Anne–Marie's story

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Introduction
Just Enough Support is a planning process to explore how we can provide just the right amount of support for people, and increase the opportunities for people to be connected within their community. If we use resources effectively and actively reduce reliance on paid support, whilst working in ways that enhance relationships and people being part of their community, then we can achieve a 'win-win' — for the person (who may have a wider variety of connections and relationships), the organisation (able to target scarce resources most effectively) and the community (benefiting from the contributions and presence of disabled people in the community).

Through using Just Enough Support you will explore ideas and options for providing support through assistive technology, natural and community supports, and finally staff support. The process also offers a way of evaluating the ideas, and action planning the final decisions.

Meet Anne-Marie
The first time I used this process was with Anne-Marie. Anne-Marie is in her sixties, and lives with five other people in a residential care home on the south coast. She used to live in a hospital for people with learning disabilities. She loves to dance, sees her dad once a week, wants a dog and to have a job, for example, working in a café. When we started learning with Anne-Marie, she had very limited variety in how she spent her time, rarely went out without other people who she lives with, and had little choice or control over her life. Anne-Marie is supported by the team manager (Carolynn) and a staff team of 16.

You may have already read about Anne-Marie in the book 'Making it Personal for Everyone — from block contracts to Individual Service Funds'. This paper goes into the detail that we could not put into the book.
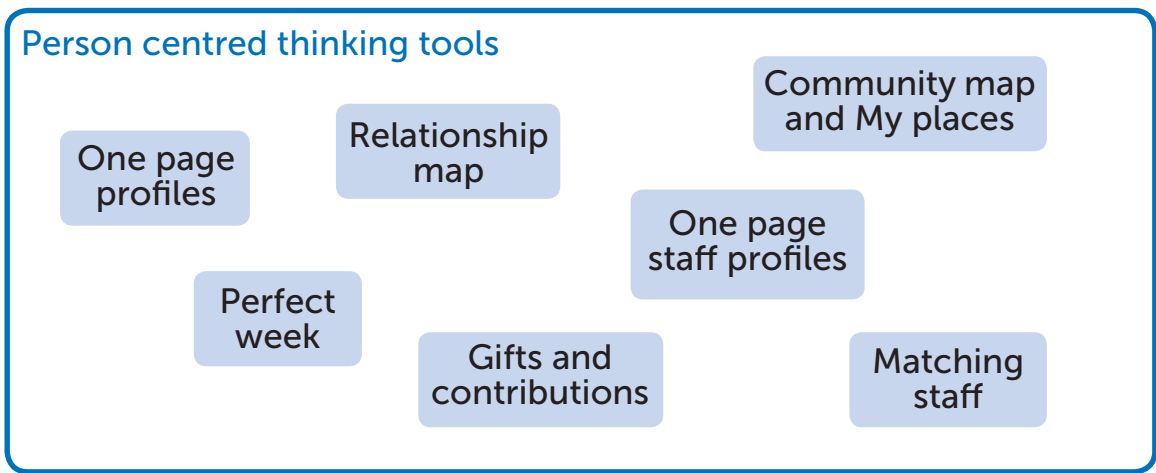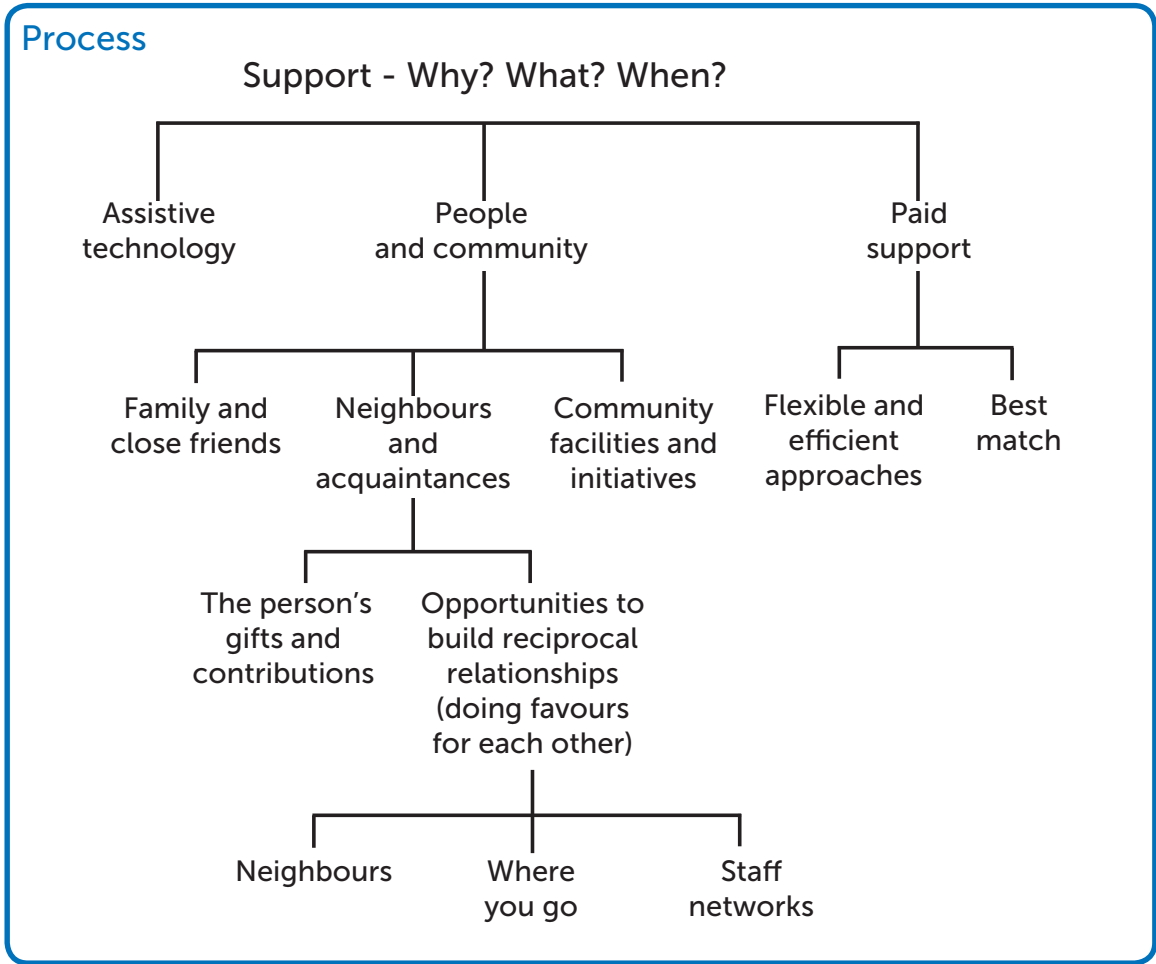
To start using Just Enough Support, you need to know what is important to the person, and when and where they want to spend their time. Ideally work with the person to describe this as a week — a perfect week (or month). This should have detailed information about what the person wants to do to enable you to then think together about how to deliver this using Just Enough Support. We used person-centred thinking tools with Anne-Marie to learn about what is important to her, how she wanted to be supported and what she wanted to change about her life.

There are four stages to providing Just Enough Support: generating ideas; testing them (Do they work for the person? Do they provide enough support?); trying them and reviewing them.

1 The 'Ideas' stage

To generate ideas, we first of all clearly identify what, how much and when the person needs support, then think about three possible ways of people getting support— starting with assistive technology, then people, and finally paid staff.

Process

Support - Why? What? When?

