



REIMAGINE MY LIFE

A WORKBOOK
TO SUPPORT YOU!



“ The goal is to become the
unique, awesome, never to be
repeated human being that we
were called to be. ”

Patricia Deegan

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“ Start by doing what’s necessary,
then do what’s possible;
and suddenly you are doing
the impossible. ”

Saint Francis of Assisi

reimagine your life

Who is this workbook for?

This is a book for you, about you! It is a place for you to put all the information you would like someone else to know about you together in one place. It was designed to support people living with mental health conditions but can be for anyone.

What is it for?

This workbook is a place to start reimagining your life. It will explore who you are, what your life is like now and how you would like it to change in the future. You can work through the book in your own way and your own time. You can also come back and add to it or make changes at any time as your life changes.

It can:

- be a place to collect information about you to help describe your situation when speaking to support people
- be a place to put down your thoughts, hopes and dreams to keep you feeling hopeful
- remind you of good things for the times when you might be feeling a bit hopeless
- help you to remember details that might be forgotten when life gets busy or interrupted
- help you collect information and think about a new initiative called the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

How do I use this book?

This book has been designed to be used with the website www.reimagine.today. The website will take you through the information and examples to help you complete activities in this book.

You can use this book to remind you when you are talking to people who are supporting you, about your hopes, dreams and chosen support needs. It can also be used as a guide to preparing an application for the NDIS.

Just remember that your hopes and dreams are important but they can sometimes make you feel unsafe or vulnerable so it is important to only share this book with people you can trust and with who you feel safe.

Introduction: About Me

This section is for collecting general information about you. You can use this as a way to start a conversation about you and your life when working with new people, such as people who provide you with care, support and treatment, even if you do not access the NDIS.

Personal Details

My name	
My address	
My phone number	
My email address	

Important People in my life

These are the people in your life who don't work for a mental health or disability support organisation. They are your friends, family, housemates, neighbours, workmates, teammates or others who care about you and help and support you. They may also be people you support.

If you don't have many people in your life this might be something you can work on as part of your hopes and dreams.

Name	Relationship to you	Describe how they are involved in your life

This is me

What you include in this section will help the National Disability Insurance Agency, as well as the people who support you, to understand more about you, your current situation and the supports you choose to lead a meaningful life.

I am...

Words or pictures that describe your personality or what kind of person you are.



I have experienced...

Words or pictures that describe your experiences of living with a mental health condition, disability or difficulty that affects your daily life (impairment); how long have you been living with them and how you cope.

A large, empty rectangular box with a green border, intended for writing or drawing. The box is positioned below the introductory text and occupies the majority of the page's vertical space.

Things I...

Words or pictures that describe things you like and do not like.

Like...

Don't like...

Things I need support with...

Words or pictures that describe things you need help with when you are doing well/
when you are not doing so well.

When I am doing well

When I am not doing so well

Who can support me to get these things?

How I like people to relate to me...

Words or pictures that describe how you would like people supporting you to behave and show they value you. (e.g. listen to you, respect you etc).



Step 1: Understand psychosocial disability

This section is to help you start gathering the information you may need for your NDIS application (called an access request). You can use this information to guide your health and community service workers when they are helping you put together your evidence.

My support needs

If you are going to apply for the NDIS you will be asked to provide information about your psychosocial and any other disability support needs. If you do not understand what psychosocial disability is - check out [Step 1 of the reimagine.today website](#).

Using the following NDIS application categories, think about how your mental health condition affects your everyday life and what support or assistance you need. You will be asked to provide this information to support your application as evidence of the impact on your life - for both your best days and your worst days.

For examples of these - check out [Step 1 of the reimagine.today website](#).

mobility/motor skills	getting out of bed and moving around the home and outside the home
communication	understanding and being understood by other people

social interaction	making and keeping friends and coping with feelings and emotions
learning	understanding, remembering and learning new things
self-care	needing help to take a bath or shower, dress and eat
self-management	doing daily jobs, handling money and making decisions

What type of disability you live with?

If you have been given a diagnosis and have found that helpful, share that information here. You can also include information about your symptoms.

psychosocial (mental health), intellectual, physical, sensory, other

What treatment, if any, have you had or are currently receiving?

This can be physical and/or mental health related.

medical, therapeutic, counselling, physio, dental, nutrition, podiatry, other

medication for mental health, physical health conditions, other

What long term impacts or side-effects, if any, do you have because of treatments (physical and/or mental health related)?

weight, incontinence, constipation, drowsiness, pain, sexual desire, etc.

Step 2: Understand the NDIS

This section is to keep any important information or questions you have about the NDIS. It can be useful to write down questions as you think about them and then you can ask them the next time you speak to a National Disability Insurance Agency representative or people that support you.

