

the toolkit

**for all voices**



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**Project  
Change**

## introduction

The idea of creating a toolkit for care experienced voices seemed necessary since before the inception of ProjectChange. Yet, when we saw others try to create the concept, it was always aimed at better understanding the applications of legislation or at organisational practice. There is nothing wrong with either of these aims but we could see there was a huge gap that needed to be filled if we were ever going to have a self-sufficient and empowered community.

Very few were ever aimed directly at trying to empower care experienced people of any age or stage. This was our starting point, but it soon became obvious that if you really wanted to empower care experienced voices, the approach and ethos you should take would be valid for all voices that needed to be heard more, especially when it comes to decision-making processes and actions that affect them or their communities.

A very dedicated and passionate group of people with a variety of lived experiences created this toolkit to help others find their voice, safely and powerfully. Ultimately, the point of this toolkit is to have lived experience valued, recognised, and embedded in an equitable and holistic way throughout systems, organisations and communities.

The toolkit provides a range of activities, resources and thinking points to pick and choose from. It is not a prescriptive list but provides a nuanced approach to helping someone to find and understand their

own unique voice, and how this fits within the wider world. By offering this collection we hope that the entire community has the opportunity to engage, develop, challenge and belong to a diverse community that they feel they are a part of.

The more conversations, the more the community is ours.

## the logic model

The first thing the group undertook was to understand what the toolkit could be, looking far and wide at the topics and themes that could be involved in this. It was a massive area to cover but the group landed on some very strong themes that are core to all the reading below:

Self-Care; Stories; Participation; Change and Community.

The group created a logic model to help guide them through the creation of the toolkit. The logic model requires each step to be completed before the next one can be achieved and gives an idea of what the end goal is.

### Step One - Discover

We will scope what is needed, where the gaps are and what's already available.

### Step Two - Dream

We will explore what's possible, how it fits in the big picture and what change we would like to see.

### Step Three - Design

We will engage with partners and people with lived experience to plan and develop the toolkit.

### Step Four - Deliver

We will co-create an open-licensed toolkit for any voice to use to develop skills in public speaking, writing, self-care and best practice for organisations to listen.

### Step Five - Enable

Care experienced people (and others with lived experience) will have the confidence and skills to use their voice safely.

### Step Six - Engage

A community of change makers will be empowered to engage in conversations about language, identity and belonging and help to reframe the narrative.

### Step Seven - Embed

Lived experience will be valued, recognised and embedded in an equitable and holistic way throughout systems, organisations and communities.

# self-care

## what is self-care?

Self-care describes the actions you take in order to promote your own physical, mental, and social health. Self-care can take many forms.

It could be ensuring you get enough sleep every night, or stepping outside for a few minutes for some fresh air.



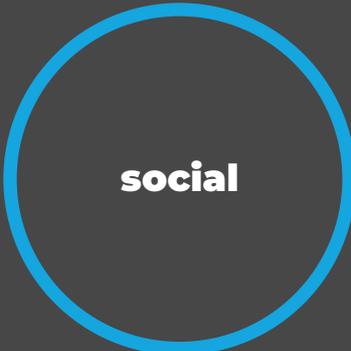
### **physical**

how the inside and outside parts of your body impact on you



### **mental**

how you feel and how your brain thinks about itself and the people/situation around it



### **social**

how you interact with the people and world around you and how they interact back

## types of self-care

Self-care can be done every day, it can be something that just allows us to relax and unwind after a difficult day. Try some of the examples below on a hard day.



**listen to your favourite song**



**watch your favourite movie**



**read your favourite book**



**go for a relaxing bath or shower**



**go for a walk**

## what is self-care?

The key to self-care is choosing what you think will work to take away some of the daily stresses of life. There's a reason we don't go to sleep with our shoes on, the same is true for self-care, we need time to relax and not be tied up.

A good way to check-in with yourself when you're not sure how the day has gone is to write yourself 5 simple questions using the space below. Be honest with your answers and take some time for reflection.

For example, *how do I feel right now? What brought me joy today?* etc.

### Activity

1.

2.

3.

