

Summary of the Everyone is Included in the EGL Approach Guide

The purpose of this guide is to make sure that kaitūhono/connectors understand how the EGL approach can work for every disabled person and tangata whaikaha Māori, as well as their family and whānau. It doesn't matter what kind of impairment or disability someone has, or where they live, the EGL approach can work for them. This includes people who live in residential services, people in prison and people who live in the community. EGL is for everyone.

The guide is underpinned by a few core ideas and beliefs. These include:

- A strong belief that everyone can and should enjoy their full human rights.
- A belief that disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori have the answers to how their lives should be.
- An understanding that family and whānau are (usually) an important part of disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori people's lives.
- Disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori should be supported to have those who are important to them involved in planning their Good Life.
- A belief that everyone is entitled to make their own choices, and everybody has the right to make mistakes.

Guided by the EGL principles and approach throughout, the guide also covers the following topics:

Citizenship, human rights and disability rights

This section looks at the laws and documents which say that disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori have the same rights as non-disabled people. These include Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Human Rights Act, the Bill of Rights Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Human rights are about making sure that everyone is treated fairly, and that people are able to access education, work and somewhere safe to live. Everyone should be free to live their life the way they want and have everything they need to be safe and well.

Unfortunately, we know that lots of disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori haven't been allowed to have their full human rights. For instance, some people aren't able to choose where they live or who they live with, can't have a relationship or choose to become a parent and can't choose how to spend their own money. Human rights are in our laws, the work now is to make them a reality for every disabled person and tangata whaikaha Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand. Kaitūhono/connectors can help to make this happen.

Elements of a Good Life

The guide talks about some of the different things that are important for people living a Good Life. These can include having something to look forward to, having somewhere safe to live, having choice and control over our lives, and having a place in the world where we feel we belong and can truly be ourselves.

Scenarios

The guide uses stories (scenarios) about kaitūhono/connectors and disabled people / tāngata whaikaha Māori, to show some examples of different people's lives. These scenarios are used to show some of the barriers disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and their family and whānau can face to living a Good Life. They also show how kaitūhono/connectors can support people overcome those barriers.

Barriers to a good life

The guide explores some of the barriers which disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori their family and whānau may face to living a good life. These include:

- Not having choice and control over your life.
- Being isolated and lonely.
- Communicating through behaviour which is harmful to yourself or others. This is often a sign of someone in distress and not having the supports and resources they need to address what is happening for them.
- Equity and cultural barriers. We know that many of our support systems in Aotearoa New Zealand do not work well for Māori, Pacific people and other people who aren't Pākehā.
- Family burnout.
- Mental health concerns.
- People being abused and neglected.

Strategies for kaitūhono/connectors when working with people

The guide also explores some strategies kaitūhono/connectors can use when they work with disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and whānau, to help them overcome barriers and live a Good Life. These include:

- Getting to know people. Relationships are the foundation of the EGL approach, and it's important kaitūhono/connectors take time to build trusting relationships with disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and their family and whānau (if this is what the disabled person / tangata whaikaha Māori wants).
- Following up to see how things are going.
- Giving things a try and expecting that mistakes will be made (and seeing this as ok).
- Meeting people where they are at on their EGL journey. Some people need to go slower than others to plan for their Good Life.
- Thinking outside the box for family and whānau support and making sure kaitūhono/connectors support people to build and maintain relationships in the process.
- Ensuring the people kaitūhono/connectors support are accessing their right to communication in the way that best suits them.
- Supported decision-making.
- Ensuring kaitūhono/connectors maintain their own wellbeing while they work.
- Supervision for kaitūhono/connectors.

The guide finishes with a checklist of barriers to a Good Life which kaitūhono/connectors can use in their work, and some suggested strategies for how to address these barriers.