



WELCOME!

We are delighted that you have chosen The Pocket Advocate to support your mental health, self-management, and wellbeing. The purpose of this tool is to give you a sense of authority and ownership over your mental health experience and the treatments available to you.

The following exercises aim to explore your and/or diagnosis in a way that empowers you to manage and communicate your experience with others. Once you have completed these exercises your Pocket Advocate will be created.

We recommend that you approach the following exercises with the support of someone you feel safe with, like a friend, relative or someone from your healthcare team.

By completing the following exercises you are agreeing to our **Terms of Use** below. Please read these carefully before continuing.

THE POCKET ADVOCATE – TERMS OF USE

These terms of use govern your use of the Pocket Advocate exercises and the content and functionality they provide (together referred to as the “Exercises”). By using the Exercises you agree to be bound by these terms of use, which form a binding legal agreement between you, the user, and us, Project Embrace CIC.

The Exercises offer access to and use of the Pocket Advocate, a self-management tool, which is designed to give assistance to people with mental health issues (“clients”) in assessing and communicating their needs.

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WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW

These questions are asked at the beginning and end of the exercises. This shows you and us if there has been any change in the way you approach and manage your health.

At the end of each statement place a number between 1 – 10. 1 being the least true, and 10 being the most true.

‘I feel confident managing my mental health needs.’

‘When I feel unwell I know how to express my needs clearly to those around me.’

‘When I need extra support I have all the information I need to contact someone from my community services or healthcare team.’

PERSONAL DETAILS & MEDICATION

The purpose of this section is to give you and those around you, including medical services, a clear outline of your requirements.

You may know what medication works for you on a day-to-day basis, but do you know what you would need if your symptoms got worse? Is there any medication that you react badly to? If you are registered with a hospital, is there a single sex ward available?

If you get stuck answering any of these questions, contact someone in your healthcare team, like your GP or Care Co-

ordinator. If you aren't registered with a doctor, maybe a close friend or relative can help.

Enter your details below:

Name

Date of Birth

Mental Diagnosis

Physical Diagnosis

Next of Kin

Medication

Hospital

Ward

Food Preference:

Medication During Crisis

Allergic to

Name of your Consultant Psychiatrist

Name of your General Practitioner

CONTACTS & SUPPORT

A big part of our ability to take care of our selves relates to our sense of support and feeling able to reach out to our community, however big or small. Community could be a friend, perhaps a few if we are lucky. It could be our partner, our children, extended family, a group that we are part of, or someone from our healthcare team.

The purpose of this section is to remind you of who you can reach out to during the challenging times. It is also for others to refer to, if they need support, or advice from someone else who knows you.

Some people are better at supporting us than others depending on the situation. When are they able or unable to be involved in your care? What do they find challenging? What is the best way for you to approach things together?

This may be a good opportunity to talk to those around you, about your experience.

Family & Friends

Below, list the name, relationship and contact number for each friend and relative you feel safe with, and could reach out to for support.

Example: Elliot, brother, 0207 543 8765

Community Services & Healthcare

Below, list the name, role and contact number for each service and healthcare contact you could reach out to for support.

Example: Helen, Care coordinator, 0208 674 8759

TRIGGERS

A trigger is something that pushes a button and creates a reaction. Triggers take us out of our 'comfort zone', and this can create a certain level of stress. There is something unsettling about the nature of a trigger. One at a time triggers may be quite manageable, but life being as it is, can often present several challenges at once.

This section will list your triggers, and can be used to remind you of the situations you might find challenging. When we know what causes stress, we are more able to prepare ourselves for those times. If we feel

SIGNS

There are signs in our behavior that tell us when we are not coping so well. If we are aware of what these are, we can take action. A simple example could be: over doing things (trigger), feeling a bit low (sign), and giving ourselves some time to rest (action).

Another example could be drinking three cups of coffee (trigger) and feeling over stimulated (sign) and not being able to sleep (sign). If this happened for over a week, it could become more serious and less manageable – and move from the ‘early’ phase into ‘intermediate’ or ‘late’. Other signs could include depression, weight loss, sleeplessness, having paranoid or suicidal thoughts, and self harm.

Sometimes it can be hard to stop and ask: “Am I okay?” This could be a good opportunity to talk to others about the changes they notice in your behaviour when you are having a tough time.

