds of resources that may be helpful when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of relationships.

Meeting new people – Making new friends

Community organizations of many types –

Doing an activity you enjoy is a great way to meet people who share the same interests you do. The librarians at your public library would be able to help you find out what **clubs and associations** there are in your local community. There are clubs for all sorts of interests.

Faith communities – Saturday newspapers frequently list local temples, synagogues and churches. Many faith communities have lots of opportunities to meet people and make friends.

Neighborhood associations – Get to know more of your neighbors by becoming active in the neighborhood association. Some neighborhoods have very active groups that meet often, hold block parties, or sponsor "Neighborhood Watch" programs for crime prevention. You could find out if your neighborhood has one by asking one of your neighbors, calling the information number for your "city government," talking to a real estate agency in your area, contacting the public library, or calling the police department (on their regular number...not the emergency number).

Become a volunteer – The Volunteer Center for your area could help you find organizations where you might like to volunteer. That can be a really great way to meet people while you make a contribution to your community.

Take a class – Check out adult education classes and workshops and find a class that interests you. The community college or other college is a good place to check out...or your local public library. HINT: Many colleges have a program to help students with disabilities take full part in campus activities.

Dating services – Dating services offer to help match men and women who want to meet dating partners, but they often charge a lot of money and some have been known to be a real "rip off." Be very cautious if you look into one of these services.

Self-advocacy groups – Your local chapter of The Arc or some other non-profit organization may be a sponsor for a self-advocacy group. If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the national headquarters:

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The Arc of the U.S.
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20036

1-800-433-5255
or on the Internet at www.thearc.org

Independent Living Centers — Some of these centers have support groups and recreational activities for people with disabilities. This is one of those resources just for people with disabilities, so you might rather go with one of the other community resources that anybody can use.

Counseling & Learning

Pastoral Counseling & Education Centers, Jewish Community Centers, Catholic Social Service are just a few of the centers that can provide counseling on personal issues, relationships, pre-marital and marriage counseling. Some of these also hold workshops, marriage enrichment workshops and other educational programs to help in relationships.

United Way, which in most areas is listed in the phone book, is a good place to call for information on how to find counseling services in your area.

Adult education – Some organizations offer workshops and classes on communication skills and other topics of interest in building good relationships. Check out the community college, the school district, or the public library for more information on these.

Abuse Hotlines – Sometimes people hurt other people badly – the hurting could be a physical injury, sexual contact against the person's will, emotional or verbal abuse such as someone saying very bad and hurtful things all the time to the person. There are places to call for help if you or someone you know is ever in a situation like that. You can call the National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (that's 1-800-799-7233). They can refer you to a local hotline.



Making a Decision & Setting a Goal

GOAL: You will make a decision and set a goal related to **Community Activities** and will consider the issue of **Transportation**.

Community Activities is another broad area of life. It can include things like –

- Shopping
- Voting
- Participating in a mosque, church, synagogue, temple, or other faith community
- Becoming a member of a club or other organization
- Letting public officials in local government know of your interest/ideas on community issues
- Participating in neighborhood events - "Neighborhood Watch," block party, recycling
- Doing recreational activities

Community Activities also touch other areas of your life...

...consider that when you do **shopping**, that is an activity that also relates to your decisions and goals in the area of **Living**. Look at it this way—if you have a goal of living in your own apartment, you will probably need to shop for your groceries and the things you need, and that is an activity in the community (unless you get everything delivered or shop for groceries on the Internet).

...consider that when you do a **recreational activity** – a **Fun & Leisure** activity – that will often be an activity you do in the community.

...consider that if you are speaking out at a city government meeting or to officials at the public transit system, that is "self-advocacy." And in the area of **Learning** you may have had a goal to learn **self-advocacy skills**...how to speak up for yourself, how to be a leader in your own life.

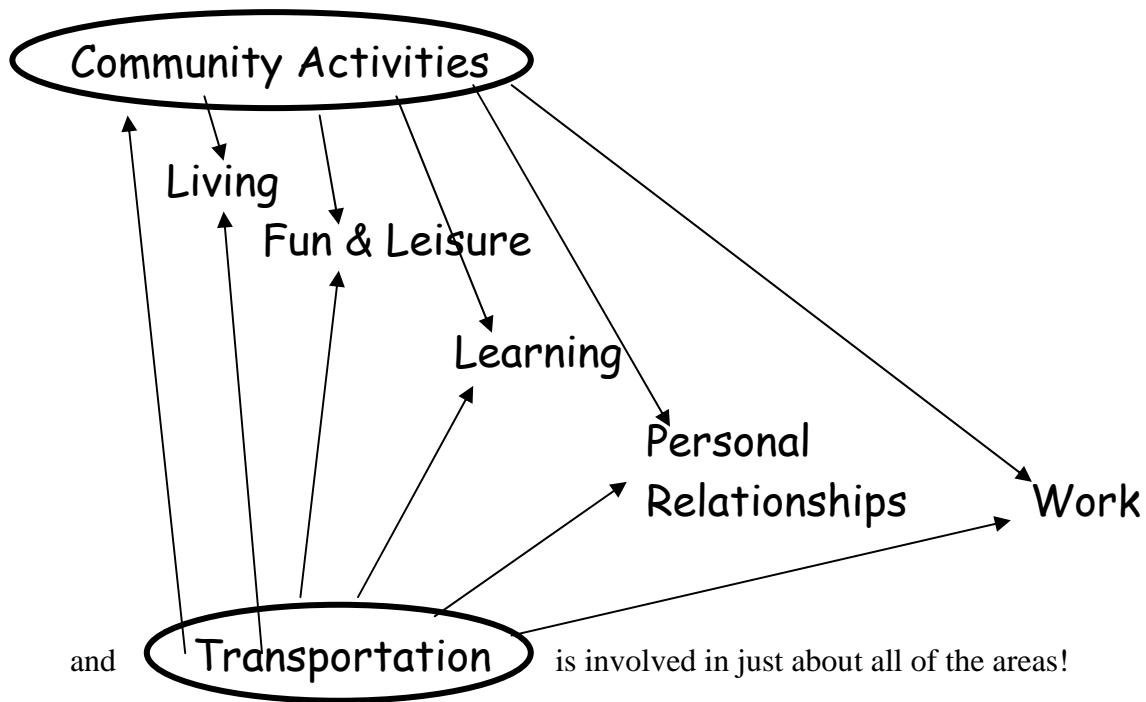
...consider if you have a goal of meeting **new friends**...or a goal of **dating** more often, this **Personal Relationship** goal will certainly involved being out in the community.

...consider that if you have a goal in **Work** of finding a **job** in the community, you will certainly have to out there in the community to find that job you want!

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Do you see how many **connections** there are between the different areas of your life and the kinds of goals you decide to plan? We just gave three examples above that showed how there could be connections between –



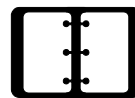
Think about your Abilities, Interests & Preferences

You want to start out by thinking about your abilities, interests and preferences with regard to this area...**Community Activities**.

If you have already worked on goals in some of the other areas of life...

You may already have a pretty good idea of some of your interests about **Community Activities**. You might even want to go back and look at your decisions in some of those other areas, Take a few minutes to look at some of the **DO IT!** worksheets and pictures you

may have already put into your *Life Book* because you may be able to move directly to ...



...planning a **2nd goal** that supports another **decision outcome** you already made in one of your other areas of life.

If you have NOT already worked on goals in some of the other areas of life...

you may have turned to this section because there's a specific *Community Activity* that you **really** want to make a decision about **right now**. If that is the case, skip the "Thinker"

and **continue here.**



But if you aren't really sure...take a few minutes now to think about what kinds of interests you have in community activities. Look at the resource list at the end of this section. It will give you lots of ideas...

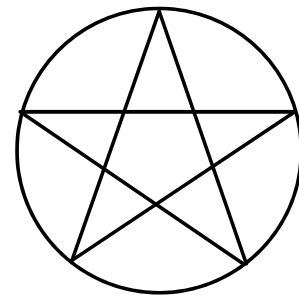
Find community resources that might fit your interests

There's another list of Community Resources at the end of this section.

Community Resources - Community Activities

To find these resources in your local area,

Start by talking with someone
in your Support Circle



HINT: Find it in your *Life Book*
or back in the section called **My Planning Meeting**.

Also, talk to other people on your planning team. They could help you use the phone book, newspaper, library, or social service directory to get the local phone numbers and other information you need to contact these community resources.

Make a decision using **DO IT!**

Turn to the blank **DO IT!** worksheet on the next page to start your decision making. Follow the steps listed there. You can ask your support person for help, if you feel you want some help filling in your worksheet.

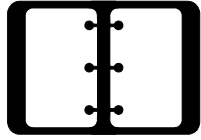
Turn your decision into a goal

On the page after your **DO IT!** worksheet is a **GOAL PLANNER**.

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Follow the **GOAL PLANNER** step by step to work through the process of turning your decision outcome into a goal.



Be sure to take all the activity sheets from this section, especially your **GOAL PLANNER**, and put them in your *Life Book* in the section for **Community Activities**. Also, don't forget to add pictures of your **Community Activities** goal, too.

When you have set a goal for **Community Activities**, consider what other areas of life you want to think about for your planning meeting. Then...

check the table of contents at the front of *It's My Future!* for the page number for the area of life you want to consider next.



If there are no other areas of life you are interested in planning for right now, and if you have finished all the planning you want to do for your upcoming planning meeting,

...then you are ready to turn to page **203** to the chapter called –

Communicating Effectively.

There you will continue your preparations for your meeting – by learning how to communicate successfully with your planning team.

After that chapter, there are chapters on –

Planning My Successful Meeting and Being a Good Leader at My Meeting.

These will also help you get ready to have a successful planning meeting. Good luck! And, remember, you can always come back to this manual if you decide you want to do some more planning later.

DO IT!

***Define* your problem – “I will make a decision about**

(write the name of the Community Activity you want to do)

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Outline your options

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

Options for Community Activities - FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities: _____

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Days/times available: _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities: _____

Days/times available: _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities: _____

Days/times available: _____

How do I register or sign up: _____

GOAL PLANNER

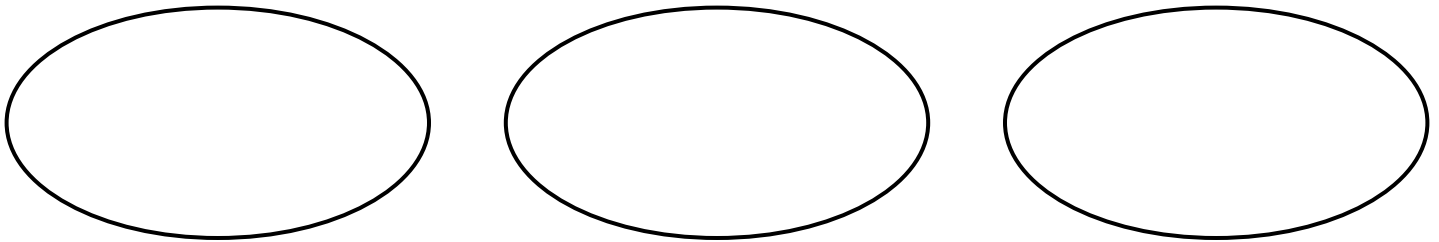
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

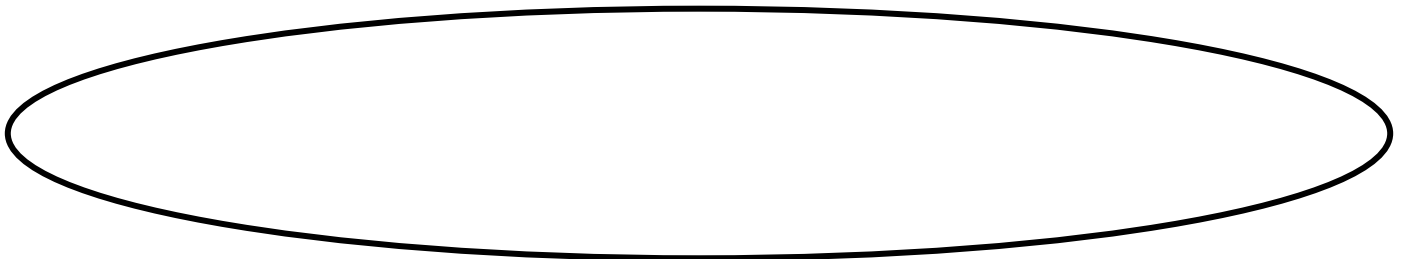


(I write one goal—something to aim for—that will help me make my decision outcome a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen..



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Blank page

Community Resources - Community Activities

Here are just a few ideas on ways to find out about options when you are making decisions and setting goals in the area of Community Activities—

Shopping — The best place to find out about shopping is by talking to people in your Support Circle about conveniently located shopping...and transportation to help you get there.

Voting — Your public library usually has voter registration forms. You can also check the phone book for the local government pages and check for "Registrar of Voters." To learn about voting, you can contact the **League of Women Voters** in your community – check the phone book or your public library for the contact number. Also contact The Arc of the U.S. (www.thearc.org) and its publication distribution center (www.thearcpub.com) for materials on voting and your constitutional rights.

Participation in a faith community (church, synagogue, temple or other) Most regular newspapers have a day (perhaps Saturday) when they print a directory of all the churches and other houses of worship in the community. You can also ask people you know for information about your local community.

Clubs and special interest groups — There are lots and lots of organizations of people who like the same thing...like bike-riding, stamp-collecting, trains, computers, boating, gardening...you name it! There may be a **Living section** in your local newspaper that lists all kinds of clubs and organizations of people who share interests in many different hobbies or community issues. Or check with your local public library.

Service clubs — There are many organizations like Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, PEO and other service sororities, Jaycees, Civitan and others that get together to do projects that help other people. The public library is a good place to find out where these groups meet.

Special events and attractions — The chamber of commerce or the convention & visitors bureau (if you are in a larger community or city) will have lots of brochures on special events and things to do in your area. The public library will also have fliers, posters, and information on special events and on organizations that you might be interested in – talk to a librarian for some help finding these.

Entertainment, special events — Check your local newspaper's Entertainment section for movies, fairs, sporting events, coupons for discounts at some restaurants and special events

Community Park & Recreation Centers — Check out whether there is a Park & Rec. Center in your area. These are great places for basketball, softball, aerobics, fitness training, martial arts, sometimes tennis and swimming. Centers often have other activities including dance, arts & crafts, workshops on a variety of things having to do with recreation.

Neighborhood associations — Some communities have very active associations of people who all live in a certain neighborhood. They get together to help improve the appearance and the safety of the neighborhood. They may sponsor a "Neighborhood Watch" to prevent crime and do projects like organize a block party or have a neighborhood clean-up day. Again, ask one of your neighbors, or check the public library for information, or talk to a local real estate agency, or call the police department (on their regular number...not the emergency number) to find out if there is an association for your neighborhood.

Self-advocacy — You may be interested in speaking out to local government, the local transit system or other groups on issues of importance to you. You may want to become active in a self-advocacy group. If you aren't already familiar with what's happening in your area, the local chapter of The Arc should be able to help you find out about a group in your area, and The Arc of the U.S. has a national directory of self-advocacy groups. If you have access to a computer and can get on the **Internet**, look up Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) at <http://member.aol.com/netsabe>. SABE is at the center of the national self-advocacy movement. You can also find out about the ways to connect with other self-advocates in different parts of the U.S. and other countries.

Chapters of The Arc — If you aren't sure whether there is a chapter in your area, contact the national headquarters:

The Arc of the U.S.

1660 L Street, NW, Suite 301

Washington, DC 20036

1-800-433-5255

or on the Internet at www.thearc.org

Independent Living Centers — These centers exist to help people with all types of disabilities get the help they may need participate in life more independently.

You can find out if there is a center in your area by doing one of these things:

–look in your phone book under "social services"

–contact the main office of the state vocational rehabilitation agency (the public library can help you find the address and phone number for that office)

–contact the Rehabilitation Services Administration - Office of Independent Living
202/732-1400

–contact ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization), a national center on independent living - 713/960-9961; 713/960-0145 TDD

Transportation — Transportation seems to always be a real concern whenever you want to do something in the community. Some communities have limited public transportation, and this is a real barrier for people being able to do activities...especially in the evening or on weekends. Some people work out rides with other people they get to know over time, though it is important to be cautious about accepting rides from other people – it would be helpful to talk that

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over with individuals in your Support Circle or on your planning team. If your community has public transportation, it may be important to you to be able to use it. Transit systems, which must follow rules under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are becoming more accessible to people with disabilities. They are also trying to get more people who now use paratransit to switch to using the regular, fixed route system. If you want and need to learn how to use the system where you live, see if you can find a source for "travel training." Some public transit systems provide this kind of training. Or, you may need to talk with an agency that specializes in assisting individuals with disabilities.

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GOAL: You will learn that communicating a message is more than just talking. You will learn tips on being assertive. You will learn about being a good salesperson for your ideas and goals.

Everything you have done so far is so you'll be ready to be **more in charge, more in control** at your planning meeting...which is getting closer every day!

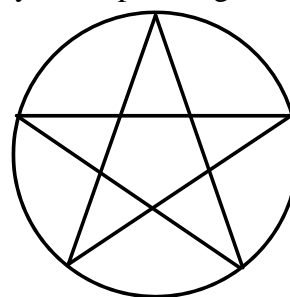
We keep talking about getting ready for your planning meeting, but remember that the things you are learning are meant to help you every day all year long. That's because planning doesn't just happen on one day for a couple of hours at your planning meeting.

