

Reach conversation starter cards

A free resource to help you discover
what a person wants in their life

1. I choose who I live with

Who or what type of
person would you like
to live with?



3. I have my own home

Who opens the front
door of your home?



2. I choose where I live

How happy and safe
do you feel where
you live?



5

6. I get help to make
changes in my life

What are you happy
with in your life?



8. I choose how I am part
of the community

Do you go out in the
evenings and weekend?
Where do you go to?



5. I choose my friends
and my relationships

Is there anything you
would like to know
about sexual
relationships?





“It’s a conversation, a time for discovery not an assessment!”

Tim Keilty



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Please note: for the most up-to-date version always go to www.paradigm-uk.org.

A person with dark skin and long, thick braids is holding a large, orange speech bubble with a white outline in front of their face. They are wearing a light gray button-down shirt over a pink ribbed top. The background is a lush green outdoor setting with various plants.

"One good conversation can
shift the direction forever."

Linda Lambert

HELLO...



These cards are for YOU.

They are a set of free conversation starter cards to help you discover more about the person you are supporting.

The cards are based on The Reach Standards and they should work alongside the Reach Practical Guide written by Paradigm. You can find this on www.paradigm-uk.org.

The cards were inspired by requests from Reach member organisations to support conversations that are both verbal and non-verbal.

How you use them is up to you and the person you are supporting. They are a way of thinking about the person's life and what matters to them.

It maybe that you want to get to know someone and explore their hopes and wishes in life generally. You could select any card to start this conversation. Alternatively, you could use the cards from one particular standard to explore a particular aspect of someone's life. For example, thinking about where someone wants to live. If have any questions we could add, let us know at hello@paradigm-uk.org.

THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO DISCOVER!

Conversations are always best when they are free flowing. So, why not ask a question from a card and see where it takes you. Be curious and follow it up with open-ended questions. Be brave and just give it a go!

3 Top Tips:

- Start a conversation in a place where the person feels comfortable. It could be in their home, whilst you are walking together or sitting on a bus. Often the best conversations don't occur when you are sitting in an office, with a form to fill in!
- Communicate in a way that will engage the person, verbally or non-verbally (think of pictures, videos, music, people).
- Remember the conversation does not have to happen all in one go. Pause the conversation if that it feels right. You can always pick it up at another time.

PLEASE see the next page for more tips to support your conversations and action.

Hosting a conversation

Set the scene

- Think about where the person will feel most relaxed having this conversation.
- Come prepared.
- Be fully present. A person will sense if you are not valuing them or enjoying being with them.
- Show the person that you understand and value their way of communicating and that you will do all you can to include them.
- Explain why you are having this conversation.

Get the conversation started

- Start in a way that engages the person (and others who might be there). You may choose to use a photo, a memory or an object, something you know is important to the person, e.g. a picture of their favourite band or football club. It is important people realise quickly this is going to be a warm and natural conversation.
- Help the person understand what The Standard means and what is possible (see the Reach Guide). Remember: people may be limited by their experience; e.g. do they know that some people do directly choose who supports them or that some people do have a boyfriend/girlfriend to stay overnight?

Keep the conversation flowing

- Show you are listening and that you value the person through your body language, as well as your words.
- Summarise or repeat back what you have heard to show people you are listening.
- Stay alert to when you might be making assumptions and value judgements. Sometimes, when we have known people a while, it is easy to slip into this danger zone!
- Keep being curious and drawing out the person's thoughts and ideas e.g. create follow-up questions based on what you have heard.
- Check out and clarify what you have heard before writing anything down.
- Remember a conversation is two-way, so you need to contribute too!

Summarise the conversation

- As you are reaching the end of your time together, summarise and reflect on what has been said.
- You may need to clarify points again. Chat about any ideas for action.

Agree and record action

- Agree the 'when', 'the desired outcome', 'how' and 'who'.
- Agree a time to review the action and check on progress.
- Record these on the Conversation Sheets.
- Record relevant information in the person's Support Plan.