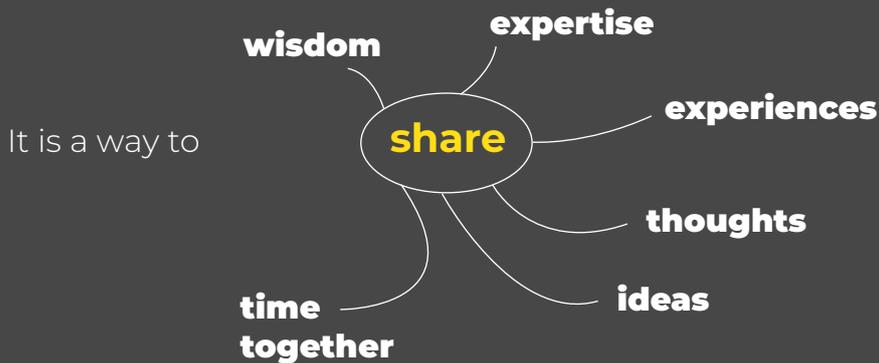
4.

5.

# participation

## what is participation?

Participation is involvement. It is when someone asks you what you think about something. It can be collective and/or individual and it can be informal or formal. The possibilities are endless!



### Why would someone ask you?

You're an expert.

What do we mean by expert?

Those with lived experience will always be better informed than those without.

**Participation = Empowerment**

### It should feel as though...

**respect**

someone is listening to me

**change**

there's going to be a difference

**co-owned**

I own a part of the process

**purpose**

there is a reason for this

## types of participation

### What does it look like?

Participation can be informal or formal. It comes in all shapes and sizes including:

1:1's  
group work  
surveys  
events  
forums  
pictures  
videos  
public speaking

questionnaires  
interviews  
drawings  
songs  
spoken word  
focus groups  
**...and so much more!**

### Surveys

Scan the QR Codes below. You will find two surveys. What do you think of them and how do they compare to each other?

**Q. Thinking about the wording of each question, how does it make you feel?**



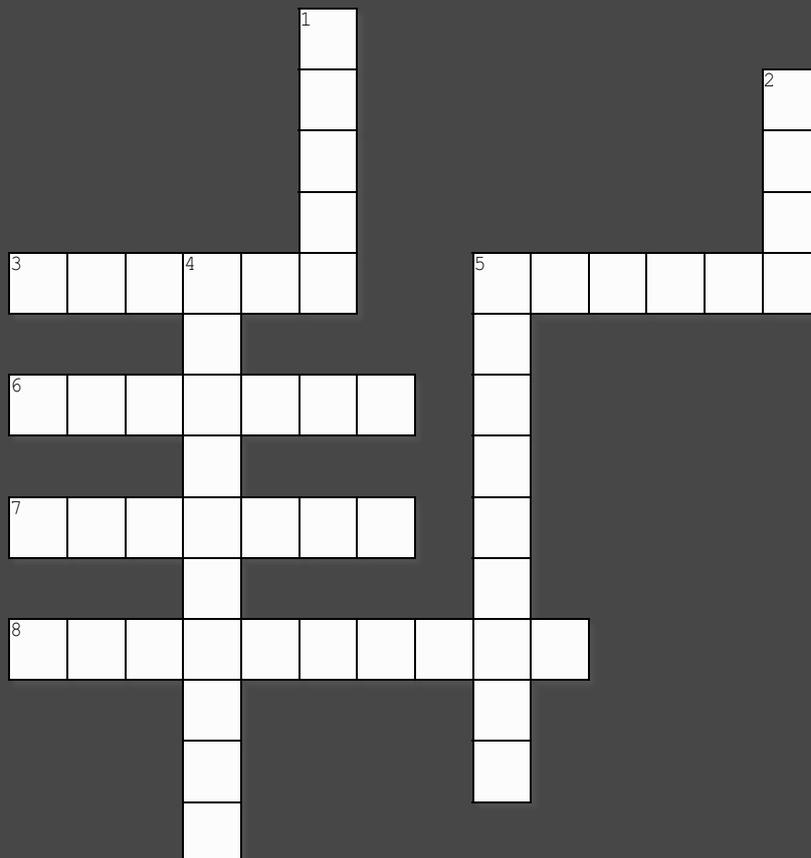
**scan me!**



**scan me!**

## what is participation

### The Crossword



#### Across

- 3. you are one
- 5. the world needs this
- 6. we should all be treated with this
- 7. an exchange of ideas;  
(anag. garnish)
- 8. strong connections between  
people

#### Down

- 1. this is built over time; important  
in relationships
- 2. how we should treat others
- 4. we all have it
- 5. we are one; a group with some  
thing in common

### Secret Message

gnitpmettA ot etarebil eht desserppo tuohtiw rieht evit-  
celfer noitapicitrap ni eht tca fo noitarebil si ot taert meht  
sa stcejbo taht tsum eb devas morf a gninrub gnidliub.  
oluaP erierF

stories

## what is my story?

### What do people mean by 'my story'?

It is everything in your life. This is the **good**, the **bad** and **everything** in between.

