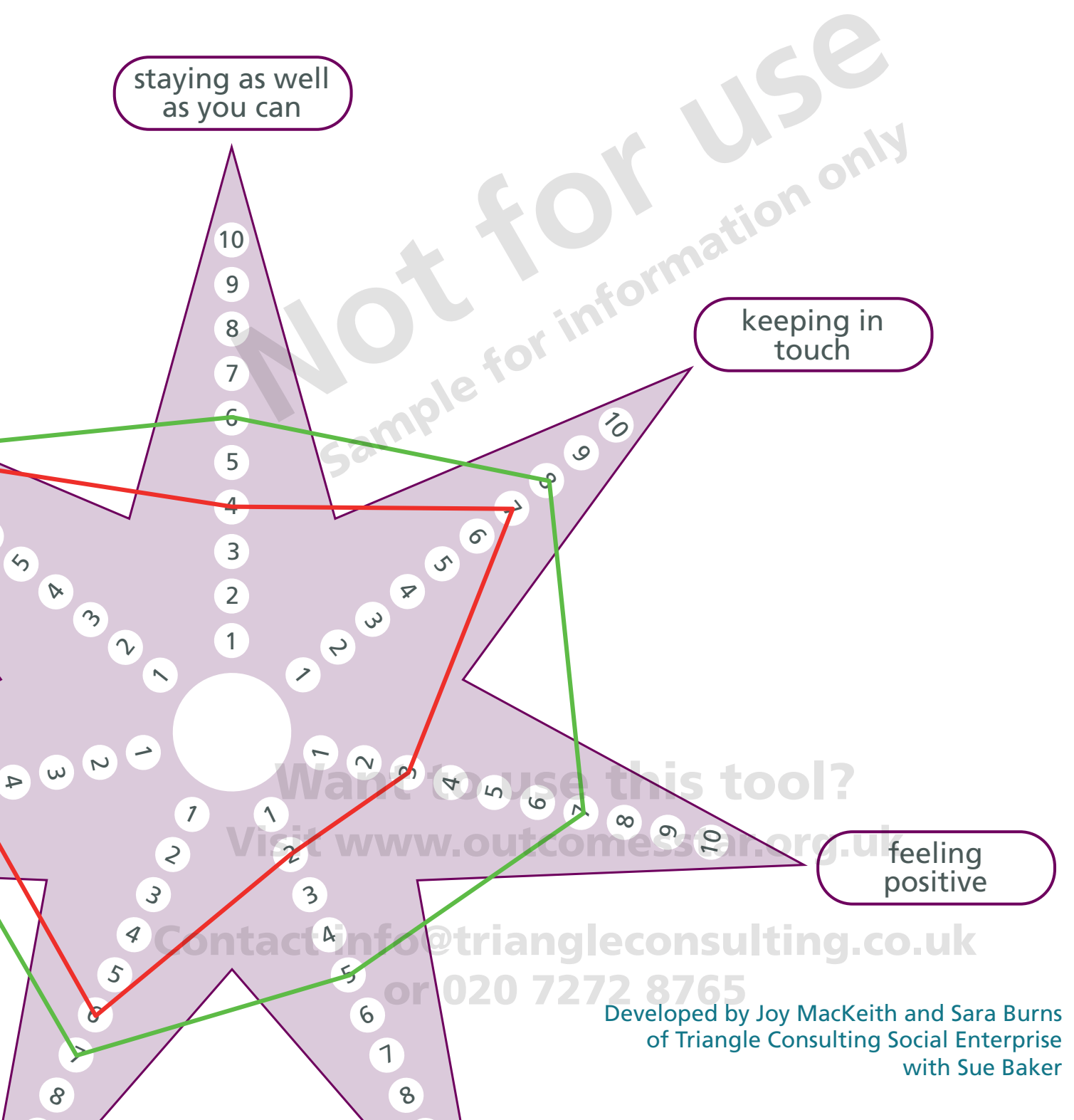




Older Person's Star™

The Outcomes Star for later life



Want to use this tool?

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or 020 7272 8765

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Please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk to enquire about buying a licence and training.

Licences are also available for those wishing to translate the document into other languages.