1. I choose who I live with

1. I choose who I live with

How did you choose who you live with?



1. I choose who I live with

If you share your house, how were you involved in deciding who moves in?



1. I choose who I live with

What do you enjoy about being with the people you live with?



1. I choose who I live with

What don't you like about living with your housemates?



1. I choose who I live with

If you have difficulty with someone you live with, how do you sort it out?



1. I choose who I live with

Who or what type of person would you like to live with?



1. I choose who I live with

How are you supported to share your home with your housemates?



1. I choose who I live with

**Are there changes you would make to how you share your home with other people?
What would these be?**





2. I choose where I live

2. I choose where I live

Why did you choose to live where you live?



2. I choose where I live

What do you like about living there?



2. I choose where I live

What do you not like about living there?



2. I choose where I live

How happy and safe do you feel where you live?



2. I choose where I live

How do you get to places that are important to you?



2. I choose where I live

How do you get on with your neighbours?



2. I choose where I live

If you aren't happy where you are living, where would you want to live?



2. I choose where I live

Thinking about where you want to live, what is important to you? E.g. be near a bus stop, close to family, somewhere quiet or busy?





**3. I have my own home
with a tenancy or ownership**

3. I have my own home

Tell me about the rights you have as a tenant?



3. I have my own home

Do you have your own keys?



3. I have my own home

What makes a home feel homely for you?



3. I have my own home

How do your supporters show they respect your home?



3. I have my own home

**Is some of your home
used by supporters as
an office?
If yes, how and why?**



3. I have my own home

**Who opens the front
door of your home?**



3. I have my own home

**Who opens your
post?**



3. I have my own home

**Do you have things
in your home where
you want them?**





**4. I choose who supports me
and how I am supported**

4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

How are you involved in recruiting your Support Workers?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

**What do you look forward to most about your day?
What don't you like?
How can we support you to change this?**



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

What would you like to make happen in the future? How can we support you with this?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

What do you do if you are not happy with your Supporters?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

Do you get support at the right time of day for you? If not, how can we help you change this?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

Is there anything your supporters can do to show you more respect?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

Do you know who to talk to if you are not happy with your Support Plan?



4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported

Is there anything you would like to change about your support?





5. I choose my friends and my relationships

5. I choose my friends and my relationships

**Who in your family is important to you?
How often do you see them? Would you like to see them more?**



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

How are you supported to meet your neighbours and people locally?



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

Would you like to find a loving relationship?



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

Do you feel able to have sexual relationships?



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

Is there anything you would like to know about sexual relationships?



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

**Who are your friends?
What do you like and not like about them?**



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

Tell me about things you would like to do with friends, family or work colleagues?



5. I choose my friends and my relationships

When friends and family visit you, do you get enough privacy?





**6. I get help to make
changes in life**

6. I get help to make changes in my life

What are you happy with in your life?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

**What are you not so happy about in your life?
How can we help you change this?**



6. I get help to make changes in my life

What's important to you about your future?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

How are you supported to think about and try new things?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

If you are getting older or your health is changing, are there any plans you need to make?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

Do you know what an advocate is? Do you feel like you need one? Why do you feel you need one?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

What does a person-centred plan mean to you?



6. I get help to make changes in my life

Who would you like to help you make any changes?





**7. I choose how to be
healthy and safe**

7. I choose how to
be healthy and safe

How are you?



7. I choose how to
be healthy and safe

**Are there things you
worry about?**



7. I choose how to
be healthy and safe

**Is anyone rude, nasty or
unkind to you?
Tell me more about this
and how I can support
you?**



7. I choose how to
be healthy and safe

**If you have a medical
condition or you take
medicine, do you
understand all about it?
What would you like to
know?**



7. I choose how to be healthy and safe

If you want to try new things and take risks, how do your supporters help you do this in the safest way possible?



7. I choose how to be healthy and safe

Do you have regular health checks?