- Assistive technology
- People and community
  - Family and close friends
  - Neighbours and acquaintances
    - The person's gifts and contributions
    - Opportunities to build reciprocal relationships (doing favours for each other)
      - Neighbours
      - Where you go
      - Staff networks
  - Community facilities and initiatives
- Paid support
  - Flexible and efficient approaches
  - Best match

Person centred thinking tools

- One page profiles
- Relationship map
- Community map and My places
- One page staff profiles
- Perfect week
- Gifts and contributions
- Matching staff

Who to involve

When it comes to generating ideas many heads are better than one. Ideally you want to bring together a group where there are people who know the person really well, and/or know the area and community where the person lives. Alongside them, you need one person who knows about assistive technology, and someone who can facilitate the process and act as a gentle (or strong!) challenge to the group. The person that this is focused on, may want to be part of this, and where they do not, their expert role is to see if the group's ideas work for them. It is vital to include family members whenever possible, and ideally people who do not think in the traditional ways that staff and managers in services often think. The cliché is 'people who think outside of the box', and however you choose to describe them, it is those people who we mean!

The quote "If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always got" rings especially true here. Doing this process with the existing staff supporting someone and their manager is unlikely to come up with as many options as the diverse 'ideas group' described here (but if there is no alternative – start there!). Ideally, we need to bring a different group together with a different process to use, to create something different in peoples lives.

The group of people who did this thinking on behalf of Anne-Marie were me, the facilitator, some people who knew Anne-Marie well, and staff who knew about the local area (but probably not as much as we needed), and a range of people used to challenging the status quo. We used Anne-Marie's one page profile to keep focused on her, and all of our suggested ideas were then talked through with her before action planning.

Exactly what support does Anne-Marie need?

In Just Enough Support we accurately describe exactly what support the person needs, how much and how often, not how we currently provide it. For example, instead of stating that the person needs 'waking night support' we would put that the person needs to be turned four times a night, or needs support if they wake up distressed (and how often this usually is). It can be very useful and illuminating to talk about and understand why we provide some of the support that we do.

When we were thinking about the support provided to Anne-Marie, we quickly learned how custom and practice can lead to assumptions about the levels of support she needed. Anne-Marie had been supported two to one when going for walks. From listening to the history of why and how this had started, it was obvious that this was no longer required, and immediate action was taken based on person-centred risk to review and change this.

We developed what was important to Anne-Marie into a draft 'perfect week/month' and used this to look at the support she would need for this to happen.

Could assistive technology help?

When we know exactly what support the person needs, how much and how often, we then need to think about whether assistive technology could help. Our colleagues in older people's services are much more advanced in their use of assistive technology and telecare, for example using bed sensor pads, automatic toilet flushes, motion detectors, automatic links to monitoring stations and call centres.

For some people this can make a huge difference, to both the quality and cost of support, for example, a bed can gently turn someone as they sleep instead of waking night staff coming in and doing that manually four times a night.

For Anne-Marie, there were some opportunities to use assistive technology, but in less dramatic ways. By using a specialised bath plug Anne-Marie was able to have baths without any support from staff. Later, a talking photo book meant that Anne-Marie could have her personal rota, and know what her plans were and who was going to support her in a way that made sense to her.

Are there other people or community initiatives that could help?

There are some person-centred thinking tools that can help here. We used the relationship map to start thinking about the people already in Anne-Marie's life, to see if we could identify opportunities there.

- **Family.** The first place to start is with family. Owen Cooper suggests that we should talk to families about their own resources; time, connections, interests, skills and money, and think together about whether any of these could be used in ways to support the person.

"Asking families to think about their own resources pays dividends. Worrying about offending people by asking, gets in the way." Owen Cooper[1]

Anne-Marie's dad is very important to her, and they see each other every week, and we wondered whether this visit could take place without staff support in the future.

- **Neighbours and acquaintances.** After family, think about neighbours who live locally, and people who share the same interests or who go to the same places. The gifts and contributions person-centred thinking tool helps us to consider whether there are any gifts or resources that could be shared, and possibly lead to reciprocal favours. For example, if the person has a car, could they offer lifts to the local church meeting, in return for the person helping them out a bit whilst they are there, instead of having paid staff there all the time. The gifts and contributions person-centred thinking tool will help you think about gifts or talents that could be useful to other people, and possible opportunities for people to contribute through being good neighbours and take on responsibility. For example; this could mean taking in parcels for neighbours, holding spare keys, or offering their house for neighbourhood watch meetings.