Planning for the things you want in your life goes on...

ALL THE TIME

Each time you make a **decision** about something you want in your life...you are planning. Each time you turn a decision outcome into a **goal** to work toward...you are planning.

Each time you ask people in your **Support Circle** to help you in reaching your goals...you are planning.



Each time you look for **community resources** for the outcomes you want...you are planning. Each time you make a new decision because your interests have changed...you are planning. Each time you reach a goal and set a new one for something else you want in your life...you are planning.

So, once you've done all that planning, you want to get people to help you achieve the goals that are important to you. And to get that help, you need to be able to communicate. I mean...how are the people on your planning team going to be able to help if they don't understand what your goals are?

Just like decision making, communication skills are something we all learn. And the more we practice communicating the better we get at it.

Communicating. You already know a lot about it. It's just talking, right? Well, not exactly.

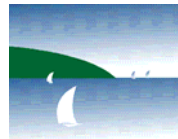


Communicating is more than just talking to somebody.

You can also communicate in writing, . or by using sign language,



or with pictures.



And communicating is a process. We've heard that before...a process...remember? A process means there are a lot of steps that have to happen before everything is finished.

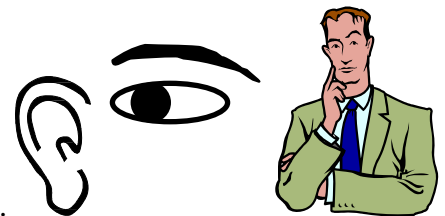
Communication is a process that leads to sharing information between people. Every time communication between people happens, there is –



the person who is sending the message

(talking, signing, writing notes, or drawing pictures)

and a person who is receiving.
the message



(listening and seeing)

Sounds simple enough, but you've had a lot of experience with living, and you know communication is not just a simple thing. There are lots of steps.



Just consider this—

Communication Scene 1: Shondra has a job doing assembly work. This afternoon her supervisor, Dee, comes over to give her some directions on a project Dee needs done right away. It involves assembling some frames, and Shondra has never assembled this kind before.

If you were Shondra, which of these instructions would you rather have the supervisor say:

“We got some new frames in. Just put these together right away.”

or

“I need you to put six of these frames together before breaktime. To assemble the frames, put a drop of glue on each red tab. Then slide the red tabs into the slots at the end of each piece. Put all the frames in this box.”

1. How are the two messages different?

Answer: In the first, Dee doesn't explain how to assemble the frames. In the second, Dee **does explain** how. She even tells Shondra how many frames to do and when they need to be finished.

2. What could the supervisor have done to make it even easier for Shondra to do the job?

Answer: **Show** Shondra. Dee could assemble one frame so Shondra can see how it's done. Then Dee could let Shondra assemble one while Dee is still there to help, if needed.

This example shows that sometimes communication is better when the sender says the message and also shows it.

Communication Scene 2: Roy walks into the kitchen where Joan and Mike are getting dinner ready for everyone in the group home where they all live.

“Hi guys. How’s everything?” Roy says with a smile as he swings one leg over the bar stool and slips down onto the seat.

Joan whirls around, eyes flashing. “Where have you been?!” she almost shouts. She points her stirring spoon at Roy who quickly draws back, eyes wide and mouth open.

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Mike doesn't say a word but starts chopping vegetables for the salad—very loudly and fast.

“Wha..well, I dunno. I was just watching some TV over at the neighbors,” Roy responds frowning, eyebrows together and head tilted slightly to one side.

“Oh that's nice! I hope it was a good show.” Joan says, her eyes narrowing and arms folding across her chest. She takes a deep breath and lets it out loudly. “Don't you remember what day this is?”

Mike stops chopping and turns, his head shaking slowly from side to side.

“Wednesday. It's Wednesday. That's your and Mike's night to cook!” Joan blurts out as she unfolds her arms and takes a step toward Roy.

“Ohh..!” Roy says as one hand comes up to cover his open mouth. “I forgot!”

What kinds of things are happening here? Take a closer look.

“Hi guys. How's everything?” Roy says...

What's happening here? Right...someone is talking. (He could be writing or signing the same words, too). But anyway, that's one part of communicating: talking.

How about this one?

Joan whirls around, eyes flashing.

What's going on here? No one is talking. But is Joan communicating? She is sending a message, isn't she?

You got it! She's saying “I'm angry!” But she is not saying, writing or signing it. She is communicating it by the way she moves and the way her eyes look. That kind of communication—when you send a message by the way you move, sit or stand or the way your face looks—is your “body language.” Your body is sending the message, even if you are not saying a word.

How about another?

She points her stirring spoon at Roy who quickly draws back, eyes wide and mouth open.

What about Roy? One minute he is smiling, the next his eyes are wide and his mouth is open.

Is he communicating?

You bet! His face—his body language—is sending the message that he is surprised.

There are lots of different kinds of communication going on in this story. Mike didn't say a word, but his chopping got faster and louder. What did that tell us? Well, maybe he is uncomfortable saying anything to Roy, but he sure shows he has some feelings about the situation. Maybe he's showing he is angry at Roy, too. Or maybe he is showing he is feeling a lot of stress because Joan is confronting Roy so directly. Or maybe he is just wanting to avoid the whole situation so he's trying to put all his concentration on the task of cooking dinner. Sometimes it might be hard to tell exactly what the meaning is.

Joan's voice gets really loud when she asks Roy where he was. **How** someone says something is also part of the communication process. By almost shouting, Joan showed her anger. If someone uses a very **LOUD VOICE**, it may mean they are angry or excited. If someone speaks very *softly*, that may mean they are shy or not very sure about what they are saying.

"Wha..well, I dunno. I was just watching some TV over at the neighbors'," Roy responds frowning, eyebrows together and head tilted slightly to one side.

The expression on Roy's face and the way his head is tilted may mean he is worried...and puzzled.

"Oh? That's nice! I hope it was a good show." Joan says, her eyes narrowing and arms folding across her chest.

Does Joan really mean she hopes Roy enjoyed the TV show? Yes No

Why? How can you tell?

She takes a deep breath and lets it out loudly. "Don't you remember what day this is?"

Joan's loud breath may mean she is upset. In other cases, when a person lets out a big sigh or a deep breath, it could mean they are very relieved. Or it could mean something very different...that they are frustrated or bored or very tired.

Mike stops chopping and turns, his head shaking slowly from side to side.

What's Mike "saying?" Well, his head movement might mean he is feeling kind of disgusted with Roy or with the whole situation. Or that it's obvious Roy hasn't a clue what day it is...or what's supposed to happen on Wednesdays.

This example shows that people send a lot of messages just with the way they look, the way they move, and the sound of their voice. That's called –



Body language



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Check this one out –

Communication Scene 3: Carlos has two roommates. This morning he was really sleepy when he went in to take a shower. Somehow the time just passed, and he suddenly realized he used up all the hot water. When he opens the door, his roommates, Jesse and Steve, are standing there glaring. They both look like they’re gonna explode. Jesse’s face is all red. Steve has his hands on his hips and is staring straight at Carlos.

Carlos tries to pass by them quickly when Jesse says, "I hope you had a very nice shower!"

1. How should Carlos answer Jesse?

Say loudly... “Thanks, I sure did. I feel great!”

Say something like “Hey, I’m really sorry I used up all the hot water. I’ll be sure not to do that next time!”

What might happen if Carlos chooses the first one (Thanks, I sure did...)?

Answer: It will sound like all Carlos cares about is himself. Jesse and Steve will probably feel even angrier.

What might happen if Carlos chooses the second one (Hey, I’m really sorry...)?

Answer: Carlos will sound like he really is sorry. It will sound like he does realize he should save some hot water for his roommates. This message might help Jesse and Steve feel like Carlos really understands how they feel.

2. Did Jesse really mean that he was glad Carlos had a nice shower? Why?

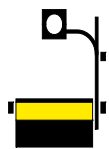
Answer: No way! Jesse was being sarcastic – that means making fun of someone in a mean way.

3. When Jesse said "I hope you had a very nice shower!" what tone of voice do you think he used?

- A kind voice.
- A voice "with an attitude."
- A loud voice.

Answer: He probably used A voice "with an attitude"
and probably also A loud voice

This example shows that sometimes people use "mixed messages." When Jesse said he hoped Carlos had a nice shower, Jesse was being sarcastic as a way to make a point, as a way to make his message stronger, and as a way to show he was really angry.



Time for a quick review question. **Circle** the correct answer.

Question: Communicating is –

Got it!

**more than just talking to somebody,
OR
just talking.**

Answer: Communicating is –

more than just talking to somebody.

There are many ways to communicate, like writing, using sign language, body language, and the tone of a person's voice.

If you got that right, put a check in the **Got it!** box beside the question.

Understanding Body Language

From the communication examples you just worked through, you can see that there is a lot going on when you communicate. Communication means sending and receiving messages. There is always a sender (someone who is talking, signing, writing, drawing) and there is always someone who is receiving (being talked to). Communication is a process. There are lots of things that happen when you communicate. Like what you say and how you say something, and how you use body language when you say it.

What we're talking about here is –



Body language



— the way you look, the sound and tone of your voice,
how you sit, how you stand or move —

All of these things are a really important part of the communication process.

Just like the way Joan and Mike looked when Roy came into the kitchen, forgetting that it was his turn to help cook...or like the way Jesse and Steve looked when Carlos came out of the bathroom after using up all the hot water. The way each of them looked, the way they stood, the way they held their arms, the expressions on their faces—all of these things sent a message. That's part of communicating.

The problem is that if you don't understand those "body language" messages, there is no real communication.

Let's think about –

body language that happens at meetings



...like your planning meeting. I mean, if someone in the meeting is sending a message through their body language, it would be useful if you saw that message.

And you want to be sure that your own body language sends the message you mean to send. Because sometimes you may send messages you don't want to if you are not aware of what you are doing.



Think about your last planning meeting. What did the room look like where you met? How were the table and chairs set up. Can you see yourself sitting at the table? Can you see the other members of the planning team? Go ahead, give it a try.

OK, keep that picture in your mind as you consider the following examples. Check out the



body language



...and decide what messages are being sent.



Picture this:

You are sitting in your chair with your arms crossed in front of you. Every now and then you

lean on the back legs of the chair.

When different members of you team talk, you stare at the table. You also keep looking at the clock. Every so often, you sigh quite loudly and shake your head back and forth.

What message are you sending?

Answer: You are sending several messages. One message you may send with your body language is that you are angry. You have your hands folded across your chest and you sigh loudly and shake your head. Your folded arms also tell the other team members you are not open to what is going on or to hearing what they have to say.

You tip back in your chair, and you don't look at anyone when they are speaking. This tells the other members that you don't really respect them, that what they are doing doesn't mean anything, that you are just not interested.

Looking at the clock often tells people you are bored. You are just waiting for the meeting to be over.

Your body language is telling all the other members that you don't want to be a part of the team that is making decisions. Do this enough and people will not bother to have you there. Then Other People will make those important decisions for you.

Now, you probably didn't do any of those things at your last meeting. This is just an example to think about what message you would be sending if you did. You need to think carefully about your body language, because it sends messages...loud and clear!

What you want your body language to say is—

“I am glad to be here at my meeting. I am ready to be an active member of my own planning team. I have something important to say. I also respect you—the members of my team—and will listen with care to what you have to say. I believe we will be able to get a lot done here to help me plan for the things I want in my life.”

So what kind of



body language




would send that message?


Here are some suggestions...





When you enter the meeting...and as others enter...stand up, smile, shake hands and say "hello."

Sit up in your chair. Something this simple sends the message that you are ready to be part of the team.

Look at the eyes of whoever is talking at the time.  When you have eye contact with people while they are speaking, they think you are listening to them.

When you look away  from someone, they think you have quit listening. You and I

know that you can still listen to someone even if you are  staring somewhere else. Still, if you want people to get the message that you are interested in what's going on in the meeting, look at the person  who is talking.

It's usually better to look into the speaker's eyes while that person is talking. When a new person begins talking, shift your gaze to them.

When **YOU** are talking, look at the person or people to whom you are speaking. If you are speaking specifically to one person, look right at that person. If you are talking to the whole group, then look from one person...to the next...and the next.

Every now and then nod your head when you hear something you agree with.

Smile  when someone compliments you or makes a joke.

If someone says something that you didn't follow...

make a facial expression that says you don't understand.



If you have the chance, take notes about things you want to remember, bring up later or think would be useful. Don't spend the whole meeting slumped over the paper taking notes. Instead, just jot down a few short things that will help you remember the point that was made. If you want, you might have someone else assist you in writing down these notes.

These are just a few ways to use



body language



to let people at your meeting know you are listening and that you are actively involved in what is going on.

Now, let's look at some other team members and see what their body language might tell you about them.



Picture this. You invited a friend from your neighborhood to your meeting. After about fifteen minutes, you look over at your friend. She is sitting quietly. She is frowning a lot, and keeps looking over at you, raising her eyebrows. Once she catches your eyes, she shrugs her shoulders and shakes her head slightly.

What message is she sending?



Answer: Your friend is confused. She is probably lost and doesn't really understand what is going on. There are lots of reasons to be confused, especially the first time a person attends a planning meeting. There are a lot of initials like IPP, VR, CSLA and on and on.

If you get lost in the meeting, what kind of body language will help tell people that you are confused?


Answer: Let the speaker know by your facial expressions that you have a question about what is happening. Raise your eyebrows, lift your finger (like you used to raise your hand when you were in school) to let them know you want to say something. Ask what is happening.

Hey... **It's Your Future!** ...so don't just sit there and hope it all works out.



Picture this. You invited a member of your family to your meeting. He has been sitting quietly next to you the entire meeting. He hasn't said a word, but you've noticed several things about him. First, he is frowning more and more as the meeting goes on. He is thumping the table in front of him with the fingers of one hand and doesn't seem to notice the noise he is making. He is beginning to sweat a little, even though it's not that hot. He is breathing more loudly than usual...and sighs loudly every so often.

What message is he sending?

Answer: This person is mad.  Something or someone has made him angry. It happens!

Usually it happens because the communication process breaks down. People misunderstand each other. That is why it is important to recognize



body language.



If you feel yourself getting angry, what body language should you use to send that message?

Answer: When you hear something that makes you angry, let the speaker know by your facial

expressions that you have a question about what was said. Raise your eyebrows, lift your index finger (or hand) to let others know you want to say something.



Don't just sit there and get madder and madder!

Be Assertive (not **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** or non-assertive)

Let's leave body language for now and talk about how to get what you want without making people angry!

You need to know two words here:

Assertive

&

AGGRESSIVE !!!!!

These words are things that you are (or can be!). What does that mean? Well, you can be *Assertive* in a meeting or you can be **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** One is a good idea. The other is not a good idea. You tell me which is which.



I'm listening...

Did you say something like this?

To be *Assertive* means to stand up for yourself, to be confident, and to make sure that your opinions are listened to.

AGGRESSIVE !!!!! means to be very pushy, demanding, angry and loud, to attack or "put down" other people, to be hard to deal with, and to argue.

When you are angry at someone it is too easy to be **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** You might feel like yelling at them or arguing a lot. If you feel like no one is listening to you, you might think you have to be loud and noisy to get some attention. Or you might think you want something so badly that you won't listen to anyone else, and you argue with other team members.

Not a good idea!

If you are **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** in a meeting, how are Other People going to react?



Well, think about this situation.

Ever see one of those TV talk shows where people get in each other's faces? You know the kind...where some man or woman is accusing their wife or husband of cheating or where a parent is accusing a daughter or son of lying. One person starts verbally attacking the other. The talk show host

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or hostess just lets the person go on and on and on. The person who is being attacked sits there getting redder and redder in the face, squirming in the chair, or crossing their arms across their chest and turning away. What happens next?

You got it! The person who has been under attack suddenly whirls around and rages back at the first person. There is usually shouting and shaking of fists. Sometimes they even start hitting and fighting! The first person was being **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** by attacking the other person with words. The second person might ordinarily be really nice. But after getting insulted and yelled at like that, almost anybody would get mad right back.



So, consider this: If you are **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** in the way you talk to Other People, are you going to get what you want?

Probably not. All you are going to do is make Other People mad! So, does that mean you sit quietly when someone says something you don't agree with? Or do you keep your opinions all to yourself just because you are afraid to make someone mad?

Well, no...those are not good ideas either. It is probably a good idea to become more *Assertive*. That means letting people know you have some ideas. It means letting people know that you are an equal part of the team.



Something good to know:

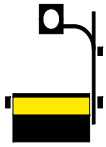
Here are some rules for being *Assertive* but not **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!**

Keep your voice calm. Don't yell, holler or scream. If you have something to say, speak up but don't shout!

Wait for your turn to speak. Don't interrupt Other People, it only makes them mad. If you have a hard time getting a word in, lift your finger to show that you want to say something.

When someone says something that makes you **really** angry, it might be because they don't understand something. Ask people why they said something or why they think something should happen. Most of the time they will have a good reason, and you can explain why you disagree.

Don't "fight dirty." If you and another team member do have a disagreement, don't bring up something that is not related to the planning you are doing at the meeting. For example, don't tell someone they're fat just because you disagree with them. Sometimes the whole team will disagree with you. Then you really have your work cut out to convince them you are right. Or, maybe you need to think about changing your mind!



