PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) Planning

PATH planning starts by looking at the future and then works backwards to identify the first steps towards the life you want. This tool is useful for people who have become stuck in their current situation and are unsure about what to do next. It is great for engaging people with intellectual disabilities and for team building.

How does PATH work?
Unlimited Potential LLP will first set up a PATH planning meeting with you. You can pick the date, time and location. Often people feel more comfortable planning at home. You can invite your family, friends and other people to your meeting. Make sure you ask them well in advance. A PATH planning meeting is a guided conversation and takes between three and five hours. Two Unlimited Potential facilitators will guide you through the PATH process.

The PATH process
Before we get started, we will ask some questions about who you are as a person. What do you enjoy? What are your strengths? What roles do you have? Once we have a clear idea of who you are, we will start to guide you through the PATH conversation. We will talk about seven key topics.
1. Future vision
2. Now
3. Enrol connections:
4. Blocks:
5. Keeping strong:
6. Short-term goals:
7. First steps:

Your plan
At the end of your planning session, you will be presented with your visual PATH. Your plan will also be turned into a written report. This will include the detailed discussion behind your plan, photographs and images of your visual plan.

Follow-up and review
We recommend an annual review meeting to see how your plan is going and to revise your goals.
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The components of PATH Planning...

1) Name and Date
2) Future Vision (AKA “The Dream”)
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) What do you want from your life
      ii) What matters to you the most? What is important?
      iii) How would you like your life to look
      iv) What would make sense for a “good life” to look like?
      v) What are your passions?
      vi) If you had unlimited power, what would your life look like?
      vii) What would a good life look like for you or your loved one?
      viii) What is important to you?
      ix) What would you like to see happening in your life?
   b) Facilitator Notes:
      i) Create a portrait of the future, regardless is if it is embedded in reality.
      ii) Any and all things should be graphically recorded.
      iii) This can take time so “Holding empty space” and “listening to silence” are keys to success.
      iv) We will encourage those present to think about all areas of your life, including: where you live, transport, communication, your health and wellbeing, employment, education, finances, relationships, hobbies, sports, clubs and your spirituality.

3) The Gifts
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) What do you enjoy?
      ii) What are your strengths?
      iii) What roles do you have?
   b) Facilitator Notes

4) The Goals: 2-3 years- LONG TERM
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) What’s the time frame you want to work in? Sometimes can link to an event (Christmas, birthday, holidays) to give meaning.
      ii) What would you want to achieve in this time period if you could achieve absolutely anything? What does life look like, feel like, sound like now?
      iii) Look back on that time frame and what achievements have happened? (these then become goals).
   b) Facilitator Notes
      i) Can be as little as a few months to as long as five years.
      ii) Break down vision into clear goals
      iii) Invite the pathfinder to “time travel” ahead to visualize what has been created by them. Balance between questioning (referring back to vision) and silent reflection.
      iv) Allow a lot of time to think about and articulate goals.
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5) Now:
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) Ground the PATH by focusing on describing what life is like now?
      ii) What are the gaps to your positive possible future?
      iii) What is life like for you now?
      iv) What is important to you?
      v) What would you like to see happening in your life?
      vi) What is (school, community groups like now)
      vii) Tell me about your friendships? Your weekends? After school?
      viii) Tell me about your health?
   b) Facilitator Notes:
      i) Examine the current situation. Could be emotions, feelings, situations, finances, health, anything that makes sense to talk about.
      ii) Sometimes the now can be more sensitive and the facilitator may need to do more active listening.
      iii) NOW provides building blocks and foundations for “2-3 year goals”, “short term goals” and “first steps”.

