

Enabling Good Lives (EGL) and me

EGL-based self -reflection

Introduction

The Enabling Good Lives (EGL) was developed in 2012/2013 by disabled leaders and their allies. EGL is about bringing about personal, family, systems and social change. There are many ways EGL can be used. One way EGL can be used is for individuals and families to have a framework to think about their lives and explore how they want to improve their experiences and supports.

Understanding what is happening now in order to guide change

A first step in a change process can be getting clearer about what is happening now. Self-reflection is one way for this to happen. Self-reflection can help us get clear about what is working well, what we might want to improve and things that are gaps or challenges. When we find gaps or challenges, this can alert us to things we might want to change. When we discover something important that is not happening, it can give us clues about where to put energy into building new things in our lives and experience.

EGL gives us a simple framework to think about important things in our lives. We can reflect on strengths and things we might want to change.

Self-reflection can assist us to:

- understand what is working well for us
- explore gaps or challenges we may be facing
- reflect on what we think are strengths and areas for development
- establish a “baseline” so we can do it again in the future and see what has changed
- contribute to the development of a “vision” for what we want our life and experiences to be.

Using the framework

All insight can be good – but constructive action is the goal

The value of any self-reflection is that it paints a picture. It can make sense of what is happening now and can provide insights that assist us to focus on the changes we want,






You can do the self-reflection any way that works for you. Some options might be to:

1. take some time and just sit down by yourself and work through the simple tool by highlighting what is working well, what is OK and what you are not experiencing. You might want to look at the 'clues' that are given later in this document. When you finish, you can see where any gaps are. You will also see where your strengths are. It can be a good idea to think about any gaps and then think about what is most important for you to change at the moment. Sometimes, it is useful to think about who, or what, might be able to assist you to make positive change. There might be family, friends, peer support groups or paid supports that can give ideas and support to make the changes you want.
2. have a chat with a close friend and ask them to assist you to do the process. If they know you and your situation well, it can be interesting for you to rate things yourself without them knowing how you rated things. They can also think about you and what they know of your life and do it too. You can then compare how you rated your experience and how they see your experience. Sometimes, other people see things we don't see. As with the first option, the main thing is to figure out what you might want to improve in your life and how you might achieve this
3. get a group of people together and do it in a group. You can just talk through the different areas or you could do it individually and then compare what everyone said about themselves. Sometimes, after we have heard what other people say, we might even want to change the way we rated things the first time. You can then choose whether to come up with some areas you might want to change individually or do this in the group. There are times other people in the group will come up with good ideas that we have not thought about. It is just important to remember that you need to live your life and so you need to be OK about any changes you want to make.

While self-reflection useful, it is possibly only as good as insight and then positive action it brings about.

It is important to remember that EGL is different for different people, different families and different communities. There is not one way of 'doing EGL'. The important thing is you do the self-reflection in a way that works for you and that you make the EGL approach real in your life the ways you want to.

A basic EGL-based Self-reflection tool

						
		NO/ NEVER	NOT REALLY	SOMETIMES	MOSTLY	ALL THE TIME/YES
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I choose what happens in my life					
2	Who I am is respected (values, preferences, culture)					
3	I am encouraged to think about what I want in my life					
4	My family and friends are as involved in my life as I want them to be					
5	I am a valued member of my community					
6	Relationships I have are supported					
7	I can get easy to understand information about my options					
8	I know the amount of money available to me for my support					
9	My support occurs when I need and want it in my life					
10	I am supported to use community services and supports					
11	The supports I receive make it easier for me to live a life that is meaningful to me					
12	I can make changes to my support					

Clues to understanding what I should experience with an EGL way of doing things

Everybody is different. This means everyone has a different:

- life story
- list of things they like and are good at
- idea about what they want in their life
- situation they live in and things they do during the day.

Below are some ideas about what you can think about when you answer the EGL self-reflection check. It should not matter if you live in your own house and have paid work or live in a residential service. All of us should experience the following things.

1. **I choose what happens in my life** (Self-determination +)

What this can look like

This might mean I decide:

- where I live
- who I live with
- what work or training I do
- what things I enjoy and want I want to do more of
- who I spend time with socially
- what groups I belong to

2. **Who I am is respected** (Mana-enhancing +)

What this can look like

This might mean:

- people know what I like
- I can communicate with people around me
- my choices are accepted by others
- I choose who supports me personally
- people take the time to understand my culture (the way of life of the people I identify with)
- people pay attention to what I think and feel
- people treat me well

3. I am encouraged to think about what I want in my life (Self-determination +)

What this can look like

This might mean people:

- know what I have achieved
- know what I like
- know what I don't like
- help me to think about what I want in my life
- assist me to do things that I might like
- make sure I have chances to talk about my future goals

4. My family and friends are as involved in my life as I want them to be (Relationship building +)

What this can look like

This might mean I:

- have contact with the people who are important to me
- choose who might get information about me
- decide who might come to meetings with me

5. I am a valued member of my community (Ordinary life outcomes +)

What this can look like

This might mean I:

- am asked what I think about things
- am listened to
- belong to groups where we have shared interests
- have people around who like me
- have people in my life who are pleased with what I do

6. Relationships I have are supported (Relationship building +)

What this can look like

This might mean I:

- choose who is important to me
- know others are OK with my choices about relationships
- can have friends and family around when I want
- see that my friends and family are treated well

7. I can get easy to understand information about my options (Easy to use +)

What this can look like

- get information in a way that I can understand
- have different choices explained
- can talk with others if I want to understand information better

8. I know the amount of money available to me for my support

What this can look like

This means I know:

- the amount of money I should have
- how much money the government is spending on my support
- what different things are costing

9. My support occurs when I need and want it in my life (Person centred +)

What this can look like

This means I have choice and control about:

- when support happens
- what support happens
- who provides the support

10. I am supported to use community services and supports (Mainstream first +)

What this can look like

I am supported to:

- think about what different things exist in the community to help me
- know and understand my rights
- make contact with the right community services
- make sure I have what I need to access community services (this might be things like transport, a translator or a support person)

11. The support I receive make it easier for me to live a life that is meaningful to me (Person centred +)

What this can look like

My support:

- is based on what I need
- is based on what I want
- works well
- I can achieve things that are important to me

12. I can make changes to my support (Self-determination+)

What this can look like

I know:

- what I can do if I am not happy with the support I get
- how I can change things about my support
- change will happen if I want it