Here's a quick review question. **Circle** the answer that fits best.

Question: Being *Assertive* means –

Got it!

demanding what I want, being angry and loud

OR

**standing up for myself, speaking confidently,
and making sure my ideas and opinions are heard**

Answer: Being Assertive means –

**standing up for myself, speaking confidently,
and making sure my ideas and opinions are heard**

If you got that right, put a check in the **Got it!** box beside the question. If you didn't get the answer the first time, you may want to go back and review the last few pages.

* * * *

Well, some people have a different problem —

being non-assertive.

That means being too quiet, not speaking up,
just accepting whatever Other People want them to do.

In fact, being **non-assertive** is probably an even bigger problem for many people. That's because it's likely there are even more people with disabilities who are **non-assertive** in their planning meetings than there are people who are **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!**



I mean, think about it for a minute...what was your last planning meeting like? Did you sit quietly most of the time and just let everyone else do all the talking and deciding?

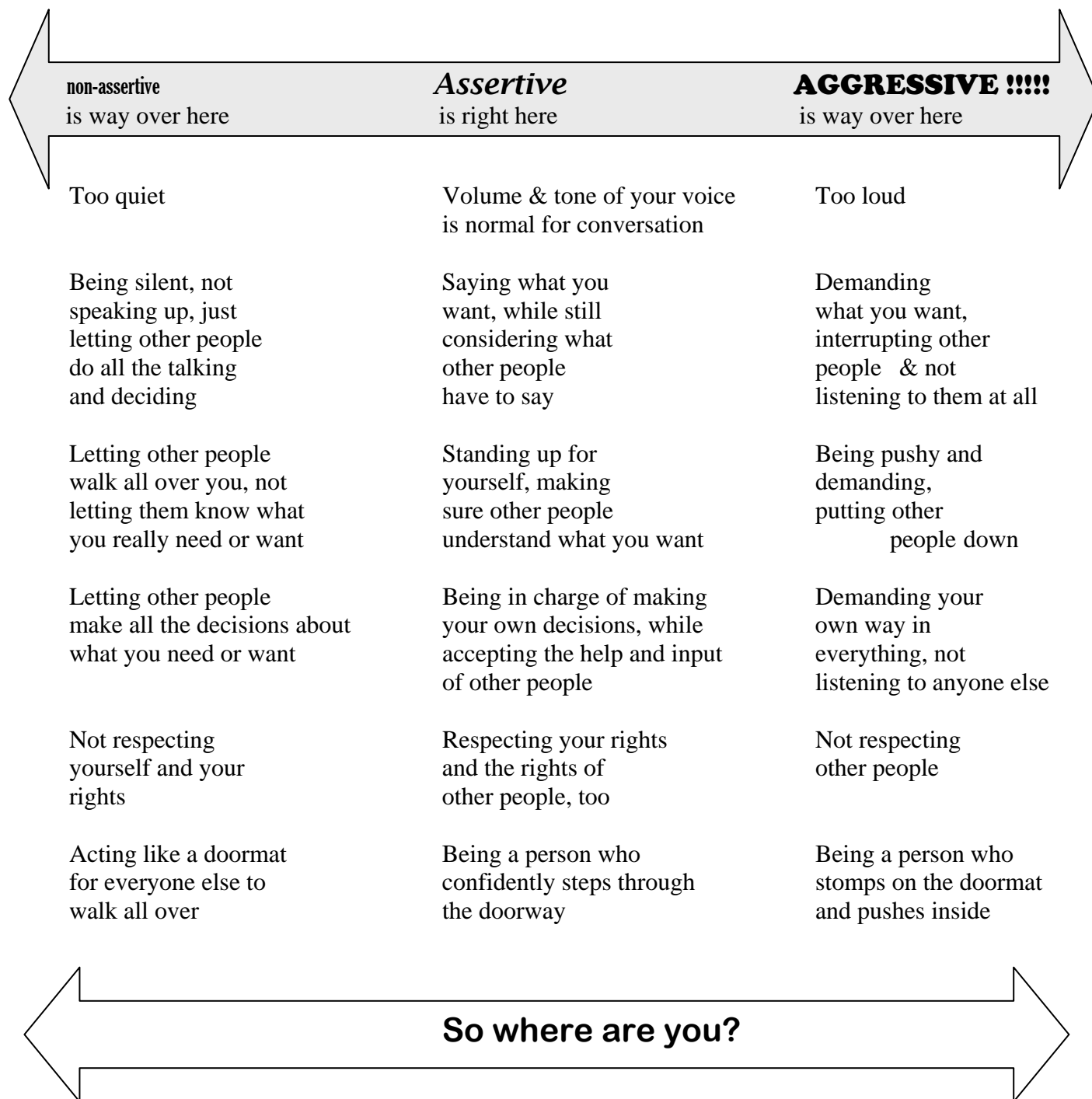
Well, if you did, not to worry. You can learn to be **Assertive**, which is a way of being that will help you get more of what you want in your life. Go to the next page to see how that works.

What's your communication style? Are you...

non-assertive **or**

Assertive **or**

AGGRESSIVE !!!!!



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Something good to know:

Being assertive is useful and important in all areas of life, not just in your planning meeting. There are lots of places where you can get more information and help on how to be more assertive. Classes in assertive communication skills are given as part of “adult education” at local community colleges. Some social service agencies also provide training. Self-advocacy groups like People First are also good places to learn and practice assertiveness. In fact, some of the information above has been partly based on *Assertiveness*, a training program developed by Laura Crawford and Mary Hart-Furman for People First of Washington state.

Being ***Assertive*** is kind of right in the middle.

You are not just letting other people do all the talking and deciding...you are not being pushy, demanding and unwilling to listen to anyone else’s idea...you’re right in the middle –

You speak up for yourself, saying what you really need and want.

You listen to other people and their ideas.

You take the time to be sure the other people really hear and understand what you want.

Then you work together with them to get the support you need so you can reach your life goals.

When you are ***Assertive*** you feel confident in your own right to say what it is you want, and at the same time you show respect for others.

And, guess what! Being ***Assertive*** helps you be a self-advocate. Being a self-advocate means speaking up for yourself. Sound familiar? That’s because one of the key things about being ***Assertive*** is saying what you really need and want.



ACTION!

Go to the next page and see how smart you are about being ***Assertive***.

That's Assertive!

Read each statement. Decide if you think "Yes, that's assertive." or "No, that's not assertive."
Then Yes or No.

If I am assertive, I should...

1. Make eye contact with the person who's speaking. Yes No

2. Talk with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice. Yes No

3. Sit there with a bored look on my face. Yes No

4. Stand or sit up straight. Yes No

5. Yell or scream so I get everybody's attention. Yes No

6. Be prepared to talk about what I need and want. Yes No

7. Just be quiet and do whatever they tell me. Yes No

8. Start crying if I don't get my way. Yes No

9. Find out who I need to talk to about my problem. Yes No

10. Interrupt other people whenever I want
to say something. Yes No

11. Hold my index finger or hand up when
I want to say something. Yes No

12. Stare at people. Yes No

13. Try to fall asleep so the meeting will be over faster. Yes No

14. Not take no for an answer. Yes No

15. Ask for help if I can't solve the problem myself. Yes No

16. Give up and go home. Yes No

Scoring

Check your answers by seeing if they match the answers on the next page.

Then come back here and record the total of how many answers you got right.

Then write that number here:

I got _____ answers right.

Check off ✓ the box for the number of answers you got right:

12 to 16 answers right **I did a great job!**

6 to 11 answers right **I made a good start.**

1 to 5 answer right **This is a good time for me to review.**

BEING *Assertive* - Answers

1. If I am assertive, I should...Make eye contact with the person who is speaking.

Yes! We've already talked about that, right? Looking at people when they are talking lets them know you are listening to what they have to say.

2. If I am assertive, I should...Talk with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice.

Yes! That way, people will understand what you have to say and will be more likely to listen to what you say!

3. If I am assertive, I should...Sit there with a bored look on my face.

No! This is your meeting to plan how to get what **YOU** want in life. Sitting there with a bored look will only make people ignore you. You don't want that! You want to be actively taking part in planning your life. You need to look interested and ready and willing to take an active part in the meeting! Have a pleasant look on your face. Look at the eyes of whoever is talking at the time. Look at the person or people to whom you are speaking. Nod your head when you hear something you agree with. Smile when someone gives you a compliment or makes a joke. Make a facial expression that says you don't understand if someone says something you didn't follow.

4. If I am assertive, I should...Stand or sit up straight.

Yes! Another one we talked about. Sitting up straight says that you are paying attention and are interested.

5. If I am assertive, I should...Yell or scream so I get everybody's attention.

No! What is yelling? It's being **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** not assertive! You might get everyone's attention, but most likely they will throw you out for making a scene!

6. If I am assertive, I should...Be prepared to talk about what I need.

Yes! Another one we've already talked about! Hey, you already know this stuff, don't you? By being prepared to talk about what you want you will be prepared to answer all the questions that might come up and can convince more people that what you want is right.

7. If I am assertive, I should...Just be quiet and do whatever they tell me.

No! You need to speak up! Tell the members of your planning team what you really need and want, what your dreams and goals are. The whole purpose of your planning meeting is to help you plan for the things you want in life.

8. If I am assertive, I should...Start crying if I don't get my way.

No! This may seem silly, but when people are talking about you, you might get really upset! It is best to try to keep all your emotions under control. It's OK to feel something, like anger or pleasure, but don't act based on your emotions. When something makes you feel angry, happy

or even confused, tell the team using “I” statements: “I feel angry when I hear you say something like that” or “I am glad we decided that!”

9. If I am assertive, I should...Find out who I need to talk to about my problem.

Yes! Think of it this way. If you were in a movie and some people behind you kept talking loudly during the movie, you would ask them to please be quiet. If that didn't work and they kept on talking, you would then go to an usher for help in solving the problem. It's the same kind of thing with your planning meeting. You should invite the people who can really help make things happen for you. They are the people you want at your meeting!

10. If I am assertive, I should...Interrupt other people whenever I want to say something.

No! Being *Assertive* means saying what you want, but it also means considering what other people have to say and showing respect for them. It would be rude to interrupt while others are talking, so when you feel the need to say something, wait until others have finished. You can also raise your finger to show that you would like to speak next.

11. If I am assertive, I should...Hold my index finger or hand up when I want to say something.

Yes! Remember what you learned about body language? You can signal to other people that you would like to speak by simply extending your hand a little and raising your index finger.

12. If I am assertive, I should...Stare at people.

No! It is good to look people in the eye when they are speaking to you or you are speaking to them. But it is rude to stare at people. If you stare, you make the other person feel very uncomfortable. And people simply stop listening if they feel uncomfortable. Since nobody likes to feel uncomfortable, people will try not to be around you if you stare. So, besides being rude, staring is not a good thing to do if you want to communicate well with other people.

13. If I am assertive, I should...Try to fall asleep so the meeting will be over faster.

No! How can you be a leader in your planning meeting if you're sleeping? Even if you feel bored or tired, it is important that you remain awake and alert and an active participant. You certainly don't want to sleep away this opportunity to plan for the things you really want in life. Listen...use eye contact...and speak up when you have something to say.

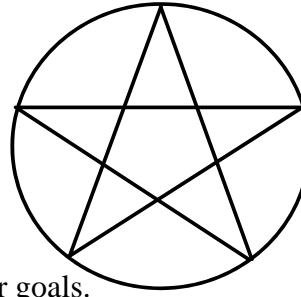
14. If I am assertive, I should...Not take no for an answer.

Yes! If you believe in what you want, and you know it is right for you then don't give up too soon. Keep working on it and maybe you can convince others to join you. That doesn't mean you shouldn't compromise and there are times when we all have to quit trying...at least for the moment!

15. If I am assertive, I should...Ask for help if I can't solve the problem myself.

Yes! None of us has all the answers for the problems we face in life. That's why it is so

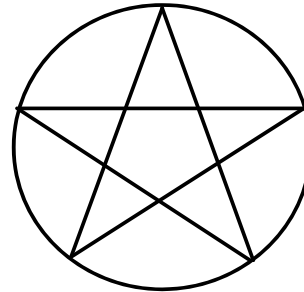
important to develop a **Support Circle** of people you know and trust and who can help you find resources, solve problems, get support for the things you want to do in life. Go ahead and take advantage of the people around you who can assist you in reaching your goals.



16. If I am assertive, I should...Give up and go home.

No! Well, what can I say, really? If you give up and go home then Other People will just keep making those decisions and living your life for you! You may be discouraged that year after year your planning meetings never result in the things you most want. You may feel your meeting is a big waste of time. If that is the case,

talk to people in your **Support Circle** right now, before the meeting. Let them know your feelings. Ask if they can help you advocate for yourself so that this year's meeting really does lead to more of the things you want in life. Don't give up!



Time for a quick review question. **Circle** the answer you believe is right.

Question: It is best to be assertive. Assertive means: **Got it!**

being very quiet and just accepting whatever other people want me to do.

OR...saying what I really need and want while still respecting other people.

OR...yelling and demanding I get my own way.

Answer: **saying what I really need and want while still respecting other people.**

If you got that right, check the **Got it!** box beside the question.

Be a Good Salesperson

So far, you have learned that communication is a process that includes sending and receiving messages. You have seen how important body language is. You have learned that being **Assertive** is the best way to act when you communicate...if you want people to hear and understand you.

Now we are going to talk about being a good Salesperson. What does being a Salesperson have to do with communicating at your planning meeting?

Well, lots of things. Persuasion, knowing when to talk and when to be quiet, negotiating and compromising, and listening. These are all things a good Salesperson needs to be able to do. These are the same things you need to be able to do if you are going to participate actively in your planning meeting.



Think about it. What is the job of a salesperson?

You got it! To sell you something. To sell you something you don't even know you need. To sell you something you probably don't even need!

Well, to be an active participant in your own planning meeting, you need to be able to sell those Other People on your ideas...your goals...your opinions. Sure, you're not gonna sell them actual things...like candy or cars. But the job of being a good Salesperson is the same.

Here are some important parts of being a good salesperson.

Be prepared

Being ready, being prepared is important if you are going to convince anyone else that what you want is important. All of the activities in **It's My Future!** are designed to help you be well prepared for your meeting.

Know a lot about what you are selling



Think about it! What if you were a car salesman but you didn't know much about cars? Betcha you wouldn't sell very many! You need to know what it is you are selling.

In your planning meeting, what are you selling to other people?

—————→ Your goals

So you need to know **A LOT** about yourself, your abilities, your dreams and goals.

(HINT: Your *Life Book* can be a big help since it will help you show other people your goals.)

Use good timing

OK, say you are still that car salesperson we mentioned. A woman has just walked into the showroom. You race right over to her and blurt out "BOY, HOWDY, DO I EVER HAVE A CAR FOR YOU!" Betcha she'll be out of that showroom fast as a streak of lightning! People don't like to be rushed, so it is important to know just when you should bring up a subject. There are good times and bad times to begin talking about something. That is true at your planning meeting, too. Use good timing just like a good salesperson.



ACTION!

There's a good way to understand the importance of timing:

Let's say you have a job as a bagger at **SOOPER GIANT SAVE LOTS** grocery store. You know you have been doing a good job. The boss has told you so. You believe it's time for the boss to think about giving you a pay raise. You have decided you will ask him for a raise...**Assertively**, not **AGGRESSIVELY!!**

Go to next page and see what's up.

Here are four different times during your work shift that you could bring up the subject of your raise.

If it is a **good** time to ask your boss, circle the smiling face. 😊

If it is a **bad** time to ask your boss, circle the frowning face. ☹️

	Good time	Bad time
1. You have just dropped a bag full of groceries as you were lifting it into the shopping cart for a customer.	😊	☹️
2. You have been working hard all day. One of the regular customers just told you how much he appreciates all your help.	😊	☹️
3. Two baggers are out sick, the other is on break. You're the only bagger working, and all the checkout counters have lines of people waiting to check out. Your boss is even helping out!	😊	☹️
4. It's closing time. You just rounded up all the empty shopping carts from the parking lot. Your boss is locking up for the night, and you're both almost ready to leave.	😊	☹️

Answers: 1. ☹️ Bad time 2. 😊 Good time 3. ☹️ Bad time 4. 😊 Good time

These might be good answers.

How can you tell when it's a 😊 good time or a ☹️ bad time ... to bring up new points at your planning meeting? Well, here are a few things to consider:

Is someone else talking? Bad time!

It's not a good idea to interrupt someone else on the team. Wait for them to finish before you speak. You can always raise your index finger or your hand to show you wish to speak.

Are you talking about the right topic at the right time?

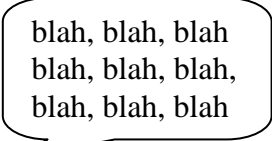

If you have a **Living** area goal you want to bring up, but everyone is talking about one of your **Work** goals, they may ignore you while they finish talking. Be sure you talk about the topic currently being discussed.

Do you have enough time to cover what you want to say?

If you are 5 minutes from taking a break and you bring up a topic that will take 20 minutes to discuss, your team is not going to have enough time to really give it their full attention. Start the new topic after the break.

Have you listened to enough of the other team members' ideas to include them in your discussion?

If another team member has an idea that is different from your idea, you will be in better shape to get what you want if you are aware of some of their concerns. Perhaps you can explain how your idea still considers their concern, too. Or you can at least explain why your idea is so important to what you want to do. Also, sometimes another team member will have a really good suggestion that will help you reach the goal you want. You want to be sure to listen to the other people so you don't miss hearing those good suggestions.