As someone with lived experience, your **expertise** is invaluable. But you should never be made to feel that you have to share everything about your life and experiences.

No one is entitled to this information and it is your choice how much you share.

### How could I use my story?

However you want, it's **yours**, nobody else's'.

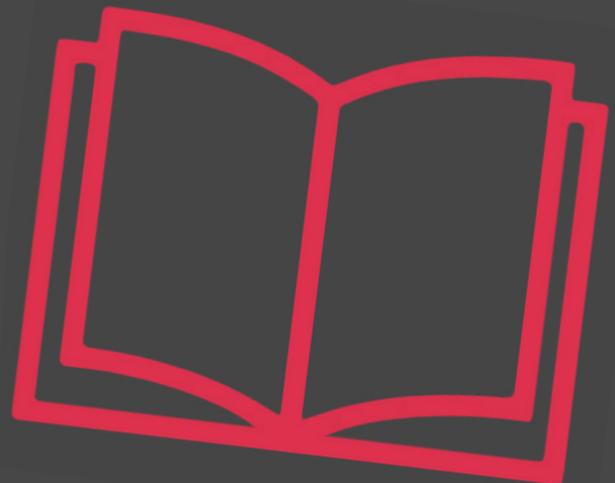
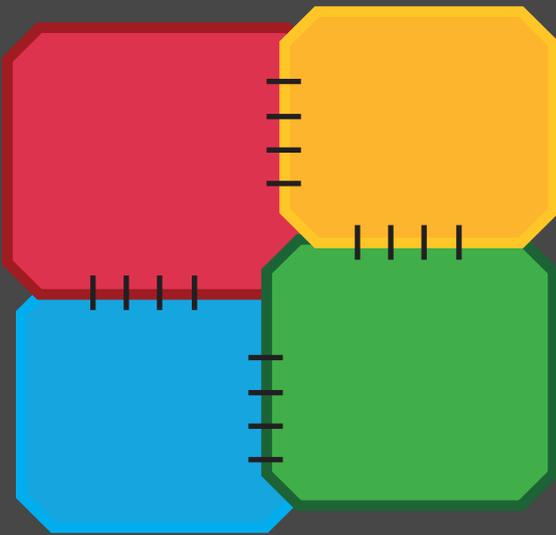
A story is more than just words on a page, it is an exploration of **memories, emotions and feelings**. The power of stories comes from what we take away from them. It comes from us.

Our life is made up of all of these things and more. It is our own unique opinions, thoughts and feelings that make us so **special**.

## how do I see my story?

We can see our life (past, present and future) in many ways other than as a story. Here are some examples below.

**Q. Can you think of any others?**



## what's my story?

Using simple sentences or words, fill in the blank space below. Can you describe:

### Yourself



### How Others See You



### Word Prompt

What comes to mind when you think about the following words?

**Me**



**You**



**Story**



**Experience**



**Then**



**Now**



### Why is my story important?

It is important to understand how you feel about your life and experiences before you engage in participation. Understanding your own perspective can be difficult but it is also what makes you who you are. You are not defined by any one action or experience.

Like a patchwork quilt, a tree, or a story, you are made up of many things and that should be celebrated.

voice

## what is voice?

### Every voice is different

From accents to languages and dialects, every voice has its own unique tone. We all have a different voice, but, beyond that, it is the expression of your own thoughts, feelings and opinions.

### How can I use my voice?

When it feels right. It is important for you to set your own expectations and boundaries. You should never feel that you have to share everything about yourself, or be made to feel you have to justify your presence in the room.

### Why is my voice important?

Your voice is your own and you are the one to decide when, how, and if, you want to use it.

You have **expertise**. Sharing your thoughts on something you have lived through is always more powerful than those who haven't experienced it.



Where your story is about exploring your experiences internally, **your voice is about how this translates externally**, into the world.

