

THOUGHTS ABOUT



MY LIFE



This workbook began with a wish to help people to write stories about their lives. Questions are outlined in this workbook in ways we hope will help people speak up through their stories. People will have opportunity to write about different parts of their lives. We expect they will become more certain about things in their life that they want to remain the same as well as things that they wish would change. Our belief is that if we pay attention to what people say is important to them, we can act on what we learn. Only then will we truly support them in ways that are unique to each person.

The questions outlined in the workbook are primarily derived from materials used to develop Essential Lifestyle Plans, especially “Developing First Plans”, “Listen to Me”, and “Reviewing Criteria for First Plans” by Michael Smull. Other materials referenced include “Read My Lips, It’s My Choice” by Bill Allen, and “Capacity Works” by Beth Mount.

This particular workbook was developed by Karen Manning, Robin Reale, Michael Smull and Liz Obermeyer. Preparation of this workbook was partially supported by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation. Their support should not be construed as an endorsement of this work. The opinions expressed in the workbook are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation.

A MESSAGE TO SELF ADVOCATES AND OTHERS WHO WANT TO WRITE THEIR STORIES IN THIS BOOK

Welcome to the “Thoughts About My Life” book. It is a book for you. You can use it any way you want. Many people use it in one of three different ways.

- **To write about things in their life that are important to them.**
- **To get better at reading and writing.**
- **To have fun writing and reading their own stories.**

You could even use it for all three reasons. The questions in your book can help you think about how you want your life to be. How you use this book is up to you.

You can write about things you like. You can write about things you don’t like. Your book is a way to tell people about what is important to you. It can help you tell people about the things in your life that you want to stay the same. It can also help you tell people about the things in your life that you want to change.

(Note to People Helping: Be sure to help the person decide when they begin which of the three purposes or even another purpose they might have for using the book.)

HOW YOU CAN GET STARTED

- 1. Read the table of contents.**
- 2. Pick the subject that is most interesting to you.**
- 3. Read one question at a time.**
- 4. How do you want to answer the question?**
- 5. Write a story that gives your answer to the question. You can use words. You can paste pictures.**
- 6. Read the question again.**
- 7. Look at your answers to the question.**
- 8. What other ways can you answer the question?**
- 9. Share your book with people you trust to help you.**
- 10. Share your book with people who care about you.**

This book is private. It belongs to:

Please don't read it unless you have my permission.

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PEOPLE IN MY LIFE



1. There are people who live with me. The people who live with me are ...

2. There are people that I want to live with. The names of the people I want to live with are...

3. There are people that I don't want to live with. The names of the people I don't want to live with are ...

4. There are people who help me at my house or apartment. The names of the people who help me at my house or apartment are ...

5. There are people that I want to help me at my house or apartment. The people I want to help me at my house or apartment are ...

6. There are people that I don't want to help me at my house or apartment. The people I don't want to help me at my house or apartment are ...

7. People help me at work. The names of the people who help me at work are ...

8. There are people that I want to help me at work. The names of the people that I want to help me at work are ...

9. There are people that I don't want to help me at work. The names of the people that I don't want to help me at work are ...

10. There are people I like to have fun with. I have fun when I am with ...

11. Some people help me feel better when I am sad. The names of people I talk to when I am sad are ...

12. Some people help me to be happy. The names of people who help me to be happy are ...

13. Some people do things that make me upset or angry. The people who make me upset or angry are ...

14. There are people I want to see more often. I want to spend more time with ...



MY WORK DAY



1. I go to work. I know it's time to get out of bed on a work day because ...

2. First I get out of bed. After I get out of bed I ...

3. I get dressed for work. This is the way I like to get dressed. First I...

Then I...

Then I...

4. I try to get to work on time. The time I leave for work is ...

5. We break for lunch at work. At lunchtime I like to be able to ...

6. The time I finish at work is _____.

7. I leave work and go ...

11. On a workday I have my dinner at _____.

12. The way I like to eat my dinner is. . .

13. Do I have to work tomorrow? On Monday night I like to...

14. On Tuesday night I like to...

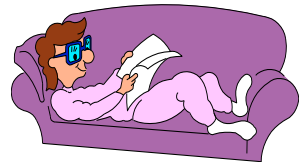
15. On Wednesday night I like to ...

16. On Thursday night I like to ...

17. Some days I have a good time at work. On a good day at work ...

18. Some days I have a bad time at work. On a bad day at work ...

17. Sometimes I think about having a new job. The kind of job I dream about is ...



MY DAY OFF



1. On my day off, I want to get out of bed at a time that I want. The time I want to get out of bed on my day off is _____.

2. It is my day off. I get out of bed. Then I like to ...

Then I...

Then I...