Be careful not to talk **too much**  OR too **little**. 


Talking too much or too little. That can be a big problem at a planning meeting.

What is going to happen if you talk **too much**?



Right. After a while, no one is going to listen to you at all.

It's like what happens with the music they play at grocery and department stores. When you first walk in you hear it, but after a while you don't hear it unless you stop and think about it. You just tune it out. Well, your team members are likely to tune you out if you just keep going on and on and on...like the Energizer Bunny®!

On the other hand, if you don't say anything,  what are they going to think?



Right. They are going to think that you are not interested or don't have any good ideas.

If you don't say anything, they will pretty much just go ahead and make all the decisions about your life for you. Not good.

So, how do you know when you're talking too much or too little? Well, good question. Use a few common sense rules to decide when and when not to say something during your meeting.

Speak.....when you are spoken to! When someone says something to you, look them in the eye and answer him or her. Don't shrug your shoulders and mumble, but speak up!

Don't speak.....when someone else is speaking. It's rude and it will make them mad. That won't get you anywhere.

Speak.....when you haven't said anything for a while. If you sit too long people will wonder if you're asleep with your eyes open! You can find something to comment about, even if it is just to say you agree with something.

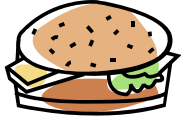
Don't speak.....if you've been talking a while and it looks like other people have questions. If you've been talking for a few minutes, say, telling people about a goal you want in your plan, and you look around at the other team members and notice that they are trying to say something or have puzzled looks on their faces, it's time to be quiet for a few minutes. Let them ask questions or give their opinions and only speak if you are asked a question.

Speak.....if you have something important to say about a topic. Go ahead! Speak up! Be assertive! Of course, be polite and wait until no one else is talking, but put in your two cents. But keep it short and to the point. This is no time to tell a long story about something that is only slightly related.

The best rule is to pay attention to what other people are saying, take part in the discussion, but respect the rights of other team members to take part, too.

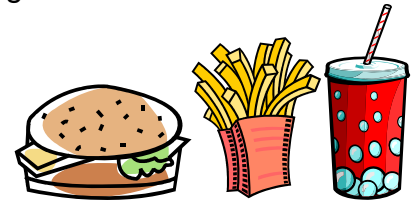
Keep your goals out in front of everyone

It pays to keep your idea or goal in front of everyone. Why do you think they put those pictures of the



Monster Burger on the wall of the Burger Beast fastfood restaurant? Never mind that you never saw a Monster Burger that really looked like those in the posters...all stacked up straight with a perfect lettuce leaf and slice of tomato, and every sesame seed in place. They put those pictures there so that the customer will walk in, look at that perfect Monster Burger and think

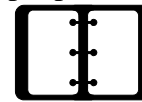
“Oooo, that looks great. I think I’ll have me a Monster Burger Meal.”



It works too. Keep your product out in front of the customer and they might just buy it. Same is true for your idea, opinion or goal. The more people look at it and see that it is a good plan or idea, the more they might begin to buy into it!

But, you say... how do you keep an **idea** or **goal** in front of people?

I’m glad you asked that question... your *Life Book*!



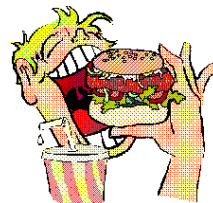
But you knew that! Your *Life Book* is a great way to show your interests and goals.

Remember...“a picture is worth a thousand words!”

Before you even have your planning meeting, it is a good idea to show your *Life Book* to each member of your team.

Then, be sure to bring your book to your meeting, too. And open it up so that those pictures can be right out there in front of everyone.

Kind of like the poster of that Monster Burger!



Here’s another thing you might do to help get your ideas and goals in front of the members of your team. Right now take a few minutes to do this...

There’s a page in the back of this manual in your *Life Visions Book* called **4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting**. Now take a few minutes and really think about this...

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What are **4 Things** you really, really want to talk about when you have your meeting?

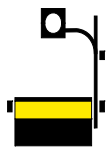


ACTION! Use that sheet right now to write down **4** ideas, goals, or opinions you really want to talk about. If you want some help, ask the person who is providing support to help you write this list. If you can't think of **4** things right now, go ahead and put down the ones you can think of. Before your planning meeting, make time to finish coming up with this list.

Be positive about what you say on your list...don't make your opinion sound **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** When it comes time for your meeting, you will have this to hand out if you choose to do that. If you change your mind between now and then, you can always make a new list.

Keep that list in your *Life Book*. Mention the things on your list a couple of times.

Do be sure to speak up and mention the things on your list. When the timing is right, mention them. Mention them a couple of times, but **don't** bring them up so many times that people get tired of hearing them.



OK, time to "show off" what you know! Circle the best answer for each item below.

Question: To be a good Salesperson at my planning meeting, I want to...

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-----------|---|---|
| 1. | Be Late. | OR | Be prepared. | Got it! <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Know A LOT about my interests & goals. | OR | Forget about my goals. | Got it! <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Use good timing for when to talk and when not to talk. | OR | Just keep quiet the whole time. | Got it! <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4) | Hope the other people might <u>guess</u> what I'm interested in. | OR | Show and talk about my <i>Life Book</i> so everyone can see my interests & goals. | Got it! <input type="checkbox"/> |

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Answers:

1)

Be prepared

2)

Know A LOT about my interests & goals.

3)

Use good timing for when to talk and when not to talk.

4)

Show and talk about my *Life Book* so everyone can see my interests & goals.

Did you circle the right answers? If so, give yourself a up there in the **Got it!** box beside each question. If you didn't get the answers right the first time, you may want to go back and review.

* * * *

Learn how to persuade other people

Another part of being a good Salesperson of your ideas and goals is —

persuasion

That means getting other people to "see it your way."

Imagine you are in your planning meeting. Suppose you live in a group home, and one of your goals is to move into an apartment. The other people on your planning team don't agree with your goal. They say you should stay in the group home. They say there are many skills you need that you just don't have. You really want to change their minds. You really want to move into your own place

So, what are you going to do?



Well, there are a few different ways you could get someone to change their mind about something. You could get **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** and threaten them. But you already know what happens if you get **AGGRESSIVE !!!!!** People get mad at you and try to stop you from getting what you want. Not a good way!

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Another way is you could whine and tell people if you don't get what you want you'll just leave. But guess what? They'll probably just let you leave. Another not-so-good idea.

But there is a third way...you could put on your "persuade shoes" and take everyone to the dance with you!

What's that about, you ask? Well, if you want to reach your goals for the things you want in life, sometimes you have to persuade people. Persuade. That means convincing people that what you have to say is worth listening to and might be better than other plans.

Persuasion has some fancy footwork. Kind of like a dance.



What do I mean by that? Well, it's like this...what do you do when you slow dance?

You sort of move together with your partner. Sometimes you turn this way. Sometimes you turn the other way. Sometimes you lead, and sometimes you follow. Persuading people is like dancing with them.

Watch this...The first step in persuading someone is to take a backward step. This is where you let them know you understand the point they are making. You let them know you understand by restating what the other person has said. In your planning meeting example, let's suppose someone says they think you should continue to live in the group home—because it is safe. You might start by saying you agree that being safe is very important, but that you had a different choice in mind. By saying this, you show the other person that you hear and understand their concern.

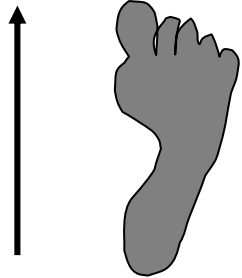
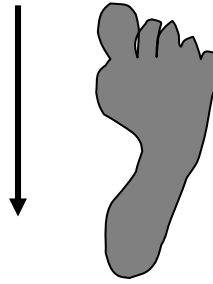
The next step in the “persuasion dance” is to take a forward step and show how you might achieve some of the same things a different way...**YOUR** way! You meet the needs of the other person stated in the first step. So, in your planning meeting example, you might point out that you can learn more safety skills and find a supported living program that will give you the support you need to eventually live in your own apartment

The final step in the “persuasion dance” is to take a slide step to the right. You do this by telling all the other advantages of your plan or idea. In the planning meeting example, you could go on to say that living in your own apartment closer to town will help you have a better chance of meeting one of your other goals—to have a job in town. There is good public transportation there, too, so you will be able to be more independent in shopping and leisure activities. Being in a supported living program will help ensure that you will have the support you need to reach this personal dream.

OK, this is not a very hard dance since it only has three steps. Let's go over those one more time—

Step backward...

listen to the other person
and show them you
understand what they said.



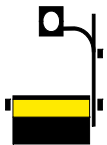
Step forward...

and tell how your plan
meets some of the same goals.



Take a slide step to the right...

and tell all the other good things
(benefits) of your plan.



OK, time to show whatcha know!

Circle

the best answer.

Question: What is the first step in persuading someone?

Got it!

Tell them you don't like their idea.

OR

**Let them know you understand by restating
what they have just said.**

Answer: The first step in persuading someone is to
let them know you understand by restating what they have just said.

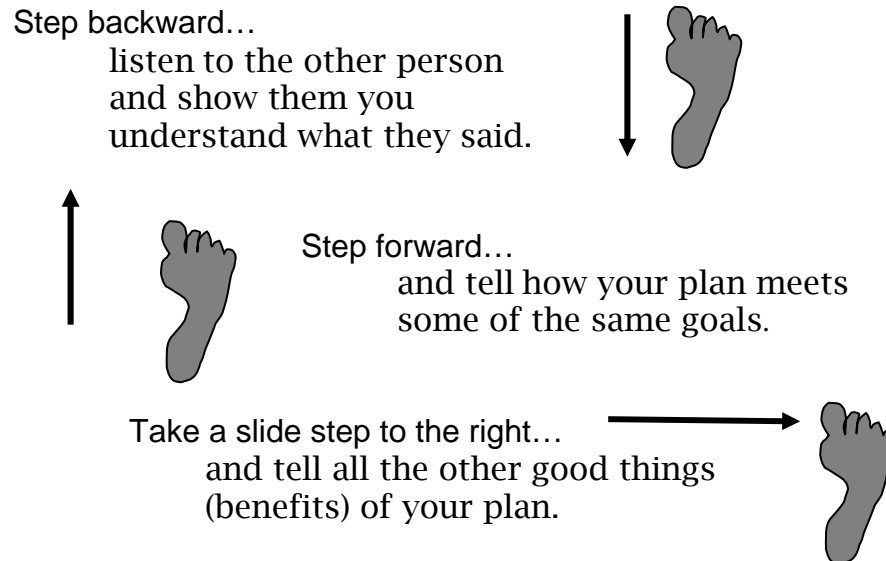
If you got that right, put a check ✓ in the **Got it!** box. If not, review the last few pages.

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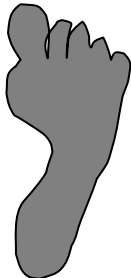
Learn to negotiate and compromise

OK, let's take one more look at our "persuasion dance." Remember, the three steps go like this —



Well, there's actually a 4th step! We call that step—

Negotiate and **Compromise**



Negotiate means to work out a deal or something...like if you and a friend are ordering pizza, but each of you likes a different kind. When you negotiate something, you talk with the other person or people, find out what they want and try to –

find something that you all can agree to.

When you agree to something that is different from what both of you started with...that is a compromise.

Why, you ask, should you settle for anything other than exactly what you want? Well, the answer to that is pretty simple. If you don't you will never get anything you want! It's like this...nobody, with the possible exception of some ultra rich rock star or football player, gets everything they want. If you hold out for things just as you want them, you may find yourself with nothing.

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Compromising is a way to get **MOST** of what you want because the other people get at least **SOME** of what they want, too. Everybody's happy, right?

Consider the pizza example — Say you and a friend have the same amount of money, and together you have exactly enough money to order a pizza. You go to the pizza place. You announce that you want the Pepperoni with Anchovy. Your friend wants Sausage and Mushrooms. Uh oh! Problem. What do you do?

You could insist on getting your way and your friend insist on getting his way, and the next thing you know neither of you gets anything.

Or you could

Negotiate and Compromise

So, you talk with your friend about the types of pizza. You each pick a second favorite...and find out that both of you like ham and pineapple. You could order one of those pizzas and both be pretty happy. Sure, it's not Pepperoni and Anchovy, but it beats nothing. Or maybe you decide that you will split the



pizza, get half Pepperoni and Anchovy



and half Sausage and Mushroom.

Most things aren't as easy to negotiate and find a compromise about as pizza. You have to work at finding what would be a good compromise. But once you begin thinking about it, you get better and better at it.

Here are some tips on... Negotiation and Compromise

Be prepared. Before the meeting, think about your “non-negotiables.” Those are the things you would not be willing to compromise on. Make sure you have a very good reason for this. If you find that you have a long list of things you are not willing to compromise on, you will not accomplish most of what you want.

Never say never! When you get to the meeting, listen to what others have to say. You might find yourself willing to compromise on something you didn't want to compromise on after you hear someone else's good idea.

Remember the Alamo! Don't back yourself into a corner where the only thing you can do is become defensive. Don't draw a “line in the sand” and then challenge the other team members to cross it. In the end, you won't get what you need.

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Teammates! Keep in mind that the members of the planning committee, including yourself, have the same goal....to put together the best plan to help reach your life goals. These are not your enemies you are dealing with here! They are people who care about what happens in your life. They might have different ideas on how to get what you need, but if you deal with them as teammates and not enemies, you will find that they will be more likely to see things your way.

Never say never, part 2. If, in the end, you don't achieve what you want, don't give up. Go back, look at the reasons you didn't get what you wanted. Maybe you need to change some things about your idea or plan. Maybe you need to find another person who could be an advocate to help you. Maybe the timing was just wrong. Be honest with yourself. Then, if you still think it is important, find ways to convince others that it is important.



ACTION! Negotiating and compromising are things that take practice.

Here are three examples of situations where negotiating and compromising would help people on "both sides" get some of the things they want. It might be hard to come up with ideas when you are just thinking about these on your own. But just take a look at these situations, and see if you have any ideas how you could get some of what you want...and the other person (or people) can get some of what they want. What compromises might work in each case?

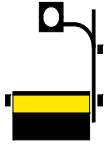
You want to watch a movie. Your roommate wants to watch **NYPD Blue** reruns.



You want to visit your sister this weekend. But she says she needs to spend the weekend helping her mother-in-law pack to get ready to move.



You want to have a job in the community but your family thinks you are safer if you stay in the sheltered workshop.



Okay. Let's do a couple review questions. **Circle** the best answer for each question.

Question: I learned that negotiate means to —

Got it!

give in to the other person.

OR

work out a deal on something and find something that everyone involved can agree with.

Answer: Negotiate means to —

work out a deal on something and find something that everyone involved can agree with.

Question: Compromise means to —

Got it!

agree on something that is different from what I wanted in the first place.

OR

just forget the whole thing and leave the room.

Answer: Compromise means to agree on something that is different from what I wanted in the first place.

Did you circle the right answers? If so, give yourself a up there in the **Got it!** box beside each question. If you didn't get the answers right the first time, you may want to go back and review.



Something good to know:

Learning to be a good communicator can take time. Go back anytime and review this section we have now finished (**Communicating Effectively**). Then keep practicing good communication!

Planning My Successful Meeting



GOAL: You will learn what it takes to be an effective team member. You will learn 4 steps for planning a successful meeting. You will check over your *Life Visions Book* and will prepare invitations to your meeting.

We've spent a lot of time on the VERY important topic—communication. We know that communication is a process and it involves sending and receiving messages.

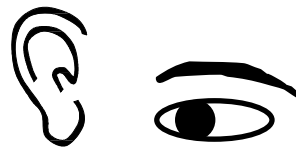


So far, we've put all our attention on the **sending** part.

We've seen how body language can be used to help send the message you mean to send. We've learned why it's important to be **Assertive**—to speak up for yourself while respecting others.

We've also seen that being a good **Salesperson** is an important part of communicating. Being prepared, using good timing—knowing when to talk and when not to talk, and learning how to do the “persuasion dance.” We found out that negotiation and compromise mean working out a deal on something so that we can get much of what we want.

Most of us are pretty good at the sending part. It's that receiving part that always seems to be the hangup—**learning how to really listen.**



So now we'll look at the receiving part—listening!

Being a Good Team Player

If you learn and practice good listening skills, you can be a good team player. That's because good listening skills and being a good team player go together. By being a good team player, you will help your planning team do a better job of helping you!

To help you learn to be a better listener, take a look at the following "rules." They are rules for Active Listening. We call these the “**get reAL**” rules.

That means “**get results from Active Listening.**” Ready to **get reAL**? Good.

get reAL.....look at the speaker!



When you look at a person while that person is speaking, you tell him that you are listening to what he or she has to say. You tell that person that what they have to say is important enough for you to take some of your time to listen to. So, when you are in your meeting, look at the person who is speaking.

get reAL.....ask questions!



When you are listening to people, they will most likely say something that you have a question about. Asking them will show that you were listening and are interested. You can ask a couple of different kinds questions—questions to **clarify** something and statements to **confirm** something.

To **clarify** means to make clear. You ask a question to try to understand something better. So, if there is something that is said that you don't understand, ask. That will let you know what is going on and will tell the speaker you are listening.

