



Recovery Star™



The Outcomes Star for mental health and well-being

managing
mental health

physical
health

living skills

friends &
community

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Published by

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Edition 4 published September 2019

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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 and Guidance for Workers 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

Many people have contributed to the development of the Outcomes Star over its long evolution and we would like to thank all the service users, workers, managers, funders, academics and commissioners who have generously given their time and expertise.

The original commission for an outcome measurement system came from St Mungo's, with financial support from the London Housing Foundation, and Triangle recognises their vital roles in the development of the Outcomes Star. We would like to acknowledge Kate Graham's important contribution, as a founding partner of Triangle. We would also like to thank Jellymould for leading on the design and editing of the Stars from 2006 to 2017.

We developed the first edition of the Recovery Star thanks to a collaboration with the Association of Mental Health Providers (then MHPF) and funding from SITRA and Making Space. We would also like to acknowledge the Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health programme and Amaani Tallawah, AWAAZ and Dosti Asian Women's Support for advice on strengthening the cultural relevance of the second edition.

Finally, we would also like to thank the lived experience practitioners, mental health professionals, support workers, commissioners and others who contributed to the Fourth Edition changes, including Research Net Bromley, Community Options, Sunderland Mind, Sheffield Mind, HEY Mind, Dr Lynne Friedli, Nick Karr, Midland Heart Housing Association, Sheffield County Council, Worcester NHS and Sheffield Local Authority.

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Foreword

We have been delighted by the level of interest in the Outcomes Star family of tools – and in particular the Recovery Star, which continues to grow in popularity not just in the UK but also internationally. The extensive and growing suite of Outcomes Stars includes versions for people with learning disabilities (the Life Star), people on the autistic spectrum (the Spectrum Star), people with mental health issues who are in secure settings (the Recovery Star Secure) and vulnerable families (the various versions of the Family Star).

This new edition of the Recovery Star draws on our learning from the development of other Stars as well as independent research on the Recovery Star and feedback from people using it. The aim in developing this version was to retain all the features that have been so valued by workers and service users while making improvements in line with feedback, including making the language more accessible, incorporating trauma-informed thinking, better acknowledging the external factors affecting people's recovery, such as housing and employment, and improving the precision and consistency of its measurement qualities.

The Recovery Star was originally developed in collaboration with the Association of Mental Health providers (AMHP), and initially both Triangle and AMHP were active in promoting and supporting its use. While continuing to be supportive of the tool, AMHP handed over the role of ensuring high-quality use to Triangle in 2016, including provision of training, training trainers, licensing and accrediting services using the tool. We are grateful to AMHP for their excellent work in disseminating the Recovery Star so widely across England.

For more information on the Recovery Star please visit www.outcomesstar.org.uk, or contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

Joy MacKeith and Sara Burns, Triangle, September 2019

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Note on fourth edition changes

In this fourth edition of the Recovery Star we have made the following improvements based on research and feedback from Star users. Most of the content is the same as the third edition. In the majority of scales the changes are to improve clarity and coherence, cover a wider range of issues and acknowledge the importance of people being supported in ways that work for them, particularly if they have experience of trauma. Points to note are that:

- The “Responsibilities” scale, which used to cover complying with the terms of your accommodation and keeping within the law, is now called “Home” and focuses on all aspects of accommodation. Offending is now picked up in the “Use of Time”, “Friends and Community” and “Addictive Behaviour” scales.
- The “Work” scale has been broadened to “Use of Time”, to acknowledge the fact that paid employment is not a realistic or appropriate option for all those completing the Recovery Star, particularly people with severe and enduring mental health issues. The scale now focuses on having a sense of purpose and something meaningful and satisfying to do in the working week, including but not limited to volunteering and education.
- The “Relationships” scale now covers close relationships in general rather than having the option of completing it for one particular relationship. This makes it easier to get an overview of how this aspect of the person’s life is going and means that Star readings are easier to interpret.
- The “Physical Health and Self-Care” scale is now called “Physical Health”. Self-care is now covered in the “Living Skills” scale.
- The third stage of the Journey of Change is now called **believing and trying** – previously it was just called “believing” – because at step 6 service users are putting that belief into action and trying to make changes.
- Step 3 on each scale now refers both to wanting help and to accepting help inconsistently in that area (previously the focus was sometimes on just wanting help and sometimes on wanting and accepting help).
- It is now made more explicit that self-reliance is not always a realistic or appropriate goal. For some people, especially those with severe and enduring mental health conditions, step 8 is the top of the scale, signaling that they are managing well with the right support. This is important for services to highlight as those people will continue to need their service or other mental health support.
- A number of edits and references are now included to ensure that the Journey of Change and the wording of the scales is more clearly trauma-informed and to acknowledge the importance of external factors and conditions affecting people’s recovery.
- Each scale now has “key points” to draw out some important landmarks on the Journey of Change and support consistency in using the scales. The wording of the detailed scales has been simplified to make them as accessible as possible and to further clarify the distinction between the numbers.

Some of these changes could result in differences in where people are placed on some scales. If you are moving from a previous edition of the Recovery Star to this one there will be implications for your data. Please contact Triangle on info@triangleconsulting.co.uk for support on how to manage this process.

For a fuller description of these changes and the research and feedback on the earlier editions on which they were based, please see the Recovery Star supporting documents.

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Introducing the Recovery Star™

The Outcomes Star for mental health and well-being

We are here to support you in your recovery, where “recovery” may mean living well with mental health issues, rather than eradication of all symptoms. Recovery usually involves receiving the support you need and changing things in a number of areas of your life so that they work better for you. Making changes isn't always easy, but understanding how change works can help.

Seeing the big picture – the Star areas

The Recovery Star looks at ten key areas of your life:

1. Managing mental health
2. Physical health
3. Living skills
4. Friends and community
5. Use of time
6. Relationships
7. Addictive behaviour
8. Home
9. Identity and self-esteem
10. Trust and hope