3. It is my day off.. In the morning I like to ...

4. At lunchtime on my day off I like to ...

5. In the afternoon on my day off I want to ...

6. At dinner time on my day off I like to ...

8. Sometimes I have a great time on my day off. Things that happen on a great day off are ...

5. Sometimes I have a terrible time on my day off. Things that happen on a terrible day off are ...

SPECIAL DAYS

1. I like to celebrate my birthday in my own way. On my birthday, I want to be able to ...

2. There are holidays that I really enjoy. My favorite holidays are ...

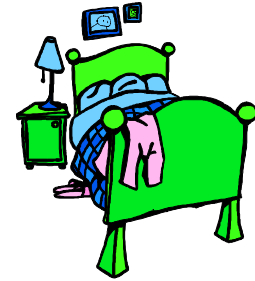
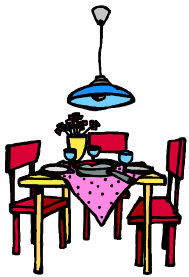
3. There are things I want to do on my favorite holidays. The things I like to do on the holidays I like best are ...

4. There are religious holidays and traditions that are important to me. Special religious days in my life are ...

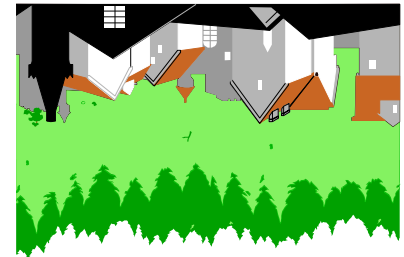
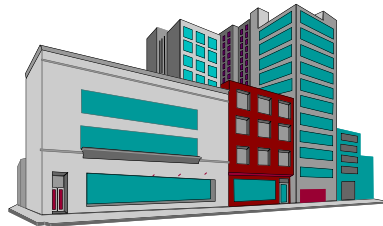
5. There are things I do to celebrate my religious holidays. The things I do on these special days are ...

6. There are other days that are special only to me. Other special days in my life are ...

7. There are things I like to do on my own special days. The things I like to do on my own special days are ...



MY HOME



1. I have a place to live. The place where I live is ...

2. I have a favorite room. My favorite room is ...

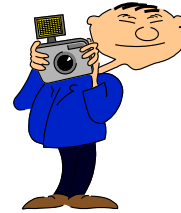
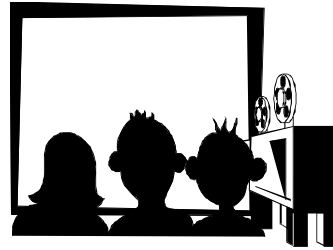
3. It is my favorite room because ...

4. There are things I like to do at my house or apartment. I like to ...

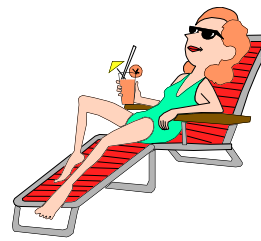
5. These are the things I like about my house or apartment. The things I want to stay the same are...

**6. There are some things I would change about my house or apartment.
The things I would change are ...**

7. Sometimes I dream about the kind of home I really want. In my dreams, my home is...



MY KIND OF FUN



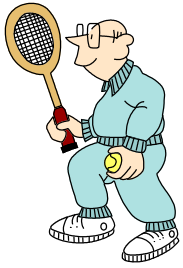
1. There are places I like to go when I want to have fun. The places I go to have fun are...

2. There are places I like to go to when I want to have something good to eat. The places I like to go to eat are...

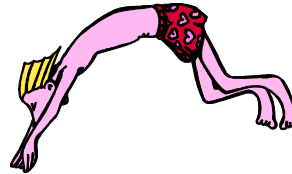
3. There are things I like to do to enjoy myself. My favorite things to do are...

4. Sometimes I go away for a vacation. On vacation I like to...

6. There are places I wish I could go. The places I would love to go to are...



THINGS I CAN DO



1. There are many things I can do well. Things I do well are ...

2. I do many things at home. The things I can do best at home are ...

3. I do a lot of things at work. The things I do best at work are...

4. I do things for myself. The things I can do best for myself are...

5. I do things to help other people in my life. The things I do that help other people are ...

6. I do things in my community. Things I can do in my community are ...

7. Sometimes I think about things I wish I could do. Some things I wish I could do are...



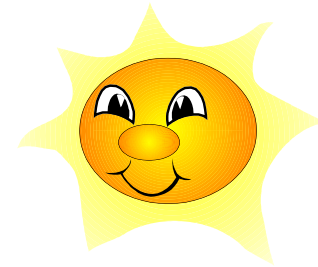
SOME HELP I NEED

**1. Everybody needs help sometimes. Sometimes I need people to help me.
The kind of people I want to help me are...**

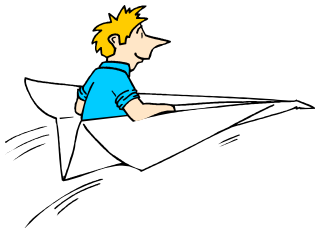
2. There are things I want people to help me to do. Things I want people to help me to do are...

3. People try to help in ways that make me uncomfortable. The things people do that make me uncomfortable are...

4. People help me in ways that make me very comfortable. The things people do that help me to be comfortable are ...



MY DREAMS



1. There are some things I'd like to change about my life. The things I want to change in my life are...

2. Sometimes I dream about my future. The things I dream about for my future are...