For more information about the National Disability Insurance Agency and for contact details - check out [Step 2 of the reimagine.today website](#).

My local NDIA office

Keep your local NDIA office information here so it is easy to access.

Phone number/s	
Address	

My Local Area Coordinator's office

Keep your NDIA Local Area Coordinator's (LAC) community partner details here so it is easy to access.

Partner organisation name (if required)	
LAC workers name	
Phone number/s	
Address	

Questions I have

Question	Answer

Step 3: Check if you can access the NDIS

This section takes you through a checklist to work out if you might be eligible to access the NDIS. Remember this is just a guide and the final decision about access is up to the National Disability Insurance Agency.

NDIS access checklist

Question	Answer
<p>1. Do you have Australian residency?</p> <p>To access the NDIS you must live in Australia and be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Australian citizen OR • a permanent resident OR • hold a Protected Special Category Visa 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes Go to Question 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No You may be able to access other supports</p>
<p>2. Are you under 65 years old?</p> <p>To access the NDIS you must be aged under 65 years at the time that you apply.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes Go to Question 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No You may be able to access other supports</p>
<p>3. Do you live in an area where the NDIS is available?</p> <p>To access the NDIS right now, you must live in an area where the NDIS is available. If you don't know check out Step 3 of the reimagine.today website.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes Go to Question 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No You will need to wait until the NDIS is rolling out in your area</p>
<p>4. Do you usually need support from a person or equipment to do everyday things for yourself because of an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent?</p> <p>To access the NDIS you need to have an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent (lifelong) and that stops you from doing everyday things by yourself.</p> <p>This includes impairments that are episodic and vary in intensity as is often so for people whose everyday living is seriously impacted by a mental health condition.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes Call the NDIA on 1800 800 110 and ask for an Access Request Form.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No You will not be able to NDIS funded supports.</p>

Step 4: Apply for NDIS support

This section will help you gather and keep track of the information and evidence you need to demonstrate reduced functioning for an NDIS application (or access request). Remember this is just a guide as everyone's situation is unique and so the information and evidence you need to provide may be different.

My appointments

Use this section to keep track of appointments you have with people who can help support you with your NDIS access request. They might include National Disability Insurance Agency representatives, case managers, support workers, your local GP or other health professionals.

Date (when)	Location (where)	Meeting with (who)	Important notes or questions to ask

Important contacts

This is a list of contact details for the important people in your life who assist and support you. They may be family, friends, health professionals or people who work for a mental health or disability support organisation.

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

NAME		Organisation they work for	
Relationship to me		Phone number (if relevant)	
How they support me			

People I want involved in my NDIS access request

Think about who you would like to help support you with an access request. It is OK to ask for help!

People I do not want contacted about my NDIS access request

Think about who you would not like to support you with an access request. It is OK to tell people that you do not need or want help!

My forms and supporting evidence

Use this section to keep track of what forms and supporting evidence you have collected to support your NDIS access request. Tick each item as complete when you have collected it and put any important things you need to remember about it in the notes section.

Form or supporting evidence	Tick if included	Important notes or questions to ask
Access Request Form	<input type="checkbox"/> By phone <input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Paper form	
Supporting Evidence Form <i>(you will be notified by NDIA if this is required)</i>		
Medical reports/ records		
Carer's statement		
Letters of support (family, support workers, GP, Psychiatrist etc)		
Case manager or nominated carer		
Guardian or trustee		
Other:		

My application's progress

Use this to track where you are up to with your application

Action	Date completed	Important notes
Contact NDIA to check eligibility		
Complete an Access Request Form <i>(note: if you currently receive disability support services you may not need to do this)</i>		
Submit supporting evidence <i>(the more the better)</i>		
Complete your pre-planning by reimagining your life in this workbook <i>(this will be useful whether you access the NDIS or not)</i>		
Receive a decision letter <i>(follow up 21 days after submitting all evidence if required)</i>		
OPTIONAL: Request an NDIA review [if decision is "not eligible" and you disagree] <i>(submit request within 3 months of receiving a decision if required)</i>		
OPTIONAL: Request more information about not eligible decision (if you do not understand the reason in the decision letter)		
OPTIONAL: Consider Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) review 1800 228 333		

Step 5: reimagine my life

This section is to help you start to reimagine your life with or without the NDIS. It is about thinking about your hopes, dreams and aspirations and working towards making them a reality. Remember achieving your hopes and dreams can take a lot of time and effort, whether you have a mental health condition or not, so take it one step at a time!

My hopes, dreams and aspirations for a meaningful life

There are so many different ways to explore your hopes and dreams.