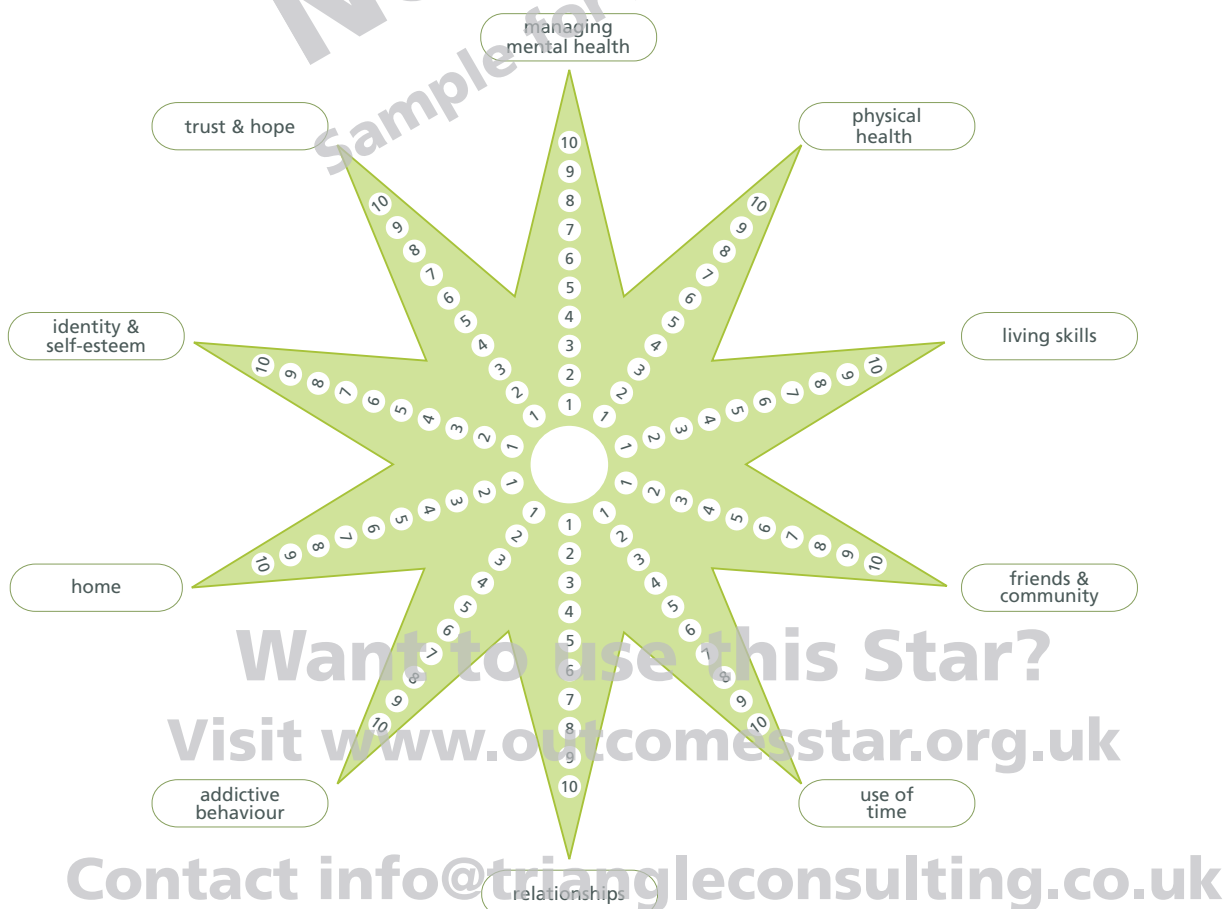


Figure 1: The Recovery Star

The Journey of Change

Many people with mental health conditions who are in recovery find it useful to think in terms of a journey with different stages. Everyone is different and it's important to understand each person's individual circumstances, but the pattern of recovery is often similar.

The Journey of Change that underpins the Recovery Star has five stages and ten steps:

- Stuck (1-2)
- Accepting help (3-4)
- Believing and trying (5-6)
- Learning (7-8)
- Self-reliance (9-10)

You can find more information about what the different stages are like in the detailed Journey of Change on page 8.

Recovery isn't necessarily moving from the first stage to the last

Different people will be at different stages and may move forwards or backwards as their circumstances change. Wherever you are in your recovery, placing yourself on the Journey of Change can help you see where you have come from, what your next step is and what support you need to get there.

It isn't just down to you

While the Journey of Change focuses on you and the steps you take, your recovery will also be affected by the services available, the way they are delivered and by a range of societal factors or other conditions beyond your control. It is important that mental health services offer an environment and approach that avoids causing more stress and enables you to feel safe and calm and to rebuild a sense of control. This may include workers being aware of the effects of traumatic events or developmental trauma on people and exploring what you need and how best to support you.

Societal factors may include a lack of access to housing or poor, unstable or unsuitable housing, benefits being withheld, inappropriate pressure to do unsuitable work, poverty or financial difficulty, a lack of services, discrimination or difficulties in getting a disability recognised. These and other factors can make it harder for things to improve but often neither you nor the service you are receiving support from can do much about them.

These things also need to be acknowledged and recorded when using the Star, as they may be a barrier to your recovery. The service supporting you may then be able to use this information to identify gaps in provision, plan future developments or raise issues with government or other policy-makers.

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How to complete the Star

For each of the ten areas there is a scale. Each scale follows the same pattern, or Journey of Change, with five stages. On the left hand page for each scale there is also a colour-coded short version, summarising the five stages of the Journey of Change for that area.

