

Making Positive Moves:

Finding out how to support community living after moving under Transforming Care

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What did we want to know?

What helps people with learning disabilities live a happy and healthy life after leaving a mental health hospital?

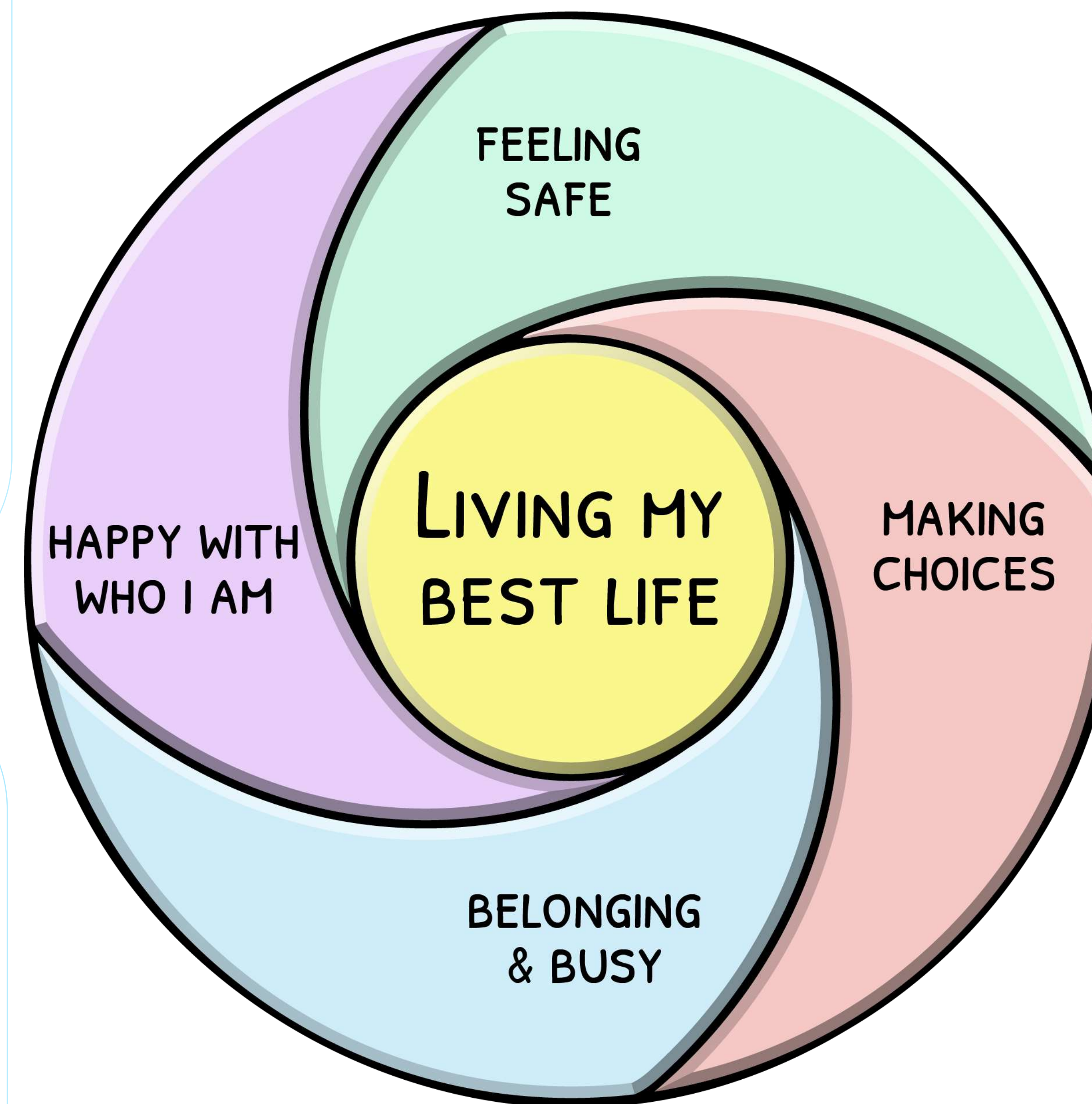
What did we do?

We talked to 22 people with learning disabilities who have moved from mental health hospitals to the community. We interviewed people twice in the first year and twice a year later. We interviewed people by themselves first then at the second interview they had the option to be interviewed with a Key Support Person if they chose one. 17 people spoke to us at both time points. We used innovative and inclusive methods to talk to people. We used a method called Grounded Theory to analyse the data and create a model.



What did we find out?

The stories people told us helped us to understand that there are four key foundations that people needed to build and maintain with their support team to enable them to live their best lives.



We have also learned that if these key supports are not in place it can lead to the person's foundation cracking, and this is the time when they are more at risk of being readmitted into hospital.