To **confirm** means to make sure that something is right. For example, you might say to a team member “You said it would be a good idea to find out if the supported living program has any openings, right?” That question is just confirming what you already heard, but it lets the speaker know you were paying attention.

get reAL.....don't interrupt people! ...do listen!



It's a good idea to ask some questions to show you are paying attention. It's a bad idea to keep interrupting the speaker. A good listener lets another person speak without interrupting unless it is really necessary. If you keep interrupting, you are telling the speaker you don't really want to hear what he or she is saying.

get reAL.....take notes!



Taking notes shows that you are listening. I mean, how can you write down what you just heard unless you just heard it! You can always ask another member of the team to take notes for you, if you need and want that kind of help.

Now, let's talk about all those members of your team.



Think about the people you want to have on your planning team.

Picture those people all seated around the table or wherever you have your planning meetings. Can you see them? Good. These are those **Other People** who can help you make plans to reach your goals for the things you want in life. They are very important because they can help you “network” to find the **community resources** you could use to reach your goals.

Why do we think of these **Other People** as a team? Because they are all on the same side—**YOUR** side—working together for a common goal: helping you get the things you want in your life.

Think about a sports team like a basketball team or football team. Does each team member have exactly the same skill and exactly the same job to do on the team?



Yes

No

No. If every team member did exactly the same thing...well, it wouldn't be a very good team, would it? Teams work together for a common goal, are on the same side and bring different skills together to address the goal.

The same thing is true about a good planning team. The members are all working for the same goal—helping you plan for the things you want to have and do in your life. But each member should have different skills and experience that they bring to the meeting. The vocational rehabilitation person knows about what supports are out there to help you get a job. The residential services person knows about supported living programs. The members also have different networks—they know about different **community resources**. A neighbor you invited to join your team might know about volunteering in the community or might be able to help you hook up with a club of interest to you.

There is one other thing about members on a team. What happens in a basketball game if a team member hogs the ball, tries to get all the attention, tries to do everything alone?



Right. The team doesn't work well. That person messes everything up. So good team members know their part and don't try to take over everything. They let the **Other People** on the team do what each one does well.

Now...what part do you play on the team? What do you bring to the team? What is it that you know more about than any one else?



Right! You know about **YOU**! You're an expert on you!

You know what you like, what you don't like, what you're good at and what you are not, what you want to be and where you want to go. Nobody, but nobody, knows you like you! That is important.

So it figures that your job on the team is —

to know about **YOU**!

to share that information with the team, and

to work together with the other team members to help create a good plan
so you can reach the goals you have set.

You are the most important person at the meeting, because, without you, there would be no point in even having a planning meeting. So, you're the "star" of the meeting...but you're also a team member. For your meeting to be successful, it is important that you be a good team member and work well with the other people who are there to help you.

What does it take for you to be a good team member? Let's look at an example. Here we have a description of two different people. Which one of them will make a good team member?

Homer is always complaining about everything! He complains about where he lives. He complains about where he works. He complains about being too busy and about not having anything to do. He complains about not having friends. He also complains about his planning meeting. He says he doesn't even want to go. He says that meetings are boring, a waste of time and don't do any good. He hasn't really thought about his future anyway.

Marge isn't sure her planning meeting will help her get everything she wants in her life, but she is sure she wants to be there. She thinks that being involved in her own planning is a very important thing, and she has spent time thinking about what she wants in her life. She's not sure that she knows everything she needs, but she is willing to listen and learn and wants to see how the other team members can help.

Which person do you think will make a good team member?



Pretty easy, right? It's Marge. I mean, Homer has a real attitude problem. I can't see him compromising and negotiating, can you?

Here are some of the things that will help you be a good team member —

1. Have a positive attitude.

If you have a positive attitude, you can get a lot of things done! People who have a positive attitude about something are willing to work to make good things happen. They expect good things to happen. They trust their team members to do what is right and to do what they are supposed to do. If you think your planning meeting will be a waste of time...it probably will be. If you think it will help you plan for the things you want in life...it probably will do that instead.

2. Come to the meeting prepared.

Since this meeting is to help you plan for the things you want in life, be sure you come to the meeting with information about your interests, dreams and goals for the future. Before the meeting, review your

Life Book and be sure it includes the pictures and notes about the things you want in your life.

Bring your book along so it can be an easy way to refer to your interests and goals. Also think about the kind of supports you may need to help you reach your goals. Remember to bring your list of **4**

Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting.

You made that list in the section called **Communicating Effectively** in the part called "Keep Your Goals Out in Front of Everyone" (that list of **4 Things** is your *Life Book*). The more you have thought about these things, the better you will be prepared to share that information with your team members and get their help.

3. Use good manners

Be sure you look your best—dressed neatly, hair combed, hands and nails clean, glasses clean (if you wear glasses). Be on time. Say hello to each team member and shake hands with everyone.

4. Participate!

You've heard the expression, "Don't just sit there. Do something!" Be an active participant in your meeting. Remember to be *Assertive*. Speak up. Let others know what your interests, dreams and goals are. Stand up for yourself and what you want in your life. Use body language to send the message that you are interested and involved in the discussion. Talk about the topic being discussed...don't ramble off on a long story that is only slightly related. Remember to show respect for others by listening to what they have to say. If you disagree, share your ideas and opinions—wait until the other person has finished talking, raise your finger to show you want to say something. Be a good Salesperson, use persuasion, be willing to negotiate and compromise.

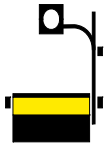
5. Follow-through after the meeting.

Be sure to do what you agree to do. Talk with other members of the team to find out how they are doing on the things they also agreed to do.

NOTE: Sometimes a team member will continue to "drop the ball." That means, they don't do what they said they would do. If that happens even after you have talked with that person, then go to another member of your team and talk with them about the problem. Perhaps the two of you can meet with the person who is "dropping the ball." Or maybe you can find someone else to help with that part of your plan. Be persistent – that means, don't give up!



These are all things that are just good common sense, but you'd be surprised how many people don't pay attention to them. If you want to make sure that you are an important part of your planning process, then make sure you do these things.



Time to check out what we've been learning. **Circle** the best answer.

Question: Each person on my team brings different skills and

Got it!

has a different part on the team.

OR

has the same part on the team.

Answer: Each person on my team brings different skills and has a different part on the team.

Question: If I am going to be a good team player, I need to learn

Got it!

how to ignore everyone else.

OR

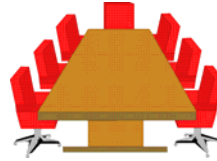
how to be a good listener.

Answer: If I am going to be a good team player, I need to learn how to be a good listener.

If you got the answers right, give yourself a in the **Got it!** box beside each question.

* * * *

Four Steps to a Successful Meeting



Who is responsible for planning your meeting? There may be a staff person, like your service coordinator, who has done all the planning in the past. If you're not sure who planned your meeting last time, ask around and find out. The reason you want to know is so you can talk to that person and let them know you would like to be involved in planning your meeting. Being involved in making the arrangements for your own meeting is one more way to be **more in charge, more in control**.

Here are four steps to planning a successful meeting that you might want to include:



Step 1: Make sure the **purpose** of the meeting is clear.



Step 2: Make **arrangements** to guarantee success.



Step 3: Specify the **outcomes** of the meeting.



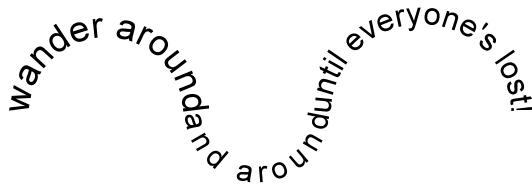
Step 4: **Follow-up** on the meeting.

The Purpose of the Meeting



Step 1: Make sure the purpose of the meeting is clear.

This is important, because, if the purpose of the meeting is not clear, the topics discussed will.....



Then, you won't get anything accomplished.

How do you make sure that the purpose of the meeting is clear? Easy. Define the purpose and communicate that to the other team members.

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A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Define and communicate.

Hey! We know how to define—we've done that several times when you used the decision-making process **DO IT!** You know... **Define your problem!**

Defining the purpose is just writing down **why the meeting is being held.**

Communicating it to the other team members is just making sure that they know. You could do that a lot of ways. You could make sure someone starts the meeting by stating the purpose of the meeting. You could write out the purpose and make sure other people get copies of that paper. You could write the purpose on a flip chart or chalk board or dry erase board so that everyone could see it. Simple. But important!



ACTION! Go ahead and write it right here.

The purpose of my planning meeting is to:

Got it? Good. Now you know the purpose of your planning meeting. (HINT: If you don't remember, take a look at Step 3 on page 250.) You need to think about how you will communicate it to everyone. Maybe you should talk with whoever is responsible for planning your meeting (if it's not you, of course) and tell that person that you want to make sure that everyone knows the purpose and then talk about how to do that.

The Meeting Arrangements



Step 2: Make arrangements to be sure the meeting is successful.

1. Make sure that everyone who is supposed to be at the meeting is given a notice of the time and place. Talk with the staff person who is responsible for planning to be sure that everyone will be sent a written notice. If you are inviting some people, like a friend or neighbor, who have never been to a meeting like this, then it would be great if you would personally make a phone call to them, in addition to sending them a written notice. They will be more likely to come to the meeting if they get personally invited by you...and not just by a written notice.

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A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

2. Pick a day and time that is convenient for everyone. Think about the people you are inviting. What hours do they work? When would they be free? You might need to hold the meeting in the evening after work so that it will be a good time for everyone you have invited.

3. Pick a place that is suitable and convenient. You will want to pick a place that is easy to get to and accessible for all people who are coming. The place should give you some privacy so that you and the other members of your team will feel comfortable to speak freely. Would it be best to have the meeting at your home? Or at a restaurant in a private meeting room? At a friend's home?

4. Set up the room to be comfortable. Think carefully about how you set up the room. This seems simple, but it's important. Be sure chairs are comfortable so people won't get restless if the meeting is long. Arrange for breaks to give people a chance to stand and stretch. If you are going to be doing a lot of writing, it makes sense to have people around a table. If you want people to talk a lot, set the chairs in a circle so everyone can see all the other team members. Make sure that everyone can see the flip chart or board if you are using one.

5. Make sure everyone has the handouts and a schedule. Make up a schedule or agenda that lists the things that will happen in the meeting. This will help the team members stay on track. Don't forget to include those **4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting** (that list should be in your *Life Book*). You may even want to make a copy of that as a handout. Check to make sure every team member has a schedule and whatever handouts you are going to use. Be sure there is blank paper for all of you to use to write down ideas that the team comes up with at the meeting.

6. Make sure that all supports and accommodations are in place. This will change depending on who is at the meeting and where and when the meeting is held. If you have asked a friend or neighbor to come and they are not familiar with this type of planning meeting, you may want to give them some information that explains what the meeting is about. If someone in the group has low vision, you will want to have the agenda and handouts in large print and to make sure that whoever writes on the flip chart does it in big letters and reads it aloud, too.

If you are meeting early in the morning, it would be good to have coffee and tea available to help people wake up! Or, if you are meeting in the evening, maybe some cold drinks and decaf coffee. You just have to make sure that people get the support they need to be able to participate and contribute.

If people are skipping lunch to be there...make sure there is a snack for them! It's usually a good idea to have something to drink, even if it is just water. Check that thermostat...is it too cold? Too hot? Know how to change the temperature if other team members don't agree! Learn how to use the equipment for the meeting. Set the flip chart up beforehand (or be sure the chalk board or dry erase board are clean and ready for use) and make sure you have the right kind of markers and/or chalk available.



ACTION! Take a few minutes to decide what you can do to make the arrangements for your planning meeting so it will be successful. Talk over these questions with the person who is planning—or helping you plan—your meeting.

Who do I want to invite? Is there anyone I should call personally to invite?
Where would be a good place to have the meeting?
When is a good day and time?
What supplies, refreshments might be needed?

There's a worksheet on the next page called **My Meeting Planner** that will help you plan the arrangements.

The Meeting Outcomes



Step 3: Specify the outcomes of the meeting.

Look at the purpose of the meeting. It's to —
create a plan that will help you get the things you want in life.

So, the outcome of the meeting is —

A Plan with goals, objectives, timelines and the supports you'll need.

Talk about the expected outcome of the meeting so that you can tell whether the meeting has been a success or not.

The Meeting Follow-Up



Step 4: Follow up on the meeting.

The last step to making sure that a meeting is a success is to follow up on the meeting. This means—
—doing the things that were decided at the meeting and
—making sure that all the people do what they said they would!

If it was decided that a team member would find out about a job in the community and you have not heard back, give that person a call. And, of course, be sure you do your part, too!

My Meeting Planner

WHO?

Names:

Phone call needed?

WHEN? Day & Date: _____ Time: _____

WHERE? Name of place: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Supplies needed: _____

Refreshments needed: _____

SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS?

And for whom?

NOTICES – Who will send them and When?

Checking My *Life Visions Book*

This is a perfect time to take a good look at your *Life Book*. Ask yourself "Do I have...?"

- My title page with my name on it?
- "How I'm Doing"
Have I kept track of my progress in setting goals? Each time I have set a goal, have I colored in the circle around the pictures of that area of life?
- My Support Circle
Have I filled in names of people I care about who I feel are part of my support circle?
And have I put that sheet into my *Life Book*? If not, I can go back to the section called **My Support Circle** to get it (check the table of contents for the page number of that section).
- Invitation List for My Next Planning Meeting
Have I made a list of the people I want to invite to be part of my planning team?
Have I noted who needs a phone call?
- My Dream page – do I have dreams I want to share with my planning team?
- 4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting.**
- My Abilities & Interests
Did I fill out those lists and put them in my *Life Book*? If not, I can find that form in the section called **My Interests, Abilities & Preferences** (check the table of contents for that page number). Did I add any pictures of my Interests & Abilities?
- My planning pages for
 - Work?
 - Living?
 - Fun & Leisure?
 - Others?
 - Personal Relationships?
 - Learning?
 - Community Activities & Transportation?
- Do I have pictures of my goals?

Now...who on your planning team would you like to share your *Life Book* with first? (Or, is there a friend, not yet on your team, who you want to show it to first?)

Decide who on your planning team you will show your book to this week and... get started!

It would be a **really** good idea to show your book as soon as possible to the person who leads or facilitates your meeting. That may be your service coordinator or case manager. Whoever that person is...be sure to meet with them soon and show them your book.

Why is it so important to show your book to the leader and members of your planning team now? Well, it gives them a chance—long before your meeting—to really consider who **YOU** are and what you want. It gives them an opportunity to start thinking **now** about –

action steps on which their help may be needed...and
community resources that might be useful.

So don't delay! Start showing your *Life Book*!

Preparing My Meeting Invitations

Next up – you want to get your meeting invitations ready.




ACTION!

Good news! You already decided who you want to invite. Take a look at the list you wrote back in the section called **My Planning Meeting/My Planning Team** (HINT: you might have already put that list into your *Life Book*). Find that list now. See if you still feel those are the people you want to invite. If there are others you have thought of, take time to add their names now.

At the end of this session is a sample form letter that you may want to use to invite the people on your list. There is also a flier called "Planning Meeting - Expectations" which tells the people on your team about the experience you have had and your expectations to take a more active role in your meeting. Be sure to include the flier and give a copy of it to each person you invite to your meeting.

Ask your support person for any help you may need. Find out exactly on what date and at what time your meeting will be held. Write that information on the form letter. Also talk with your service coordinator or case manager about where you would prefer the meeting be held. Once you have agreed on the location, be sure to write it down on the form letter. Enclose a map on how to get there.

You need to decide who will take phone calls  from people you invite to be on your team. Some of them will probably have questions about how to get to the meeting, what will happen there, what they are expected to do, etc. Think about it, and also talk with your service coordinator or another person who is currently on your planning team to help you decide. Ask yourself:

- Do I want to receive the phone calls from members of my team?
- Would I rather have someone else take those phone calls? Who?

When you have decided who will take those phone calls (and that person has agreed), fill in the correct name and phone number in the space provided in the letter.

Once you have figured out when to mail the invitations, put that date on the top of the letter.

After you have added the information to the letter, make enough copies for all the people on your team. Fill in each person's name on their copy of the letter. You can sign your name at the bottom. Don't forget to include a copy of the flier, "**Planning Meeting - Expectations**," with each letter you send out.

Decide if you will deliver the letters in person or if you will mail them. Ask your support person for any help you may need to make copies, get addresses, etc.

The best time to send out your letters is 6 weeks or a month before your meeting. It is good to give people enough notice so they can really think about whether they are willing to come and be part of your planning team...and to put your meeting date on their calendars before other activities get in the way.



Something good to know:

If someone you invite to your meeting cannot attend, that person can still help with your planning process (if they agree to). Being at the meeting is best, but it is not the only way they can help you.

Before the meeting takes place, you could show them your *Life Book*, and talk with them about the goals you want to work on this year. You can get their ideas. You can also ask them to help you after the meeting is over. They may be able to help you find community resources, get supports or even be a support.

Sample Invitation Letter

(See next page for a blank you can fill in and use to make copies)

(Date you will mail letter)

Dear _____,
(Name of person you are inviting)

It is time for my annual planning meeting. At this meeting we will talk about me and my dreams and plans for the future. I have already spent time setting some goals that are important to me. I would like your help as I plan steps on how to achieve them.

