

# Creating a Good Life in Community

## A Guide on Person-Directed Planning



**This *Person-directed Planning Guide* has been designed by:**

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## To the reader

This *Guide on Person-Directed Planning*<sup>1</sup> has been written to assist families and people with developmental disabilities to plan for their future. It was developed to:

- highlight the importance of building a life in community
- show how the process of person-directed planning gives you more choice and control over your lives
- provide direction during times of transition
- offer practical suggestions on how you can proceed.

Person-directed planning puts the person with a disability at the heart of important decisions that affect their life.

## About this guide

### **Transition**

This *Guide* provides some steps in which to approach person-directed planning.

Change can be exciting and challenging for lots of people. The transition from high school life to life as an adult can be particularly so. It is a time for you as the person leaving high school and your family to make important decisions about the future. These decisions include making choices about education, employment, volunteering, relationships, community participation and social involvement. Person-directed planning is an interactive, dynamic, person-focused, ongoing process that helps bring clarity to the decision-making process. It enables the identification of opportunities and experiences that are available in your community. It will help you to prepare, plan, set goals and take action to assist with a successful transition into life as an adult. Understanding and undertaking the steps involved in person-directed planning is often the first step required to building a good life in community.

### **Language**

This *Guide* avoids jargon and labels that have traditionally been used to describe people with disabilities, so does not use words like *client* or *consumer*. As a person with a disability, this writing has been addressed to 'you,' as the person who is directing the planning process. However, this *Guide* recognizes that you may want and need to have the help and support of family and/or friends to assist you with decisions. This *Guide* recognizes that there are many people who want you to have a good life built in community.

## **About person-directed planning**

We use the term *person-directed planning* throughout this *Guide*. Some people use phrases like ‘person-centred planning’ to talk about an ongoing planning process that helps to determine life paths. We prefer the term *person-directed* because it is clearer about the fact that it is you who is directing the process. Person-directed planning is an ongoing process that begins with listening in order to understand what it is that you want in your life. It builds on your dreams, strengths and capabilities. It is focused on the development of relationships as well as on ways you can access community resources to support a good life. Understanding what is of value and how you can participate in your community is key to the process – things like how you spend your day.

## **Values and beliefs**

There are values and beliefs that are the foundation of person-directed planning. They include:

- *Inclusion* – everyone wants to be a participating member of their community
- *Citizenship* –rights and responsibilities, valued roles, and choosing from a range of opportunities that enable one to learn, explore and participate
- *Self-determination* – everyone wants to have choice and control over their life
- *Community as a First Resource* – much of what we want in our life can be found in community – opportunities for jobs, volunteering, recreation, relationships and experiences. Your community is rich in possibilities
- *Contribution and Participation* – building on the gifts and talents that we all have will lead each of us to discover our own unique way to contribute and participate in community.

At the heart of all the planning approaches is the belief that every single individual has their own life to lead – a life that is right for them.<sup>2</sup> As a result, everyone’s plan will be different.

## **Community**

‘Being in community’ is not just about where we live – it is about our human need to belong and participate with others in families, neighbourhoods, networks and groups. The community is many different things to each person. This *Guide* acknowledges that you want a sense of belonging and comfort in your life, and it will help you think about your own community, what it has to offer, its diversity and your place in it. It will also help you to think about how you can use your gifts and talents to contribute to a life in community, and how you might build a day that brings meaning to your life. This *Guide* encourages you to be a participating citizen of your community. This is a principle upon which person-directed planning is built.

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*A person-directed plan is about you and your life, now and in the future. It lets others know and understand what you want and what you need, how you want to do things, and who you want to help you. Person-directed plans can be short or long. They can have pictures, words, or both. You can do it yourself or get someone to help you. You can choose because the plan begins with you.*

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## What is person-directed planning?

Person-directed planning is an ongoing process that helps you think about the future. When people need the support of their family, friends, and their community to be able to live the kind of life they want, it is especially important to consider planning for the days and years ahead.

There are some steps you can go through with the help of family and friends to figure out what you want and need in your life. Person-directed planning isn't so new and it really isn't hard for you to do. It is about supporting the choices you make about your life, such as:

- how to spend each day
- who to spend time with
- where to live
- what are your hopes and dreams for the future.

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*"Not being able to speak is not the same as not having anything to say."*

Jordan's T-shirt

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There are many questions that are answered in a plan. Plans build on the history of the person, and their abilities and experiences *today* as a foundation upon which to create a future. Person-directed planning challenges all of us to build a life as citizens in our community.

## Communication

It is hard for some people to say what they want with words. But when people whom you trust and love listen carefully, and take time to learn what you want, you can direct decisions about your life. You might need help from your family or your friends to communicate what you want. Sometimes, people may need to depend on their knowledge of you, their intuition, and their ability to understand your behaviour in order to interpret what you are saying. Everyone communicates in different ways and everyone needs a supportive environment in order to make good decisions.



## Why planning is important

Planning gives direction and purpose to your life. When people do not plan, their lives can take an unexpected direction. There is a saying “If you don’t know where you are going, then you will never get there.” This is especially true when your life is in transition, for example when you are leaving high school. When life is in a transitional period, the planning process will help you to increase the number of options available to you.

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*"All of us plan things.  
Having a vision is the only  
way to get the life you  
want and need."*

Cathy S

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Everyone has gifts to offer and contributions to make. Planning helps you figure out how best to use those gifts and talents. It makes sense to be intentional about planning what you will do, how you will do it, and what help you need from others so that you can create a future and a ‘good life’ in the community.

A good life is different for everyone. It often means having relationships with friends, family, and loved ones; getting out and having fun; and having plenty of opportunities to try new things. It might mean volunteering, getting a job, or creating a meaningful day that reflects your personal gifts and talents. Planning will increase the amount of choice and control that you experience in all areas of your life.

