

Qualitative evaluation of My Life Today – a co-produced personal tool from the IDEAL programme to help people with dementia monitor valued aspects of their lives

Can people with dementia use a guide – My Life Today – to make sure they are doing the things that support their well-being?

People with dementia want to continue doing things that make them feel good. They have told us that they would like easy-to-use tools to help them check whether they are doing enough of the things that are important for well-being.

Researchers worked with a group of people with lived experience of dementia to develop the My Life Today booklet and a short explanatory video.

The main part of the booklet is a simple chart with spaces to write answers to these questions:

1. What makes me happy or helps me feel good?
2. How often do I want to do this thing (that makes me happy or helps me feel good)?
3. Am I doing this thing often enough (yes or no)?
4. If 'no', what would help me do it more often?
5. What action could I take to make this thing happen?

The chart is repeated several times so that people can keep using it. You can see and print My Life Today [here](#).

Once we had created My Life Today, we wanted to see whether it could be useful for other people with dementia, and whether it could be improved.

We asked 16 people with dementia to use it for 4 weeks. We then talked to them to find out about their experience of using it. If people said they wanted to carry on using it, we talked to them again a month later.

We asked everyone whether someone had helped them to use My Life Today. Four people said yes, and we talked to the people who had helped them as well.

The people with dementia we talked to said they found it useful to think about things in their lives that they were doing or wanted to do:



- They felt more positive about what they were doing.
- They realized they were doing more than they thought, and that these things made them feel good.
- Some noticed difficulties they were having and thought about ways to overcome them.

Helpers liked planning to do enjoyable things together. They said the booklet prompted pleasant conversations and helped solve problems.

Three things influenced how useful people found My Life Today:

- Whether they had any difficulty filling it in.
- Whether they had support if they needed it.
- Whether they expected My Life Today to be helpful.

The study showed that some people with mild-to-moderate dementia find My Life Today helpful. People can use it by themselves, or with support. Carers and people with dementia may benefit from using My Life Today together.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **Dementia** journal in December 2024.