Another person-centred thinking tool that is very helpful is a community map. This is a way to map the places where the person goes already and where there might be opportunities for connections and contributions.

One of Anne-Marie's goals was to learn to bake, and also to go to coffee mornings. We wondered whether a place to start could be to bake cakes to share at the coffee mornings. Becky supported Anne-Marie to go to the coffee mornings at the local church. "Initially I had to convince the lady at the church that we could be helpful" explained Becky. Anne-Marie has been going every week, supported by Becky.

- **Community initiatives and opportunities.** A third area to consider is whether there are local community initiatives that are opportunities to reciprocally share skills, talents and resources. One example is Timebanks. A Timebank is a way to share skills and time across a community, and is based on the principle that everybody has something to offer and its equal. It's a simple equation: an hour of anybody's time is as valuable as an hour of anyone else's time, and that people can offer help to each other in a community through trading hours. Timebanking UK supports over 200 Timebanks across the country. Each Timebank is

[1] All Together Now

different, reflecting the local community, and innovative providers have been instrumental in starting Timebanks in a local area, for example, Newsome Ward Timebanking was founded by members of Newsome Ward Community Forum and United Response in Huddersfield.[2] If one is not available locally, or not available to everyone, is this an opportunity for the organisation to contribute and be part of making a Timebank available to everyone? Another example is 'Never Watch Alone' in Wigan. This is a way to connect fans with learning disabilities to fellow supporters to attend rugby or football matches.[3]

There were no obvious solutions for Anne-Marie here. Instead we decided that we needed to work with the staff to enable them to see opportunities for connections and relationships that may eventually lead to natural supports. We looked at ideas for this, based on what was important to Anne-Marie, and her gifts and capacities and decided that the church, where Anne-Marie wanted to help out with coffee mornings, would be a good place to start. The other opportunity to build connections was through using staff networks. Children are important to Anne-Marie, and she sometimes saw the children of one of the staff members. We wanted to explore whether there were opportunities there for further connections, and think about that with the staff member. This led to lots of discussion, and Dimensions are now looking at their 'professional boundaries' policy to clarify how they can support staff in this area.

Are there ways we could think differently about paid support?

The ideas that we had generated so far for Anne-Marie looked promising, but it was very clear that Anne-Marie would still need paid support, and the last section of the generating ideas part of this process was to see if staff support could be provided in a different, flexible and innovative way.

There are different models of support to consider here, like home sharing models where someone who needs support, but has a home, is carefully matched with someone who is looking for a home and in return could offer support. One approach is to list all the radical and different ways that support can be offered. The list could include:

- Community service volunteers or other volunteers.
- The Keyring model.
- Zero hours contracts to offer maximum flexibility.
- 'Life sharing' possibilities.

[2] To learn more about the Newsome Ward Community Timebank and the impact this has made go to http://whatmakestick.wordpress.com
[3] For more information go to http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk/whats-new/all-together-now-paper.aspx

As Anne-Marie's service is registered care, we wanted to see if there were ways that we could offer maximum flexibility through changes to the rota, as other options did not feel possible at this stage.

We also wanted to make sure that we could get the best match between Anne-Marie and her staff.

Anne-Marie naturally had different relationships with the 16 staff who supported her and the other people she lives with. We were not in a position at that stage to recruit new staff for Anne-Marie, so we wanted to make sure that we had the best possible match between Anne-Marie and her staff.

To do this we used the same relationship map as before, but used it differently. We asked Anne-Marie to put the staff on the relationship circle with the people she liked the most, and enjoyed them supporting her in the circle closest to the middle, then in the next circle, the staff who she was ok with supporting her, and then outside of the circle, anyone who she did not want to support her. Anne-Marie chose four members of staff for the inner circle, then the rest of the staff in the next circle, and then one staff member was put outside the circle. Our challenge was to make sure that Anne-Marie was only supported by those four staff. Carolynn worked with the staff member who was placed outside the circle to understand why, and what needed to be done about this.

Now we had four staff chosen by Anne-Marie, and the next part of getting the best match was to look at Anne-Marie's perfect week, at what she wanted to do, and see who the best person to support her in this could be.

