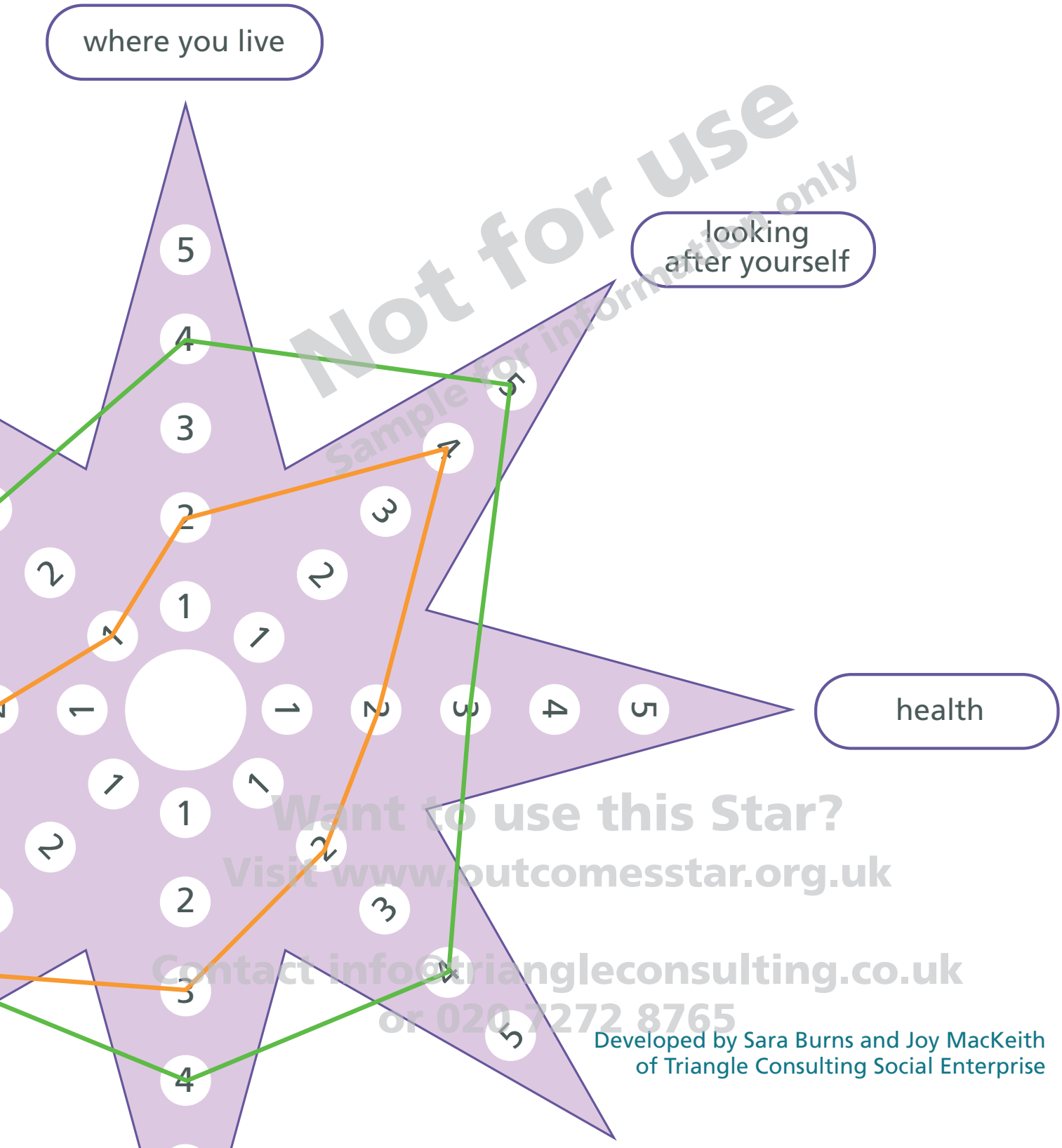
Independent Living Star™

The Outcomes Star for independence at home



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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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- Staffordshire Housing Association, who collaborated in the creation and testing of the Independent Living Star as a further development of the Older Person's Star
- Camden, Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and Brent Councils who collaborated in the development of the original Older Person's Star, on which this version is based
- Paul Muir for making this version happen and Sandra Greaves for her role in the development of this version of the Star.