I would like for you to be a part of my planning process. My planning meeting will be on _____ at _____.
(Date) (Time)

Please call _____ at _____.
(Name of person who will receive calls) (Phone number of the person who will receive calls)

to let me know if you will be able to come. Please also read the enclosed flier which describes my expectations for the meeting and suggests ways you can help me be actively involved in the meeting.

The meeting will be held at _____.
(Name of place where meeting will be held)

Enclosed is a map of how to get there.

If you need more information, please call _____.
(Name of person who will receive calls)

at _____. I do hope you will be able to attend my meeting.
(Phone number of the person who will receive calls)

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Blank page

Dear _____

It is time for my annual planning meeting. At this meeting we will talk about me and my plans for the future. I have already spent time setting some goals that are important to me. I would like your help as I plan steps on how to achieve them.

I would like for you to be a part of my planning process. My planning meeting will be on _____ at _____.

Please call _____ at _____

to let me know if you will be able to come. Please also read the enclosed flier which describes my expectations for the meeting and suggests ways you can help me be actively involved in the meeting.

The meeting will be held at _____.

Enclosed is a map of how to get there.

If you need more information, please call _____

at _____ I do hope you will be able to attend my meeting.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

It's My Future!

Planning Meeting - Expectations

I have participated in a process to help me be able to participate more actively in my own planning. As a result, I have some expectations for this planning meeting.

In preparing for my meeting, I have had the opportunity to make some decisions and set some goals for things that are important to me. I have prepared a book of information and pictures – *My Life Visions Book* – that will help me share my interests, dreams and goals with you and the other members of my planning team. Your assistance is important to me as together we work out details on "next steps" with regard to the goals I have set.

I want to take more responsibility for decisions that are reached in the planning process. I welcome your help in providing opportunities and encouragement for me to express my opinions and ideas. Please ask to see *My Life Visions Book*. You can also help by asking me if I understand specific items being discussed, how I feel about decisions being considered, and by listening to my input.

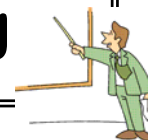
I expect my ideas to be listened to and respected by all team members. I will be open to your ideas, too. You can reinforce my self-esteem by listening and responding positively to my attempts to be actively engaged in the discussion.

It is important to my continuing efforts to assume greater responsibility for my present and future for you to encourage and reinforce my efforts to be self-determining. You can also help me learn to communicate effectively by reinforcing my assertive input, encouraging me to share when I am hesitant to speak, and redirecting any aggressive or inappropriate input.

Thank you again for participating on my team. I look forward to working together.



Being a Good Leader at My Meeting



GOAL: You will learn what it takes to be a good team leader at your meeting. You will learn how to handle some of the problems that can occur in small group meetings.

You have done many things to prepare for your meeting. And you have learned what it takes to be a good team member...

but, what about **leading** your meeting?




Why should you think about leading your meeting? Well, first of all, because the meeting is focused on **YOU** and how to help you get more of the things you want in your life. It makes sense...if the meeting is all about you and for you, then it might be a very good idea for you to serve as the leader.

A second good reason to consider being the leader is this: If you want to be successful and be **more in charge, more in control** of your life, you need to develop leadership skills. If you let everyone do everything for you, instead of being a leader and taking control of your own life...well, you will end up doing things other people want you to do for the rest of your life.

You may already have had experience serving on a committee. You may have learned about leadership by participating in a self-advocacy group. But, even if you haven't had those experiences, you can learn what it takes to lead your planning meeting and decide if you want to have more of a leadership role.

So...just what does it take to lead your own planning meeting?



People who lead meetings are called chairpersons or chair  for short. If you think you want to be the chair of your planning meeting, you need to make sure you want to take on all that work. Leading a meeting means you agree to do whatever it takes to make sure that meeting is a success!

If you are willing to do all the work that it takes to be a committee chair, you should follow these basic rules. If you don't want to do all the work or, for some reason, don't think you can do all the work, maybe you should think about being a co-chair!



In that case, you and someone else would share the responsibilities of being the chair.



What are some of **the responsibilities of the chair?** Well, for one thing the person who is chair of a meeting will want to make sure all the planning is done and the arrangements are made. Once all the arrangements have been made, and everything is in place for the meeting to start, here are some things that the chairperson will do on the day of the meeting.

1. Call the meeting to order.

This means that it is the chairperson's responsibility to get the meeting started. If the chair doesn't eventually call the meeting to order, the team will probably spend the whole time talking about the weather or sports, the latest headlines in the newspaper, a friend they have in common, or some other "small talk!" It is the chair's responsibility to say something like "Let's start this meeting" or "I call this meeting to order" to let everyone know that it is time to get down to business.

2. Introduce all team members.

It is the chair's responsibility to make sure that everyone who is at the meeting is introduced. If there are a lot of people who don't know each other, you might want to have everyone wear name tags. Even if everyone knows each other, you should introduce them and tell something about why they are on the team. If you really don't want to introduce everyone, or don't know everyone, have all the team members introduce themselves. Either way, try to say something nice to everyone and make them feel comfortable.

3. Make sure everyone knows the purpose of the meeting and the expected outcome.

Remember this part? It's important to communicate the purpose of the meeting to all team members. Make sure that everyone knows why they are there and what they are supposed to get done. If you have written these down, read them to everyone. You can put them on the flip chart. Don't assume everyone remembered just because you sent them the purpose and expected outcome before the meeting!

4. Make sure everyone knows the meeting agenda and has a schedule.

This will make your job easier in the long run. It will be easier to keep people focused on the purpose and the outcome if you have an agenda and you, as the leader, can steer people back on topic. Make sure that the agenda has a timeline on it and be sure to stick to the schedule! This is important. If people show up for a one-hour meeting that goes six hours, they will never volunteer to do this again! Use the agenda to keep people on track and schedule another meeting to finish up if the meeting is running too long.

5. Keep the meeting focused on the topic.

It is the chair's job to keep people focused on the topic. Help keep people from telling long stories or talking about things that are not related to the meeting's purpose. Use the agenda. Remind members of the purpose of the meeting. Whatever it takes...keep them focused!

6. Move the meeting along.

We've said this before, but it is important. It is the chair's job to make sure the meeting starts on time and ends on time. You need to make sure that the team doesn't spend too much time on one topic so that there is no time left for other topics.

There are two more things the chair does that are very important:

7. Get team members to participate and stay involved. AND...

8. Assist the team in coming to a decision.

Just like the coach for a sports team, the meeting chair makes sure that everyone is contributing to the best of his/her ability...and that everyone is participating fairly. This is a really important job. It might also be one of the hardest.

There are different ways to get team members to participate in a meeting. Here are some of the suggestions that can help you.

Ways to Help Team Members Participate

If one team member won't participate...there could be different reasons:

--The person may be very nervous. To get the person involved in the conversation, ask him a question he may feel comfortable answering. Ask a question that can't be answered just by a yes or no. Then thank him for contributing.

--The person may feel nothing she says will make any difference. Use questions to get her to contribute something, and then be sure what she says is written down or included in the decision-making process.

--The person might not care about the meeting. Again, you can use questions to get him to say something and then use the same approach—be sure what he says is written down or included in some way in the decision-making process.

If one team member jokes all the time and keeps disrupting the meeting...

Some people do this because they are nervous. Others may do it just for the attention. Either way, you have to let the person know when it's OK to joke and when it's not. Sometimes a joke can help everyone relax. You can let the person know you appreciate her humor and laugh at her jokes before and after the meeting. But when it is time to get to work in the meeting, just ignore her jokes and ask her questions to get her participating in another way.

If one team member does all the talking and keeps interrupting everyone else...

Your job as chair is to be sure everyone on the team gets to contribute. Sometimes you will have to work hard to help get a quiet person involved. Other times you will have to work hard to keep one person from doing all the talking. That person may be talking too much just to impress everyone else, or because he is too eager to participate.

Here's what you can do—politely interrupt the talkative person when he is taking a breath or has stopped for just moment. Say something like, “You make a good point. Let's hear from some of the other team members.” Then turn to another person, look right at her, call her by name and ask “What do you think?” You can also give the talkative person an extra job to do, like taking notes. This may make the person feel more important or will let the person contribute without talking.

If one team member argues all the time...

Some people argue all the time to impress the team or because they want to be the leader. It is important not to show your anger and to help the rest of the team stay calm, too. If you argue back, the person keeps getting the attention he wants. Like the person who clowns around too much, you can ignore some of the person's arguments and direct the conversation to some of the other team members.

Another reason a person may argue is that she believes she is right! In this case, listen carefully to what she says, see if there are things you agree with, and make sure she knows her point of view is heard. You might have to explain to the person that what she said was heard, but that it is important to hear from other people on the team and get their viewpoints as well.

If the whole team seems tense and quiet...

As a leader, you have to deal with group problems as well as people problems! This probably means the members are nervous or afraid something negative will happen. Get everyone talking and calmed down. Start the meeting with a joke to loosen things up. Show you are excited and want to hear everyone's opinion.

If the group won't stay on the topic and seems confused...

If the group seems confused and is wandering, you may need to change your leadership style. That might mean coming up with a different agenda or different way of working. Talk to the members and find out how they want to work together. Involve them in making decisions about how to run the meeting.

Assist the team in coming to a decision.

Your meeting is supposed to help you develop a plan for achieving the things you want in life. This means there will have to be some decisions reached at the meeting...even if it means a decision to disagree...or to make the decision at another meeting! It is sometimes hard for a group to reach a decision, because everyone has a different idea. Here are some things you can do to help the group come to a decision:

✓ Teach them about decision making.

Many people don't know how to make decisions. Use the **DO IT!** process, and show them how to make a decision.

- ✓ Encourage team members to negotiate and compromise.

Remember, negotiating means working out a deal on something that everyone can agree with. To compromise is to agree to something a little different from what you wanted in the first place. Get people to talk about what they would be willing to agree on, and keep people talking and negotiating and compromising.

- ✓ Summarize the discussion.

When it is time to reach a decision, review what has been said so everyone has all the ideas and viewpoints in front of them.

- ✓ Provide specific choices for decisions.

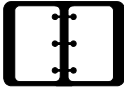
Use your position as leader to pick decision options that have the most support and give team members the chance to choose between them.

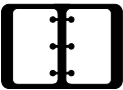
Leading a group is hard work, and these tips don't guarantee everything will work out just right. But, if you follow these tips, you will have more success working with your team. Remember that it takes lots of practice to become a good leader. And being a good team member is just as important.

It is up to you what role you want to take at your planning meeting. Think about what you would be most comfortable doing. How important is it to you to be the leader right now? Would you like to share that responsibility with another person on the team this time?

You are almost at the end of **It's My Future!**

You have accomplished a lot! Before you attend your planning meeting, get ready by doing the following things:

Keep looking at your *Life Visions Book* . Be sure it has the notes and pictures you want to show the things you most want in the different areas of your life. If you still need to add to your book, take the time to do this.

Show your *Life Book*  to the members of your team before you have your planning meeting.

Be sure you have decided on **4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting**. There is a lot to cover at your planning meeting, so be sure you get to talk about the things that are the most important to you.

Decide what role you want to take in your meeting. Talk with the person who usually helps organize your meeting. Talk over the different things that need to be done, and decide what you would like to do to be **more in charge, more in control**.

Perhaps the last thing to consider is this:

Planning is not just a one-time planning meeting.

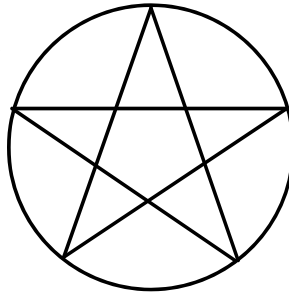
Oh, sure, your planning meeting is an important time to go over all the major areas of your life and to be sure you have goals and objectives for the things you want to accomplish in the next year...or the next several months. But planning is something you do day-to-day throughout your lifetime. You make decisions, find new interests, learn new skills, make new friends and expand your Support Circle, experience different changes in life...all of these things are a part of your planning process.

Continue to use **It's My Future!** and your *Life Book* .

You can look back at any topic to review things you may want to refresh your memory on. You can use the forms and planning worksheets again. Then you can add them...and other pictures...to your *Life Book*.

And be sure to keep showing your *Life Book* to people who can assist you...

people in your **Support Circle**
and others on your planning team.



The more you think about your abilities, interests, needs and preferences, the better you get to know yourself. And the more you practice the decision-making process **DO IT!** the better you get at making decisions that work. Same thing with setting goals. The more you practice all of these things, the better you will get at achieving more of what you want in life.

So, keep planning and keep inviting people to help where and when you need them and you will achieve your goals.

Remember... **It's Your Future!**

APPENDIX

**Making Telephone Calls
to Get Information**



Thinking BIG
Stories About Other Self-Advocates

Goal-Setting Tips



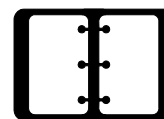
Phone List
for Information on My Planning Meeting Rights



Protecting Myself & Knowing My Rights



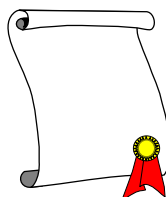
Creating *My Life Visions Book*



Extra Forms

***DO IT!* Worksheet/Options FACT SHEET**
GOAL PLANNER

My Certificate



It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

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Making Telephone Calls to Get Information



It is important to be able to get information about the options, the community resources you have identified for your decision. One way to do this is by making phone calls to those places—the places you have listed on your **DO IT!** worksheet. On the back of the worksheet is the **Options FACT SHEET**. That's a good place to write down the information you get when you make the phone calls. There is an extra copy of those worksheets at the end of this section – use them to make more copies, if you need them.

You will be more successful at making calls if you practice first. To practice making phone calls to gather information about options, you will need:



A phone you can use

Your **Options FACT SHEET**

Your local phone book with yellow pages and blue pages (government agencies)

Depending on what category of places you are calling, there are other resources that can help you.

If you are calling **Fun & Leisure** places, it might also help to have:

Service guide that includes recreation and leisure resources in your area

Entertainment section from your newspaper (often in Friday or weekend papers)

Entertainment newspaper for your area (usually published weekly or every other week)

If you are calling **Work** places, it might also help to have:

Service guide that includes employment programs (this might be included in a social service organization guide put out by the local United Way or other organization in your area)

Newspaper want ads

Directory of businesses in your area, like a directory from the chamber of commerce or better business bureau

If you are calling **Living** places, it might also help to have:

Service guide that includes housing programs (United Way guide or other directory)

Apartment Locator newsletter



ACTION!

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Pick one of the resources you listed on your **Options FACT SHEET** and make a "practice" call now to learn more about the place. Write down the information you get on your fact sheet. Here's what you will want to do when you call. Be sure to include the specific questions you decided you want to ask about the place...its services or activities, days/times, eligibility, and so on.

Try a practice "call" with someone else who is doing **It's My Future!** or practice with your support person right now, before you actually make the call to one of the places on your list.

You: (Dial the number)

Community resource place: "Hello."

You: "I would like to talk to someone about the activities you offer."

Community resource place: "Hold please."

You: (wait)

Community resource place: "Hello. How may I help you?"

You: "I would like to ask a few questions about the activities you offer."

Community resource place: "Fine. What do you need to know?"

You: "I am interested _____

(the kind of activity, service, information you are interested in)

Do you offer that activity? And what other activities and services do you have?"

Community resource place: (answers and you write down the information)

You: "Who can participate? Is there a charge?"

Community resource place: (answers and you write down the information)

You: "How does a person sign up or get started?"

Community resource place: (answers and you write down the information)

You: "Do you have any written information you could send me? Or could I stop by to get more information?"

Community resource place: (answers)

You: Here is my name and address.... (or find out when you can go there to talk with the person and ask for directions on how to get there)

Community resource place: (answers)

You: "Thank you."

It can take a lot of time to make phone calls to collect information. But, be patient, and you will be able to get the information you need. It gets easier as you have more practice making calls.

You can finish making your calls on your own before you continue **It's My Future!**

Be sure to ask someone in your Support Circle or someone else if you need help making the calls and writing down the information you get. You may need to ask the person on the phone to repeat the information if they talk too fast and you do not have time to write it all down. Also, repeat the information back to the person to be sure you got it right.



Something good to know:

You may want to be prepared for phones that are either answered by a **voice mail system** or by a **regular answering machine**.

With the voice mail system you will need to listen carefully for the "prompts." Those are the directions the tape recorded message tells you....for example, "press 1 for such-and-so department, press 2 for some other department..., press 0 or stay on the line if you need to speak to an operator." These systems are all a little different. For example: Another system might say "if you know your party's extension, press that number now...or for a company directory use the touch pad to spell the last name of the person you are calling." Sometimes, if the announcer talks too fast, you'll have to hang up and call back to listen to the messages again.

With the regular answering machine, you want to be prepared with exactly what you want to say when you leave a message. It really helps to practice this.

HINT: If you have used this section to practice making phone calls, you can now return to page **69** in the section on **Decision Making with *DO IT!***

Thinking **BIG**

Stories About Other Self-Advocates

What's **thinking BIG?** It means—don't just stop looking for options with the first places or first ideas you think of. Don't give up if you can't think of anything or if the places you find just won't work out. Look for another way if the first thing you try doesn't work out like you want. There are lots of different community resources, and lots of different ways to of reaching a goal. It will probably take some effort and some time, but there's usually more than one way to get to do something you really want to do.

Consider a few stories that give examples of thinking **BIG** —

Roxanne had a job in an office. Her job was a long-term temporary job. She was a clerical assistant. (This was her first job in the community. Before that she worked for several years in a sheltered workshop.) Roxanne's job included filing, making copies, putting packets of information together and typing envelopes to mail the packets out to different people, entering information on the computer.