We used the four staff members one page profiles to do this. We looked for any connections between what was on Anne-Marie's perfect week, and the hobbies and interests on the four staff member's one page profiles.
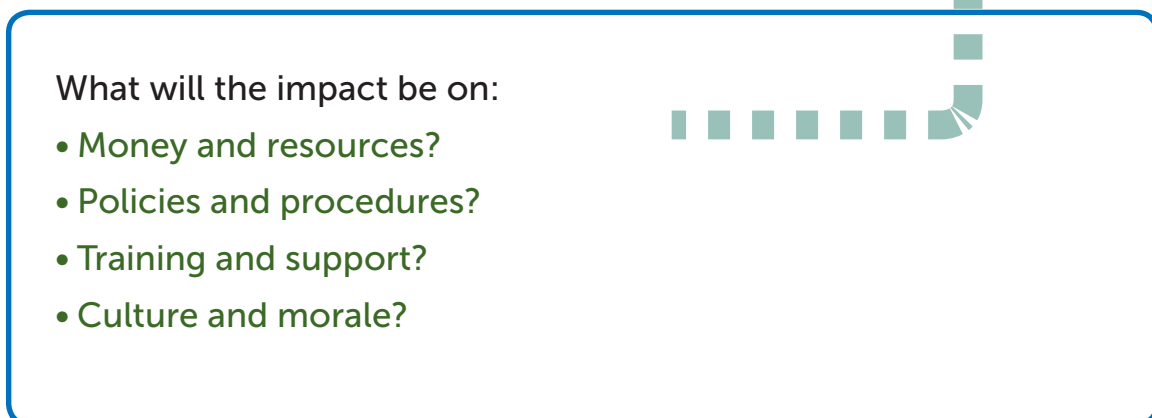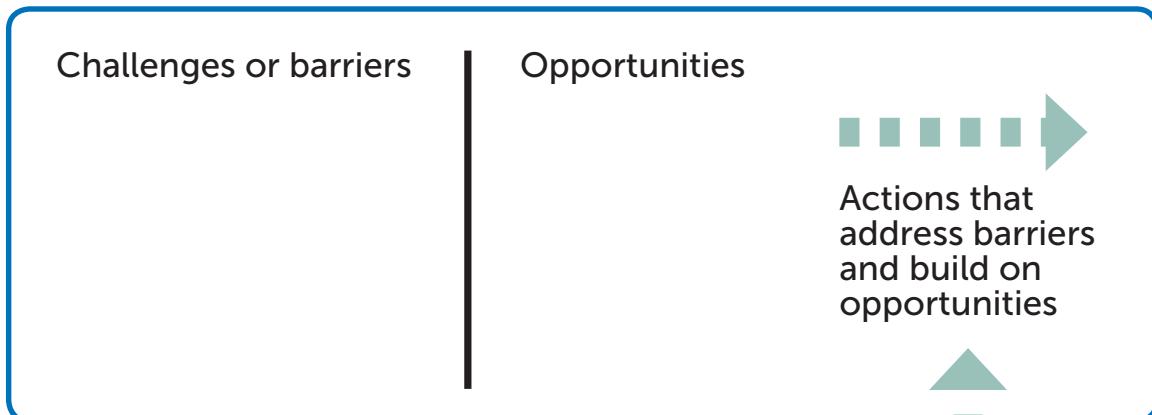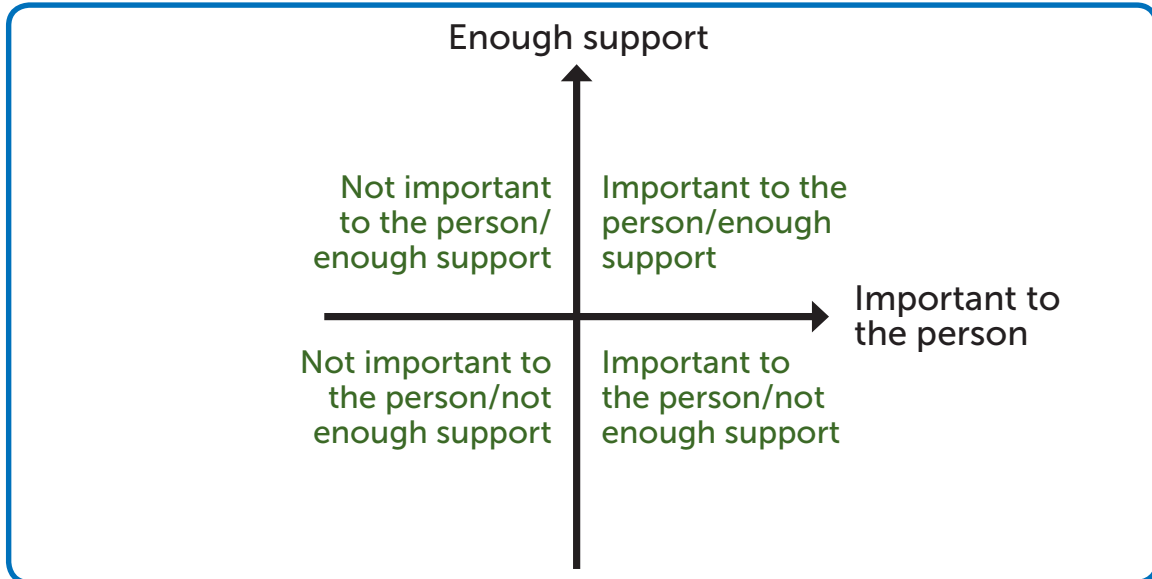
There were some great and obvious connections – Anne-Marie wanted to be paid to walk dogs, and we had someone in Anne-Marie's new team of four who had a dog and loved dogs. We had someone in her team of four who loved baking and cooking, which was something that she wanted to do. There were some areas where there was no obvious match, and then we just wanted to make sure that Anne-Marie had consistent support by one person in that area (for example supporting Anne-Marie to go to church) to maximise opportunities to make relationships and connections in the church.