7. I choose how to be healthy and safe

Do you have a health action plan?



7. I choose how to be healthy and safe

Where do you get information about eating well, keeping fit and keeping emotionally well?





**8. I choose how I am part of my
community**

8. I choose how I am part of the community

**Do you go out in the evenings and weekend?
Where do you go to?**



8. I choose how I am part of the community

**Is there anything that
would help you be
more independent?**



8. I choose how I am part of the community

**What community
activities are you
supported to be part of?**



8. I choose how I am part of the community

**Do you work (paid or
unpaid?)? If not,
would you like to?**



8. I choose how I am part of the community

What local events do you enjoy?



8. I choose how I am part of the community

Who do you see in your local area? Would you like to get to know more people? How can we help with this?



8. I choose how I am part of the community

How do you get around where you live e.g. using your wheelchair on the bus?



8. I choose how I am part of the community

Do you see people who live near you as much as you would like? If not, how can we help you with this?





9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

What are the most important things you need to do as a tenant? What would happen if you didn't do them?



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Support for Living

9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

Do you vote when there is an election? If not, why not? How can we help you?



veach
Support for Living

9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

Do you know how to make a complaint or pay a compliment about your support?



veach
Support for Living

9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

How could we help you make more decisions in your everyday life?



veach
Support for Living

9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

Do you feel safe when you are out in your local community? If not, why not? What can we do to help with this?



9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

You have a right to private space in your home and to who comes in and out of your home? Do you have this? If not, how can we support you to have this?



9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

How are you supported to understand about money and bills? Could we do more?



9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens

Do you understand how much your support costs? Do you have a personal budget? If not, would you like to know about this?



Add your own question!



Add your own question!