Here are some other reasons why it is important and good to plan:<sup>3</sup>

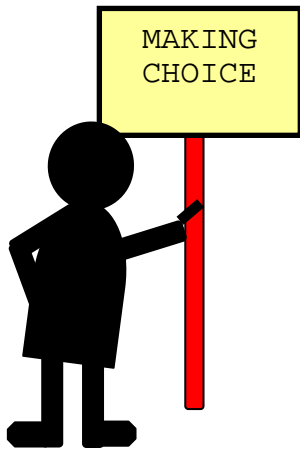


### **Things are changing**

When things change in your life, like when you leave school or move away from your parents, it can sometimes be confusing.

This is most likely when you need support from other people to make things happen in new ways.

*To make life changes positive and meaningful it is important to have a planning process that outlines the future.*



### **Self determination**

All people want to have choice and control over their lives.

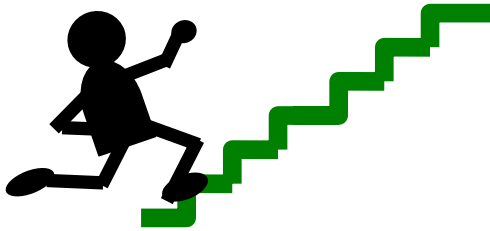
Sometimes your family or friends can help you figure things out. They do this by getting you to think about what you would want and need, about your passions and interests and what you really care about.





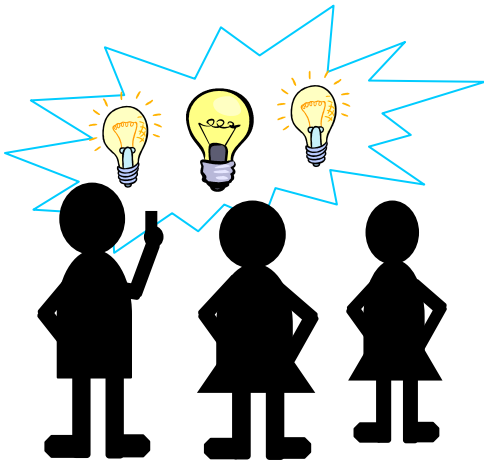
## **Building a future**

When you are uncertain about your future, it is a good time to plan.



Planning can help you imagine what is possible for the future. It can also give you a way of making change happen.

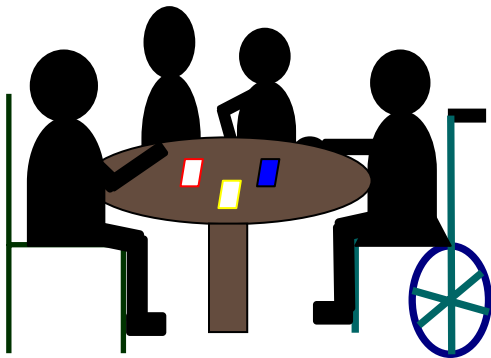
*A planning process leads to action.*



## **Exploring possibilities**

Planning helps you to explore all of the possibilities. It helps you to look at things in a new way. When you plan and explore with others there are many ideas that you can use to build a future life upon.

*Planning promotes brainstorming, the sharing of ideas and creativity.*



## **Having a better family life**

Planning can help families improve their lives. Planning helps you and your family work out what is important and what you value. This enables everyone to work together to make things better for each other.

*Planning helps to make our families stronger.*



## **Having community options**

The planning process helps you and your family to discover and explore what is available in your community. It is in this way that people of all abilities can begin to build their life in community. When discovered the community is full of things to do, places to go, and people to meet.

*Planning helps you use your community as the first resource to build a good life.*

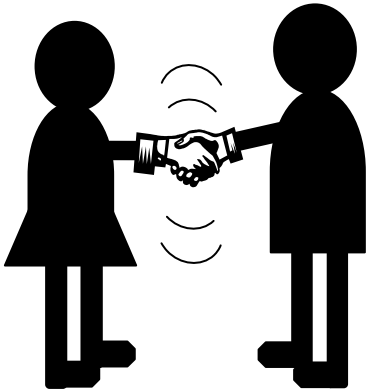


## **Solving problems**

The planning process helps you talk about things that are happening in your life that might be hard or difficult.

Problems can be easier to solve when you share them with others and have others to help you.

*Planning helps you work out how to get what you want and overcome obstacles that might slow you down or stop you.*



## **Building relationships**

Planning helps you think about your relationships. It helps you figure out how relationships can make you feel safe, secure and cared about.

*Planning helps you to invite and involve friends, family and community members in your life.*



## **Directing supports**

Planning helps you figure out how to direct the people who provide support to you. It helps them know how to do a good job. The planning process help others understand your needs and helps you to achieve your goals.

*Planning helps others help you.*

## Some rules about person-directed planning

The planning process is about you. You need to be the focus of all discussions that take place. It is good to have some guidelines or ground rules about the person -directed planning process. Here are some points that you might want to ask your family, friends and facilitator to consider:

- Use respectful language that everyone can understand
- Do not rush the process – take as much time as you need
- Be creative – remember that community is a great resource
- Remember that a plan is only as good as the action
- Keep the information private.



## Who can help you plan?

Most people find that it can be very helpful to invite others to help them plan. This gives you the benefit of different perspectives.

### **You**

You are the starting point for all planning. You will direct the planning process, which often happens with the help of family and friends. Because it is about your life, it is your plan.

### **Family Members**

Family members are some of the best people to be involved in the planning process because they care about you, and they may have a lot of experience with you. Family members could include your mother, father, grandparents, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, cousins or your step-family.

### **Networks and Circles of Support**

Sometimes, people with disabilities have a *support network* or *circle of support*<sup>4</sup> made up of people who care about you and your future. People in support networks or circles of support could include members of your community such as:

- friends
- friends of family
- neighbours
- people from your faith or church community
- people your age

Having a network or a circle of support just means that you can count on a certain group of people (friends and family) who will meet with you to help figure out what you want and how to get it. Building a network of support can be an important step in the planning process. Having people supporting you can help to make you feel safe and secure for the future. The very nature of relationships means that the more friends and family you have involved in your life, the safer you will be in community, the more people you have who are ‘looking out for you.’ More relationships also mean contacts with other community members and less isolation.

