



SELF-ADVOCACY

MY LIFE

WORKBOOK

October 2003



Acknowledgements

The '*My Life Workbook*' was developed by Individuals with Developmental Disabilities in Central Alberta over the 2002-2003 period as part of their work in the *Broadening Your Horizons* project. Many individuals in the Wetaskiwin, Camrose, Wainwright and Red Deer areas assisted in the preparation of this workbook through their plain language suggestions, pilot use of the workbook, and through sharing their thoughts and ideas. Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

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The Workbook is based on the Quality of Life standards that are part of the *Creating Excellence Together* certification process operated by the Alberta Association of Rehabilitation Centers (AARC). AARC's support for this project is also gratefully acknowledged.

My Life Workbook
c 2003

PDD Central Alberta Community Board



THIS IS MY LIFE

Workbook

By: _____

Date: _____

With Help From Mentor:



Self-Advocate Workbook

You can use this workbook to help you find out if you have the kind of life you want. It can also tell you what you can ask for to help make your life and the supports you get better.

When agencies and PDD talk about how good your services and your life are, they use Creating Excellence Together (also called “CET”) language. Agencies have to meet CET standards of good service to get money from PDD to help you. But the words in the CET standards are not always easy for self-advocates to read.

This book was made *by* self-advocates *for* self-advocates. We put each CET standard into plain words, so more people can understand it. There are lots of examples with each standard so you can see how it may relate to your life and the issues you face.

You can fill out the workbook by yourself. Or you can get another self-advocate who is a mentor to help you fill it out. (A mentor is someone who knows more than you about what you want to learn. A mentor is there to help you.)

After you have filled out the workbook, you can look at what you want to change in your life and make that happen. You can also use this workbook to tell agencies and your staff about quality of life issues that are important to you.

This workbook was made by Self Advocates who participated in the

***Broadening Your Horizons Project in
Wetaskiwin and Wainwright, Alberta during 2002 and 2003.***



About the Workbook

The workbook has 12 standards:

1. **Homes** – *I have a home.*
2. **Choices and Decision-making** – *I make decisions about everyday matters.*
3. **Relationships** – *I have strong, positive relationships.*
4. **Rights** – *I am treated with dignity and respect.*
5. **Rights** – *My rights are upheld.*
6. **Personal Control** – *I have personal control.*
7. **Community inclusion** – *I am included and participate in my community.*
8. **Work and Community Options** – *If I choose to be employed, or participate in productive or skill learning activities, I have opportunities that are what I hoped for.*
9. **Leisure** – *I enjoy my leisure time.*
10. **Health and Safety** – *I take care of my health.*
11. **Health and Safety** – *I am safe from physical harm.*
12. **Health and Safety** – *I am free from abuse.*

If you think there are important things missing from the standards, please add them to the end of the workbook.

1. HOMES

Standard #1: I have a home.



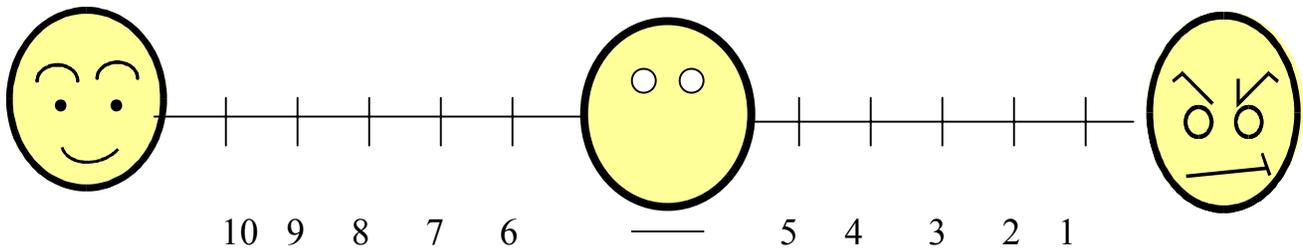
“I have the kind of home life I want.”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I decide where to live and with who.
- I decide if I want to own my own home.
- I decide if I want to have personal space.
- I have privacy.
- I decide what to eat and when.
- I decide when to go to bed and wake up.