## types of voice

**I can share my voice through:**

**talking**

**body language**

**sign language**

**friendships**

**campaigning & protest**

**the internet**

**clubs/activities**

**ordering a takeaway**

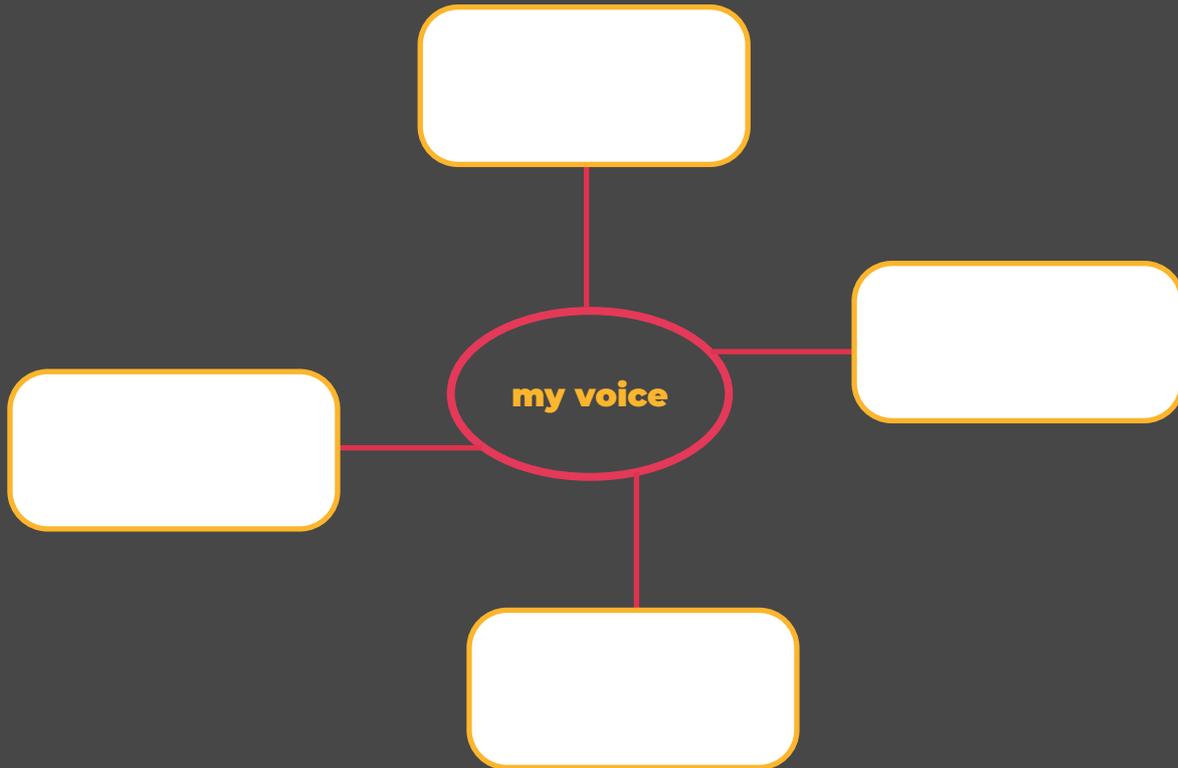
These are just some of the ways we can share our voice.

By using our voice, we can be understood and our perspectives, thoughts, and feelings taken into account - from the biggest decisions to the smallest.

## what is voice?

### Recently, how have you shared your voice?

Write some examples of how you've used your voice.



### Why is this important?

Can you decipher this Caesar cipher?

aol cvpjl vm aol buolhgk pz aol val dl ullk av olhy aol tvza.

### Lately, have you felt listened to?

yes  no

# listening

## what is listening?

**There are many types of listening and many ways to listen.**

We listen to **learn** and to **understand** other people's thoughts, ideas, and perspectives.

We each have our own story to tell, and even though we may have had similar experiences, our personal perspective and connection to those experiences differ.

It is through listening that we can tap into our shared commitment for change.

### How do I listen?

Listening isn't just about hearing someone. It is about understanding what someone has said, how you feel about it, and how you are going to respond.

This is the act of listening, it is an ongoing and active process.

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### How should it feel?

It should feel purposeful. There is no point in listening if it goes in one ear and out of the other.

It can feel frustrating, especially when people have different opinions or approaches to a particular issue. However, no one has the right to challenge your experience.

