

TOOL 6: FAMILY MEMBERS

6 FAMILY MEMBERS

STIMULUS

You think, you calculate, you talk, you consider, you try, you decide, you review,

...

Some choices remain the same, others change. Your choices can have consequences for you and for everyone around you, especially for your family members. Just like you, they have wishes, needs, interests and 'no-go's'.

How do they think about it?



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Illustrations by Jenny Stieglitz



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ASSIGNMENT

Being a personal assistant to a family member influences the family dynamics.

What do the other members of the family think about it? What would they like to maintain? What would they like to change? What do they think and feel?

A family conversation

Maybe, your family has already the habit of talking about the goings-on at home. Naturally and spontaneously, the conversation takes place. Sometimes at the table, sometimes on the terrace or in the lounge.

Other families plan a family discussion and come together especially for the conversation.

On the first day of spring, summer, autumn and winter, we have a 'family council'. we talk about everything, listen to each other and rethink our "family rules".

It can be useful to talk with family members about the regulation of care and support. Especially when changes are imminent, it can be helpful to discuss the decision and its consequences.

As soon as we heard that we finally received the budget, we talk about the possibilities with our children and children-in-law. Of course, Henk was there too. Our eldest daughter and her husband immediately said that they would like to keep the habit of "going out with Henk on the first Sunday of the month" but they did not want to be paid for it. His twin brother offered to explore the possibility of additional day-care together with Henk. Henk was quite happy with that offer. The youngest, who still lives at home, said she would like to be closely involved in the choice of a personal assistant. She wants to be able to be herself at home and is very protective of her privacy.

On the next page, you will find some "conversation cards". You can use the cards in different ways:

- Someone picks a card and everyone completes the sentence.
- The cards are on the table and everyone chooses a card to talk about. You can decide in advance how many rounds there will be.
- In turn, someone takes a card, completes it and passes it on to someone else. That person can either complete the card or choose another card.

Make up your own rules, create your own (additional) cards, collect the answers on post-its or on a large sheet, ask everyone in advance to make a vlog about some of the questions and watch it together,

Does the conversation lead to new ideas or points of attention? If so, keep them in mind or write them down.

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I WOULD LIKE TO
MAKE GOOD
ARRANGEMENTS ...



I THINK ...



I AM WORRIED
ABOUT ...



I AM AFRAID THAT ...



I WOULD BE HAPPY
IF ...



I WOULD LIKE ...



I WOULD LIKE TO
TALK ABOUT ...



I WONDER ...



I CERTAINLY DON'T
WANT ...



I AM CURIOUS
ABOUT ...



I AM FEELING ...

.....
.....
.....

WHAT I WOULD LIKE
TO SAY/ASK



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Besides a family discussion, there are other ways to take the opinion of your family members into account.

Separate conversations

I am a part-time personal assistant to my youngest brother. My oldest brother, Wim, is the budget holder. We both think it is important to involve our other brother and sister in decisions about how the budget is spent. Talking in group just doesn't work for us. We are so different and there are so many sensitivities. I'm not in the mood for heated discussions. I ask them separately how they think about it, which solutions they think are good, ... As such, Wim and I can make a proposal that I like and that we know in advance will be accepted.

With the help of a confidant

Since last summer, I have been a personal assistant to Joachim, our son with autism. My sister-in-law called me last month. Julie, my eldest daughter, told her that things were not going well at home. She said that all my attention was focused on Joachim even more than before and that I had less time for her than when I was working. Back then, there was always an external personal assistant on Saturdays, so I often went swimming with my girls. She misses those moments. But she also knows that it is not easy financially - I earn half of what I used to - and that there is no budget for someone to come every Saturdays. Julie did not dare to tell me. We agreed that my sister-in-law would come and see what was going on with each of us. I am glad we did so. My sister-in-law led the conversation and did an excellent job. I was surprised how much it effected Julie and only now, I do realize how much the care for Joachim absorbs me. But we also found out that our other daughter, Femke, likes the fact that I have more time for her: I'm always there when she comes home after school and then she can tell me about her day at school. A lot to think about. Not easy. Very confronting. I am seeing a psychologist and I am going to discuss it with her as well.

Looking from another person's point of view

I thought about everyone's personality, what they like and what they don't like. I think I am good at looking from another person's point of view. It is still my decision whether to remain a personal assistant, but I think it's important to look at it from their point of view as well. There are often discussions between me and my partner. It might help to look at those signals as worries, fears, unfulfilled expectations and wishes. I also know she is grateful for some things, like the daily structure and its calming effect on her and the children.



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Notes on the opinions of your family members