The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Star Chart, User Guide or Quiz and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

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- Camden, Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and Brent Councils who commissioned this version of the Outcomes Star
- The following projects who participated in the working group with which we developed and piloted the Older Person's Star:
 - Camden Council's Review Team and Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre and Age Concern Camden's Great Croft, Hill Wood and Henderson Court Resource Centres
 - Westminster Re-enablement Team and Westminster Care Management Team
 - Elgin Resource Centre and Elders Housing Support, Hammersmith and Fulham
 - Intermediate Care Scheme and Adult Social Care within Brent Council
 - Age UK's Gifted Housing Project.

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Introducing the Older Person's Star™

Things change as we get older. Perhaps you have just retired and are thinking about how to use your new freedom. Perhaps you have lost a spouse and need to adjust to life without them. Perhaps you can't do all the things you used to and need help and new ways to enjoy life.

The service and the worker supporting you are there to help you be as well and independent as you possibly can be, no matter what your circumstances. The Star helps them to do this by looking at different parts of your life to see how things are going in that area and what support you might need to live as good a life as possible. It looks at seven different areas:

- Staying as well as you can
- Keeping in touch
- Feeling positive
- Being treated with dignity
- Looking after yourself
- Feeling safe
- Managing money and personal administration.

Steps to the best life for you

For many people it takes time, effort and support to become as independent and happy as they can be in each of these areas. It can help to be aware of the steps along the way and the Star gives you a picture of the five main stages in the journey towards greater happiness and independence. These are described as follows:

At the beginning there is **cause for concern**. Things aren't going well in this area of your life. Others are concerned about you but you would rather they left you alone.

The first step forward is to begin **talking about it**. At this stage things aren't going well but you are talking about it and perhaps getting a little help.

This makes it possible to start **meeting your basic needs**. At this stage things are ok in this area of your life. The basics are there but things aren't organised the way you would like them to be.

The next step is to start having some **choice and control** in this area (or for someone to do that on your behalf) so that you have some say over how things are and can start making the most of what is there.

Once you have done that, things become **as good as they can be**. There may be limitations but you are making the most of what you have and things are run the way you like them.

For each area of your life there is a scale that follows these five steps. You and the person working with you will look at each of the scales in turn and see how close you are to being as well and independent as you possibly can be in that area of your life. Not everyone starts at the first step and not everyone reaches the final one but people can usually see which step they are on and this can help them think about what the next step is for them.

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Getting a picture of where you are now

Each scale is made up of ten points. By marking each of your scale points on the Star we can see what shape your life is in at the moment. The Star gives a snapshot of how things are for you now. The more full and rounded your Star reading is, the more full and rounded your life is. Completing a Star may help you think about what you would like to be different and what support might help make this a reality.

When we carry out a review, we complete another Star. The difference will show whether things are getting better and what else you might need. If your circumstances change suddenly it may also be helpful to do another Star at that point too. You may find that your scale point goes down for a while as you deal with the change and the new circumstances. This is not a problem or failure in any way but simply a new challenge in your life for you and others to respond to.

The Star below shows what the Star looks like when it has two different readings or snapshots on it. The green line shows the first snapshot and the red line shows the second one. The difference between the two is the progress that has been made.

