

SAFE HAVEN CONNECT CIC · REGISTERED CIC

PLAN B, C & D

Handling change, disruption and the unexpected - with backup plans that work for me

NEW DISABILITY WORKBOOK SERIES - BOOK 19

This workbook belongs to:

Unexpected change can create more than inconvenience. It may affect sensory safety, communication, energy, mobility, executive function, medication routines, access arrangements or the ability to process what happens next.

Welcome

A backup plan is not expecting the worst. It is reducing the amount of thinking required when something changes. You can build alternatives before your capacity is already stretched.

A type of unexpected change I find especially difficult:

1. What Kinds of Change Affect Me?

Tick the disruptions that can have a bigger impact on you.

- ☐ Plans changing suddenly
- ☐ Someone being late
- ☐ Transport disruption
- ☐ Cancelled appointments
- ☐ Different staff / support person
- ☐ A familiar item being unavailable
- ☐ Unexpected visitors
- ☐ Room / venue changes
- ☐ Technology not working
- ☐ Weather changes
- ☐ Food plans changing
- ☐ Routine interrupted
- ☐ Being asked to decide quickly
- ☐ An access arrangement not being available

My notes / what applies to me:

2. What Happens in My System When Plans Change?

Notice body, communication, thinking and sensory responses.

Area	What may happen when plans change
Body	
Thinking	
Communication	
Sensory tolerance	
Movement	
Emotions	
Decision-making	

3. Early Signs I Am Struggling With Change

Recognising the first signs can make it easier to reduce demands.

Early sign	What helps at this stage

4. What Helps Me Process New Information?

A change may become easier once the new plan is clear.

- ☐ Plain language
- ☐ Written information
- ☐ A visual plan
- ☐ One step at a time
- ☐ Knowing what stays the same
- ☐ Extra processing time
- ☐ A clear reason for the change
- ☐ Fewer people talking
- ☐ A quiet place
- ☐ Being shown the new location / option

My notes / what applies to me:

5. What Stays the Same?

When one thing changes, identifying what has not changed can create an anchor.

What changed	What is still the same

6. Plan A, B, C & D

Build layers rather than relying on one perfect plan.

Plan	What happens	What I need
A - preferred		
B - first backup		
C - lower-capacity backup		
D - stop / go home / reschedule		

7. Transport Backup Plans

Travel disruption can affect access, timing and energy.

My usual plan:

If transport is cancelled / delayed:

Alternative route / transport:

What access information I need:

When I would decide to go home / reschedule:

8. Appointment Changes

Cancellations, delays or different clinicians can be hard to process.

If my appointment is delayed:

If it is cancelled:

If the clinician changes:

How I want changes communicated:

What I need help reorganising afterwards:

9. Support Person Changes

A different supporter may not know your routines or communication.

Important things a replacement supporter needs to know:

How I prefer them to communicate:

What routines should stay the same:

What I can explain myself:

What information can be shared with my permission:

10. Venue or Accessibility Changes

A replacement venue is not equivalent if access is different.

Access features I need:

What I need checked before accepting a new venue:

My alternative if access is not suitable:

Who can help confirm accessibility:

My exit / reschedule option:

11. Food Plan Changes

Food changes can involve sensory safety, routine, allergies, access or energy.

Foods / options that are reliable for me:

If the planned food is unavailable:

Backup I can carry / store:

Sensory / allergy / dietary needs to protect:

What others should not pressure me to do:

12. Technology Failure

Prepare low-tech alternatives for important tasks.

Important task that relies on technology:

Low-tech backup:

Information I need saved elsewhere:

Who I can contact if it fails:

What can safely wait until later:

13. When I Forget Something Important

A forgotten item does not have to become an all-or-nothing disaster.

Thing I might forget:

Can I continue without it?

Can I buy / borrow / replace it?

Can someone bring it?

Would going back cost more energy than changing the plan?

My backup for next time:

14. When I Am Running Late

Create a script and a simplified next step.

Simple message: "I am running late. I expect to arrive around _____. Please let me know if that causes a problem."

What can I skip or simplify?