These initial ideas were checked through with Anne-Marie and her new team of four. We had done this with two team members and Carolynn the manager because we were learning about the process. A better alternative would be that once Anne-Marie had decided on her four staff with Carolynn, that the four staff, Carolynn and Anne-Marie used their one page profiles and make these decisions together.

2 Testing the ideas

From this we had a list of ideas and thought about how to match staff where we did not have other ways to support Anne-Marie. The next step was to test these out before seeing whether Anne-Marie wanted to take them forward.

Enough support

Not important to the person/ enough support

Important to the person/enough support

Important to the person

Not important to the person/not enough support

Important to the person/not enough support

Challenges or barriers

Opportunities

Actions that address barriers and build on opportunities

What will the impact be on:

- Money and resources?

- Policies and procedures?

- Training and support?

- Culture and morale?

The best solutions would be ones that had a great fit with what matters to Anne-Marie and how she wants to be supported, and also provide the right amount of support, when and where Anne-Marie needed it. A one page profile is a good way to check this. The group could look back at Anne-Marie's one page profile to begin to check whether these ideas were on the right lines.

One way to test the ideas is to plot them onto a grid like the one on the previous page. Along one axis is what is important to Anne-Marie, and on the other axis is providing enough support.

You are obviously looking for ideas that fit into the top right hand quadrant. For ideas that fall in the bottom right hand quadrant, you could ask what it would take to move them to the top right hand quadrant (i.e. is there any thing that we could do so that this idea would offer enough support?). Ideas that are on the left hand side, that do not fit with what matters to the person should be discounted.

Now that you have a list of ideas that look promising, you can then think more deeply about what the challenges and barriers might be to implementing these, as well as what opportunities they present.

It is also important to think about what this means in implementing them, for the immediate people affected and the wider organisation. What resources might be required? Is any training or support required? Will taking this idea forward require changes to policies and procedures? Will there be any impact on culture or morale as a result of taking this forward? The end result of this should be an action plan that begins with directly checking the chosen ideas with the person (if they have not been part of the process) and then implementing them.