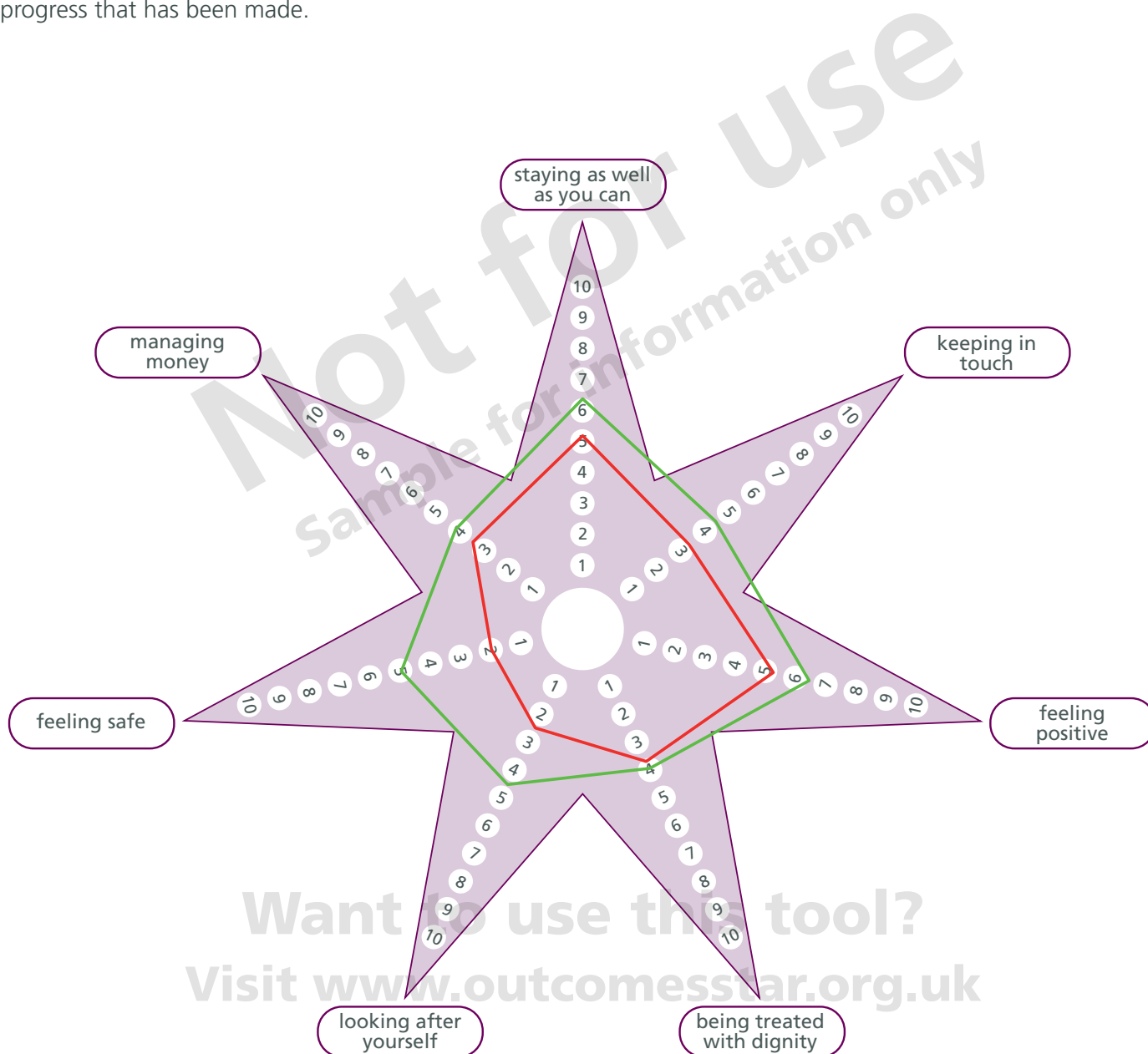


Figure 1: A completed Older Person's Star

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Have a look at the brief visual scales in this guide. If you are interested, or need more explanation in order to understand the difference between each of the steps, you can also look at the detailed descriptions that accompany each scale. As you complete a Star, you will discuss where you are on each of the scales with the person working with you and then plot those positions on the Star Chart.

Choose the lower number in a box (i.e. 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9) if that box clearly fits for you. Choose the higher number (i.e. 2, 4, 6 or 8) if you can see that you are on the way to the next stage up but you are not quite there yet. Choose 10 if you are managing this area particularly well – perhaps helping others or inspiring them with your example. Ten doesn't have to mean that your well-being and independence is perfect. It simply means that you and the people helping you have done everything possible to make things as good as they can possibly be in your current circumstances.

Recognising external factors

The Older Person's Star focuses primarily on the things that you and your worker can do to enable you to stay as well and independent as possible, even as things change. However, it is important to recognise that there may be conditions which affect your well-being and/or independence but are beyond your control or that of the service supporting you. For example, the practical support or care services you need at home may not be available, you can't access somewhere more suitable to live or are waiting for an operation or other treatment. Using the Star may reveal these or other external factors holding you back as well as enabling you and your worker to draw up or review a realistic support plan for you.

Not for use
Sample for information only

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1 Staying as well as you can

This is about getting help for any health conditions you may have, including mental health conditions. It is also about staying well – getting regular check-ups, eating well, taking regular exercise, not drinking too much alcohol and not smoking. If some aspects of the management of your health is in the hands of someone else then it is about the extent to which they are listening to your preferences and noticing what works for you so that your health is as good as it can be.

