

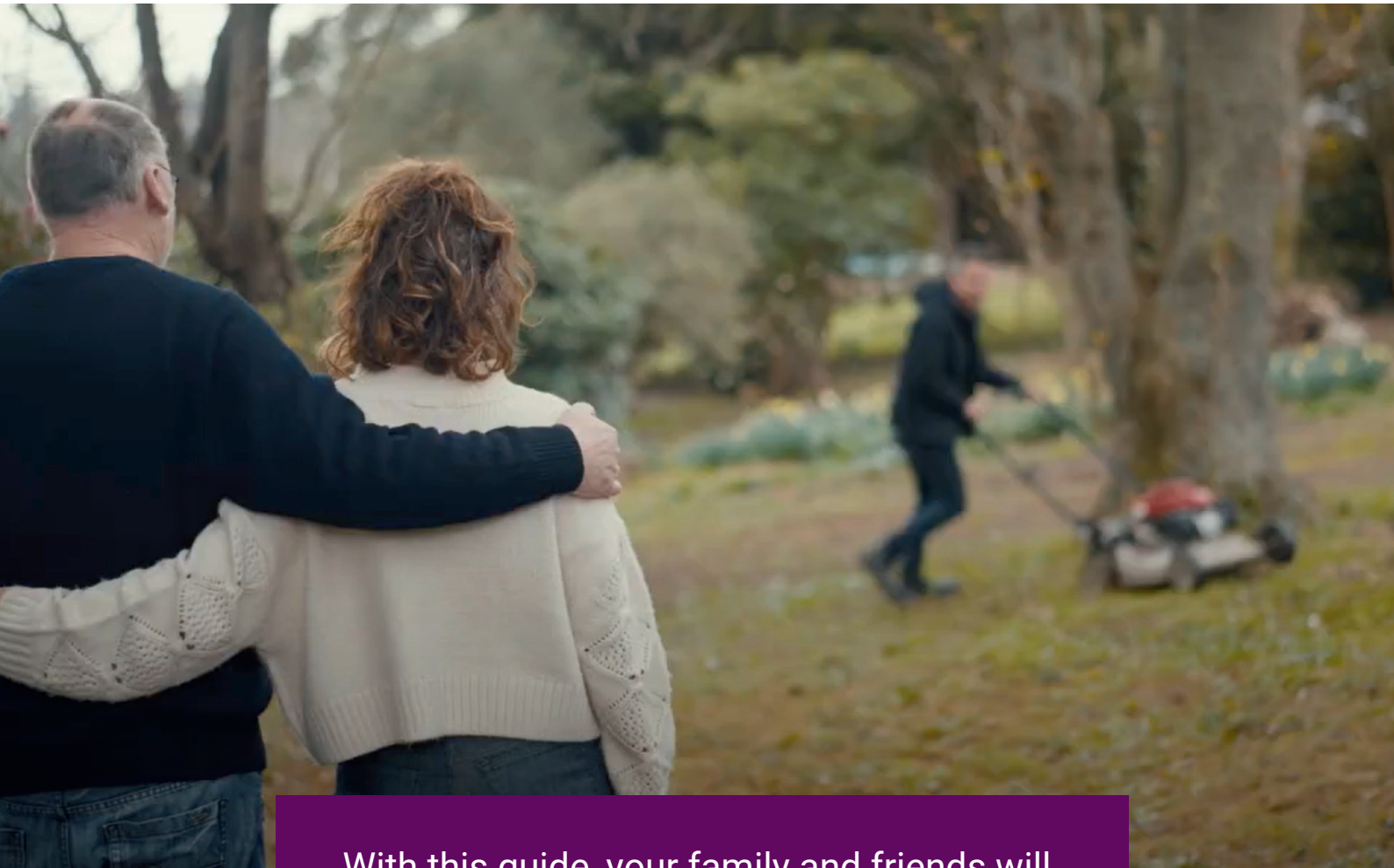


Helping others to help you

HELP for carers, families and friends

Step-by-step guide to organising support and staying connected

**For those of us living with serious
illness and age-related health issues**



With this guide, your family and friends will know how they can help. It is easier for people to support you when they have a clear idea of what you need and when you need it.

Most people want to show their care and help at this important time, but often they don't know how, and don't want to get it wrong.

Your Healthy End of Life Plan makes it easier to ask for, and accept help from the people in your life.

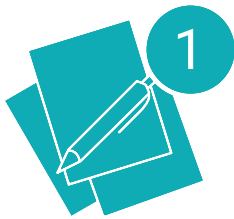
Family members, friends, colleagues, neighbours, parents from the kids sports clubs and school, people in your faith groups or book clubs, friends from the gym. These people are our support network - they want to help - they just need a bit of guidance from you.

Including people like this can dramatically reduce the load on you and help you feel better - and it gives them an opportunity to show up for you because they care.



“It never occurred to me to ask ... though if one of them asked for my support, I’d do it in a heartbeat.”