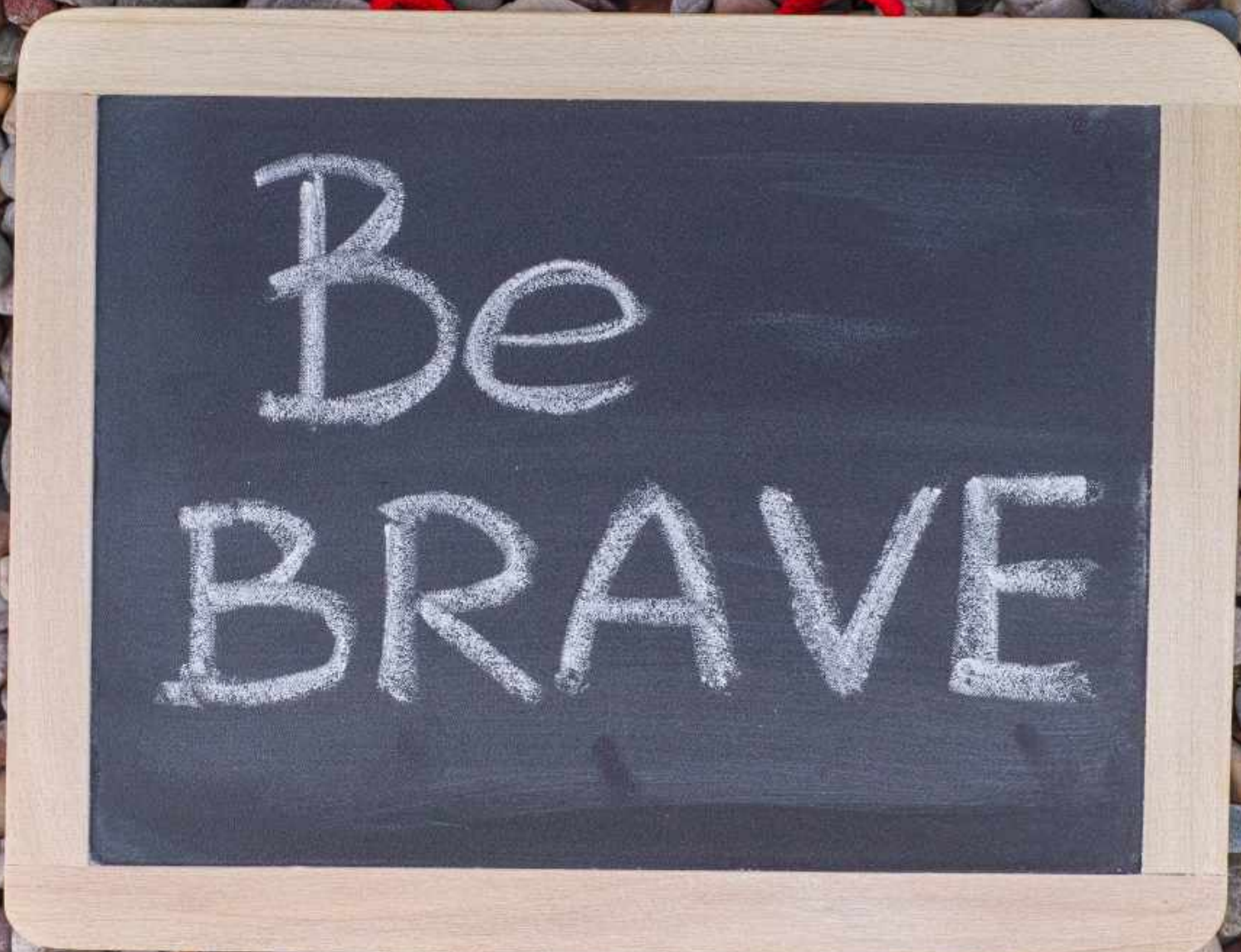


Add your own question!



Add your own question!





Be
BRAVE

**Be brave enough to start a
conversation that matters.**

Margaret Wheatley

'No two people have the same desires, expectation, wants or needs. Each person is a unique human being.

The Reach Standards encourage us all to stay refreshingly curious and committed to discovering what a good, ordinary life looks like for each person we support.

Acting on what we discover, will enable us to design a person's housing and support with them to avoid 'slotting' people into predetermined systems.

Fundamentally, The Reach Standards reminds us about the human rights of all and our duty to protect these.'

Sally Warren
MD Paradigm



'Great supporters for my sister are those who meet her humanity with their humanity; who meet her with an innate curiosity to explore and help her enjoy more of life to the full. She's not a tick list of "tasks to be done".

They look beyond labels and Sammy's struggle to articulate her thoughts ... that's when support becomes beautiful, powerful and freeing.'

Hazel Hendrickson,

Why not bring a refresh of The Reach Standards training into your organisation, so that we can bring The Standards alive for your staff teams?

We will guide you through how to use the standards, share tips, inspire and challenge each other to stay focused on the true principles of Support for Living.

We can even deliver it over zoom for you!
Simply email hello@paradigm-uk.org.

'The training was fantastic, the team was engaged and so motivated to improve what we do and how we do it. It encouraged us all to think more widely about the support we provide and challenged some of our current practice.'

Team Manager



The best conversations aren't linear. They go off on tangents all over the place! Dive in, be curious and enjoy what you discover!

A few thank yous ...

A **BIG** thank you to the team at PSS Liverpool who particularly inspired the creation of these cards.

Thank you to all those who have been part of
creating and further developing
The Reach Standards over the years.

The first Reach Standards were first created in 2002 by
Peter Kinsella, Nicola Gitsham and Nicola Hilson
with the support of many friends across the UK and beyond.

The Standards were further developed in 2006 by Alicia Wood, Liz
Wright (Skills for People) and Peter Kinsella, and then in 2014 by
Sally Warren, Alicia Wood and Sarah Maguire.'

be passionately curious ...

If you would like to find out more about what we do at Paradigm – our Individual Life Designs, The Gr8 Support Movement, bespoke and off-the shelf training e.g. on Supported Decision Making, organisational reviews, supervision and coaching, do contact us at hello@paradigm-uk.org.

We'd love to hear from you!