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I do everything possible to be as healthy as I can be

7 - 8 Choice and control

I do some things to promote good health but there is more I could do

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I get help when I need to and take the medication I am prescribed

3 - 4 Talking about it

I know I need to get help with my health but I haven't yet

1 - 2 Cause for concern

I don't want to see a doctor, even when I feel unwell or notice something unusual

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1 Staying as well as you can (detail)

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I do everything possible to be as healthy as I can be

- Your lifestyle keeps you as healthy as possible
- You have a sense of what makes you feel better or worse and you do the things you know will help you feel well
- You may have a chronic health condition(s) but are doing everything you can to manage it and slow down any deterioration

7 - 8 Choice and control

I do some things to promote good health but there is more I could do

- You are making an effort to have a lifestyle that will maximise your health but some areas are easier than others. For instance, maybe you eat well and take exercise but sometimes drink a bit too much or occasionally smoke
- You attend all the recommended check-ups (e.g. dentist, optician)

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I get help when I need to and take the medication I am prescribed

- When you feel unwell you see the GP or nurse
- If you have an ongoing health issue you take the medication prescribed
- If you have been referred for specialist help (e.g. physiotherapy, occupational therapy or dietician) you attend but find it hard to follow their advice
- You go for tests, see specialists or have a flu vaccine as recommended by the doctor or nurse
- Perhaps a health professional might have mentioned exercise, diet, alcohol or smoking but you don't feel able to change your lifestyle or have chosen not to

3 - 4 Talking about it

I know I need to get help with my health but I haven't yet

- You realise your health is not what it was and are talking about getting appropriate treatment, or
- You may have gone to hospital or seen a GP in an emergency and now want to follow through on the treatment they have recommended

1 - 2 Cause for concern

I don't want to see a doctor, even when I feel unwell or notice something unusual

- You refuse support from doctors and other health professionals
- You may have been told that you have a medical condition(s), for instance a heart condition or high blood pressure, but you aren't taking any treatment or haven't seen a medical professional about this for at least a year

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2 Keeping in touch

This is about having people to see every week and things to do. It's not about being busy or seeing people a lot, it's about doing the amount that is right for you. It may be that you have things to do but would like more contact with other people or vice versa. If this is the case choose a scale point with the area that you most want to change in mind. If the organisation of your time is partly in the hands of someone else then it is about them listening to your preferences and noticing what works for you so that you have company and things to do to the extent that is right for you.

9 - 10 As good as it can be

My week is just right for me

7 - 8 Choice and control

My average week is taking shape and includes some things I like doing and/or being with people I like to be with

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I've got a few things to do or people to see and I'm thinking about new possibilities

3 - 4 Talking about it

My days are very lonely or boring – I wish it could be different

1 - 2 Cause for concern

My days are very lonely or boring – that's just how it is

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2 Keeping in touch (detail)

9 - 10 As good as it can be

My week is just right for me

- You see people and have interesting activities to do – what you do and the amount you do suits your needs and personality
- You feel you are offering something to others as much as you want to and are able to

7 - 8 Choice and control

My average week is taking shape and includes some things I like doing and/or being with people I like to be with

- You know what is available and what you can get to and do
- Your day is filled in a satisfying way quite a lot of the time
- You are finding ways to work around obstacles to do the things you want to do and to see people

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I've got a few things to do or people to see and I'm thinking about new possibilities

- Perhaps these are things you've done for some time or you may be trying some new things with support and encouragement from others. For instance, they might be taking you along to a day centre or signing you up for a class
- There are still too many days when you are bored and/or lonely but you are exploring new possibilities and have information about what is available to you

3 - 4 Talking about it

My days are very lonely or boring – I wish it could be different

- You would really like things to be different but it's hard to imagine how
- You are talking to someone about this but when they suggest things you could do it feels too daunting and you don't feel you can do it at the moment, or you don't know what it is you want

1 - 2 Cause for concern

My days are very lonely or boring – that's just how it is

- Perhaps things have changed recently and you can't do things you used to do
- Perhaps you have caring responsibilities which prevent you from doing anything else
- You don't want to try new things or meet new people. For instance, you may think, "No one wants to spend time with me, I'm too old"

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3 Feeling positive

This is about feeling positive about life and motivated to do things. It's about finding ways of dealing with changes that happen and adapting to new circumstances. It's about being realistic and accepting limitations but still feeling that life is worthwhile and there are things out there for you. If your feelings change a lot from day to day and hour to hour, think about how you have felt most of the time over the last month.