Three simple steps for more support and connection:



Identify what would help

PAGES 3 - 5

- Support with day-to-day living
- What’s important to your person



Identify who can help

PAGES 6 - 7

- Make a list of all the people around you



Action and show people your plan

PAGES 8 - 10

- Tell people about your plan and invite them to see where they can help

Tip: Ask someone you trust to help you with this!

Personal and/or Family Needs

Assistance so you can keep on top of your personal and/or family needs.

Task	Frequency
e.g. medical, personal appointments, kids' pickups, faith needs	e.g. every second Sunday

Enjoyable activities that lift your spirits and bring you joy!

What are the things that help you to feel good and give you the boost you need so that you can 'keep going'.

Task	Frequency
e.g. going to the movies, your hobbies, yoga classes, massage etc	e.g. Tuesday afternoons

"This means they are not just helping, but helping in the ways you need it most – and that makes them feel like they are a truly useful and valued presence in your life".



What's important to me?

When we are living with a sudden diagnosis, serious illness or age-related issues things that are important to us can sometimes be forgotten. What matters to you?



To Say, Do & Contribute

For example: unfinished business, getting together to plan, visit special places, message or write to people, write down my life story



To See

For example: people, garden, flowers, familiar things, favourite items, shows, faith leader, art, GP, palliative care service, pets



To Hear

For example: music, family talking, friends laughing, children playing, silence, prayer, household noises



To Feel

For example: warm, comfortable, clean, free from pain, the touch of loved ones, massage, at peace, comfort of my bed, home comforts, animal companions



To Taste

For example: favourite foods, flavours and drinks



To Smell

For example: perfume, essential oils, hot chips, baking, fresh air, forest, the garden, the ocean



Step 2: Identify who can help

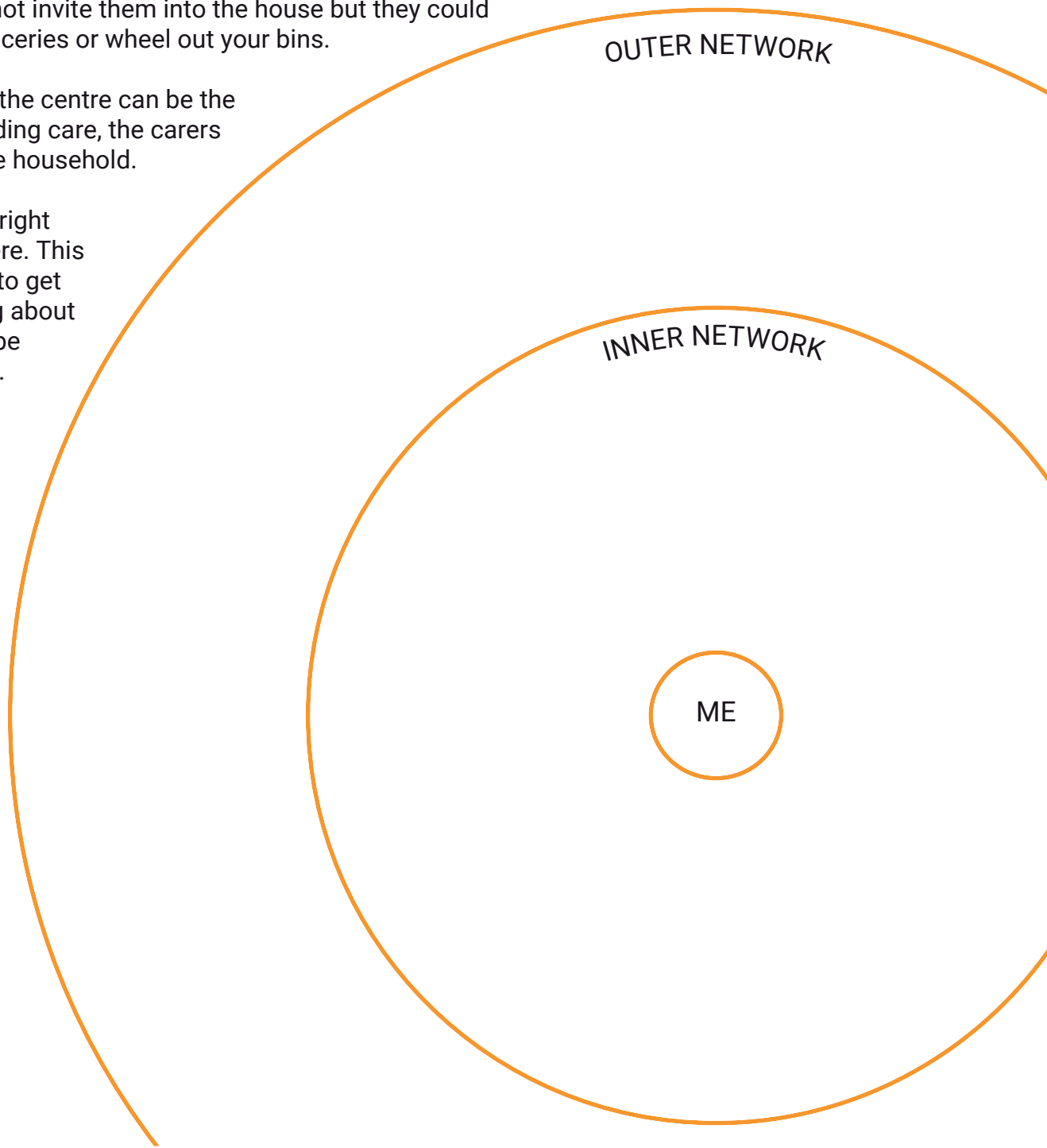
In this step, you make a list of the people in your life that you know, like and trust. Support can come from unexpected and surprising places.