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*Each of us has our own way of involving others in the decisions we make. Some are formal and some are informal. The important thing is that you have others to count on.*

Jennifer

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## Other People

Sometimes there are people in your life who have information that could be useful to the planning process. These people might include: teachers, educational assistants, or support workers. The roles of these people are not to be decision makers in your life, but are to give you information that might help you make decisions, or to connect you with others who can assist you to reach your goals.

## Facilitators

In many communities across Ontario there are people who are skilled communicators whose job it is to help people plan and think about their future. These people are independent of local service providers (that is, they do not work for organizations that provide services like group homes or day programs) and have experience working with people with disabilities and their families. These people are called *independent facilitators*.

An independent facilitator is a 'neutral' person who can help you to plan your future. Although people who are already in your life can become facilitators, an independent facilitator is committed to support you to ensure that the process of planning includes information on which a future in community can be built.

The facilitator works directly for you and your family. These are some of the things a facilitator might do:

- Get to know you well
- Bring people together (may even do the asking)
- Share information about resources in your community
- Facilitate 'networks' and relationship development
- Build on your strengths, capacity and abilities in order to create a plan to help build a good life
- Ensure your voice is heard in the planning process
- Ensure that family and friends also have a say during the planning process
- Ask questions that helps you explore a lot of different possibilities
- Listen to the many different ways that you communicate
- Create a written or visual record of the plan
- Ensure the plan includes a clear action plan
- Help you make sure people are doing what they said they would do<sup>5</sup>

### Qualities of an Independent Facilitator

- Deep listener
- Creative
- Good problem solver
- Flexible
- Trustworthy
- Respectful
- Honest
- Reliable
- Informed
- Curious
- Works well with many different people
- Challenges status quo thinking
- Accepting
- Honours you as a decision maker (with the help of family)
- Know that they work for you and with you



## What is included in a plan?

Sometimes, people use certain tools to help them with their person-directed plan. You can learn about some of these tools at the back of the *Guide*. The planning process captures information and explores possibilities. There are conversations that you can have which will be useful in moving you from thinking about things to taking action in order to build a good life for yourself (moving from ideas to action). Some of the things you will want to think about during a planning process are included below.

### **Vision**

A vision is often referred to as the dreaming part of the planning process. If you had everything you needed, what would your life look like? When you are creating a vision for your life it is important not to get stuck on how you will reach your dream. A vision or dream holds the values and what is important in the distant future. It reflects your interests and what is really important to you. It reflects your identity of who you are and who you want to become. Dreaming is key to building a good life-what do you think is possible? <sup>6</sup>

—————  
*“I want to wake up to  
a good day, every  
day!”*

Ricardo

### **Moving from ideas to action**

As part of developing a vision, you will want to begin to think about...

What does a good life look like for you?

What are the things that you do not want to happen to you? (fears)

Where you are now at this point in your life and where you want to be in the future.

## Getting to Know You

The plan includes information about who you are. It reflects your personality, lifestyle, cultural background, and interests.

- important celebrations/traditions
- history
- rhythm or pace of life
- favourite things
- likes
- dislikes
- important routines
- qualities
- health
- gifts, talents and life purpose
- particular vulnerabilities

## Moving from ideas to action

As part of the getting to know you section, you will want to begin to think about...

- What is important about all these things listed?
- What about this list do you want others to remember as they help you create meaningful days for yourself?
- What is your life like now?
- What do you value about your life today and how will you use this information as a foundation for your future?

## About your relationships

A plan also includes who is in your life right now. Everyone has a need for relationships. The planning process will allow people who know you to help you to use your gifts and talents in the best possible way. You may find that planning can help you to think about your relationships, increase the number of relationships and strengthen the relationships you already have. It is good to know who can be counted on in good times and even not so good times in our lives. Thinking about relationships is a good way to discover who you might want to get to know better and who you might be able to spend some time with. This would include:

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*“It will soon be Lisa’s birthday. As her family and friends, we will help her invite her neighbours to an open house party. It will be the beginning of knowing and understanding each other.”*

Marilyn

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- new relationships (where and how can I meet more people?)
- past relationships (who from my past do I want to see again or see more of?)
- friends (who do I already know, and who I want to spend more time with?)
- people I want to get to know better (who are the people in my life that I want to get to know better?)
- family (how do I stay connected to immediate and extended family members?)
- acquaintances (how do I increase my social contact with others?)
- co-workers/co-volunteers (how might I become more socially involved with my peers at my job or in my volunteer work?)
- neighbours (what can I do to be more neighbourly and come to know my neighbours better?)

### **Moving from ideas to action**

As part of building relationships, you will want to begin to think about...

- What relationships do you want to nurture and explore?
- What things can happen now to strengthen the relationships that you have in your life?
- Based on your vision, consider who might understand what you desire? How could you connect with them?
- What support do you need to build more relationships in your life?
- How will you begin?

### **Your gifts, talents and abilities**

The plan includes information that identifies and builds on the positive aspects of who you have become. This includes:

- your admirable qualities
- your strengths
- things that you are particularly good at- talents
- what you bring to others- your contributions
- the way you are with others- your gifts
- things you would like to try
- great things about you
- things others count on you for
- things you enjoy doing

—————

*“James has an incredible curiosity and interest in architecture. Autism affects his life in ways that people don’t easily understand his language. I knew that an architect would understand James’ fascination with buildings. I introduced James to a local architect who was happy to hang out with him for a couple hours a month.”*

Sunita

—————



## **Moving from ideas to action**

As part of building on your gifts and talents, you will want to begin to think about...

- Who are the people and where are the places in your community that will understand value and welcome each gift, talent, and ability that you have?
- Who really needs you to assist them in what they do?
- What do you and others need to do to make this possible? (introductions, information sharing, résumé)

## **How you communicate**

It is important that others understand how you communicate your decisions about what you want and what you need. It is also important that you feel others understand the way you communicate the choices you are making in your life? You may want to have those who support you to think about how this understanding could be improved? You may or may not use words but either way those who listen closely and carefully will be able to understand you.