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I mostly feel at ease and appreciate aspects of life

7 - 8 Choice and control

I am okay and find things to appreciate in life

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I am okay but life gets me down at times

3 - 4 Talking about it

Life is getting me down and I would like some help

1 - 2 Cause for concern

Life is getting me down. There is nothing anyone can do to help

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3 Feeling positive (detail)

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I mostly feel at ease and appreciate aspects of life

- You mostly feel at ease with how things are and any changes and any losses you may have experienced. You have some resilience to face any changes ahead
- You make a point of doing things that you appreciate and/or enjoy or that make you feel better
- You may still miss how things were before but you have a life that works for you now

7 - 8 Choice and control

I am okay and find things to appreciate in life

- You have a level of resilience – life may be hard but that does not get you down too much
- You are starting to identify what helps you to feel more positive and are making an effort to do those things. Sometimes things don't go as planned but you are learning what is possible and works for you
- If there have been big changes, you are starting to adapt and build your life around your new circumstances – there is a bit of trial and error but you are making progress

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I am okay but life gets me down at times

- You have good days as well as bad days. If there have been big changes you are starting to think about how to make life work in your new circumstances
- It may look rather daunting or you may be very excited and have plans that others feel are unrealistic

3 - 4 Talking about it

Life is getting me down and I would like some help

- You feel angry, unhappy or ill at ease a lot of the time but you are talking about it and getting some help
- If there has been a big change in your life, you are starting to take it in but it is hard to accept how much has changed

1 - 2 Cause for concern

Life is getting me down. There is nothing anyone can do to help

- You feel angry, resentful, unhappy or ill at ease with life a lot of the time
- Perhaps you just feel like giving up or life feels like a constant struggle
- You may have experienced some big changes like bereavement or illness and you can't take it in or think about what you need to do
- You don't want others 'interfering'

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4 Being treated with dignity

This is about being treated with respect and dignity by those providing you with care, both relatives and paid carers. If you don't have any kind of carer (e.g. someone who comes in to do housework or help you get up or a warden who is there to check on you) then choose ten.

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I am treated with dignity and respect by those who care for me

7 - 8 Choice and control

I am mostly treated with dignity and respect

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I am treated with basic dignity but things could be a lot better

3 - 4 Talking about it

I am not treated with dignity and respect but I know it is wrong and I am talking to someone about this

1 - 2 Cause for concern

I just have to take what I'm given

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4 Being treated with dignity (detail)

9 - 10 As good as it can be

I am treated with dignity and respect by those who care for me

- Any support or services you receive are delivered in a way that is sensitive to your human dignity, your preferences and to any cultural or spiritual needs you may have
- You have the amount of control that is right for you
- If your mental functioning is such that you are not able to make choices in a consistent way, then someone is noticing what works for you and advocating for your needs

7 - 8 Choice and control

I am mostly treated with dignity and respect

- You know how you would like your care to be organised (or someone has a clear and accurate picture of what would work for you)
- Your care reflects your choices and preferences to some extent but there are some important areas where it doesn't

5 - 6 Meeting basic needs

I am treated with basic dignity but things could be a lot better

- You are treated with basic dignity but your care doesn't reflect your own particular preferences, for example what you like to eat or when you want to get up
- Perhaps you are not sure how you would like things to be organised and are talking to someone to get clearer about this
- You know how to make a complaint about services if you need to (or have someone you trust to do this for you) and are confident that you would get a response

3 - 4 Talking about it

I am not treated with dignity and respect but I know it is wrong and I am talking to someone about this

- As in 1-2 below but you are letting the right people know that there is a problem and they are listening
- Or someone has noticed that you are being treated poorly and is concerned about this

1 - 2 Cause for concern

I just have to take what I'm given

- Your care is not given in a way that makes it possible for you to retain your dignity
- You may be being physically harmed or verbally abused
- Either you don't believe things can be any different so you don't say anything about it or you do tell people that there is something wrong but no one seems to listen or do anything about it

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