Who needs to know?

At what point would I reschedule instead?

What helps me avoid rushing unsafely?

15. When Someone Else Is Late

Uncertain waiting can be harder than a known delay.

How long I am comfortable waiting without an update:

What information helps me:

What I can do while waiting:

When I will contact the person:

When I will change / cancel my plan:

16. Unexpected Social Contact

Visitors, calls and spontaneous plans can create immediate demand.

- ☐ I can let the call go to voicemail
- ☐ I can reply later
- ☐ I can say I am not available
- ☐ I can ask for advance notice
- ☐ I can offer another time
- ☐ I can keep a visit short
- ☐ I can ask someone not to come in
- ☐ I can choose text instead of speaking

My preferred response to unexpected social contact:

17. When My Body Changes the Plan

Pain, fatigue, overload or other symptoms may require a different version of the day.

If my capacity is...	The plan becomes...
As expected	
Lower than expected	
Very low	
Symptoms suddenly worse / concerning	Seek appropriate help / follow my healthcare plan

18. The Low-Capacity Backup Plan

Build a version that requires less movement, communication and decision-making.

Normal plan	Low-capacity backup
Food	
Communication	
Travel	
Household tasks	
Appointments	
Social plans	
Work / learning	

19. My Exit Plans

Knowing how to leave can make trying something feel safer.

Situation	How I can leave / stop	Who / what helps
Social event		
Appointment		
Community venue		
Work / learning		
Travel		
Overwhelming conversation		

20. My Emergency Information

Keep practical information available without putting private information where it is unsafe.

Privacy note: Only record information here that you are comfortable storing in this workbook. Do not write passwords, PINs or other security credentials.

People I may contact:

Important access / communication information:

Medication / health information I choose to have available:

Transport / support information:

Where fuller emergency information is safely stored:

21. What Other People Can Do When Plans Change

Helpful support can reduce uncertainty rather than demanding instant flexibility.

- ☐ Tell me clearly what changed
- ☐ Tell me what stays the same
- ☐ Give me time to process
- ☐ Write the new plan down
- ☐ Offer a small number of alternatives
- ☐ Do not demand an immediate answer
- ☐ Reduce extra talking
- ☐ Check access needs again
- ☐ Help with practical rearranging
- ☐ Respect if I need to stop

The most helpful thing someone can do for me:

22. Recovering After Disruption

Even when the problem is solved, your system may still need time to settle.

After an unexpected change I may need:

Signs I am still processing it:

What helps me return to baseline:

What demands should wait if possible:

How much explanation I want afterwards:

23. Building Flexibility Without Forcing It

Flexibility can be practised with small, chosen variations rather than surprise exposure.

Small variation I choose	What stays predictable	What I learn

24. My Plan B Experiment

Choose one predictable disruption and prepare an alternative in advance.

Disruption I want a backup for:

My Plan A:

My Plan B:

My lower-capacity Plan C:

My stop / reschedule Plan D:

What information or items will I prepare?

Did having a backup reduce the thinking required?

25. My Change & Disruption Passport

A quick guide you can choose to share with people supporting you.

Changes I find especially difficult	
My early signs of overload / distress	
How to tell me about a change	
How much processing time helps	
What should stay predictable if possible	
My best backup-plan format	
What helps when capacity drops	
When I need to stop / leave / reschedule	

26. My Universal Plan B Card

A reusable backup plan for when the original plan stops working.

1. What changed?

2. What is still the same?

3. What do I need to know next?

4. What is my easiest safe alternative?

5. Do I need to continue, pause, leave or reschedule?

When the Plan Changes

I do not have to become instantly flexible just because something changed.

I am allowed to ask for:

I am allowed to take time before:

I am allowed to choose a backup that is easier because:

A change does not mean I have failed when:

Something I want future me to remember:

Notes

This workbook is a general disability-focused planning, accessibility and self-advocacy resource. It is not an emergency-response plan or a substitute for personalised medical, safeguarding, travel or professional advice. For urgent or dangerous situations, use the appropriate emergency or professional support for your circumstances.

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