It should also feel productive and that your expertise is acknowledged and acted upon.

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### What is the goal?

It is through listening that we can bring communities together and support each other. Listening and understanding supports collaboration and co-ownership, working together to bring change.

## how do we listen?

Understanding other people's thoughts and feelings can be difficult, especially if they differ from your own.

In participation, people generally want to make life better. We may all want to do this, but different approaches and perspectives can cause conflict.

How do we find common ground and harness the best of different points of view? Is there a way of mapping out these tricky situations?

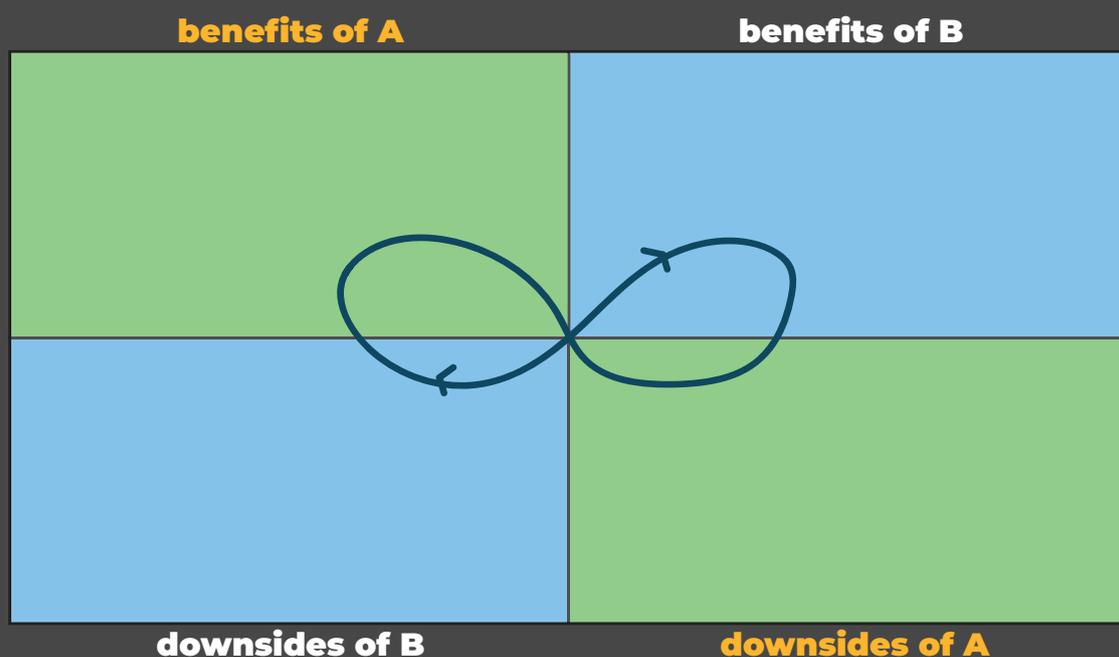
### Polarity mapping

Using a polarity map, we can identify the benefits and the downsides to a particular polarity. Like breathing, inhaling and exhaling are polar opposites. Both rely on one another to maintain respiratory function but too much of either side would cause a problem. Polarity mapping finds the value in competing perspectives.

The goal in this exercise isn't to make a decision, but to value what each point of view has to offer and enrich understanding of both sides of the coin.