Of course the most important test is what Anne-Marie thinks. To check out the assistive technology ideas Marcus (the AT lead) went to meet Anne-Marie and spent time with her showing her the options. She decided to go ahead with the bath plug and talking photo book.

Carolynn (who manages her support) and Becky (one of her support staff) talked to Anne-Marie about the coffee morning and cakes idea, and she was keen on this, as it fitted directly with her goals. The next challenge was getting the new staff arrangements, with Anne-Marie's new team of four, into a personalised rota based on Anne-Marie's perfect week.

3 Implement and review

The new rota, personalised to Anne-Marie - what she wanted to do and who she wanted to support her - was the key to the implementation. Marcus made sure that the assistive technology was in place. Team meetings and supervision sessions were opportunities to keep checking how the rota and actions around outcomes were going, and of course Carolynn checked in with Anne-Marie each week over coffee.

The process of Just Enough Support meant that we had looked at what Anne-Marie wanted to do, and the support that she needed in a very different way. The staff were supported in what they needed to do to enable Anne-Marie to make connections, especially with people at the church where she was now helping out with coffee mornings. We wanted to build opportunities for these connections to eventually lead to natural support for Anne-Marie. Within four months we had our first example of that, when Anne-Marie, supported by Becky bumped into one of the women from church. She invited Anne-Marie to help out at a church event that weekend, and suggested to Becky that she did not need to come. Result!

When we started this process, it was not to save money, but to maximise the money Anne-Marie had through her Individual Service Fund, and to see how far it could go. Any 'savings' that could be achieved through natural supports meant that Anne-Marie could use staff time differently or convert it to cash to use for her support in a different way. Therefore the emphasis for Anne-Marie was getting the best value for money from her perspective, and increasing the amount of choice and control she had over her money.

Carolynn had been checking in with Anne-Marie to see what she thought about this new way of working, and whether Anne-Marie was seeing progress on what she wanted (her outcomes). We also needed a more structured way to do this, and an opportunity to include the perspectives of her family and other team members. The person-centred review approach is the best way to do this, and Dimensions were already building their capacity to use person-centred reviews throughout the service. We wanted to make sure that there was a strong focus on the outcomes and our accountability to Anne-Marie on achieving these, and in how she was spending her money.

The person-centred review

The person-centred review process begins, like most things, with good preparation. For Anne-Marie this meant thinking about when, and where she wanted to have the review and who she wanted to invite. It was also a good time for Anne-Marie to start to look at her outcomes and to think about what she wanted to share in the review, and how she wanted to do this.

Anne-Marie used the outcome review booklet and this included talking about what she wanted to achieve over the next year as well. Anne-Marie prepared by talking this through with her support worker, and Carolynn talked her through the preparation booklet and the headings informally over a cup of tea. Carolynn supported her to invite her Dad and the staff who she wanted to attend. She wanted to have the meeting on a Wednesday afternoon - she goes to a dance class in the morning, and wanted to have it after that.

In a person-centred review, the person shares their own perspective, and then everyone adds their information (including family and friends). So, rather than sitting formally around a table, information is shared and built together. Sometimes flipchart paper is pinned on the walls in the room and everyone is given a pen so that they can write their thoughts on each in a more relaxed way.

Information is recorded around the following questions:

- What were Anne-Marie's outcomes for a year?
- What worked and did not work for each of them?
- What is important to Anne-Marie now - is there anything that we need to change in her one page profile?
- What is important to Anne-Marie for the future? What are her new outcomes for the next year
- How has Anne-Marie spent her personal budget?
- What questions do we need to answer?

This process is also used with 'what else we need to learn', by looking at the 'questions to answer' and then thinking about any person-centred thinking tools that could help address the questions. The record and information from the person-centred review is written up or photographed and produced in whatever way is required.

On the day that the review was organised, Anne-Marie did not feel like spending time with people, and did not want the review to take place in the way that had been planned. Carolynn discussed this with her, and in the end, Anne-Marie decided that she wanted to have a chat at the local café just with one person instead.