Examples of how my home fits my life:

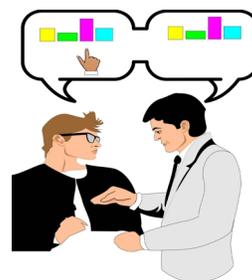
How I feel about my home life



2. CHOICES AND DECISION-MAKING

Standard #2: I make decisions about everyday matters.

“I make decisions about daily things in my life.”



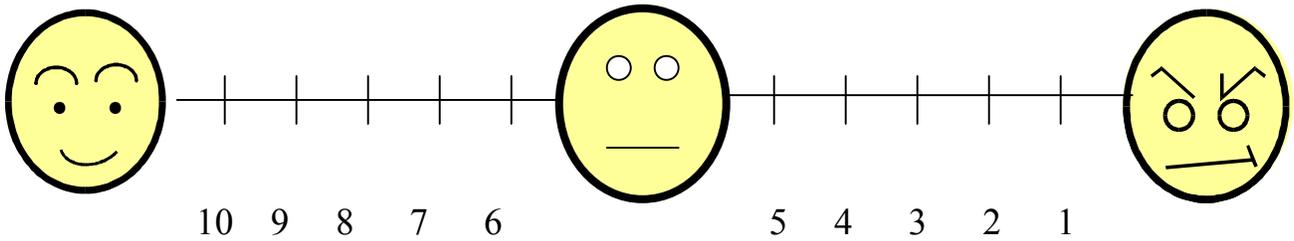
Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I decide what to wear.
- I decide if and when I wash my hair and if and when I want to have a bath.
- I decide what and when to eat.
- I decide when to go to bed and wake up.
- I decide if I want to go to work or not.
- I decide how to spend my free time.
- I have a say in making decisions.
- I make decisions on my own without anyone changing them.
- I ask for advice when I need it.
- I get advice from parents or guardians to make good choices.
- I get advice from support staff to make good choices.
- I am given real choices.

Examples of decisions I make each day:

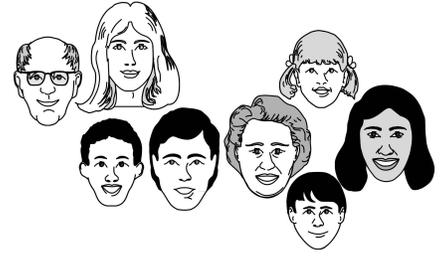
- I am given healthy opportunities or other choices.
- I have control of my life.
- I have the learning I need to make choices.
- I can find out what I want to know from TV, radio, internet, newspapers or libraries.

How I feel about the decisions I make in my life



3. RELATIONSHIPS

Standard #3: I have strong, positive relationships.



“I have strong relationships with family, friends, staff and the community.”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

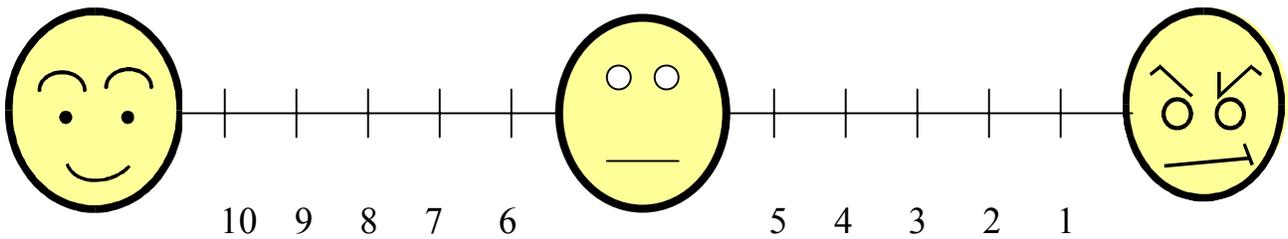
- I have good relationships with my family and parents.
- I have good relationships with friends.
- I have a good relationship with my roommate(s).
- I have a good relationship with a girlfriend/boyfriend.
- I have good relationships with support workers/paid staff.
- I have pets.
- I have good relationships with community members (like police, doctor, fire dept., pharmacist).
- I have good relationships with co-workers.
- I have a good relationship with my employer.

I also have a good relationship with

- I have relationships of my own free will.
- I decide who my friends are.
- I decide if I want to be married.
- I get opportunities to make friends.
- I am comfortable with my friends.
- Staff read my body language, positive or negative, and don't push me.