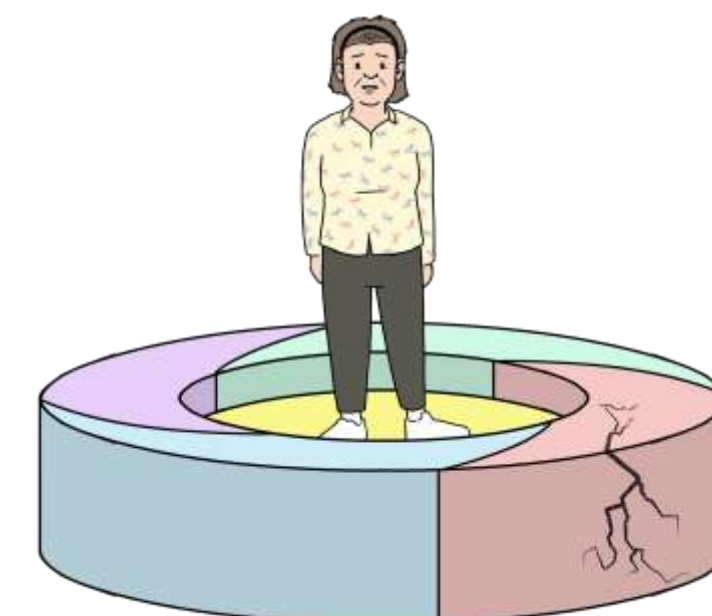
'Feeling safe in my relationships'

People talked about how important it was to feel safe in their relationships, which was supported by people feeling known, feeling cared for, being listened to and trusting staff. Safety in relationships often had to be in place for the other key foundations to work well for the person.



"Erm, staff can tell when I'm depressed, staff can tell if I'm not happy and, erm, and I don't have to tell the staff all the time, but they can tell by my voice or they can tell by my looks and that" - Max

Some people told us about times when they did not feel safe in their relationships and when they did not feel listened to. This really damaged their foundation.



"I just feel like they don't listen, and I'm still part of there, and... I just basically want people to listen to me, and I'm like, I'm like, oh, if I go for different scenarios, I... And I said if they make you go to the house, I'll cut my wrist wide open and they'll, maybe they'll listen, basically, and get me a [new] house, if I don't die first" - Lisa

'Feeling happy with who I am'

Many people told us that during their time in hospital they developed bad stories about themselves. When they moved to their own homes, they started to build their foundations and as each key support area developed, they would start to feel happier about themselves.

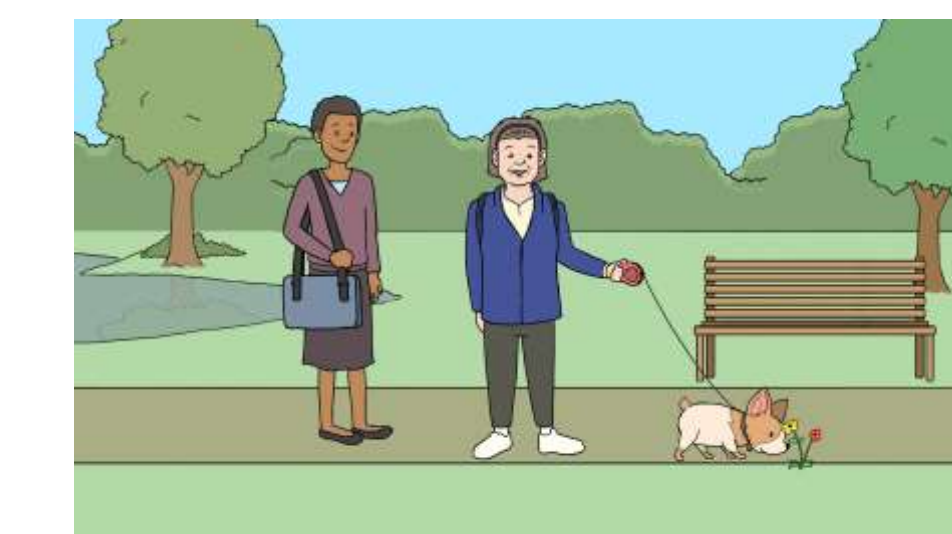


"I think, erm, what the difference is, it's like when I go out with the staff, you know, they're just, like, they're just like myself, you know, dressed in normal clothes. And it's just you can have a normal conversation and talk about, like, football, music, erm, films, erm, and you're just having, like, a normal, civilised... It means a lot to me, yeah. Yeah, it just means - it makes a big, it makes a big difference in my life anyway." - Mark

People also talked about their activities and involvement in their community and how this led to them having experiences where they were seen positively by others, and this in turn helped them to see themselves in a more positive light.

'Making my own choices'

People told us that being able to make choices and decisions about their own lives was important to them. This gave them freedom. They also told us how much they valued the support they received to make 'good' decisions.



"When we don't have enough staff, we can't go nowhere" - Larry

"I get to make my own decisions, which will sometimes impact my life quite a lot" - Sabrina

"having the choice and the freedom to do, you know, things myself and what I'd like to do. And go out and go shopping...go to the supermarkets by myself and, erm, and go and see my family by myself as well. And - and that's kind of like a big, erm, a big step for me and it's, like, it gives me all that freedom as well" - Mark

For some people, choices were limited, or they felt excluded from them decision making, and this could lead to the quality of people's lives decreasing.

'Belonging and keeping busy'

It was important to people that they had enough to do each day, that they had a routine and that their activities created opportunities for them to feel a sense of belonging in different parts of their community.



People talked about the importance of everyday activities such as household chores, hobbies, paid or voluntary work and time with family and friends. What was important here was that the person had the right level of busyness for them, and they were doing activities they found meaningful.

I: Oh. Yeah, how did you get to know your neighbours?

Sabrina: I was just sitting out there chatting, and I was like, hello, my name is Sabrina. Just chatting, and they were all very nice, so I'm quite lucky.

I: Yeah. Do you - yeah, how do you feel about sort of knowing your neighbours? What does it feel like?

Sabrina: Oh, nice.