Anne-Marie talked about each of her outcomes and what was working and not working about each one These were then built into actions for the team to work on with Carolynn. The section of the review on how Anne-Marie was spending her money, and getting the perspective of her family, happened later through separate conversations rather than a meeting. Anne-Marie wanted to think about what she wanted to achieve over the next year at a later date. It was very important that we reviewed the outcomes with Anne-

Marie, accounted to her about her money, and sought the perspectives of her family and others. It was also crucial that although Anne-Marie had prepared for her meeting, that on the day we completely respected her decision to achieve this in a different way.

Here are some examples of what we learned with Anne-Marie, and what has changed in her life:

Some outcomes had been successful

One of Anne-Marie's outcomes was to walk dogs, as a job. She was now doing this, walking a dog called Gem, and she was paid. She found that there were aspects of walking a dog that she did not like (fellow dog walkers will know what I am talking about!), but loved the dog walking overall, and enjoyed having money, which she was saving.

Another very successful outcome was spending more time with her dad. Anne-Marie now sees her dad once a fortnight, and in between visits she phones him and is supported to write to him or send him a card. Her dad also visits her at home and her relationship with her dad is much closer, and Anne-Marie is really pleased about this.

Anne-Marie also wanted to work in a tea room or a café. The team supported her to experience this as a volunteer first, so that Anne-Marie could decide whether she wanted to keep doing this as a volunteer or to explore this as a paid job. Anne-Marie is a volunteer at the church coffee morning every Sunday. She loves the social side of this, and has made new friends who now stop for a chat if they bump into each other in the village. Anne-Marie has been asked to help at the church fete as a direct result of her work at the coffee morning. She is now part of the church community and wants to continue this, even if later on she wants to get a paid job as well.

Some outcomes had not been completely successful

Anne-Marie wanted to be in touch with her sister. The staff supported her to send cards and to phone. For the first time in six years, Anne-Marie got both a Christmas card and a birthday card from her sister – she was delighted. Her original outcome was to see or speak to her sister, and this has not happened yet, but a first step has been made.

Some outcomes changed as Anne-Marie explored them over the six months

One of Anne-Marie's outcomes was to go out more – for meals and to the theatre. Anne-Marie goes out each week, about three times for meals, tea or coffee. Staff could not find anything at the theatre during the last six months that Anne-Marie wanted to see. She has been going to the cinema a couple of times a month. As part of the review process she said that she now wanted to go to a pub to see live music and go to a musical.

Anne-Marie wanted to extend some of her outcomes

Another of Anne-Marie's outcomes was to look good and wear makeup. If you met Anne-Marie you would see that she wears make up most of the time, and has her nails painted each week. Anne-Marie has what she calls 'pamper sessions' every week and enjoyed a 'pamper evening' organised by the local church. Now that wearing make up and having her nails painted is part of her daily and weekly routine, she wants to extend that to having her hair dyed every six weeks.

Some outcomes Anne-Marie no longer wants to achieve in the same way

Anne-Marie wanted to learn how to bake, and to bake every week. She bakes every couple of weeks - her favourites are cakes, biscuits, gingerbread, or apple crumble. Early on she made it clear that once every two weeks was enough (it was originally planned in for every week). In her review conversation she said she does not want to do that anymore, she wants to cook, and to start with a curry.

Carolynn, then went back to the 'perfect week' with Anne-Marie to make the changes that she wanted.

Conclusion

Anne-Marie's life now looks more like other women of a similar age who live in the same area. She volunteers at her local church, dances, goes to the cinema and out for meals, tea and coffee, sees her dad.

She earns a bit of money through her dog walking, and is saving for a holiday. The big difference is that she lives with people who have a disability. She is much more in control of her service, she chooses her staff, says what she wants to do and when, and the staff are accountable to Anne-Marie in making the changes to her life that she wants to make.

The Just Enough Support process helped us to think about how we could achieve what Anne-Marie wanted through assistive technology, through natural supports in her community, and through thinking very differently about how staff support her.