Examples of how others help me make friends:

How I feel about my relationships



4. RIGHTS – Dignity and Respect

Standard #4- I am treated with dignity and respect.



“I am treated the way I want to be treated.”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

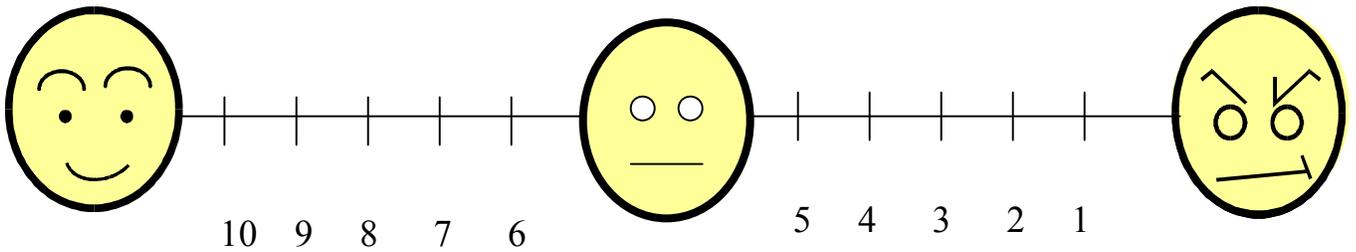
- People are nice to me.
- I am not called names.
- People talk to me and listen to me.
- People smile and are happy around me.
- People help me if I have a problem.
- I am allowed to help out.
- I am not ignored.
- People treat me with trust and honesty.
- I am treated equal/like everyone else.
- I am taken seriously.

**Examples of how
I am treated:**

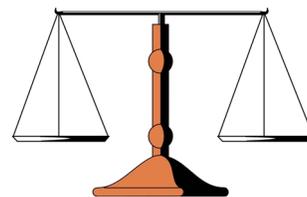
- People respect my choices.
- I have privacy.
- People keep my secrets as long as it doesn't harm me.

Examples of how I want to be treated:

How I feel about how others treat me



5. RIGHTS – Rights are upheld



Standard #5: My rights are upheld.

“I have the same rights as anyone”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

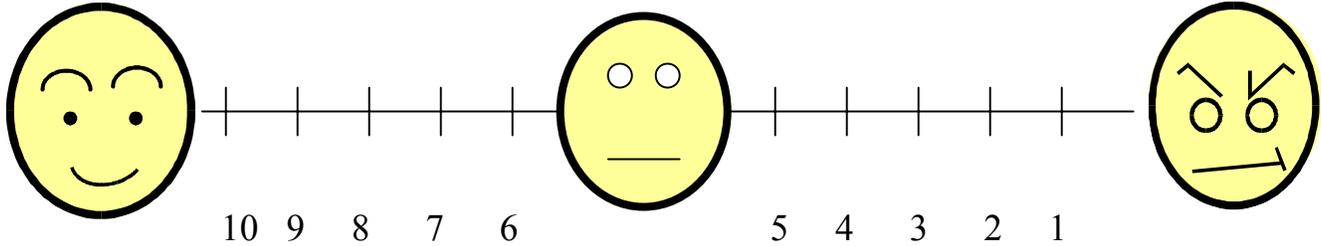
- I am part of the planning process.
- I take part in decisions about me.
- I decide if I want to learn about my rights and stand up for them.
- I know and understand my rights and what I must do (responsibility).
- People treat me like anyone else.
- I get to do things, like get a job or do leisure activities, just like everyone else.

Examples of rights I have:

- My supporters listen and talk to me - allow me to say what I want to say.
- My supporters do not holler at me, watch their temper and mouth, and keep their cool.
- If something is bothering me, my supporters help make it better.
- My supporters help me talk to people who don't treat me fairly.
- My supporters treat me equally.
- My supporters see that I'm being treated the same as other people.
- My supporters give me freedom to make choices.
- My supporters make sure I know right and wrong.
- My supporters make sure I know what I must do (my responsibility).
- My supporters make sure I know how to be responsible.

Examples of how my supporters help me with rights:

How I feel about the rights I get



6. PERSONAL CONTROL

Standard #6: I have personal control.