Your **'inner network'** is made of your closest people - family *and* friends. People you might feel comfortable coming into the home, or seeing you in your pyjamas.

Your **'outer network'** includes people you have some connection with. You might not invite them into the house but they could drop off groceries or wheel out your bins.

The **'me'** at the centre can be the person needing care, the carers or the whole household.

There is no right or wrong here. This step is just to get you thinking about who might be able to help.



Ideas for building more support when you feel isolated:

Often, the people who care about us aren't just our closest family or friends - they're the familiar faces we see in everyday life. The neighbour who waves. The person from lunch. The hairdresser who's known you for years. These casual connections can become meaningful support when you let them know. Here are some simple ways to reach out and invite others in:

The neighbour who waves every day:

"It always brightens my day to see you walk past. I've been unwell lately and trying to stay on top of everything. Do you think you could wheel my bins out for me on Friday?"

The man I chat with in the lift everyday who works in a different apartment to me:

"My partners health is not great at the moment. Would you like to have lunch together one day soon, that would be a friendly distraction for me."

The lady who's been cutting my hair for 12 years:

"You've known me for such a long time - I've been caring for my dad at home and it's been a lot lately. It means a lot just having someone to talk to about him."

The young mum I see at the library every week

"It's always nice seeing you at the library. I've been a bit under the weather lately and trying to stay social - maybe we could go for a walk together one day soon, but it's ok if you're busy?"

The work friend from 20 years ago who lives interstate:

"I've been unwell and resting a lot, but I'd love to stay in touch. Would you play an online word game with me to help lifts my spirits?"

The friends from the gym:

"Things have been a bit tough lately with my sister being sick. Do you think you could go to the chemist for me next time you're at the shops, it would be a big help."

A few things to remember:

- Start small. A friendly cuppa is often enough.
- Be specific and make it bite-sized. People say yes more often when the task is clear and time-bound for e.g., "pick up milk Tuesday" versus "help anytime".
- You don't need to invite anyone into your home to make new connections.

"At first I was hesitant. But after trying it a few times I was delighted by the response."

TIP: Try these places to connect and find support: Libraries, community centres, neighbourhood houses, Meals on Wheels social lunches or "community café" days, knitting circles, art classes, community card games, men's/women's Sheds, U3A, Rotary/Lions, COTA, volunteering services, Carers Gateway, multicultural and faith-based associations, local Aboriginal Health Service or community centre, senior exercise groups, walking clubs, hydrotherapy sessions, chronic illness support groups (diabetes, heart, cancer, dementia carers). Or try online localism: Facebook groups for your suburb; community noticeboards; a simple "seeking a friendly check-in buddy" post.



STEP 3: Show people your plan

In this step, your responses from steps 1 and 2 come together, to start actioning your Healthy End of Life Plan.

1. Write down some things from step 1 that people could start helping you with
2. Is there anyone from step 2 that you could ask?
3. When people ask if there is anything they can do to help - **show them your plan** - and let them select something from your list that suits their own schedule.
4. Your plan may include people helping with special wishes or unique experiences.

Day	Task or Activity	People	Frequency
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Anytime			

Tip: You may wish to create two separate plans: one for the more private tasks you might ask of your inner circle, and one for more general tasks that people in your outer circle could do. The following pages have templates you can photocopy.



- Fix garden tap to stop leaking
- Check expiry dates in fridge
- Deliver items to op-shop
- Clean lizard tank
- Install sensor light
- Chop firewood
- Buy orchid potting mix
- Bring your puppy
- Kindy lunches
- Clean gutters
- Do a load of washing
- Help draft NDIS application
- Tighten shower rose holder
- Phone call from grandkids
- Bog up holes
- Stay with dad while I attend Pilates
- Walk the dog
- Bring in some things
- Pop in for visit
- Send chatty messages
- Take kids out for fun day
- Make appointment with social worker
- Check my aged care
- Organise memory book
- Prepare chicken soup
- Help organise records
- Work through tidying wardrobes
- Drive to medical appointments
- Wedding outfit shopping
- Locksmith coming between 11-12
- Aunty and Uncle Visiting
- Brings bins in
- OT phone appointment
- Car service
- Flea treatment for cat
- Bring polarised camera
- Evening call
- Help with advance care planning and paperwork
- Pick up medications from pharmacy



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END OF
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PLANNING

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