The Star is completed by you and your keyworker looking together at the scales one by one and talking about that area of your life. You can start anywhere on the Star, choose which area to discuss next and take breaks if you need to. It's also fine to complete the Star over more than one session. Together you can agree where you are in each area. Then mark the number on the Star Chart and connect the points to create a picture of the areas of your life that are working well and the areas that are causing difficulties.

The aim is to have a helpful conversation and create a picture on the Star to help you and your keyworker plan your support and next steps together.

Your own personal journey

You and your keyworker will come back to the Star at regular intervals, take time to discuss the different areas of your life and plot a new shape on the Star Chart. Over time, this will help you to build a picture of your progress. You will see where you have come from and how things have changed for you. This can help you to view things in a new way – to put the ups and downs of each week into a bigger picture.

Looking over your Star Charts and those of other service users also helps us to build up a picture of how we are doing as a service, where people make most changes and where we may need to provide more help or do things differently.

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The Journey of Change (detailed)

Stuck

- 1 At the beginning of the journey, you are experiencing strong mental health issues and don't accept help. Perhaps you feel depressed, anxious, angry or confused. Perhaps people are worried about you. You might feel cut off and not be aware of problems or you might be thinking about them all the time but feel that there is no one you can trust or no way things can improve. Perhaps the services on offer aren't being delivered in a way that works for you. So, at this stage things are **stuck**.
- 2 Things are the same as at 1, but every now and then you think that they don't have to be like this or you realise you need help. This is a positive sign – it's an opening for things to start to move and change.

You move to the next stage when you start to act on these moments and accept help.

Accepting help

- 3 You have a feeling that you want things to be different. Change may seem impossible or frightening and you may not know what you want, but you know you don't want to carry on living as you have been. You let others do things on your behalf and may open up about what you are experiencing, though sometimes you may feel the need to draw back again. Perhaps you want to feel better but don't know what to do or are in a difficult situation, so it is up to others to find appropriate ways to support you.
- 4 You are **accepting help** more and more, talking things through with workers and going along with the actions that are agreed, and may feel better as your circumstances improve. At this stage, you are relying on workers to make change happen and drive things forward. Without this, you can slip back quickly, and you may feel critical of workers if things don't go well. You don't yet feel the sense of control, safety or confidence needed to make changes for yourself.

You move to the next stage when you begin to believe that things can get better and that you can make a difference yourself.

Believing and trying

- 5 At this stage there is an internal shift towards **believing** that your life can be better and that you can make a difference yourself. It may also be that the help you are receiving is supporting your sense of safety and control so you feel able to move into action. You have a sense of what you want as well as what you don't want, and you can see that lasting changes won't happen unless you help make them happen. This is an important turning point – a change in the way you view yourself and your life that makes new things possible.

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- 6 You start to act on this belief by **trying** to do things differently, though this isn't easy. You start to take action yourself to improve things and may try different approaches, such as a support group, relaxation techniques, exercise or other activities that help you feel better for a while. However, often things don't go well and you have not yet found what works for you, and you may struggle with factors beyond your control, such as access to housing or employment, discrimination or a lack of services. Progress will also depend on having the right support and opportunities available to you.

You move to the next stage when you experience some benefits from the changes you have made and start to get a sense of what works for you.

Learning

- 7 As you continue to try new things to move towards your goals, some things go well and others don't, but you are **learning** what works for you and how to build the life you want. You may be doing things for the first time or returning to things from the past. If you are affected by trauma, you are starting to understand this and to find ways to manage this. These new reflections, behaviours and skills are still developing and it helps to have support to celebrate things that go well and learn from things that don't work out the way you hoped. This helps strengthen your motivation and confidence to achieve your goals.

- 8 At this stage you have learnt what works for you and do those things consistently. You may be managing well by this point, with support, have achieved at least some of your goals and feel positive about this aspect of your life. However, you need ongoing support to keep managing well and to face new challenges.