In this workbook we focus on eight outcomes for everyday life that are key areas in which the NDIS provides support. The areas are:

1. **Choice and control** – This means that you make your own decisions about what is important in your life and to decide how you live it and including who supports you.
2. **Daily activities** – These are the day to day things you do in your life like cooking, shopping and cleaning and going places.
3. **Relationships** – This is about the people in your life and whether or not they are a good influence.
4. **Home** – This is about the place that you live and if that arrangement is working for you.
5. **Work** – This is about having meaningful activities in your life and does not always mean paid employment.
6. **Health and wellbeing** – This is about how physically and mentally well you are and want to be.
7. **Social and community participation** – This is about you taking a part in, and sharing with others, the different things you do in your life that make you feel like you belong.
8. **Lifelong learning** – This is about the things you want to learn throughout your life and that this learning can occur in many ways.

For each of these areas you are going to explore what your life is like now (what do you want support with) and how you would like things to change.

My life hopes, dreams and aspirations

These are your hopes and dreams, use this page to write, draw, **reimagine...**

aspiration
HOPE DREAM

Exploring my hopes, dreams and aspirations

Check out your hopes and dreams you put down in the previous activity. Choose up to three that you would like to explore in more detail.

Write your hope and dream in the centre of the page and complete the questions around it.

Why do I want to do this?

What skills do I have now that would be useful?

What supports do I have now that would be useful?

aspiration
HOPE DREAM

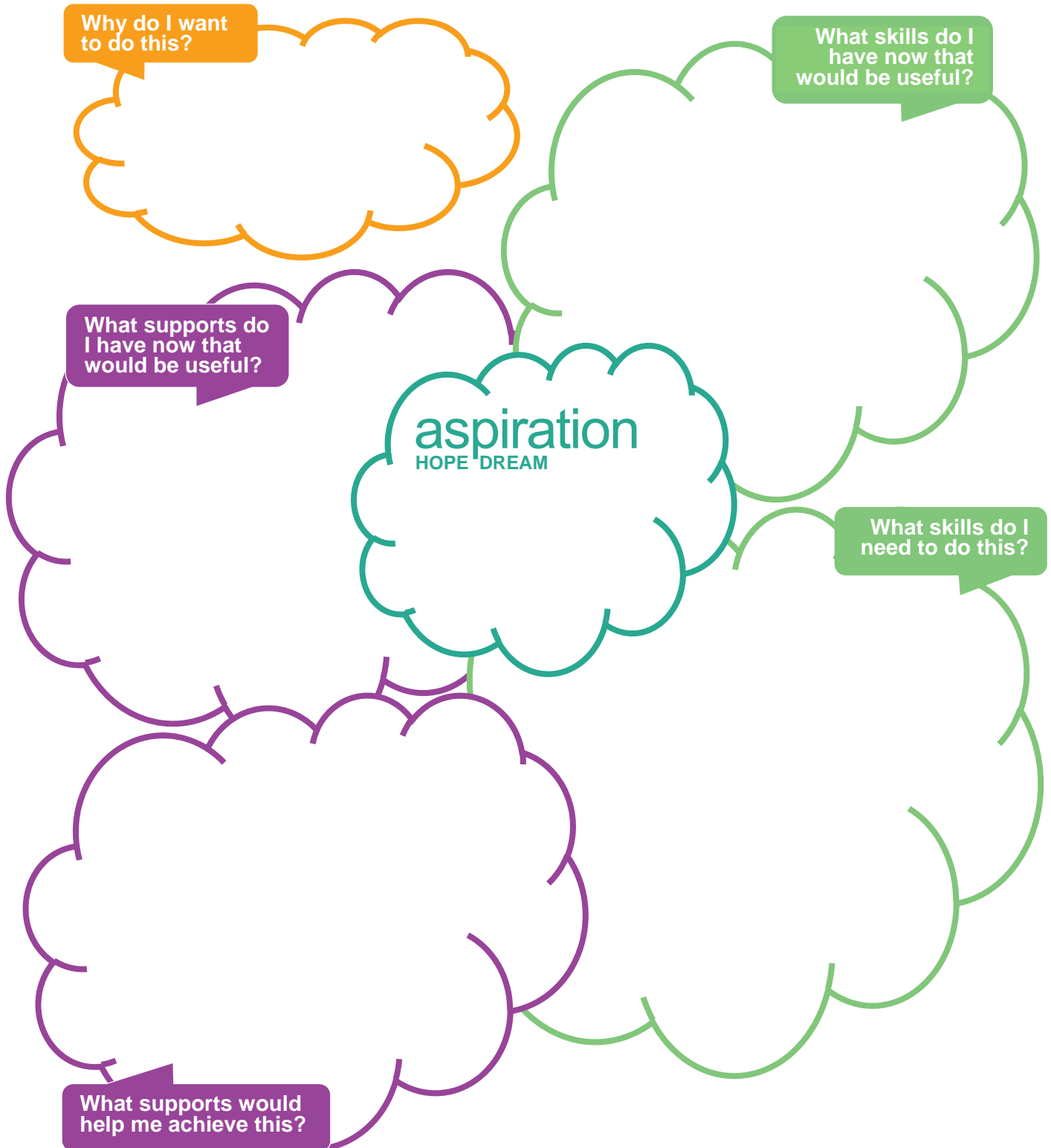
What skills do I need to do this?