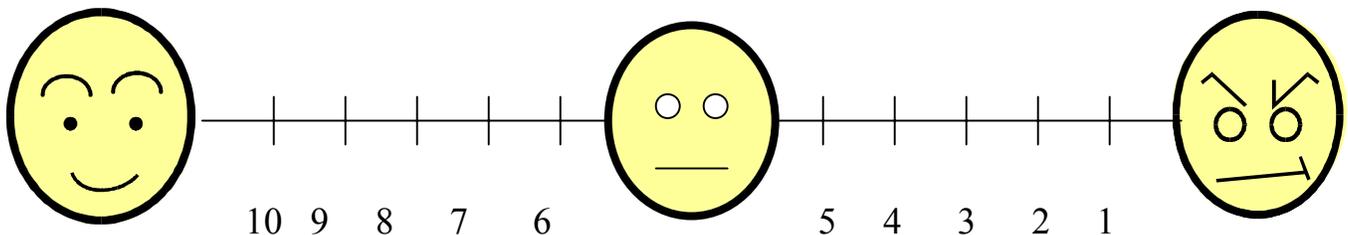
“I can do what I want in my life”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I have control over myself.
- I have control over what activities I want to do.
- I have control over how I spend my money.
- I have control over where I live.
- I have control over decisions I make (like going to work, what to eat, where I work).
- I have control over who I want as friends.
- I have control over who I marry.
- I learn new skills.
- I decide whether to make changes in my life or not.
- People listen when I have something to say.
- I feel better and better about myself every day.
- I am treated equal.

Examples of what I have control over:

How I feel about how much control I have



7. COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Standard #7: I am included and participate in my community.



"I am involved in my community"

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I go to local sports events.
- I help and volunteer.
- I go to nightclubs.
- I am on the local bowling league.
- I am a member of a club.
- I have general relationships with people around town.
- I am able to access public places.
- I feel included in my community.
- I take part in community events.
- I have a voice in the community.

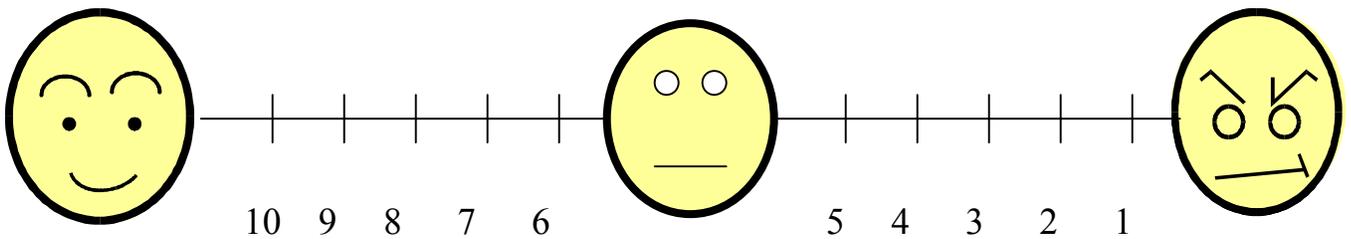
Examples of things I do in my community:

(Check the ones that are true for you.)

- My staff find out about community events on TV, in newspapers or flyers.
- My staff keep me up to date on community events.
- There are extra staff when I want to attend events, so there is enough support for people who want to attend and for those who want to stay home.
- Support staff make sure there is a way for me to get places I want to go.

Examples of ways staff help me be involved in my community:

How I feel about my community involvement



8. WORK AND COMMUNITY OPTIONS

Standard #8: If I choose to be employed, or participate in productive or skill learning activities, I have opportunities that are what I hoped for.



“I choose to work or take part in activities that I am interested in”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I have the choice to be employed and be a volunteer.
- I have the choice of attending Day Programs to learn skills.
- I decide if I want to learn to read.
- I am happy with what I do.
- I have a job.
- I volunteer.
- I can work as a dishwasher.
- I can work at the newspaper.
- I can work at the sewing store.
- I can work as a janitor.
- I can work in recycling.
- I can volunteer at the library.
- I can volunteer at the museum.
- I can volunteer at playschool.

Examples of where I work or volunteer or learn:

Way 1: For the person who is employed
(Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I chose my employment from a variety of options.
- I get paid for the work I do.
- I am supported if I leave my job.