6) Enrol:
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) Who will you need to assist with this vision?
      ii) Who do we need to enroll if we are really going to get anywhere?
      iii) Where will you get support from?
      iv) Who do you need to enroll to achieve these goals?
      v) Who else could help with this? Anyone else who you think needs their name up there?
   b) Facilitator Notes:
      i) Identifying those people or organizations to support the pathfinder to implement their PATH Goals.
      ii) Your connections might be family members, friends or other people in your life.
      iii) People might be present at the meeting or approached after PATH. Journey between NOW and LONG TERM goal is eased with support from committed people.
      iv) Use graphic chart as a prompt to ensure all long term goals have been thought of in relation to support.

7) Keeping strong:
   a) Reflection Questions
      i) What is it that is needed to give you strength to journey to your goals?
      ii) What knowledge do you or your supporters need?
      iii) What skills to you need to develop
      iv) What supports do you need to keep on track? Socially, physically, emotionally
      v) What do we need to actually do to stay strong enough for the journey?
      vi) How might you (keep healthy/save money/improve communication)?
      vii) What can you do to (increase relationships/stay positive/feel safe)?
   b) Facilitator Notes:
      i) This can include personal growth as well as a way to enhance social growth
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ii) Examine what the supporters need to maintain their support for the pathfinder during the journey? How will they keep healthy and strong?

iii) Possibly think about what things might get in the way (blocks) and explore how to counteract those.

8) Breaking Down the Goals (AKA ½ way)- 6 months to 1 year- SHORT TERM

a) Reflection Questions
   i) What do you want to achieve in the next 3-6 months?
   ii) If you are to have (2-3year goal), what would you need to have done in the next 3-6months?
   iii) If you are on holiday this time next year, how much money will you need to have saved? What arrangements will you need to have made by 3-12 months time frame)?

b) Facilitator Notes
   i) Write down goals and break goals into steps and timeframes
   ii) From the future - remember backwards what has happened in six months.
   iii) Possibly link to a time period (such as Christmas or birthday)

9) First Steps

a) Reflection Questions
   i) What is the very first thing that needs to be done for each goal set?
   ii) First steps following this meeting. What can we do straight away? What will you do in next few days or within the week?
   iii) Who will take responsibility for these actions? How soon will you action?
   iv) What will your first steps be following your PATH meeting?
   v) Who will take responsibility for your first steps? How soon will you achieve them?
   vi) Can the pathfinder complete these goals yourself or do oyu need some support? Who will support you?
   vii) To have your passport by July(short term), what is the first thing you need to do?
   viii) Would you like help with this? What sort of help? Who might help you?

b) Facilitator Notes
   i) Pathfinder to move from thinking to action. Action for each short term goal.
   ii) First, identify the first step and then identify the people or supporters who will assist the pathfinder in this step.
   iii) List immediate beginning steps on this journey - and appoint a coach to keep you on your PATH.
   iv) Graphic these actions with names of whom will support and time frame.

10) Blocks:

a) Reflection Questions
   i) What might be some Potential blocks to the vision becoming a reality? Challenges such as money, time, health, relationships, attitudes.
   ii) What are some possible (pre planned) solutions to the above?
   iii) What are the potential barriers to your vision becoming a reality?
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b) Facilitator Notes
   i) We’ll talk about the challenges that you might face as you work towards your goals. We can then pre-plan solutions in case problems develop.
   ii) Blocks may include money, time, health issues, relationships and attitudes.

11) Closing the PATH
    a) Reflection Questions
       i) How are we feeling now that the PATH is completed?
       ii) Thank everyone.
       iii) Opportunity for clarifications.
    b) Facilitator Notes
       i) Facilitators acknowledge and record each feeling.
       ii) You can invite people to come and sign their name on the PATH as a sign of commitment to support the Pathfinder on their journey
       iii) Take pictures, then remove from wall, roll up and present to pathfinder with celebration and good wishes.
       iv) Thank everyone for contributions.

12) Follow up
    a) Facilitator Notes
       i) Facilitator can then prepare pictures of the PATH as well as a written format or video and send through to individual.
       ii) Additionally, the facilitator may continue to stay involved in a mentor role as the person journeys through their PATH.