EARLY SIGNS

These signs are your first responses to a trigger.

Use the space below to write down any early signs you can think of.

Examples of some common early signs: Fatigue. Low energy. Waking up earlier. Loss of appetite. Feeling isolated. Paranoid thoughts. Anxiety. Unable to rest and relax. Agitation. Tearful. Drinking alcohol. Unusually ‘high’ energy. Racing thoughts. Messy home. Looking after myself feels hard.

INTERMEDIATE SIGNS

These signs may be combined with the early signs, and are more pronounced.

Use the space below to write down any intermediate signs you can think of.

Examples of some common intermediate signs: Suicidal thoughts. Heart palpitations. Fearfulness. Aggression. Hearing voices. Moving from one emotion to another quickly. Weight loss. Behaving out of character. Feeling overwhelmed. Unmotivated. Having delusional thoughts. Unable to take care of myself. Self harm.

LATE SIGNS

Late signs are a combination of all the above but will have become more extreme.

Use the space below to write down any late signs you can think of.

Examples of some common late signs: Suicidal. Can't leave the house. Completely withdrawn. Extreme weight loss. Will not let people speak. Volatile. Unable to sit down for long. Extreme paranoia and fear. Unable to concentrate. Feeling powerful. Voices have become more dominant and negative. Speech is jumbled. Feel possessed. Volatile. Violent.

INTERVENTION

'Intervention' is the action we take to make sure we are safe. This changes depending on how we feel. Telling someone that you're struggling is a form of intervention. Increasing your medication until you feel better, is also a form of intervention.

This section is an opportunity for you to explain what actions you and others need to take, to bring you back to a place of safety. We need different things at different times, so we have divided this section into: 'early', 'intermediate' and 'late'.

This may be good opportunity to talk to those who have supported you through tougher times in the past. What helped, what didn't?

If you are registered with a healthcare team or doctor it would be good idea to talk through what services, treatments,

medications and dosages support you through different times.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Complete the following statement by DELETING the options that DO NOT apply to you:

‘At this stage I find it...

Option 1: ***easy***

Option 2: ***difficult***

Option 3: ***impossible***

...to reach out for support. If I am able to manage my early signs the progression of my condition can be prevented.’

Action & Response

What actions do you need to take to support you during this time? How do you need others to respond? What is helpful? What is unhelpful? What has worked in the past? What hasn't?

Use the space below to describe the actions you and others need to take during this time.

For example: Contact a friend or Health Care Professional and have a chat about what's is going on. Cancel any prior engagements. Bed rest and medicate at home. Slow the pace right down and be gentle. Cancel any prior engagements. Have a meal at the local café, try not to be alone too much. Do something to help me relax like have a sauna. Take a walk in the local park.

Medication & Activities that Help

Use the space below to detail what medication and dosage helps at this time. What other activities bring you to a place of safety?

For example: Talk to doctor if I am unsure about what I need right now. Alprazolam 0.25mg. Citalopram 30mg. Fluoxetine 20mg. Diazepam 5mg. Celexa 20mg. Aripiprazole 400mg. Olanzapine 2.5mg. Lithium 800mg. Call Anna everyday to check in. Make sure I eat regularly. Ask Dave if he can come food shopping with me, or help organise food delivery.

Contacts & Support

Use the space below to name the people you want to reach out to at this time.

For example: Sue, Gill, Dave, Care Co-ordinator, GP.

Rest & Recovery

How much time do you need to give yourself to rest and recover? **Be generous.**

For example: 2 weeks – 3 months.

INTERMEDIATE INTERVENTION

Complete the following statement by **DELETING** the options that **DO NOT** apply to you:

‘At this stage I find it...

Option 1: **easy**

Option 2: **difficult**

Option 3: **impossible**

...to reach out for support. If I am able to manage my intermediate signs the progression of my condition can be prevented.’

Action & Response

What actions do you need to take to support you during this time? How do you need others to respond? What is helpful? What is unhelpful? What has worked in the past? What hasn't?

Use the space below to describe the actions you and others need to take during this time.

For example: Call my contacts, make an appointment to see my doctor, go and stay with a friend, talk to my doctor about my medication. Let someone from work know what is going on. Don't pretend everything is okay. Let the Crisis Team know what going on.