For some people, the severity of their mental health issues means that they may always need support from mental health services and it is not appropriate to be self-reliant. If this is the case, 8 will be the top of the scale for you, at least in those aspects of your life where support is needed. Maintaining stability at 8 in those areas is a significant achievement. If you then find you start to manage independently of mental health services, you would move to the final stage in this Journey of Change (**self-reliance**).

Self-reliance

- 9 Your new ways of doing things are now quite well established and feel more natural and automatic. Most of the time you can keep going but at times of crisis you need support. It can be helpful to have someone who checks that all is well and helps you recognise the danger signs and take action when necessary.
- 10 At 10 there are no particular issues that are likely to knock you off course. You behave in ways that work well for you and those around you. You are **self-reliant**, as you can manage with support from community services such as a GP and self-help group, plus family or friends. You don't need any additional support from mental health services to maintain this, though if you are taking medication you may still be seeing a psychiatrist. You are able to recognise if you need support and to access it.

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1 Managing mental health

Understanding your mental health, managing mood, behaviour and symptoms

Key points

- At 4 you have a support plan in place and are following it
- At 5 you have some understanding of your mental health issues
- At 8 you have some effective ways of managing your symptoms, moods and behaviour, with support

Self-reliance

- 10 I manage my mental health well
- 9 I manage my mental health well, with occasional support

Learning

- 8 I mostly manage my mental health well but need ongoing support to maintain this
- 7 I'm learning how to manage my mental health effectively

Believing and trying

- 6 I'm trying out new ways to manage my symptoms, moods and behaviour
- 5 I'm starting to believe I can manage my mental health better

Accepting help

- 4 I mostly go along with treatment and support for my mental health
- 3 I realise there are problems with my mental health and sometimes go along with help

Stuck

- 2 I often have strong symptoms and occasionally wonder if I need some help
- 1 I often have strong symptoms. I don't have help or don't accept it

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1 Managing mental health (detail)

This scale is about how you manage your mental health issues. It's about learning how to manage your mood, behaviour and symptoms, taking medication as appropriate, and building a life that isn't defined or limited by your mental health issues, even though you may still have symptoms. You can also use it to discuss any issues relating to self-harm, eating disorders or compulsive behaviour.

9-10 Self-reliance

10 I manage my mental health well

- You have a good understanding of your mental health issues and have tools for managing symptoms, moods and behaviour and for coping with setbacks or the impact of trauma
- You may still see a psychiatrist if you are on medication or have ongoing symptoms, but any extra support you need comes from family or friends

9 I manage my mental health well, with occasional support

- As for 10, but you need low-level support from a mental health service for difficult issues

7-8 Learning

8 I mostly manage my mental health well but need ongoing support to maintain this

- You have built some resilience and skills for coping with difficulties

7 I'm learning how to manage my mental health effectively

- You are learning about your mental health issues, including how to manage triggers, symptoms and perhaps the effects of trauma
- You are able to reflect on and learn from your experience, with support

5-6 Believing and trying

6 I'm trying out new ways to manage my symptoms, moods and behaviour

- You are trying new approaches or persevering with prescribed medication, with the right support
- However, you don't yet know what works for you or may struggle with factors outside your control

5 I'm starting to believe I can manage my mental health better

- You believe you have an important role to play in your recovery and that you can take the initiative, but you may not know what to do
- You may feel vulnerable but you feel supported enough to move into action

3-4 Accepting help

4 I mostly go along with treatment and support for my mental health

- You have some suitable treatment and/or support and are engaging consistently with it. You may be (re)starting medication
- You don't yet believe you will be able to manage your symptoms, moods or behaviour and rely on workers or others to take the lead

3 I realise there are problems with my mental health and sometimes go along with help

- You are starting to acknowledge to others that you need support with your mental health, and that you want things to improve
- It may take courage to acknowledge the difficulties

1-2 Stuck

2 I often have strong symptoms and occasionally wonder if I need some help

- As for 1, but you have occasional moments when you realise you need help, but don't act on them