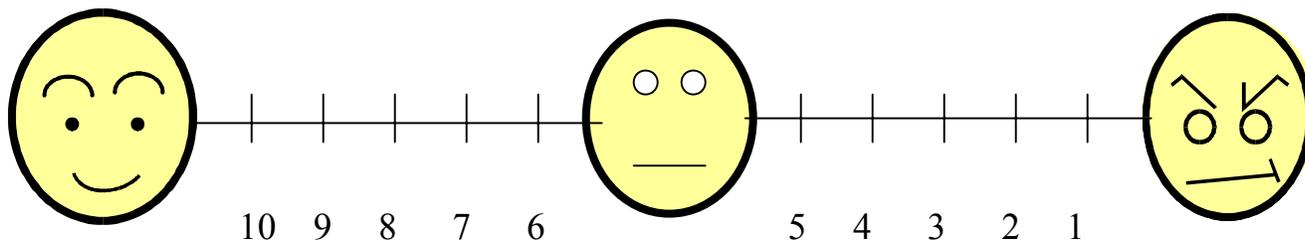
Way 2: For the person who wants to be but is not employed right now

- I have choices to make in where I want to work.
- I am being helped to look for employment.

Way 3: For the person who chooses to participate in productive or skill learning activities

- I was able to make my choices based on my personal likes, dislikes, skills and interest
- If I volunteer, it is at a place that has other volunteers, and I am treated like the other volunteers.
- I can change activities if I wish to do so.

How I feel about my work life



9. LEISURE

Standard #9: I enjoy my leisure time.

"I enjoy my free time."



Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

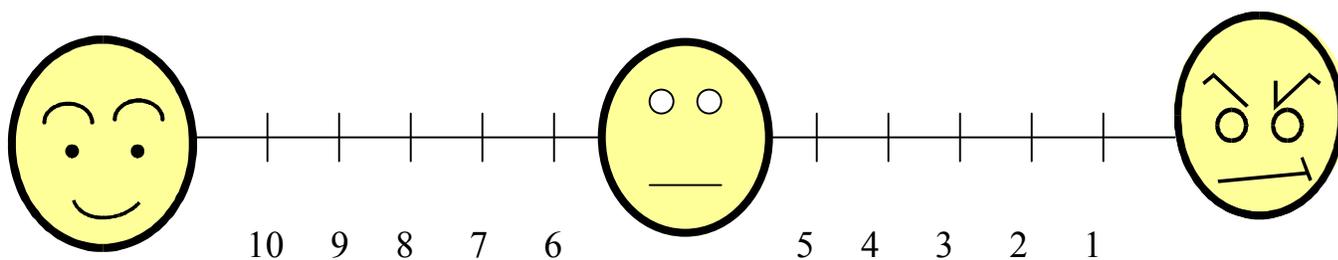
- In my free time I like to play on the computer.
- In my free time I like to read.
- In my free time I like to go to or watch movies.
- In my free time I like to watch TV.
- In my free time I like to bowl.
- In my free time I like to play cards.
- In my free time I like to go for a walk.
- In my free time I like to listen to music.
- In my free time I like to do crafts.
- In my free time I like to visit friends and family.

Examples of what I like to do in my free time:

- I get to choose what I want to do for fun.
- I am given choices for activities.
- I tell my staff about things I like to do.

Examples of how staff support me to enjoy my free time:

How I feel about how I spend my free time



10. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Standard #10: I take care of my health.



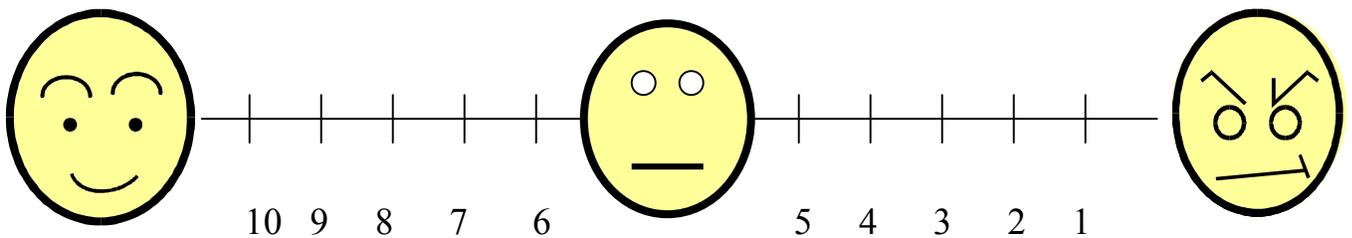
“I take care of my own health.”

