



YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL™

PEER CENTER
ISSUE BRIEF

How to Help Yourself Transition to Adulthood

INTRODUCTION

This document is a collection of information directly for young adults who are navigating the transition to adulthood. Within this document you will find information on developing natural supports, tips on asking for help and building relationships, goal planning, healthcare & self-care, tips for accessing traditional services, and getting involved in your community.

Remember that you will need other people's support, time, and resources as you create your future. Don't be afraid to reach out as many times as you need to, to different people - at the end of the day you can be your own best advocate!

DEVELOP YOUR SUPPORTS & RELATIONSHIPS

Formal relationships can simply be defined as those who are paid to be a part of your life. Examples of formal relationships are doctors, peer support professionals, dentists, mental health providers, case workers, etc. Natural supports are personal associations and relationships typically developed in the community that enhance the quality and security of life for people such as family relationships, friendships, classmates, coworkers, and other peers that may be developed through clubs, organizations and civic activities. These relationships reflect the diversity of the neighborhood and the community. (Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, Section 4512 of the Welfare and Institution Code, Part (e):)

“Natural supports are just people in your life that are not paid to be there.” – Young Adult

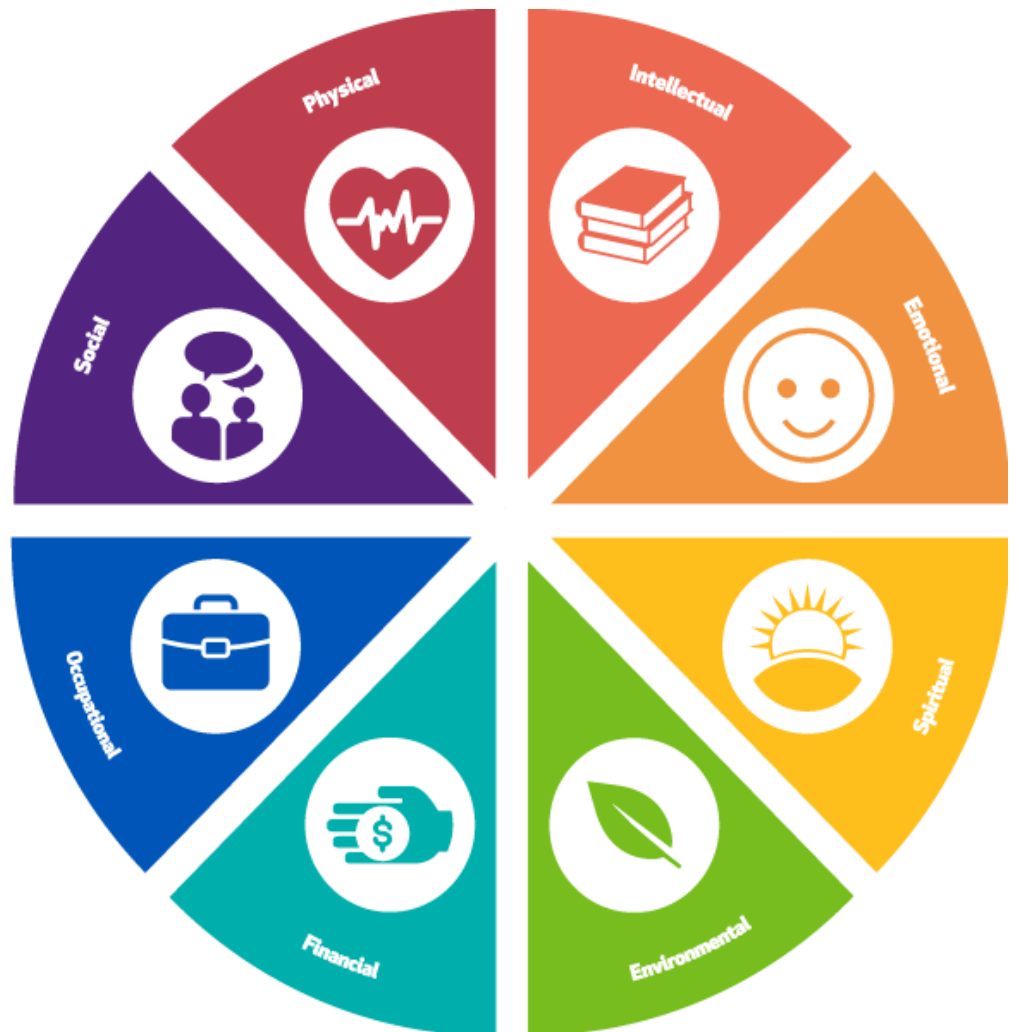
Often these types of relationships are naturally built in our life, through our daily activities, including work and school.