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Introduction to the Independent Living Star™

We are here to help you to live independently at home, safely and well, for as long as possible.
The Star helps us do this by looking at where you live and other aspects of your life, to see how things are going and if there is any help you need. It looks at eight areas:

1. Where you live
2. Looking after yourself
3. Health
4. Being treated with dignity
5. Meaningful activity
6. Social life
7. Managing money
8. How you feel.

Change doesn't happen overnight. If you have a disability or health condition, are simply getting older or have experienced a recent change or loss, it will take time to adjust and to find new ways to enjoy life. So the eight Star areas follow a five-stage Journey of Change described on the following pages.

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The Journey of Change

For each core area there is a five-point scale that measures your relationship with any difficulties you are experiencing in this area and where you are on the steps towards addressing these difficulties. These scales are underpinned by a Journey of Change, described on the next two pages.

Using the Star™

Look at each of the eight scales one by one and talk them over with your keyworker. Together you can agree where you are in each area then complete the Star Chart to create a picture of how things are for you and your family now. You and your keyworker will come back to the Star at regular intervals and use it to identify the support you need.

Recognising external factors

The Independent Living Star focuses on what you and your worker can do to enable you to stay as well and independent as possible. However, it is important to recognise any conditions beyond your control or that of the service supporting you. For example, not having access to the services you need at home, to somewhere more suitable to live or waiting for treatment for health conditions. The Star may reveal these as well as enabling you and your worker to draw up or review a realistic support plan for you.

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The Journey of Change

For many people, it takes time, effort and support to be as independent and well as possible but it can help to be aware of the steps along the way. The Star gives you a picture of the five main stages on the way to a life that is as good as it can be.

Cause for concern (1)

At the beginning there is **cause for concern**. Things aren't going well and others may be concerned about you. Perhaps your health is poor, you are not able to look after yourself well enough, or you have little or no social contact with other people. At this stage, you don't want others involved or don't know who to turn to for help. You may not want to be a burden on others or you would rather people left you alone. Perhaps you are afraid of what may happen if you talk about the problems you face.

Accepting help (2)

Things might be as difficult for you as at stage 1 but you are talking about the problems to someone who can support you and **accepting help**. You may feel vulnerable or angry, or you may dislike not being able to cope as well as you used to on your own, but at least you now have help. At this stage you and/or those supporting you can address any risks to you or other areas where there is cause for concern.

No pressing concerns (3)

At this stage there are **no pressing concerns** for your safety or well-being. However, things aren't organised in the way you would like them to be, or there is a lot that needs to change if life is going to be as good as it can be for you. Perhaps you could do more for yourself with some changes at home or new aids, or you need more support to enable you to get out and about.

Choice and control (4)

The next stage is **choice and control**. At this stage you have some say over how things are and can start making the most of what is there. You may have new aids, more support or activities that work for you and perhaps you are getting better at saying what you want. Some things are going well for you, but there are still areas that are not working so well where you need support.

As good as it can be (5)

At the final stage on the Star, you are able to live independently at home. You have any support you need do this and to stay as safe and well as possible. Life is **as good as it can be** for you – there may be limitations but you are making the most of what you have, and, where possible, things are organised the way you like them. You may rely on other people to do some things for you – for instance, someone may help you with daily living tasks or manage your money – but you feel in control and your preferences are respected.