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I decide to live healthy.
- I take medication at the right time everyday.
- I eat healthy meals.
- I get lots of exercise.
- I go to doctor’s appointments on a regular basis.
- I get the support I need to get medicine from the pharmacy.
- I feel well.
- If I don’t feel well, I can rely on my staff to make sure I’m looked after.
- I get help with meal planning if I need to.
- My staff reminds me to take my meds and helps me if I need it.

Examples of how I take care of my health:

How I feel about my health



11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Standard #11: I am safe from physical harm.



“I am safe from having harm done to my body.”

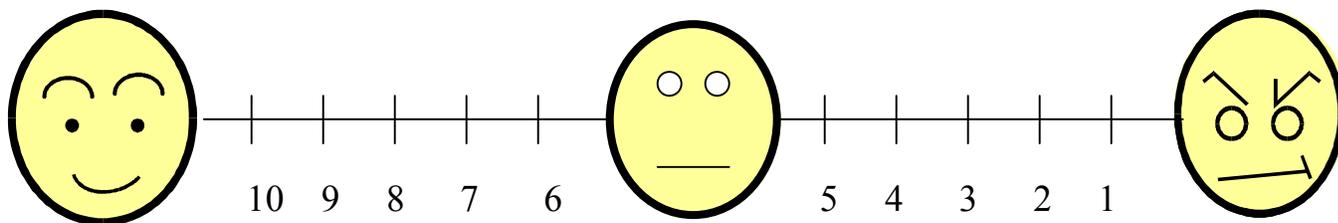
How would you know that you have it in your life?

Examples: (Check the ones that are true for you.)

- I am alive, healthy and safe.
- I am informed about safety issues.
- I have the tools needed to be safe.
- I have safety plans in place.
- I practise safety plans regularly.
- Staff check on how I’m doing.
- Staff help me get out of bad situations.
- Staff help me find ways to prevent bad things from happening.
- My staff know safety plans and teach me.

Examples of what I do to stay safe:

How I feel about my level of safety



12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Standard #12: I am free from abuse.

“I am free from having my body or my feelings/mind hurt by anyone.”



Abuse means

1. Physical Harm - being hit or kicked (anything that hurts my body)
2. Mental Harm - when someone calls me names or makes fun of me (when my feelings are hurt).
3. Financial Harm - when people take advantage of me or take my personal things.
4. Sexual Harm - when someone touches me in private areas or makes me feel uncomfortable.

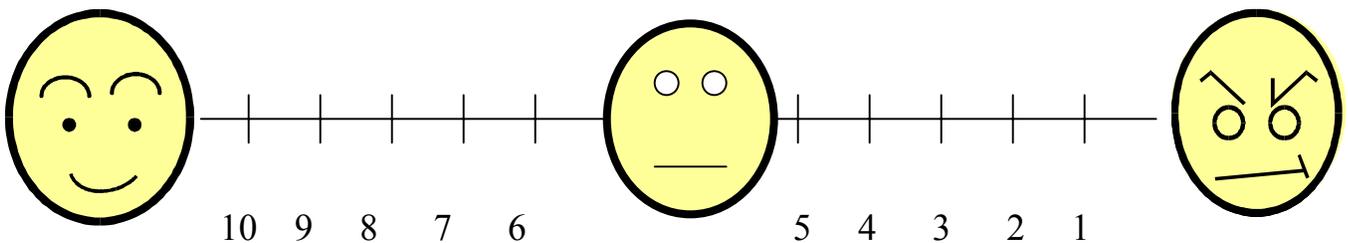
If you have been abused, how were you abused?

(Check the ones that are true for you)

- I feel safe where I am.
- I am healthy.
- I know what abuse is.
- I am happy with my life.

Examples of how I keep from being abused:

How free I feel from abuse





My Action Plan

You can use what you learned from this workbook to pick what you want to change in your life.

You can make a plan for this to happen.

(If you want more than one change, you can make more copies of this page.)

Plan # ____

What Do I Want to Change:

When I will do it:

How I will do it:

Who will help me:

(Use this page to write more about *Your Action Plan*)

If you would like more information about this workbook, how to use it, or opportunities to be a mentor, call:

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Phone (780) 352-6096

If you would like more information about the *Creating Excellence Together* (CET) Standards or the work of AARC call:

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