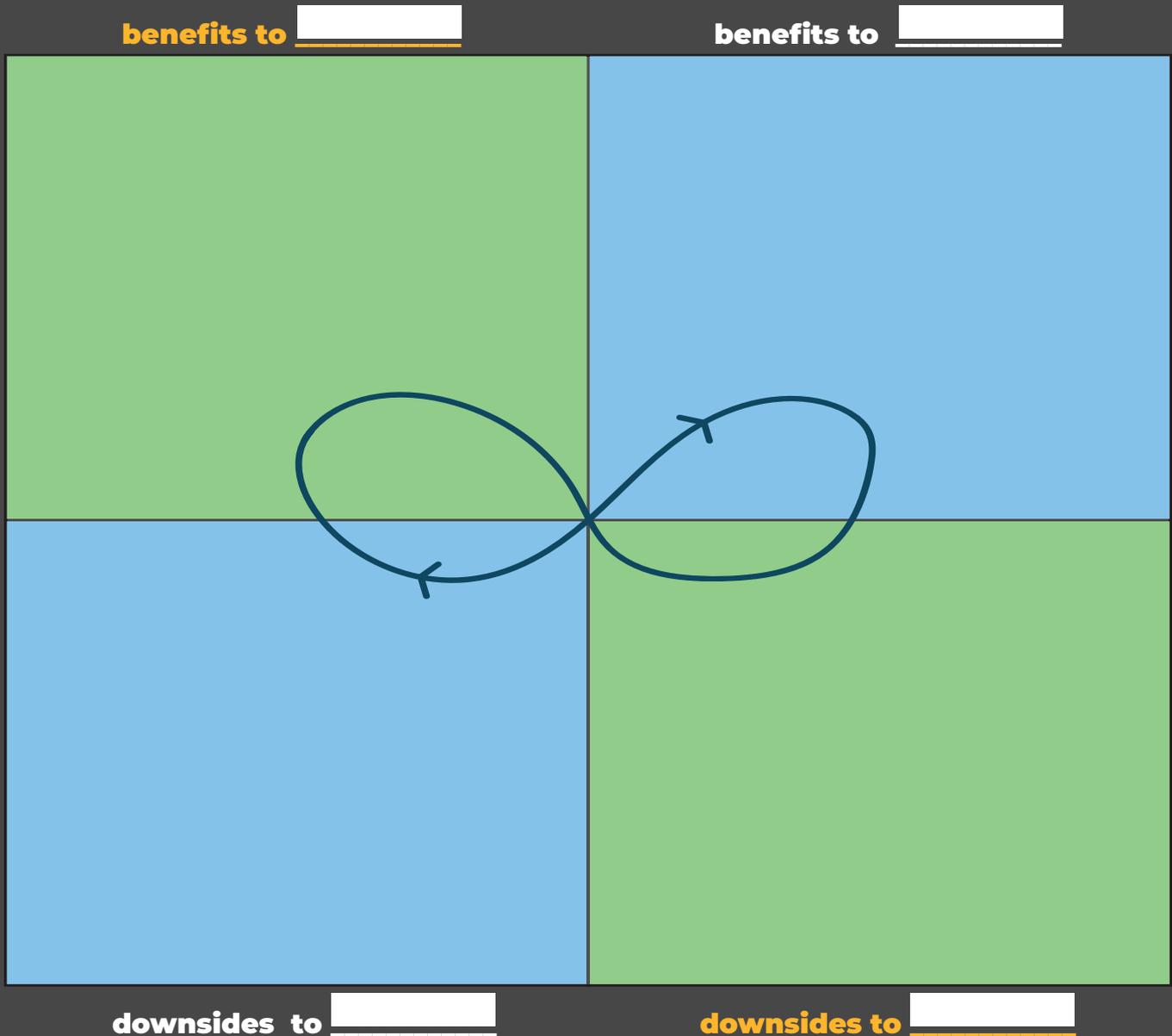
From this, **action points** and early **warning signs** can be predicted and acted upon before they become an issue.

### How to map polarities



## 2. Can you think of an issue you're passionate about?

Using the empty diagram below, how would you apply the polarity model to that topic or situation?



These activities allow you to think about how your own experiences have informed your own views, and how understanding other people's perspectives can often enhance your own decision making and listening skills.

If we can move away from "you're wrong" and "I'm right" mentalities and towards a "we both have valid points," change can happen. This merging of perspectives is where we can truly create a movement and a community that works for everyone.

Polarity management is about understanding that we are an individual.

At the same time, we are also part of something much bigger. We are part of our community.

**action points**

**early warnings**

Blank white space for recording action points.

Blank white space for recording early warnings.

**Notes**

Blank white space for recording notes.

## answers

### The Crossword, p.11

#### Across

- 3. expert
- 5. change
- 6. respect
- 7. sharing
- 8. friendship

#### Down

- 1. trust
- 2. care
- 4. experience
- 5. community

### Mirror Message, p.11

“Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects that must be saved from a burning building.”

- Paulo Freire

### Caesar Cipher, p.19

See the cipher solution below. Each letter can be replaced by a letter 7 places before it. i.e. A = T.

Alphabet	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Cipher	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E

Alphabet	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Cipher	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S

**We would like to hear your **feedback** on the toolkit in its current format.**



**Scan the **QR Code** to leave your comments on our website.**