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The Journey of Change

5 As good as it can be

I am able to live independently at home and have any support I need to stay safe and well

4 Choice and control

Mostly things work OK for me but there is more that needs to change for life to be as good as it can be

3 No pressing concerns

My basic needs are met and there is no cause for concern but things are not organised in ways that work for me

2 Accepting help

I have some support to sort out any immediate cause for concern about my health, well-being or safety

1 Cause for concern

My health, well-being or safety are at risk and I don't have any support with this

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1 Where you live

This is about having a home that is adequate for your needs and that is safe, warm and affordable to run, including any adaptations you need to live as independently as possible. If you are living in supported housing or a residential home, it is about whether this environment is suited to your needs in terms of location and support on offer.

5 As good as it can be

My home is secure, affordable and adequate for my needs. I can live there as independently as possible

4 Choice and control

My home is secure and adequate for my needs. I am starting to make choices about how I use and maintain it

3 No pressing concerns

My home is secure but there are some problems and I don't feel in control

2 Accepting help

My home is not secure or adequate but I have some help

1 Cause for concern

My home is a problem but I don't want to talk or think about it

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1 Where you live (detail)

5 As good as it can be

My home is secure, affordable and adequate for my needs. I can live there as independently as possible

- Your home is adequate for your needs and has any adaptations you need to live there as safely and independently as possible. You do not need support in this area
- You can afford to heat your home well enough and keep it safe and in good repair
- The location of your home gives you access to other people and facilities

4 Choice and control

My home is secure and adequate for my needs. I am starting to make choices about how I use and maintain it

- Your home is adequate for your needs and you are dealing with any adaptations you need to be safe and as independent as possible, but some changes are still needed
- You can afford to heat your home well enough and to carry out necessary repairs to keep it safe
- You are looking at how to make the best use of the space you have
- The location of your home gives you access to other people and facilities, although if you have moved in recently, you may not yet have settled in

3 No pressing concerns

My home is secure but there are some problems and I don't feel in control

- Your home is safe but may not be in a good state of repair or still requires adaptations to allow you to live as independently as possible
- You may not be using all the space because of this
- The location of your home may not give you access to other people or facilities
- Your home may be a source of stress to you

2 Accepting help

My home is not secure or adequate but I have some help

- As for 1 but you are talking to someone about the problems and any urgent repairs or safety issues are being addressed
- This may be through improving your home or considering moving home

1 Cause for concern

My home is a problem but I don't want to talk or think about it

- One or more of these apply to you:
  - Your home does not meet your basic needs
  - Your home is not safe or in a poor state of repair
  - You cannot afford to heat it adequately or pay for essential repairs
  - You do not have any of the adaptations you need to live as independently as possible
  - You do not have access to other people or to facilities like shops or recreation
- You have no support with where you live or you don't accept support

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2 Looking after yourself

This is about being able to look after yourself – shopping, cooking, getting up, dressing, and getting around – and keeping your house clean and organised enough for you. It's about being able to do as much as possible for yourself and having any support you need. If you are looking after someone else it is also about how you manage with those responsibilities.

5 As good as it can be

I look after myself as well and as independently as possible and have any support I need

4 Choice and control

I am mostly able to look after myself but there are a few things that need to change

3 No pressing concerns

There is no immediate cause for concern but things could be a lot better

2 Accepting help

I can't look after myself well enough. I am looking at making changes but it's daunting

1 Cause for concern

I can't look after myself well enough. I don't have help or don't think I need help

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2 Looking after yourself (detail)

5 As good as it can be

I look after myself as well and as independently as possible and have any support I need

- You have any help and aids you need to get on with daily living – including dressing, keeping clean, meals and getting out to the shops – as safely and independently as you can
- If you look after someone else, you can manage, or you have help with this

4 Choice and control

I am mostly able to look after myself but there are a few things that need to change

- You may be using new aids to help with things like dressing, washing and/or mobility, with some success, but it's a learning process
- You may be learning new skills or regaining old ones such as cooking or doing minor repairs
- If you have carers, you are finding ways to work with them that are better for you
- Some things are easier than others and you still need to make some changes