## **Your participation and contribution**

Exploring and knowing your community is a good way to discover possibilities. A plan describes the places and ways that you are now involved, and ways that you can be involved in your community in the future. Person-directed planning is a way to brainstorm, explore, and expand the roles that you already play and those that you would like to play in your community.

The plan would include places:

- that you now go to regularly
- where you can learn
- where you can volunteer
- where you can work
- where you can become a member
- that are nearby in your neighbourhood
- that gives you a sense of belonging.

## Moving from ideas to action

As part of planning your participation and contribution, you will want to begin to think about...

- community - what community places do you use?
- learning - what do you need/want to learn and how might you learn it?
- working/volunteering - who could use your talents, or who could you share your talents with?
- neighbourhood – how can you be more active in your neighbourhood?
- membership - what club or group would you enjoy joining in the community?
- work -what are the places where you may want to work in your community?
- activities –what kinds of events and activities would you enjoy participating in?

## Your needs

The plan includes information about what you need in order to build a good life in community. The needs you have will be unique to you. Some examples of needs might be:

- daily routines
- health
- transportation
- experience
- safety and security
- teaching and training
- coaching
- relationships
- support
- skills

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*“It is often during the planning process that many people figure out exactly what they need and the way that they need it. It makes it easier for everyone when the person is clear about the supports they require to get on with their day.”*

Beth

---

## Moving from ideas to action

As part of recognizing your needs, you will want to begin to...

- think about how to identify your needs as they relate to your vision and goals
- figure out the support you may require to address your needs
- identify obstacles to the life you want
- create positive action.

## **Goals**

Setting goals is a way to make your dreams, hopes and desires become a reality. You will begin to think about how you will accomplish the things you want in your life. You will begin to figure out what you want to begin today and what you will do sometime in the future. You will begin to identify those who can help you, ways to overcome any barriers, and what you expect to achieve (outcomes).

## **Moving from ideas to action**

As you develop goals, you will want to begin to think about...

- where and with whom can you share your time?
- how you can use your gifts and talents?
- what roles are there for you in the community? (i.e. employee, volunteer, club or group member etc.)
- what experiences do you want to have?
- who needs you and your skills and abilities?
- what do you still need to learn?
- how will you spend your days, your evenings, and your weekends?

## **Setting your goals**

Be as specific and as realistic as possible about what you want to achieve. It is usually good to start with just a few goals. As you begin to accomplish them, you can add others. There is not a certain number of goals that you should have. The right number of goals will be what you think you can manage.

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In the following tables, general goals have been made more specific by thinking about something that someone really wants to achieve, who will help them and by when.

Examples of general goals	Examples of specific goals for John set by John and his network	Who will do what by when
To find a way to make money (3/4 time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact local employment support program</li> <li>• write and deliver résumés around town</li> <li>• become a volunteer at the library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judy - July 20<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Judy - July 20<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• support worker - immediately</li> </ul>
To keep learning new things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to the library 3 x's per week to read the newspaper and sports magazine</li> <li>• attend a woodworking course</li> <li>• join a literacy/numeracy class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncle Liam - September</li> <li>• Joe - next semester</li> <li>• support worker - immediately</li> </ul>

Examples of general goals	Examples of specific goals for Sally set by Sally and her network	Who will do what by when
To take part in everyday household activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have regular chores to complete</li> <li>• pick up the mail each day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mom &amp; dad - August</li> <li>• support worker - immediately</li> </ul>
To be part of my local neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stop and chat with my neighbours when I see them</li> <li>• volunteer at local community events (i.e. walkathon, canned food drive, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• everyone - immediately</li> <li>• support worker - immediately</li> </ul>

Examples of general goals	Examples of specific goals for Lionel set by Lionel and his network	Who will do what by when
To develop a day that is meaningful to me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an opportunity to experience many different things in my community (to further discover likes and dislikes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• everyone – immediately</li> </ul>
To get help to stay healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• begin to make healthy choices about what I eat</li> <li>• go to the doctor regularly</li> <li>• join a fitness class at the YMCA (introduce me to someone to share this class with)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• my choice always</li> <li>• Mom – annual</li> <li>• Support worker – September (3x)</li> </ul>
To be safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purchase a cell phone with emergency numbers on speed dial (or beeper)</li> <li>• practice saying no</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dad – immediately</li> <li>• With everyone</li> </ul>

**Action**

It is by naming the things that you want to do that a plan leads to action. The planning process always includes an action piece about:

- What is going to happen?
- How it is going to happen?
- Who will help make it happen?
- When is it going to happen?

*Person-directed planning processes ALWAYS LEAD TO ACTION.*

—————

*I began going to the library with Uncle Liam in September. At first we sat all by ourselves and looked at the books. Then Uncle Liam began to invite an older man who was always there to sit with us. Now I look forward to going to the library with Uncle Liam. We always sit and read with Ken. Then we all go for coffee after we look at books.*

John

—————



## What support do you need?

You will find that some pieces of the plan can be accomplished by you alone, or with the assistance of your family and friends. There may be some pieces of your plan for which you will need funding (e.g., the assistance of a paid person or services). Your plan will include what kind of paid and unpaid supports will help you develop a meaningful day. Include what type of support and how many hours of support you need.

In the example below, we have taken one of John's goals and broken it into the support 'pieces' that he needed to help him accomplish this goal. John uses informal support from friends and family, as well as paid support from workers to achieve his goal.

### **Supporting John's Financial Goal**

General Goal: To find a way to make money (3/4 time)

Specific Goals: •contact employment support program  
•write and deliver résumés around town

What are the needed supports for John

1. Judy (John's cousin) will be the person to assist John in making sure everyone is doing what they said they would do in order to meet this goal.
2. The support network will each think of two places that John could apply for a job. The list with names and contact information will be given to John and Judy within one month.
3. John, with Judy's help, will contact the local employment support program by phone. (next week)
4. John will attend the first meeting at the employment office with a support worker. (paid person) (as scheduled)
5. John, with the help of the support worker, will begin to work on the recommendations outlined by the employment support program.
6. The support worker will help the employment support program person develop ways to communicate with John so they can work together.
7. John and Judy will talk about the places on the contact list.
8. After deciding which ones John would like to pursue, John and Judy will introduce themselves and leave a résumé at the places that are on the contact list created by the support network. (within two months)
9. John, with help from his dad, will buy a new outfit for possible interviews. (within one month)
10. Everyone will check back to see how things are progressing (3 months)



## Is everyone doing what they should be doing?

Person-directed planning is a continual process. Having a plan should not be the desired end result. It is only the first step. Having a good life is the outcome of a good planning process. Making sure that everyone is doing what they said they would do is an important part of the ongoing planning process (monitoring and evaluation).