1 I often have strong symptoms. I don't have help or don't accept it

- You are feeling the full force of your symptoms, and your behaviour may be causing concern or harming you or others
- You can't see any possibility of change. Perhaps you don't feel safe or any support on offer is not working for you

2 Physical health

Doctors, treatment, healthy food, stopping smoking, sleep, exercise, managing stress, safety

Key points

- At 3 you are getting treatment for any major health issues
- At 6 you are taking steps yourself to look after your health and well-being
- At 10 you are mostly doing what you can to be as healthy and safe as possible and don't need help to maintain this

Self-reliance

- 10 I look after my physical health, safety and well-being
- 9 I look after my physical health, safety and well-being, with occasional support

Learning

- 8 I mostly look after myself but need ongoing support to maintain this
- 7 I'm learning what makes me feel fit and healthy

Believing and trying

- 6 I'm trying new things to look after my health
- 5 I'm starting to believe that I can look after myself better

Accepting help

- 4 I'm working with someone to improve my health and feel better
- 3 I'm not looking after myself but I sometimes go along with help

Stuck

- 2 I don't look after myself but occasionally wonder if I need some help
- 1 I don't look after myself. I don't have help or don't accept it

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2 Physical health (detail)

This scale is about how well you look after yourself – taking care of your physical health, getting enough healthy food, exercise and sleep, cutting down stress, avoiding smoking and other unhealthy habits, staying safe and looking after your sexual health. It also includes maintaining a sense of well-being by doing the things that help you feel good.

9-10 Self-reliance

10 I look after my physical health, safety and well-being

- You take care of your physical health on your own, and any extra support you need comes from family or friends. You manage any physical health conditions well enough
- You mostly eat enough healthy food, get enough exercise and sleep, minimise unhealthy habits, manage stress and keep yourself safe

9 I look after my physical health, safety and well-being, with occasional support

- As for 10, but you need a mental health service for help with difficult issues

7-8 Learning

8 I mostly look after myself but need ongoing support to maintain this

- You have healthy habits and are looking after your physical health and safety well, with support
- You are building awareness of how to handle stress

7 I'm learning what makes me feel fit and healthy

- You are learning what helps you feel fit and healthy or manage a health condition, for example, sleep or exercise, but there are still some issues
- If risk-taking is a problem, you are learning how to keep yourself safe

5-6 Believing and trying

6 I'm trying new things to look after my health

- You attend health appointments on your own or with friends or family and are trying to manage any health conditions
- You are trying changes such as healthy eating, getting enough sleep or stopping smoking, and things that make you feel better such as art, meditation, walks or sport. However, you don't yet know what works for you or may struggle with factors outside your control

5 I'm starting to believe that I can look after myself better

- You are starting to believe you can look after your health and well-being better
- You feel supported enough to move into action

3-4 Accepting help

4 I'm working with someone to improve my health and feel better

- As for 3, but you also accept help with minor health or safety issues. You may feel better as a result

3 I'm not looking after myself but I sometimes go along with help

- You see a doctor or nurse about pressing health problems if someone else takes you, but ignore less serious ones

1-2 Stuck

2 I don't look after myself but occasionally wonder if I need some help

- As for 1, but you are occasionally aware that you don't like how things are, though you don't act on it

1 I don't look after myself. I don't have help or don't accept it

- You don't go to the doctor even for pressing health problems, and may not take prescribed medication
- You may be behaving in ways that risk your health, including your sexual health, or put you in danger
- You can't see any possibility of change and any support on offer isn't working for you

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3 Living skills

Shopping, cooking, cleaning, washing, dressing, managing money, language skills

Key points

- At 3 and 4 you are accepting help in at least some areas
- By 5 you have addressed any issues with personal hygiene, self-care or presentation
- From 6 to 8 you are learning and practising more skills so that by 8 you have the skills to live independently but need support to keep going