Roxanne had worked in this job about a year. Her goal was to find a permanent job. One day the place where she worked posted a job opening. It was a data entry job. It was a permanent job and paid more, too. The job announcement said anyone who applied for the job had to have experience entering data on the computer. Roxanne had experience. She decided she would apply. She put in her application. She waited several days...a week... Nothing happened.

Roxanne guessed she wasn't going to have a chance to interview. She was about to forget the whole thing. But then she talked to Eileen, a coworker who was in another department. Eileen encouraged Roxanne not to give up so easily. Eileen helped Roxanne contact the head of the department where the job opening was.

Eileen and Roxanne told the department head about the work Roxanne had been doing with her department. He said he had already been interviewing other applicants. But, he agreed Roxanne had the qualifications, so he said he would make sure she got an interview.

Eileen suggested Roxanne practice for the interview, so the two of them met several times—at breaks and lunch—to practice.

When Roxanne interviewed, she felt more confident because she had practiced. And...best of all! She got the job!

If Roxanne had just forgotten the whole thing after applying for the job and not hearing anything...well, do you think she'd have gotten the job? No way! But she thought of talking to someone who could help her. Talking to Eileen gave Roxanne a new idea of what to do. By not just giving up...but by looking for another way, Roxanne got the interview...and the job!

Check this one out:

Pam and Roger are married. They thought they'd like to go to a community theater to see plays but found that the ticket prices were too high for their budget. Oh, maybe they could have afforded one ticket, but they wanted to be able to see the shows together.

Roger listened to the radio a lot and heard about a contest to win some free tickets. So he entered the contest. He was sure he'd win! But, unfortunately, he didn't, and Roger felt rotten about it.

It would have been easy to forget the whole thing at that point, but Pam and Roger decided to find another way. They talked with Claire, a staff person at the agency that provides them services. Claire suggested they look in the newspaper—that sometimes there are coupons. They looked in the paper every day that week, but there weren't any coupons there. Then they found the Friday paper's entertainment section, and there were coupons! "Buy one—get one free." They would only have to pay for one ticket, and they'd get the second ticket free. Both of them could go see the show for the price of one. Problem solved!

Pam and Roger knew they couldn't afford to just go to the theater and buy tickets. So they looked for another way—Roger's idea to enter the contest was great...only problem is that the chances of winning a contest are usually *very small*. Entering the contest was not at all a sure way to get tickets. So Roger and Pam looked for another way—this time they found another **community resource** which just happened to be...their newspaper! With coupons!

And here's another example:

Neil wanted to take art classes to learn to paint. He found out that the only place in his community that gave art classes charged a lot of money...more money than he could afford to pay (sounds familiar, doesn't it?). Neil thought he would have to give up his dream of learning to paint. But, fortunately, he talked with a bunch of different people about his dream. He talked with his family, with staff, with friends...and you know what happened? He talked to enough people that he finally found out there was a hospital that used volunteers to help children who were in the hospital paint pictures and do other kinds of art projects. The hospital needed more volunteers, so Neil called the hospital. A friend went with Neil to meet the volunteer coordinator there. Turns out that Neil was able to become an assistant helping Irene, the volunteer in charge of the children's art program. Irene said she would help Neil learn while he helped the children. And it wouldn't cost Neil anything...just his transportation to get there.

Neil didn't stop looking when the most obvious place didn't work out. When he found out that the art classes cost too much money, he could have given up. But he kept on looking and talking to people about his interest. And he found art in the hospital! Not the first place you'd think of, huh? Notice that the way Neil got to do the thing he was interested in—art—was by becoming a volunteer. (HINT: Volunteering can sometimes be a really good way to get to do **Fun & Leisure** activities you are interested in. And for very little or no money!)

Goal - Setting Tips

GOAL-SETTING Tip #1

Your **Goals** and **steps** should be based on the decisions **YOU** have made and based on your unique interests and abilities. You need to be involved in writing your own goals.

Consider Chris' goal of using the Y to take Water Aerobics. Chris' goal is –

Based on an outcome Chris decided: to try Water Aerobics.

Based on Chris' unique interests and abilities: Chris loves swimming.

And, Chris was involved in writing the goal.

GOAL-SETTING Tip #2

You have to write **Goals** that you can reach and that you have some control over reaching.

Chris' goal is definitely something that can be reached...and Chris has some control over reaching it. Chris will ask Support Circle members for help when it's needed.

GOAL-SETTING Tip #3

Your **Goals** and **steps** have to be able to be measured. That means you have to be able to tell how you are doing on them.

You've got to be able to tell if you are getting close to reaching your goal. You've got to be able to tell when you have reached your goal. Otherwise, you'd just keep working on it and working on it.

Chris' goal is "Within two months, I will be able to attend the Y so that I can take the class in Water Aerobics." Chris' goal has a time–2 months–for something to happen. Two months from now, Chris will be able to look and see if "going to the Y" is happening yet. If it's not happening yet, Chris can change the time period or make other changes that will help in reaching the goal.



ACTION! Let's turn the page and look at some examples...

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Ray is **planning** to move into his own apartment. He is setting a goal about learning to cook. **Circle** the goal Ray can measure:

I will: get good at cooking. OR learn to cook five different dinners.

What is “good at cooking?” It would be awfully hard to tell when Ray met his goal. But look at the other goal—“Ray will learn to cook five different dinners.” Now he can tell how he is doing. He can ask himself...Have I learned how to cook one dinner? Have I learned two, three, four and finally five?”

So...the answer is "Learn to cook five different dinners."

Wanda has decided to start walking regularly to get in better shape. **Circle** the goal Wanda can measure.

I will: take a walk after dinner every day this week. OR go walking a lot.

The answer is “take a walk after dinner every day this week.” Think about it...what is "a lot," anyway? Wanda wouldn't be able to measure "walking a lot," but she can measure whether she walks after dinner each day this week.

GOAL-SETTING Tip #4

Your **Goals** and **steps** should have a time to start and a time to end.

You want to put a start date or time on your goal and also a finishing date. This is to help you keep track of how you are doing on the **Goal**. So you don't just keep working on it, working on it, working on it...and never knowing if you are getting any closer to reaching your goal. It's also to get you started on working toward your goal instead of always saying that you will start it tomorrow! You should have a time when you start and a time when you want to finish.

The time you start is usually the easier part. The finishing date is the tricky part. You don't want to set the date so that you can't reach the **Goal**, because then you will just have to set a new date. On the other hand, you don't want to set it too far away, or you'll forget about it.

Usually when you set a **Goal**, you also set a time that you will reach that **Goal**.



Something good to know:

It is important to keep track of how you are doing in working to achieve your goals. There are lots of ways to keep track...You can keep your **GOAL PLANNER** in a place where it is easy for you to look at it each day or each week. When you complete an action step, you can

- check it off your list
- say something positive to yourself, like "I'm doing a good job!"
- reward yourself in some small way –
 - like taking a few minutes to listen to some of your favorite music, or
 - taking a walk, or
 - having a bubble bath or a nice long shower, or
 - telling a friend what you just accomplished.

HINT: Save the big reward for when you reach your goal! Or...maybe reaching the goal is the reward itself!

Notice how you are doing. Give yourself little rewards when you have achieved something makes you feel good. By doing these things, you will be encouraged to keep on moving ahead to reach your goal.

Some goals may have steps where it would be helpful to keep a daily or weekly record of things you are doing. Think about that example we gave about drinking water instead of soda. If that were your goal, you could track your progress every day by making a note on the calendar to show if you did or did not drink a soda that day. Or by noting how many sodas you did drink to see if you are getting closer to your goal of zero (0) sodas per day.

Phone List



for Information on My Planning Meeting Rights

To learn about laws that affect your rights and your planning meeting, you can contact one or more of the following organizations. You will want to fill in the numbers of the local organizations that can help you. If you don't know where to find these numbers, ask your support person to help you do so.

My local or state chapter of The Arc:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

My local self-advocacy group:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

My local Transition Planning Council:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

My state's Protection & Advocacy agency:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

My state's Developmental Disabilities Planning Council:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Other local organization(s):

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Here are some national organizations who should be able to help you get in touch with their local chapters or find the information you need about laws in your state:

National Down Syndrome Congress Phone: 1-800-232-6372

People First International Phone: 503/362-0336

The Arc of the U.S. Phone: 1-800-433-5255

National Association of Protection & Advocacy Systems Phone: 202/408-9514 (Voice & TDD)

National Autism Hotline Phone: 304/525-8014

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. Phone: 202/776-0406

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

Protecting Myself & Knowing My Rights



Each state has a **Protection and Advocacy Center** that helps people with disabilities when their rights are not being protected. Call the national center at 202/408-9514 and ask them to give you the phone number for the center in your state.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a law that says people with disabilities should be treated like those without disabilities. You can call the **Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center** for information about the ADA at 1-800-949-4232. You can find out about simplified ADA training materials and other ADA information through The Arc's publication distribution service on the world wide web at www.thearcpub.org. You can contact the **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division** at 1-800-514-0301 if you think your rights have been violated and to find out what you can do to make sure your rights are protected.

The **American Bar Association** has a Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law. They have a resource book that lists attorneys throughout the United States who work with people who have disabilities. Some attorneys specialize in ADA cases, or Disability Law or Social Security Disability. To find out about attorneys near you, call the commission at 202-662-1570.

People with disabilities who are living in the community are faced with the possibility of being hurt or victimized by **Other People**, or of being wrongly accused of doing something they did not do. It is important to **LEARN ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS AS A CITIZEN**. Check with your local chapter of **The Arc** or your local **Police Station** to find out if they can help you learn about how to **STAY SAFE** and **SPEAK OUT** if someone hurts you or tries to get you to do something that is illegal.

You can call the **POLICE** for three other things:

1. If you are in **IMMEDIATE DANGER** (for example, someone is trying to break into your home or apartment), pick up the telephone and dial 911. **CALL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY!**
2. If you need to **REPORT** a crime that has already occurred, or if you want to **LEARN** more about your rights from police officers, you can look up their phone number in the **PHONE BOOK** under "government services section." In this section you will find the phone number for the "police department." A few communities have a **311** number for non-emergency calls.
3. If you are **VICTIMIZED** (hit, abused, hurt, raped), you can call the local victim assistance agency in your area. They may be called "Rape Crisis Centers" or "Victim Assistance". Sometimes they are located within the police department. To find a victim assistance agency near you, call your local police department or look under "social services" in the phone book for "Rape Crisis Center." You can also call the National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (that's 1-800-799-7233).

Creating My Life Visions Book

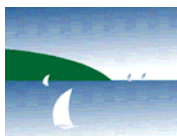


GOAL: This section will tell you how to create your own *Life Visions Book*, a book of pictures and notes about your personal goals for the things you want in your life. **HINT:** Once you have started your book, be sure to return to **What is My Dream?** on page **11** and continue there.

What exactly is a *Life Visions Book* anyway?

It's a book you create for yourself...

It will hold pictures



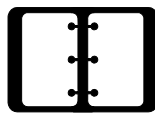
of what you want in your life.

Pictures of your... **interests, hopes and dreams.**

Why are you going to make yourself a *Life Book*?

Good question! Remember, you're planning for things you want in your life. A great way to keep your dreams and goals right where you can see them is to create pictures of them. By putting these pictures in a book, you can keep the pictures together and look at them often. This will help you see your goals often so you can keep doing things to reach them. Also, your book will be like a picture album that makes it is easy for you to show other people what your dreams and goals are...people like your friends, family, members of your planning team...people who can help you reach your goals.

Talk to the person who is providing support to you and ask for help in getting these supplies:



A looseleaf, 3-ring binder

Plastic page protectors (for 3-ring binder)

Blank paper (if you don't have plastic page protectors, you will need to get a 3-hole punch and punch holes in these)

Colored markers

Scissors and glue stick, glue or paste

A collection of different kinds of pictures from sources like:

It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

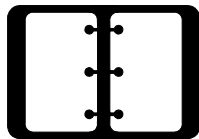
magazines,
"clip art" software (computer CD-ROMs),
pictures, like those in your family album,
or use a camera to take pictures.

As you work through the activities in **It's My Future!** be on the lookout for pictures that show your interests and goals for the things you want in life.

Then put these pictures in your *Life Book*. You can include photographs of the actual places, people, activities you want in your life. But it may be easier to use pictures of the kinds of places and activities you might want in your life – pictures from magazines, computer CD-ROMs or other sources.

You can also add notes, drawings and some of the activities you will do as part of **It's My Future!**

Assembling your *Life Visions Book*



Here's how to start creating your own *Life Book* right now!

You will need your 3-ring binder and some of the other supplies above. After the explanation we give below, you will see pages that are for different parts of your *Life Book*. A few of the pages are forms or worksheets from activities you will do as you work through the manual, while others are blank pages with headings for different areas of life. There is also an extra set of blank forms for the decision-making and goal-setting process. HINT: You may want to make a complete copy of these pages and leave the extras in the manual in case you need another set later. Or, you can go ahead and cut out the pages to use now.

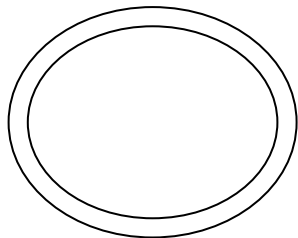
Here is a list and explanation of the pages for your *Life Book*:

Title page - *My Life Visions Book*

Carefully cut this page out of this manual and slide it into the first plastic page in the binder (if you don't have plastic pages, just punch holes in it and insert it in the binder directly). On this title page, write your name and, if you like, add a picture of yourself or something you particularly like, or draw something on it to show that this is **YOUR** book!

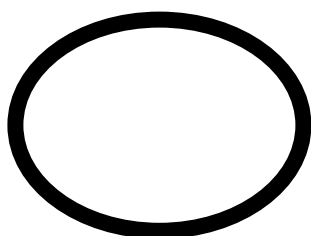
How I'm Doing...

This is a page that shows pictures of things in all the major areas of life. Each area has a ring around it like this –



Carefully copy or cut this page out of the manual and slide it into a plastic page in your binder. As you work through **It's My Future!** each time you set a goal in another area of your life, put that information ...into your *Life Book*.

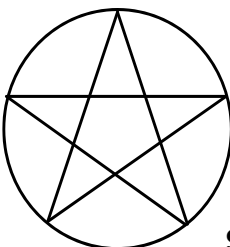
Then, take out this page and color in the circle around that set of pictures –



This will be a way for you to "track your progress" to see how you are doing in getting ready for your planning meeting.

You can celebrate each time you color the circle for another area of life!

My Support Circle



Next, we suggest you add your **Support Circle** – that page you began in the section called **My Planning Meeting**. Once you begin to add names to your Support Circle, you can clip that page out of the manual and put it into your *Life Book*. It's good to keep your Support Circle page close by since those are the people you will often be talking to about your goals.

My Dreams



If you jotted down a note or picture about a dream of yours in the section called **What is My Dream?** this would be a good place to insert that page or pages.

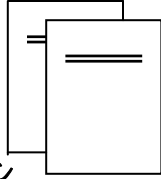
4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting

In the chapter called **Communicating Effectively** you made a list of things you want to be sure to talk about at your meeting. Review your list—if you want to change something on it, that's fine. Be sure to add your list to your book so you will have it with you when you go to your meeting.

My Interests & Abilities

Next we suggest you add your list of Interests and Abilities. Clip it out from the section called **My Interests, Abilities & Preferences** and put it into your book.

Planning pages



Next in your *Life Book* there are title pages for most of the major areas of your life. These are the areas of life that may be discussed at your planning meeting. As you make decisions and set goals in these different areas, find pictures that show your interests and goals. Paste the pictures onto these pages...or slide the pictures into the plastic sleeves, if those are available. You can add as many plastic pages or blank pages as you need for the pictures that are important to you.

You can also put in the exercises and other worksheets you will do throughout **It's My Future!** as you make decisions and set goals.



Your *Life Book* has a real purpose—to show your **interests** and your **goals** so that you can easily see them and keep focused on them and so you can share them with other people who can help you reach your goals.

It's a book you can use all year...not just at your planning meeting, because...
to get what you want in life, you don't do it all in one day at one meeting.

You work on your plan every day. So you'll want to keep your *Life Book* handy so you can look at it often to remind you of what you want to have in your life. And it will help if you show it all year long to other people, especially people who can help you reach your goals.

Remember, at various times during **It's My Future!** you will be able to add pictures and notes to your *Life Book*. It is also a great idea for you to be on the lookout for pictures between our sessions so you can continue to add them to your book. Look over your *Life Book* often, and show it to the people who are important to you. By adding pictures, drawings and notes to your *Life Book*, you will have pictures relating to your goals in each area of your life by the time your planning meeting rolls around.

Over the months and years ahead, you can keep your *Life Book*. You can take out or add or change pictures or pages as you reach your goals or as your interests change. Your book will continue to show your hopes and dreams throughout your life. Or...you could review your book each year, and start a new one. HINT: Keep the old one to remind yourself and others of your progress.

NOTE: If you want to hear how a *Life Book* helped another self-advocate start to reach his dreams, read this **True Story...**

When we first met James, he was living with his mother. (We'll call him James, but that's not his real name). He spent most of every day at an adult day program at a local church. Each morning the church van picked James up at home and took him to the program where he spent time with other people with disabilities as well as older people. Sometimes there were classes to learn things about everyday life. Lunch was always served in the middle of the day. A lot of the time was just free time.