It is a good idea to have everyone come back together to discuss the plan and what worked well and what did not work well and if the plan is still a “fit” for what you want in your life. You may find that you need to change some things in your plan or you may even have to change how you plan. Regular and ongoing review of your plan leads to better outcomes.



*seekcreative, 2006*



## What do you do with your plan?

- Begin to act on the pieces that do not require funding
- Apply for Passport funding for those pieces that fit that criteria
- Attach the plan to the Passport application



## What do you include in a budget?

The budget will reflect the amount of paid support you need in order to meet your goals. You will want to think about:

- will you be hiring your own workers or using agency workers or both?
- what is the number of hours of support that you need?
- what is the amount that you will pay per hour?
- is the salary you are paying your workers fair?
- do you need to include benefits?



## Life in community

Developing a life in community is possible for you. A good life is different for each person. Below are the stories of two people (Aida and Kyle). They have both engaged in the planning process with the help of their family and friends. Although their lives look very different, they are both enjoying a good life as citizens in their community.



### **Aida's Story as told by her mother Linguai**

I can say with all honesty that I had not spent much time helping my daughter Aida dream. It seemed that life has always been busy and dreaming was a luxury that we had not afforded ourselves. This all changed during the planning process. I can not say enough about how creative and positive planning has been for Aida and our family.

Aida does not speak for herself. But she is very clear when something is not going well for her. It was also clear to us as her family that high school would not last forever. In fact, Aida would be finished high school in one year. It was time for us to begin to help Aida figure out what she would do when high school was finished.

At the suggestion of our facilitator, Aida (with me doing the talking) asked her brother, cousin and a family friend to help us figure out what Aida would do next year. Aida and I began to share a dream, that one day she would contribute to her community in a way that made sense to her and in a way that built on her gifts.

We struggled with naming her gifts and talents. Although each of us loved her dearly, we found it hard to figure out what Aida felt passionate about. With the help of others, we all agreed that Aida had a love and a passion for bananas, plastic, car rides, and her Mom. We also knew that Aida really liked to have people in her life. She was at her silly best when she was spending time with others. So over a few meetings we brainstormed all the possible ways that Aida could use her



gifts. We thought we might need a list of a lot of ideas because the only way we would know for sure if our idea was a good fit for Aida is by her having the opportunity to try them out.

### **Ahead 18 months...**

With the help of both paid and unpaid support, Aida has built a life for herself in community. Building on the passion and love for plastic and car rides and her need to have more relationships of her own, and providing Aida with the experience to try new things has been a good thing in Aida's life.

#### Meals on Wheels

She now is a volunteer with Meals on Wheels. Her worker drives for Aida. With her cousin's help, Aida asked an older woman who does not have a license if she would like to be a Meal on Wheels volunteer with Aida. They enjoy volunteering together.

#### Learning Centre

With the help of paid support, Aida waters the plants (with a plastic watering can of course!) at a learning centre. It is here that she met Dorada. She volunteers at the learning centre too! Dorada recently came to Aida's birthday party. They are still figuring out how to be with each other but you can tell that they like each other.

#### Recycling

Aida has become the neighbourhood recycling depot for the things that can not go in the weekly recycling box but can be recycled at the city depot. This is a chance for her to take care of the environment but also a chance to get to know her neighbours better. Aida and I both smile when the visitors to the neighbourhood also drop off their things.

A lot has happened for Aida and for us as her family. We know that Aida is happy and is able to use her passions and gifts to help others. She has more friends. And she has a group of people who are dedicated to helping her with planning. For Aida, this is a good life.





**Kyle's Story (as told by him with the help of his brother)**

I have been thinking about the Calgary Stampede ever since I saw my first cowboy movie and that was a long time ago. I kept telling people I was going to the Stampede but I never went. One day my brother Bob told me I was never going to the Stampede if I didn't get a job because you have to save money to go on a "trip of a lifetime."

When I was ten years younger, I wanted a job but it just never happened. This time was different because I needed a job. I needed money. My brother, his friend, my dad and two other friends (George and Michael) helped me think about things I could do and all the places I could get a job. I now had a plan and I was ready to take action.

When I went to my first interview I was so nervous. But I just told them I wanted to work because I needed money for "a trip of a lifetime." I got the job. Every day, I help a local farmer with his chores. I am good at this job. I always have someone working with me. I get to do different jobs depending on the day. I like working with the people at the farm and I think the job is okay too.

My brother got real worried that I would not save the money for my trip. His friend introduced me to a fellow at the credit union. Now every time I get paid I go to the credit union. That guy helps me put money into my "trip of a lifetime" account.