3 No pressing concerns

There is no immediate cause for concern but things could be a lot better

- You are trying to become more independent (for example trying new aids or physiotherapy or learning new skills) but it's hard, and you haven't seen the benefits yet, or
- You are getting help to meet basic needs like food and personal care, but things are not being done in the way you would like them

2 Accepting help

I can't look after myself well enough. I am looking at making changes but it's daunting

- As in 1 below, but you are accepting some support
- Change may feel daunting or you may be upset about needing help or about the impact of your needs on others so you accept help in some areas but not others

1 Cause for concern

I can't look after myself well enough. I don't have help or don't think I need help

Either

- You are not eating well enough, keeping yourself or your house clean, dealing with repairs, getting out, or coping with caring responsibilities
- Perhaps people are concerned that you are particularly vulnerable to accidents or crime
- You have no support or don't accept support – perhaps you don't want to be a burden or don't want people you don't know coming into your home.

Or

- You have become very dependent on others for your care. Other people feel that you could do more for yourself but you don't see how or don't want to make changes

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3 Health

This scale is about how well you look after your physical health and manage any health conditions, including having treatment or taking medication as needed. It is also about staying as well as you can – eating well, taking regular exercise if that is possible for you, not drinking too much alcohol, avoiding smoking, having regular check-ups and getting enough sleep. If you are unwell or have a health condition you may not feel healthy, so it is about whether your health is as good as it can be.

5 As good as it can be

I look after my health well and get the treatment I need. My health is as good as it can be

4 Choice and control

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

3 No pressing concerns

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

2 Accepting help

My health is poor or at risk but I have some help with this

1 Cause for concern

My health is poor or at risk. I don't have help or don't accept it

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3 Health (detail)

5 As good as it can be

I look after my health well and get the treatment I need. My health is as good as it can be

- Your health is good enough to allow you to stay living at home for the foreseeable future and you have any support you need to maintain your health
- If you have health problems, for example diabetes, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure or dementia, you take medication and do what your doctor recommends
- Your lifestyle is healthy enough. You mostly eat healthily and sleep well enough, take enough exercise, do not smoke and keep alcohol within safe limits

4 Choice and control

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

- You attend recommended check-ups with doctors and other health professionals and follow treatment
- You are making an effort to have a lifestyle that maximises your health but some things are easier than others. Perhaps you eat well but sometimes drink too much or don't get enough exercise

3 No pressing concerns

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

- There are no immediate concerns about your health but things could be a lot better
- When you feel unwell you see a doctor or nurse and follow any treatment. If you have an ongoing health issue you take the medication prescribed and see specialists as health professionals recommend
- However, you are not maximising your health. Perhaps you are neglecting a minor health problem, or need to substantially improve aspects of your lifestyle or fitness

2 Accepting help

My health is poor or at risk but I have some help with this

- As for 1, but you realise this and are talking about getting treatment, or
- You may have gone to hospital or seen a GP in an emergency and want to follow through on the treatment they have recommended

1 Cause for concern

My health is poor or at risk. I don't have help or don't accept it

- You don't see a doctor or other health professional even when you feel unwell or notice something unusual
- If you have a health condition(s), such as diabetes, depression, heart disease or high blood pressure, or have dementia, you are not taking medication as prescribed or doing what doctors recommend
- Your lifestyle is not healthy and you may be seriously overweight or underweight
- You have no support to improve your health or don't accept support

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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 (for example, someone who comes in to do housework or help you get up, or a warden who is there to check on you) then place yourself at 5 and move to the next scale.

5 As good as it can be

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

4 Choice and control

I am mostly treated with dignity and respect but some changes are needed

3 No pressing concerns

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

2 Accepting help

I am not treated with dignity or respect but I am talking to someone about this

1 Cause for concern

I am not treated with dignity or respect. I don't think anyone could help change this or I have no help

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