Self-reliance

- 10 I have the practical skills to manage independently
- 9 I have the practical skills to manage independently but need occasional support

Learning

- 8 I mostly have the practical skills I need but need ongoing support to maintain this
- 7 I'm (re)learning practical skills for living independently

Believing and trying

- 6 I'm trying out the new skills I need to manage independently
- 5 I'm starting to believe I could manage independently

Accepting help

- 4 I'm consistently accepting help with living skills
- 3 I don't manage independently but I sometimes accept help with living skills

Stuck

- 2 I don't manage most daily living tasks but occasionally wish I could
- 1 I don't manage most daily living tasks. I don't have help or don't accept it

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3 Living skills (detail)

This scale is about the practical side of living independently – being able to shop and cook for yourself, stay clean and well presented, keep your place safe, clean and tidy, and look after your money and paperwork. It's also about improving your literacy and/or language skills if needed.

9-10 Self-reliance

10 I have the practical skills to manage independently

- You have all the living skills you need including getting meals, managing your money and paperwork, laundry and keeping where you live clean and tidy enough
- Any extra support you need comes from family, friends or neighbours

9 I have the practical skills to manage independently but need occasional support

- As for 10, but you need a mental health service for help with difficult issues

7-8 Learning

8 I mostly have the practical skills I need but need ongoing support to maintain this

- As for 7, but you are also tackling the skills you find more difficult, so you are at least trying to develop all the main living skills, with support

7 I'm (re)learning practical skills for living independently

- You are making progress with living skills. Perhaps you can cook meals independently or keep your place clean without support but there are other areas where you are not yet developing the skills you need

5-6 Believing and trying

6 I'm trying out the new skills I need to manage independently

- You are trying to gain some of the practical skills you need, for example attending literacy or language classes, cooking or cleaning, but you don't yet know what works for you or may struggle with factors outside your control
- You may not yet be addressing some living skills that are particularly difficult for you

5 I'm starting to believe I could manage independently

- You are motivated to learn the skills you need to live independently
- You feel supported enough to move into action
- If you struggled with self-care or presentation, you have now addressed this

3-4 Accepting help

4 I'm consistently accepting help with living skills

- As for 3, but you accept help consistently and as a result your situation may be improving

3 I don't manage independently but I sometimes accept help with living skills

- People are helping sort things out for you or you are participating in a course or activities to learn new skills, but the initiative comes from workers

1-2 Stuck

2 I don't manage most daily living tasks but occasionally wish I could

- As for 1, but you sometimes wonder if you need help, but don't act on this

1 I don't manage most daily living tasks. I don't have help or don't accept it

- You have difficulties with some or all of these areas: shopping, cooking, cleaning, self-care, budgeting, paperwork or language skills
- If you have your own place you may be at risk, for example through poor hygiene or unmanaged debt
- You can't see any possibility of change and any support on offer isn't working for you

4 Friends and community

Friends, social life and activities, social skills, connection, belonging

Key points

- At 4 you are consistently taking part in activities that are arranged for you
- At 6 you are trying to connect socially with people outside the service
- At 8 you mostly have positive social connections but need help to maintain these
- 10 looks different for different people but means having regular, positive contact with others

Self-reliance

- 10 I have the friends and social connections that are right for me
- 9 I have the friends and connections that are right for me, with occasional support

Learning

- 8 I mostly have the social contact I need, but need ongoing support to maintain this
- 7 I'm developing interests, positive social connections and friendships

Believing and trying

- 6 I'm meeting people and trying new social activities
- 5 I'm starting to believe I can have positive, supportive social connections

Accepting help

- 4 I'm consistently going along with help to take part and connect with others
- 3 I sometimes accept help to take part in activities or connect with others

Stuck

- 2 I mostly feel isolated but occasionally wish I was more connected to people
- 1 I'm isolated or my friends are not good for me. I don't have help or don't accept it

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