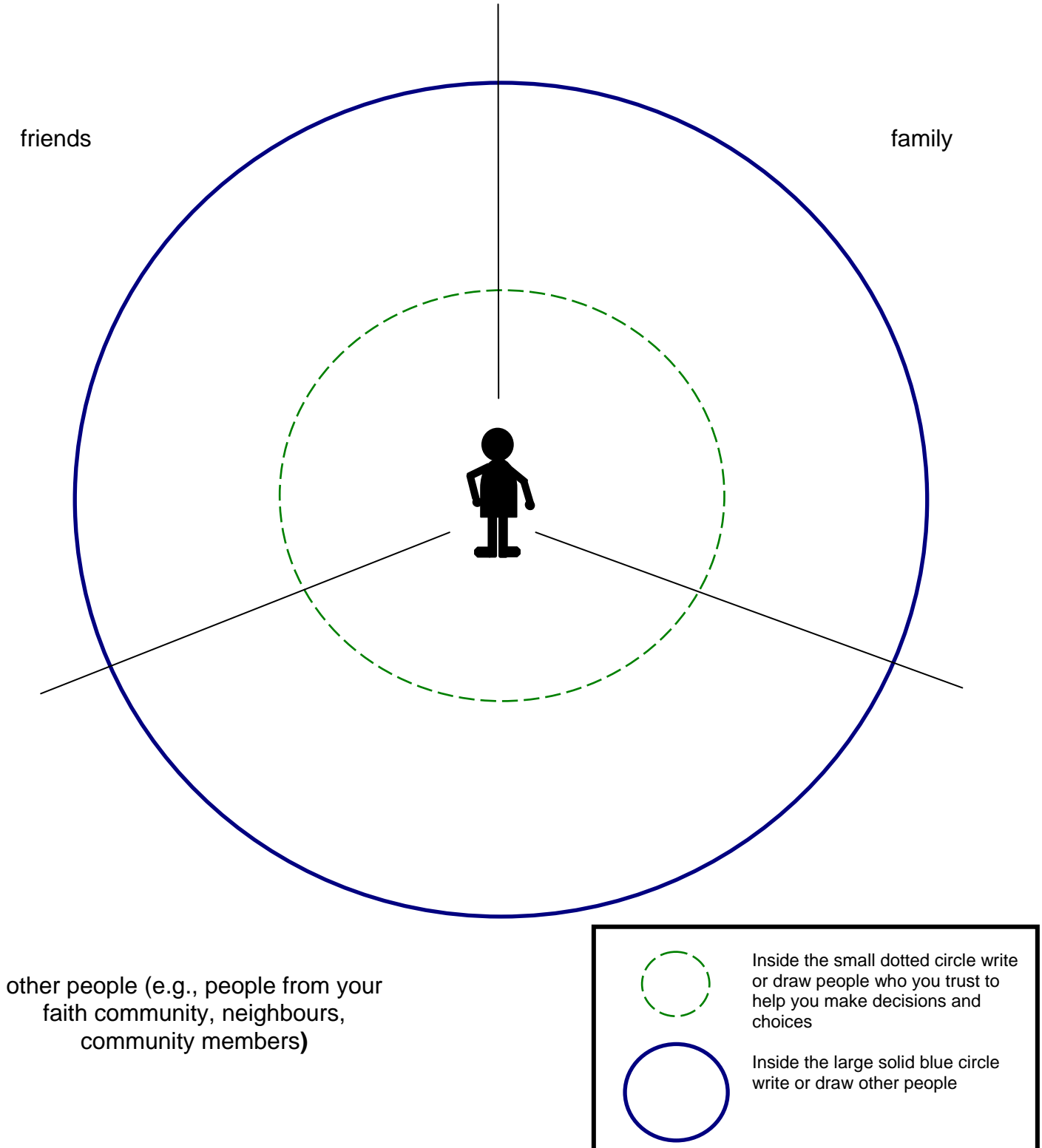
You know what? Liking cowboys has helped me get a job, get a special account and meet some new people. I went last summer to the Calgary Stampede with two friends, George and Michael. We went on an airplane and stayed in a hotel. We didn't sleep much either. You know what else? My brother was right. It is a lot easier to have a "trip of a lifetime" if you have a job, save money and have some friends who like cowboys too!



## Thinking about relationships

This page has been included to help you think about community

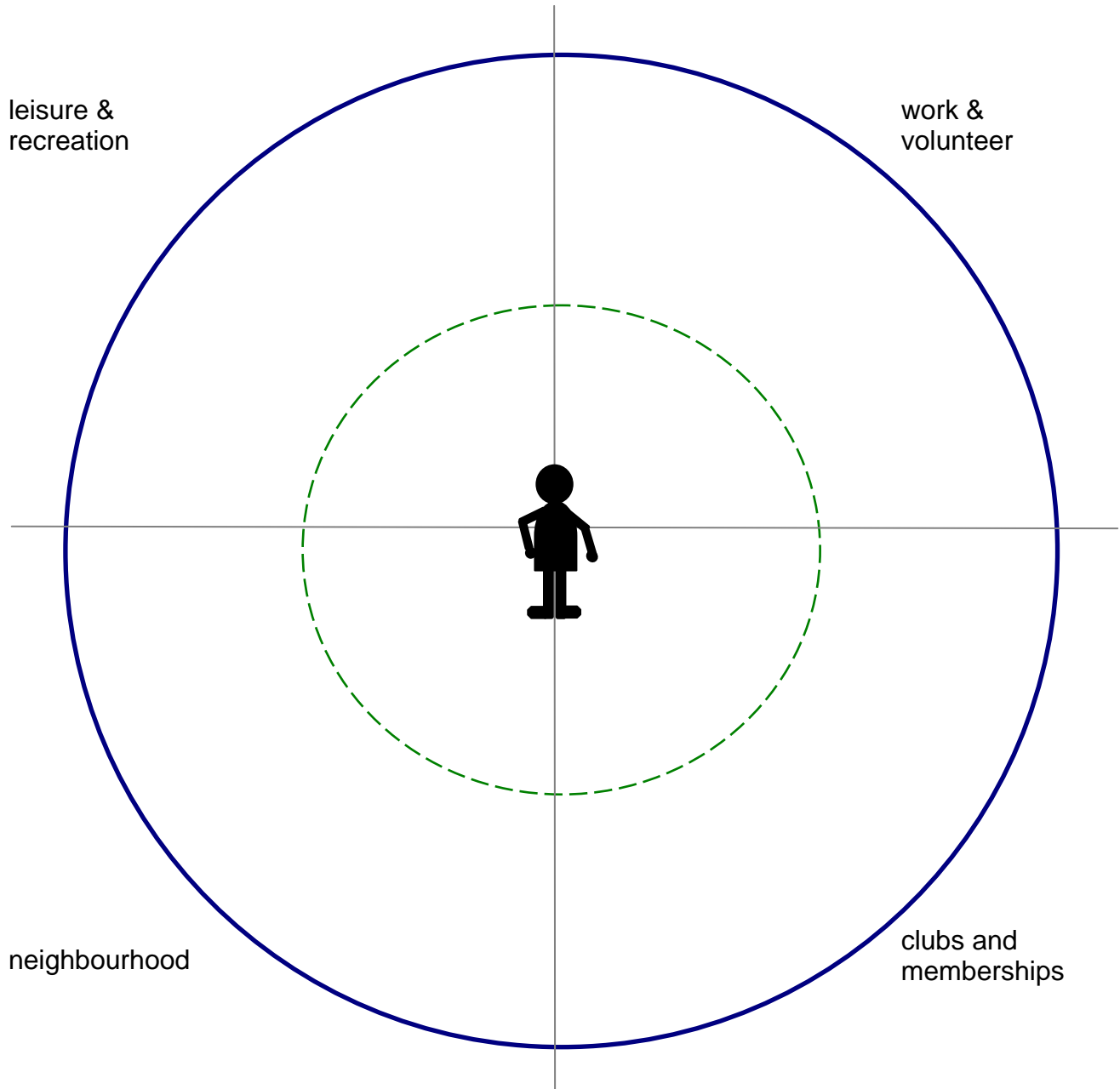
- Who are the people I spend time with now
- Who are the people in my life that I would like to get to know better