James had always lived with his mother. She was in her 80's now and was not in very good health. She didn't want James to go anywhere except to the day program, because she worried about him. James had never held a job or even been in a job training program. He had never learned to ride the city buses. He did not have any friends except at the day program. He thought he might like to do some new things but wasn't sure how to start. He also hoped one day to live in his own apartment.

A volunteer at the day program named Tina got to know James a little bit. She began to talk with him about things he might be interested in. Tina brought a lot of different magazines to the program, and James started looking through them. He began to see things he might be interested in.

With Tina's assistance, James began to create a *Life Book*. He cut out pictures of golfers, because he always thought he would like to learn to play golf. Other pictures were of apartments. Some pictures were of places where James thought he would like to travel someday. In the front of the book James wrote a list of the things he wanted in his life.

James looked at his *Life Book* often and added other pictures every time he found something that really interested him. He showed his book to the people in the day program. Sometimes he read them the list he had written in the front of the book.

Tina asked James if he'd like to show his *Life Book* to his brother and sister, Al and Diane. James had never before talked with them about his dream of living in an apartment or doing any new things in his life. But he decided to show them his *Life Book*. It was the first time Al or Diane ever knew that James had interests and dreams for his life, too.

And, do you know, when James' mother became ill and needed to be in a nursing home for a couple of months, Al and Diane helped James get the supports he needed to try living in his own apartment. It didn't all happen at once. It took planning and effort by James and his family...but it happened. And this was the first time James had had the chance to see one of his dreams become real.



Something good to know:

This story happens to be about a man, because that's who happened to have this particular experience. BUT...there are plenty of successes that women with disabilities have in their personal planning, too.

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My Life Visions Book

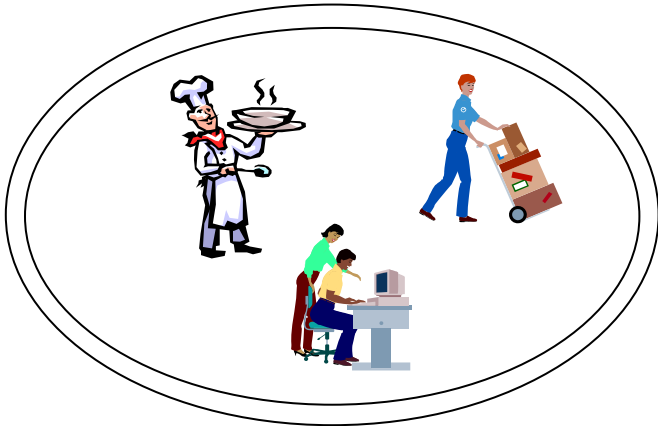
It's My Future!

A National Gateway to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

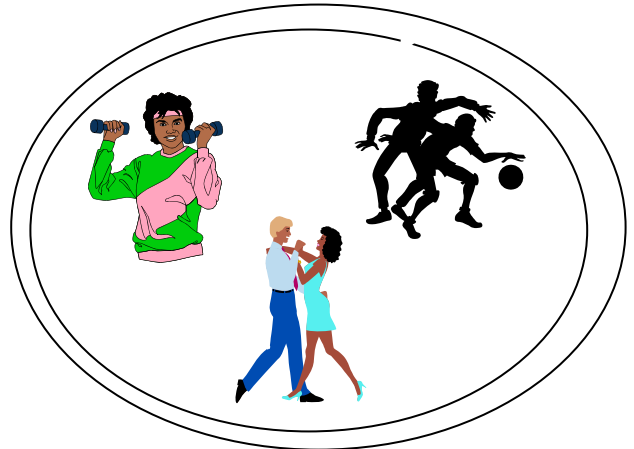
HOW I'M DOING...

When I have made a decision & set a goal for an area of my life, I color in the circle around that area.

WORK



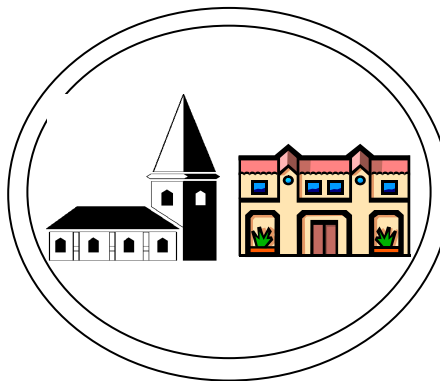
FUN & LEISURE



LEARNING



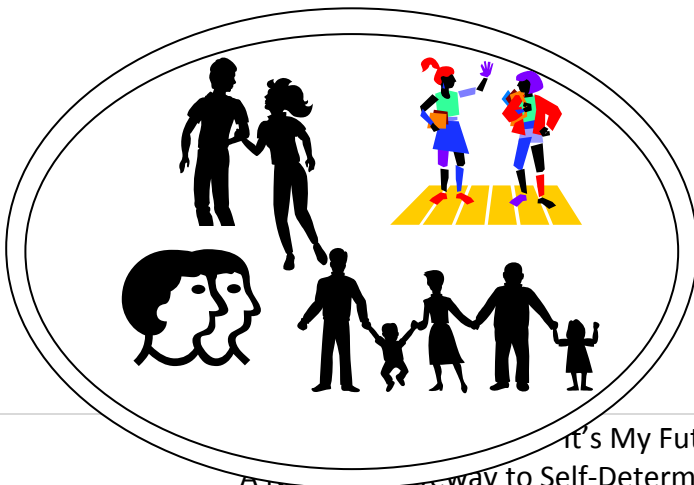
COMMUNITY



LIVING



PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS



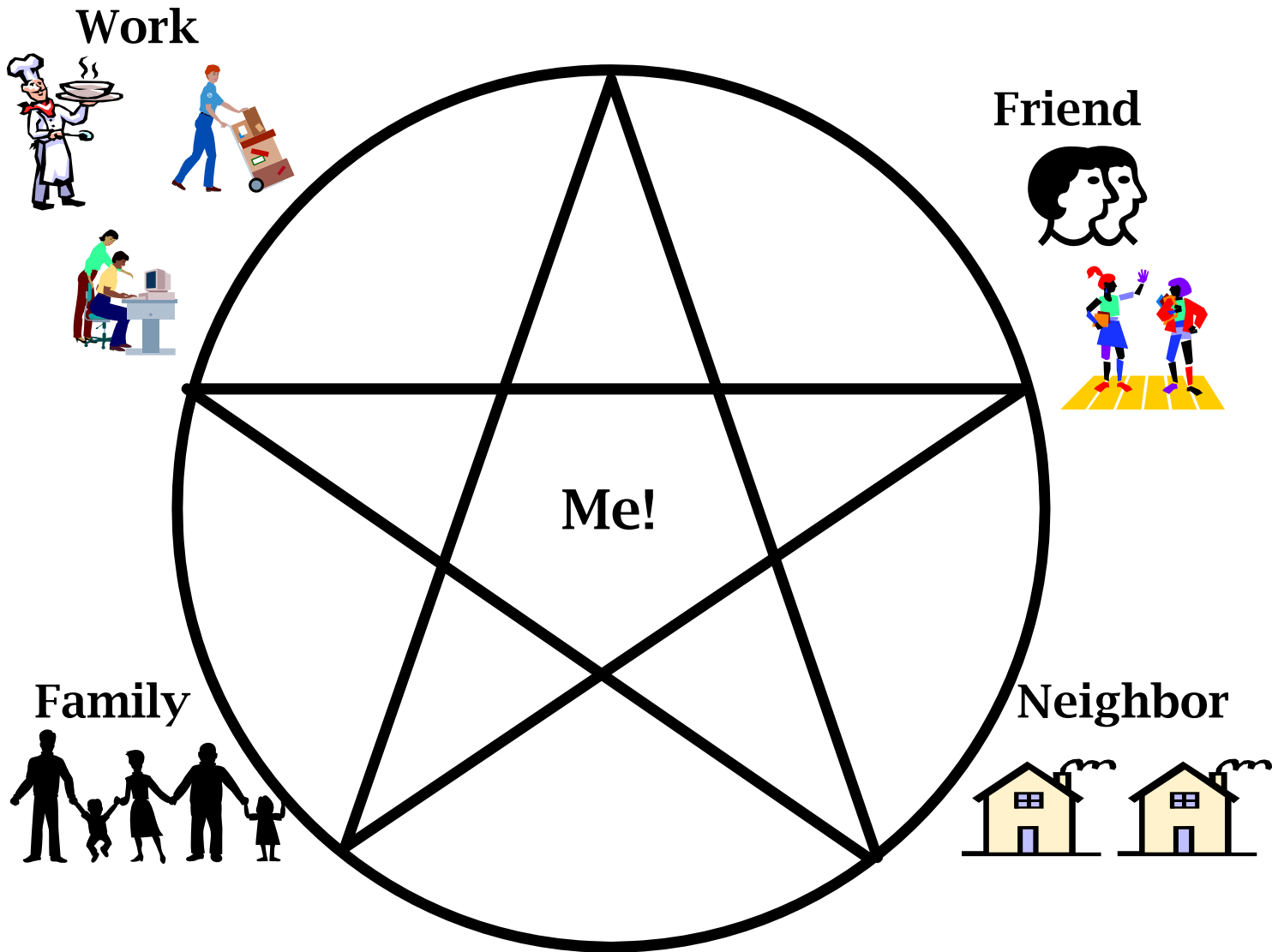
TRANSPORTATION

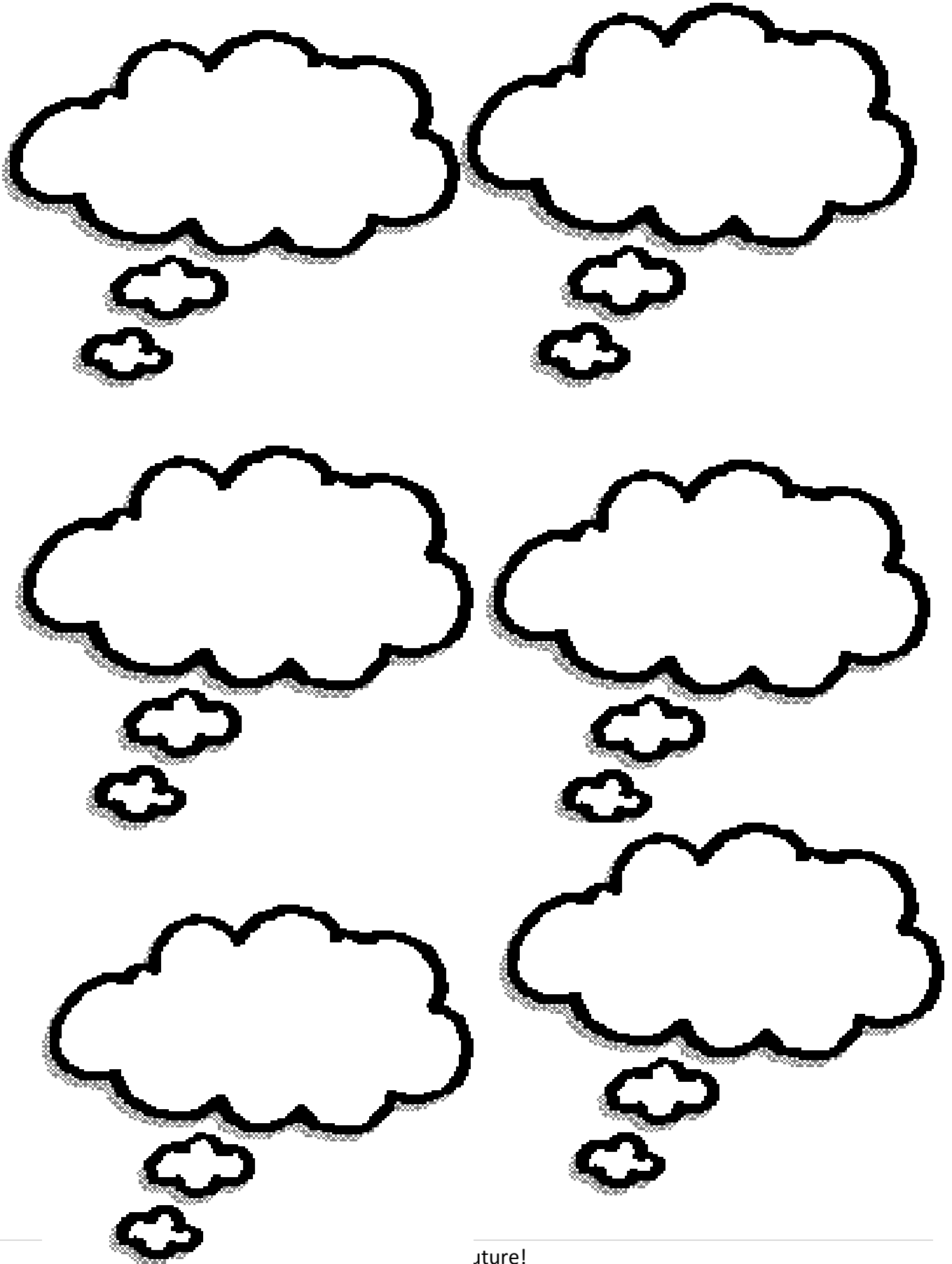


It's My Future!

Another way to Self-Determination (www.aucd.org/ngsd)

My Support Circle





uture!

4 Things I Really Want to Talk About at My Meeting

1.

2.

3.

4.

My Interests  **Things I Really Like to Do**

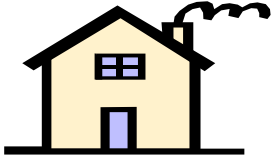
My Abilities – Things I Do Best





Work





Living



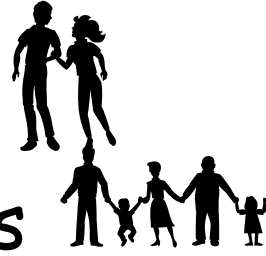


Fun & Leisure





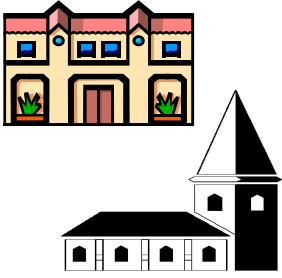
Personal Relationships





Learning





Community Activities & Transportation



DO IT!

Define your problem - “I will make a decision about

Outline your options

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Identify the outcome of each option

Positive 😊

Negative ☹️

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Take action (I pick the option with the **outcome** that's best for me)

Get excited!

Options FACT SHEET

1. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities/What cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

2. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities/What cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

3. Name of the place: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Who I talked to: _____

What activities/What cost: _____

Days/times activities can be done: _____

Eligibility (who can use this place): _____

How do I register: _____

GOAL PLANNER

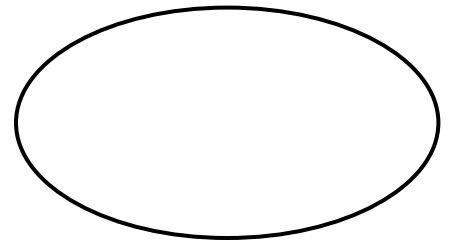
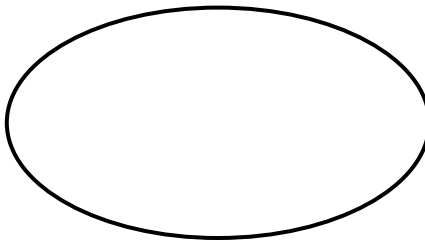
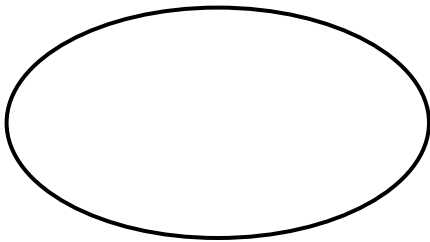
**My decision
outcome**

(I write the outcome from **Take action** on my **DO IT!** worksheet)

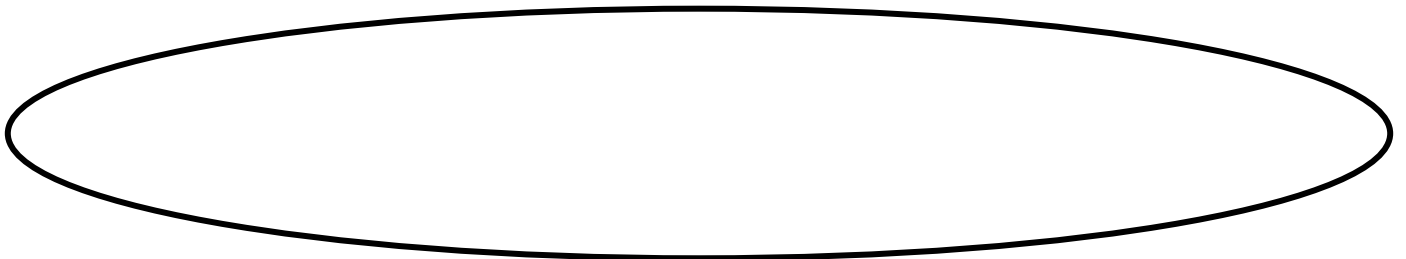


(I write one goal—something to aim for—that will help me make my decision outcome a reality)

I write some **steps** I need to take – things I need to do – to start working toward my goal.



I pick **1 step** to start working on first. Then I list the smaller **steps** to make that step happen.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____