When you are looking to increase the number of formal and natural supports in your life, look at the following 8 major life domains where you can develop relationships with organizations and people. These 8 major life domains include social, occupational, financial, environmental, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical.

IDENTIFY YOUR SUPPORTS

Map your supports on the worksheet on the next page; including all the people and places you seek advice, information, and have positive relationships with. These should be people you feel comfortable reaching out to for a specific reason or need, who listen to and hear what you are saying.

Once you have identified where you need additional support in your life, it is important to reach out and develop new relationships—and it is equally as important to know what you need from that person. Consider the tip sheets shared in this document - **Tips on Asking for Help** and **Tips on Building Relationships** in this process.



WORKSHEET: IDENTIFYING YOUR SUPPORTS

Use the following template to map your supports

| Social |
|--------|
| |

| Spiritual |
|-----------|
| |

| Occupational |
|--------------|
| |

| Emotional |
|-----------|
| |

| Financial |
|-----------|
| |

| Intellectual |
|--------------|
| |

| Environmental |
|---------------|
| |

| Physical |
|----------|
| |

TIPS ON ASKING FOR HELP

There are many people that find it hard to ask for help. The reality is that the way you ask for help can impact someone's willingness to say yes. To increase your chances of having positive responses from those you ask for support, consider the following information:



1. Create a specific, defined, time limited request whenever possible. Clarify what you need, when you will need it, why you need it and how their support will help you. When you reach out, be prepared for possible questions they could ask you.
2. Don't rely on just one person to help you in your transition goals. Develop a network of people that can support you in different areas of your life.
3. Give as much notice as possible when you will need someone to do something for you, such as help with transportation or helping you to complete a task. Even if the task won't take a lot of time, giving someone as much notice as you can will give you a better chance of them agreeing to help you again in the future.
4. Don't be afraid to let people know what you have been able to achieve because of their help. Express your appreciation.

An important take away from an article titled, 'A social psychologist explains how to ask for help without making it weird' is the following statement:

"People want to see or know the impact of the help they have given or will give. They want to see it land. This is actually not an ego thing. It's what some psychologists have argued is the fundamental human motivation: to feel effective. To know that your actions create the results you intended. To, in essence, shape the world around you. In the absence of feedback—when we have no idea what the consequences of our actions have been—motivation takes a nosedive. And that is particularly true when it comes to helping."

Read the full article here:

<https://qz.com/work/1302535/how-to-ask-for-help-without-making-it-weird/>

Tips on Building Relationships

There are many different existing resources on topics from building effective relationships to building healthy relationships and being a good friend. Below are several highlights and recommended resources for you to develop your skills in this area.

“Keep expectations realistic. No one can be everything we might want them to be. Healthy relationships mean accepting **people** as they are and not trying to change them.”



- [10 Tips for Healthy Relationships](#), published by Amherst College

“Be willing to work through conflict. Every relationship will hit a speed bump at one time or another. Show them you are willing to work through the times of misunderstandings and hurt feelings.”

- [How to Be a Great Friend – 9 Must-Knows](#) published by The Hope Line

“Accept people the way they are. You don't have to agree with them all the time in order to form a relationship with them. No one likes to be judged.”

- [Building and Sustaining Relationships](#) published by The Community Toolbox

MAKE A PLAN FOR YOUR OWN GOALS

Set aside time to write down goals for each life domain, they can be short term or long term. Allow yourself to be creative and don't feel limited to traditional goals or those suggested to you by other people. Don't be afraid to move at your own pace, to try new things and leave behind parts of your life that do not work for you. This is a time for self-exploration and growth! Creating SMART goals can be helpful. SMART is an acronym that stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Find templates to create your own SMART goals on [Mind Tools](#).

Specific

Your goal should be clear and specific. When drafting your goal, try to answer the following questions:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Why is this goal important?
- Which resources or limits are involved?

Measurable

A measurable goal should address questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

Achievable or Attainable

An achievable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- How can I accomplish this goal?
- How realistic is the goal, based on other constraints, such as financial factors?

Relevant

A relevant goal can answer "yes" to these questions:

- Does this seem worthwhile?
- Is this the right time?
- Does this match my other efforts/needs?

Time-bound

Every goal needs a target date, so that you have a deadline to focus on and something to work toward.

A time-bound goal will usually answer these questions:

- When?
- What can I do six months from now?
- What can I do six weeks from now? What can I do today?

Healthcare & Self-Care

“Self-care can be defined in terms of physical or mental well-being, but at its most basic, self-care is comprised of” productive strategies for staying physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually healthy” (AAS, 2013).