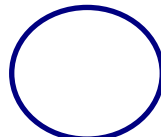
## Thinking about community

This page has been included to help you think about where you spend time in your community, like

- Where are the places that you presently go to and share with others?
- Where are the places that you would like to further explore?



Inside the small dotted circle, write or draw the things you are doing now in the community.



Inside the large solid circle, write or draw the things you want to do in the future.

### Thinking about goals and action

Here is a page that has been included to help you think about your goals and the actions you might take to achieve them. Write down:

- What are my future goals?
- What are the specific steps you can begin to take today? next week? next month?
- Who will help me with the goal and by when?

General goals	Your specific goals	Who will do what by when



## Where can I find more information to help me plan a good life?

There are many resources you can use to get further information on how to create a person-directed plan. Some of them are planning methods, and others are more general books and guides on person-directed planning.

### PERSON-DIRECTED (CENTRED) PLANNING RESOURCES

#### **A Good Life: For You and Your Relative with a Disability**

A Good Life was developed by Al Etmanski in 2000, and is designed for families. This book is intended to motivate, inspire and challenge you to begin and complete a planning process for your relative.

You can obtain this book from Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN - [www.plan.ca](http://www.plan.ca)), 101-3790 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 1G4

#### **Person Centred Planning Guide Book**

This guide book was developed in 2004 to give an overview of person-centred planning that is occurring in Alberta. The guide contains family stories, information on the policy work completed to-date, and a summary of the work that still needs to be done.

You can order or obtain this book online from Persons with Developmental Disabilities Central Alberta Community Board ([www.pdd.org](http://www.pdd.org)), #501, 5010-43 St., Red Deer, AB, T4N 6H2, Ph: (403) 340-5003.

#### **Planning On...A Resource Book for Facilitators**

*Planning On* was developed by Susannah Joyce in 2000. It is a resource book for facilitators and outlines a step-by-step process of person centred planning.

You can obtain this book from Realizations Training and Resources, P.O Box 1430, Station B, London, ON, N6A 5M2, Ph: (519) 433-2387.

#### **Building New Worlds: A Sourcebook for Students with Disabilities in Transition from High School to Adult Life**

This book, written by Beth Mount and Connie Lyle O'Brien, captures the transitional process that students with disabilities experience as they leave high school. It also chronicles the ways in which people with disabilities and their allies have worked together to ensure an active, participatory life as valued citizens in the community.

This resource can be obtained from Capacity Works ([www.capacityworks.com](http://www.capacityworks.com)), L.L.C., PO Box 271, Amenia, NY, 12501-0271, Ph: 1-888-840-8578.

### **A Parents' Guide to Transition Planning**

This guide was compiled by the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Central Alberta Community Board, and contains valuable information for families of individuals leaving high school. Some of the information in this guide includes lifestyle planning, funding, obtaining resources, supports, and services, guardianship, and estate planning.

You can order or obtain this book online from Persons with Developmental Disabilities Central Alberta Community Board ([www.pdd.org](http://www.pdd.org)), #501, 5010-43 St., Red Deer, AB, T4N 6H2, Ph: (403) 340-5003.

### **Planning Your Support**

This 2004 guide was generated by a program entitled 'In Control', which is associated with Mencap, a UK-based organization for people with developmental disabilities. This guide has two versions - a plain-language and a simple-language - and provides details on how to create a person-directed plan for the future.

You can obtain this document through Mencap's In Control website ([www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)), or via Mencap themselves ([www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)): 123 Golden Lane, London, England, EC1Y 0RT, Ph: (044) 020-7454-0454.

## **TECHNIQUES FOR PERSON-DIRECTED (CENTRED) PLANNING**

### **ELP: Essential Lifestyle Planning**

Essential Lifestyle Planning is a way to learn how to develop a life plan for someone based on how they want to live. It ensures that a person is heard and that their wants and needs are categorized and organized into a 'user-friendly' plan.

You can obtain information on ELP by contacting The Learning Community for Essential Lifestyle Planning at <http://www.elpnet.net>, or Allan, Shea, and Associates, ([www.allanshea.com](http://www.allanshea.com)) 1780 Third St., Napa, CA, 94559, Ph: (707) 258-1326.

### **MAPS: Making Action Plans**

MAPS was developed by John O'Brien, Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint, Judith Snow and David Hasbury. This tool asks people and their families to respond to a series of planning questions to form an action plan that heads away from their nightmare and towards their dream.

You can obtain books on MAPS at Inclusion Press ([www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)), 24 Thome Cres., Toronto, ON, M6H 2S5, Ph: 416-658-5363

### **PATH: Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope**

PATH was developed by John O'Brien, Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint. This tool uses graphics that help people find direction and build strength.