What supports would help me achieve this?

Exploring my hopes and dreams

Check out your hopes and dreams you put down in the previous activity. Choose up to three that you would like to explore in more detail.

Write your hope and dream in the centre of the page and complete the questions around it.



Exploring my hopes and dreams

Check out your hopes and dreams you put down in the previous activity. Choose up to three that you would like to explore in more detail.

Write your hope and dream in the centre of the page and complete the questions around it.

Setting my goals

Now you have some aspirations for the future it is time to set some goals to help you achieve them!

Go back and review the eight areas you completed in the previous activity. The things you want for the future are your aspirations. Choose three aspirations for the future that you would like to focus on. For each aspiration you are going to set one step to complete within three months, six months and then by one year as well as explore what supports you might need.

For more detailed examples of supports that you might need - check out [Step 5 of the reimagine.today website](#).

Capacity building: These are supports that help you to build your independence and skills.

- Improved daily living
- Improved living arrangements
- Improved relationships
- Increased social and community participation
- Improved learning
- Finding and keeping a job
- Improved health & wellbeing
- Improved life choices
- Coordination of supports

Core: These are supports that help you to complete activities of daily living.

- Assistance with daily living
- Assistance with social and community participation
- Consumables
- Transport

Capital: This is about investment or purchasing things you need long-term.

- Assistive technology
- Home modifications

Aspiration #1

My aspiration is:

Timeframes	My goal is:	Who or what can help me?
Within 3 months I will have		
Within 6 months I will have		
Within 1 year I will have		

Aspiration #2

My aspiration is:

Timeframes	My goal is:	Who or what can help me?
Within 3 months I will have		
Within 6 months I will have		
Within 1 year I will have		

Aspiration #3

My aspiration is:

Timeframes	My goal is:	Who or what can help me?
Within 3 months I will have		
Within 6 months I will have		
Within 1 year I will have		

Step 6: Plan with the NDIS

This workbook has been designed to help you prepare an application for the NDIS and to gather important information that you will use in your planning process with a National Disability Insurance Agency representative. The reimagine.today website provides some information about the [planning process in Step 6](#).

Once you have accessed the NDIS all your planning and funds management will be completed through a National Disability Insurance Agency process, not the reimagine.today website or workbook.

If you have any questions about this, the National Disability Insurance Agency will be able to assist you.

Questions I have

Question	Answer

Preparing to manage your NDIS funds

There are two key decisions you will need to make if you do get NDIS funds that you should think about before you go to a planning meeting.

1. Do you need a coordinator of supports?
2. How do you want to manage your NDIS funds?

To get you to start thinking about which options are best for you it can help to make a pros (positives) and cons (negatives) list. Use the section below to note your ideas. It might be useful to discuss this with a support person as well.

For more information about these options check out [Step 5 of the reimagine.today website](#).

Do I want to have a coordinator of supports?

Pros (positives)	Cons (negatives)
My decision is...	

How do I want to manage my NDIS funds?

Options	Pros (positives)	Cons (negatives)
Self-manage		
Plan nominee		
Registered plan management provider		
The NDIA		
A combination of the above		
My decision is...		

Good luck

The reimagine.today team would like to wish you good luck on your journey to achieve your hopes and dreams. We hope the reimagine.today website and this workbook have been helpful to you, whether you access the NDIS or not.

If you have any suggestions or feedback about the reimagine.today website or workbook please contact reimagine@mhcc.org.au

For all NDIS related questions, please contact the NDIS directly.

Thank you!

**“ Be who you are and say what
you feel, because those who
mind don't matter and those
who matter don't mind. ”**

Dr Seuss

Additional notes & ideas

Additional notes & ideas

Daily diary: activity tracker

Everyone we have spoken to in the creation of this resource has recommended that you keep a diary of your daily living activities. Try using this daily diary to help record the daily things you do and the support you get to do them.

Date (MM/YY)	Daily Activities	To do these things I get help and support from
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Thank you

Alolka	Kat	Arahni			Mark C	Petra	Simon
Peter	Jason	Marita	Vanessa	Lara	SJ Paz	David P	Dianne
Erika	Gwen	Nicole	Reuben	John	Becky	Lynnette	Michael S
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MENTAL HEALTH, MY RECOVERY AND THE NDIS