Self-care plans generally address the same basic life domains but the format you choose is up to you- no one approach is better than another. When creating your self-care plan, you may want to include the following information about yourself: Triggers and antecedents, symptoms, what has or has not worked before, medications, and supports.

Triggers & Antecedents

Antecedents means a thing or event that existed before or logically precedes another

What happens prior to you feeling unwell? These can be specific triggers, or things you notice that indicate you might be “off” or different, such as irritability, sleeping more than usual, or canceling plans.

Symptoms – What does it look like/sound like/feel like when you are unwell? This could be moods; tolerable/intolerable noises, textures, foods, etc.; being more talkative or quieter than usual; substance and/or alcohol use; or missing work or school without notice or an explained reason.

It is important to define what being “unwell” means and looks like to you. How do you recognize it and how would others perceive it?

What has or has not worked before – Consider what strategies you have used in the past. It might be helpful to group these strategies based on things that worked or didn’t work. For example, if you use medications to help manage your mental health, you’ll want to record which have been effective or ineffective or if you’ve had any adverse reactions. Similarly, it can be helpful to identify other things that have been helpful or harmful- a particular song that’s comforting or places that might activate you, like a hospital. Think of the things you have done in the past to help yourself feel better. What worked? What didn’t? *Keep track!*

Medications – This section of your self-care plan includes medications you are currently taking, for mental and physical health, as well as things like vitamins and supplements. This helps other people know what medications are helping you, as well as what you may be allergic to.

Supports – It’s important to include the names and contact information for people who are particularly supportive when you are unwell. This might include our parents or those who raised us, close friends, former or current coworkers, support workers, therapists, clinicians, psychiatrists, pharmacists, etc. Include people you would feel comfortable reaching out to in a crisis or when you are not feeling your best.

Self-care plans are as varied as the people who use them! They might be a booklet, in a binder, managed within an app or in a notebook. Regardless of how one chooses to document their self-care plan, the most important thing is to collect information and put it into one place while you are **still feeling well**. This information can help you navigate a hard time or help a support – such as a close friend, a supervisor, or a doctor – navigate how to help you when you are unable to do so by yourself. You can find a few examples in the appendix.

Resources:[YMN Self-Care Plans](#)[Mad Maps](#)[Wellness Recovery Action Planning](#)[Caring for Yourself is a Radical Act: Self-Care Guide for Youth Working in Community](#)

A few tips for accessing traditional services (such as a medical doctor, dentist or a therapist.)

- When seeing a new provider, you will want to make sure that they accept your insurance, or if you don't have health insurance, that the professional you are seeing is able to work with someone who is uninsured. If you are uninsured, ask your provider if they offer sliding fee scale.
- If you are under 26 years old, you may still qualify to be on your parent's health care plan.
- If you are under 25 years old and have been a part of the foster care system, there may be separate insurance options available for you! Make sure to research healthcare.gov for your options or contact your most recent Case Manager.
- Bring important documentation with you to the appointment, including your ID, insurance card(s), and any information related to your healthcare history that the Doctor may need.
- Remember you always have a choice in providers, if you don't feel respected or heard, you can choose to see a different professional.
- If you are having trouble paying for your healthcare costs, even with insurance, consider reaching out to faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations or the healthcare provider directly to see how they can support you.
 - If you are enrolled in a University or Community college, check out what healthcare options are available to you through your institution.
 - If you are employed, ask your supervisor if the organization offers an Employee Assistance Program.

Get Involved in the things you are interested in. Find what you are passionate about and spend time doing it. You can find a community for any interest that you have, especially with the variety of apps and platforms available online. Don't be afraid to try new things, to learn new skills and do things differently.

Resource: [Things2Consider - Community Mapping](#) - *Community youth resource mapping is a process that identifies what resources and opportunities are available to youth in a community.*

REFERENCES

Axner, Marya. (n.d.). Community Toolbox. *The University of Kansas*. Retrieved from:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/leadership-functions/build-sustain-relationships/main>

10 Tips for healthy relationships. (n.d.). *Amherst College*. Retrieved from:

https://www.amherst.edu/campuslife/health-safety-wellness/counseling/self_care/healthy_relationships/10_tips_for_health_realtionships

Department of Developmental Services. (n.d.). Natural Supports... They're All Around You!. Retrieved from:

https://laddc.org/userfiles/files/Natural_Supports.pdf

Grant, Heidi. (2018). A social psychologist explains how to ask for help without making it weird. *Quartz at Work*. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/work/1302535/how-to-ask-for-help-without-making-it-weird/>

How to be a great friend- 9 must-knows. (2022). *The Hope Line*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.thehopeline.com/63-how-to-be-a-great-friend/>

SMART Goals: How to make your goals achievable. (2020). *Mind Tools*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>