You can obtain books on PATH at Inclusion Press ([www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)), 24 Thome Cres., Toronto, ON, M6H 2S5, Ph: 416-658-5363

**PFP: Personal Futures Planning**

Personal Futures Planning was developed by Beth Mount, and is a set of questions and graphical maps that adjusts to the strengths and gifts of an individual. It is also used to give a sense of how these strengths and gifts could be better utilised.

You can obtain information on PFP via Graphic Futures, 25 West 81<sup>st</sup> St #16B, New York, NY, 10024, Ph: (212) 362-9492.

**Discovery Planning: A Guide for Facilitators**

This guide offers suggestions on facilitations, working with planning groups and building community.

You can obtain a copy of this guide through The Collective for Community Action , (519) 744-7645

**Developing Leisure Identities: A Pilot Project**

This book offers an insightful look into what it takes to support people with disabilities to go after their dreams, to really do what they have always imagined doing. It gives practical suggestions and reflective questions that help individuals and their families to figure out how they can be supported to get on with creating a passionate life for themselves. The book helps the reader to gain a fuller appreciation of leisure and how it can create aliveness and balance in our lives.

The book is available through Brampton-Caledon Community Living, 34 Church St. W., Brampton, Ontario L6X 1H3, Ph: (905) 453-8841.

**OTHER RELEVANT RESOURCES:**

Support Circles/Networks

**Friends In/Deed**

This handbook focuses on planning to help people develop and sustain relationships

You can obtain this book from Realizations Training and Resources, P.O Box 1430, Station B, London, ON, N6A 5M2, Ph: (519) 433-2387.

Individualized Funding

**Individualized Funding: Definition and Elements**

This article was written by the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario in 2004, and is a useful first step for understanding the current context of IF in Ontario.

This resource can be obtained from the Individualized Funding Coalition of Ontario ([www.individualizedfunding.ca](http://www.individualizedfunding.ca)), 240 Duncan Mill Rd., Suite 403, Toronto, ON, M3B 1Z4, Ph: (416) 447-4348 ext. 240.



**Report of the Ontario Round Table on Individualized Funding: A Pathway to Self-Determination and Community Involvement for People with Disabilities.**

This report was written by John Lord, with the support of members of the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario in 2000. Attendees at the meeting upon which the report was based represented a number of people who had experienced individualized funding, either as an individual with a disability, family member, advocate, broker/facilitator, service provider, or researcher.

This resource can be obtained from the Individualized Funding Coalition of Ontario ([www.individualizedfunding.ca](http://www.individualizedfunding.ca)), 240 Duncan Mill Rd., Suite 403, Toronto, ON, M3B 1Z4, Ph: (416) 447-4348 ext. 240.

**More Choice and Control for People with Disabilities: Individualized Support and Funding.**

This review was commissioned by the Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy in 2000, and was written by John Lord, Barbara Zupko, and Peggy Hutchison. The purpose of the review was to develop an awareness and understanding of the strategies that could be used to build the capacity of Ontarians to implement individualized funding for people with disabilities.

This resource can be obtained from the Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy ([www.ofcp.on.ca](http://www.ofcp.on.ca)), 1630 Lawrence Ave. West, Suite 104, Toronto, ON, M6L 1C5, Ph: 1-877-244-9686.

**Creative Community Supports**

**Creative Supports for Vulnerable Citizens: Papers from the Guelph Spring Conference**

This 80-page book was developed from a conference held in Guelph in April 2005. It includes topics such as: *Creative Supports that Work: Values, Principles and Processes* by John Lord; *Creating Home* by Barbara Leavitt; and *Building Meaningful Supports for Work and Recreation Purposes* by Peggy Hutchison.

This resource can be ordered by emailing [gbloomfi@uoguelph.ca](mailto:gbloomfi@uoguelph.ca)

**Leisure, Integration and Community (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)**

This book was written by Peggy Hutchison and Judith McGill in 1998, and includes a wealth of information on how community is used as a first resource for people with disabilities. It also includes chapters on person-centred philosophies, planning for change, and the systemic resistance that often occurs when families and individuals choose to think outside of the box.

This resource can be obtained from Leisurability Publications, Ltd., through Parks and Recreation Ontario ([www.prontario](http://www.prontario)), 1185 Eglinton Ave East, Suite 406, Toronto, ON M3C 3C6, Ph: (416) 426-7142.

**Shifting the Paradigm in Community Mental Health: Towards Empowerment and Community.**

Although this 2001 book written by Geoff Nelson, John Lord, and Joanna Ochocka details a new model for community integration and empowerment for people with mental health issues, its values have wide applicability for other marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities. The three values are: participation and empowerment (“nothing about me without me”), community support and

integration (“community is not just a place to live”); and social justice and access to valued resources (“receiving our fair share”).

This book can be ordered from the University of Toronto Press Inc. ([www.utpress.utoronto.ca](http://www.utpress.utoronto.ca)), 5201 Dufferin St., Toronto, ON, M3H 5T8, Ph: 1-800-565-9523.

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<sup>1</sup> This Planning *Guide* is the result of information obtained from numerous resources including written materials and the experience of people with disabilities, family members, facilitators obtained in three focus group sessions.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from “*A Constellation of Tools for Change*”, Forest, O’Brien and Pearpoint (1999)

<sup>3</sup> This format was modeled after the one used in ‘*How to Write Your Support Plan*’ by In Control in the UK. It is available at [www.in-control.org.uk/downloads/Guide to Planning eVer.doc](http://www.in-control.org.uk/downloads/Guide%20to%20Planning%20eVer.doc).

<sup>4</sup> Circles of support started in the early 1980s as people with disabilities and their families began to realize the power and importance of relationships. Judith Snow is often credited with having the first support circle in Canada. Judith's story is outlined in “*Behind the Piano*”, Judith Snow, Jack Pearpoint (1990). Toronto: Inclusion Press.

<sup>5</sup> More information is available in the following resource entitled “*More Choice and Control For People with Disabilities*,” John Lord, Barbara Zupko, and Peggy Hutchison, (2000).

<sup>6</sup> Taken from “*Lifestyle Planning Process: Steps for Facilitators, Individuals, Families, and Network Planning Groups*,” John Lord, (2003).