Have daily contact with those around me.

Medication & Activities that Help

Use the space below to detail what medication and dosage helps at this time. What other activities bring you to a place of safety?

For example: Talk to doctor if I am unsure about what I need right now. Alprazolam 0.5mg. Citalopram 30mg. Fluoxetine 40mg. Diazepam 5mg. Celexa 20mg. Aripiprazole 400mg. Olanzapine 5mg – 10mg. Lithium 800mg. Diazepam 5mg. Be as restful as I can. Listen to my audio books.

Contacts & Support

Use the space below to name the people you want to reach out to at this time.

For example: Samaritans, Crisis Team, CPN, GP, Psychiatrist, Mum, Helen, Pete.

Rest & Recovery

How much time do you need to give yourself to rest and recover? **Be generous.**

For example: 2 – 6 months.

LATE INTERVENTION

Complete the following statement:

‘At this stage I find it...

Option 1: *easy*

Option 2: *difficult*

Option 3: *impossible*

...to reach out for support. If I am able to manage my late signs the progression of my condition can be prevented.’

Action & Response

What actions do you need to take to support you during this time? How do you need others to respond? What is helpful? What is unhelpful? What has worked in the past? What hasn't?

Use the space below to describe the actions you and others need to take during this time.

For example: Don't be alone, call Sue and let her help, show me this document and talk me through it, call the crisis team and or doctor, make sure I am eating and sleeping. Is there someone that can help support me on a daily basis?

Medication & Activities that Help

Use the space below to detail what medication and dosage helps at this time. What other activities bring you to a place of safety?

For example: Talk to doctor if I am unsure about what I need right now. Alprazolam 1 mg. Citalopram 30mg. Fluoxetine 40mg. Diazepam 5mg. Celexa 20mg. Aripiprazole 400mg. Olanzapine 20mg. Lithium 800mg. Lorazepam 1mg, Diazepam 20mg. Make sure I am in contact with support daily. Consider emergency services if things become unmanageable. Ask someone to help me pack an away bag just in case.

Contacts & Support

Use the space below to name the people you want to reach out to at this time.

For example: Crisis Team, Care Co-ordinator, GP, Psychiatrist, Mum, Helen, Pete, emergency services.

Rest & Recovery

How much time do you need to give yourself to rest and recover? **Be generous.**

For example: 6 months – 3 years.

WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW

These questions are asked at the beginning and end. This shows if there has been any change in the way you approach and manage your health.

At the end of each statement place a number between 1 – 10. 1 being the least true, and 10 being the most true.

'I feel confident managing my mental health needs.'

‘When I feel unwell I know how to express my needs clearly to those around me.’

‘When I need extra support I have all the information I need to contact someone from my community services or healthcare team.’

CONGRATULATIONS!

By completing this process you have:

- **Engaged** with your condition/diagnosis from a clinical and personal perspective;
- **Liaised** with your personal and medical community to gain insight into your care needs;
- **Researched** the details of the treatment you require in the event of an emergency;
- **Explored** your sense of community and who you are able to reach out to for support;
- **Enquired** into the situations that feel comfortable or uncomfortable for yourself and those around you;
- **Created** guidelines for appropriate support depending on your experience;
- **Explored** the meaning of a ‘trigger’;
- **Identified** a variety of triggers that are unique to you;
- **Evaluated** how you react to triggers in the form of specific signs;
- **Analysed** the characteristics of the signs you experience at different stages of your condition;
- **Formulated** practical strategies to aid your self management and care *and*
- **Produced** clear instructions to guide yourself and those around you through the different stages of your condition.

WELL DONE!

CREATE YOUR POCKET ADVOCATE

1. Order as many Pocket Advocates as you like, by going to the following link:

www.project-embrace.com/the-pocket-advocate.php

2. Use the answers to your exercises to fill in your Pocket Advocates.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We would be so grateful if you could tell us if you have found this process useful, and how it could be improved.

Email us at feedback@project-embrace.com

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We would be so grateful your feedback.

This process was useful (please circle one):

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Please explain why:

How could it be improved?

What, if anything, can you use from this process to help in the development of your wellbeing?

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