



Life Trajectory Tip Sheet | Caregiver Well-Being

This tips sheet provides an overview of how and why to use the Life Trajectory - Caregiver Well-Being

Overview of the Trajectory

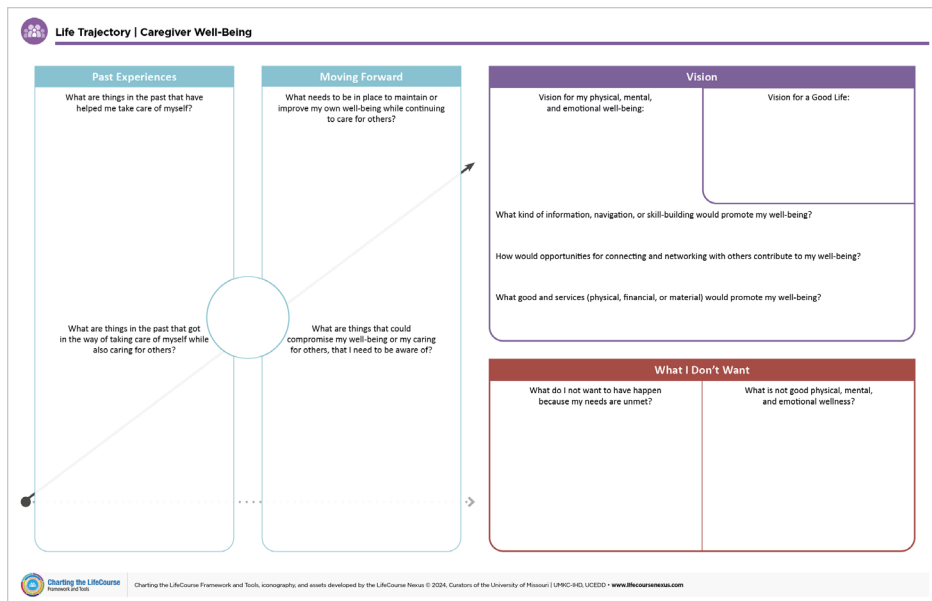
Life is a journey for everyone. Each decision we make is paving a path that leads toward – or away from – our vision for the future. This path, or Trajectory, will have ups and downs where there is a need to stop and consider what to do next. This is especially true – but may feel much more difficult – for those who are in the role of supporting or caring for someone else. Taking time to understand what you want and need for your own well-being and good life can become secondary to planning and problem-solving you are doing with or on behalf of your loved one. The trajectory tool offers an opportunity to define a vision for yourself and to brainstorm how you might move toward that vision, considering what is positive and possible in light of the role you play in the life.

A

The Trajectory is designed to be used over and over - whether you choose to keep it to yourself or share it with others. It should be added to and updated as “life happens,” to continue to help with exploration, planning, problem-solving and decision-making.

Who should use this tool and why?

The trajectory is a visual way to help you define – or redefine – your vision for your good life and well-being, especially as you are caring for others. It can be used by anyone to consider what you want and need – both now and in the future - both for your overall good life, and in your role of supporting your loved ones (A).



Above: Example image of the Life Trajectory, Caregiver Well-Being Tool



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How is the Tool Organized?

The Trajectory is a visual tool organized in two major sections: Vision and Experiences.

- The Vision section, on the right-hand side, is further broken down into what is wanted and what is NOT wanted in your life in general. The larger parts of the Vision sections are to think specifically what personal well-being means/looks like for you – and to define what good supports would entail to support this vision.
- The Experiences section is broken into what has happened in the past and what will need to happen in the future in relation to that vision.

Though there is no “right” or “wrong” order to follow when completing the tool, it is generally suggested to begin with the vision of what is and is not wanted. Establishing the vision can help to contextualize the experiences you have had that have helped or have gotten in the way of achieving your vision of personal well-being and a good life, as well as to think about what will be needed (or will need to be overcome) to ensure you continue to move toward that vision.

Life Trajectory | Caregiver Well-Being

Past Experiences

What are things in the past that have helped me take care of myself?

Think about times that you felt you were doing well - physically, mentally, and emotionally.

- What contributed to that well-being?
- What were you - or others - doing that helped to make you feel satisfied or comfortable?

This may include routines, habits, experiences, supports from others, and access to resources. Think about what has “worked” for you in the past to maintain your well-being.

What are things in the past that got in the way of taking care of myself while also caring for others?

Think of any of the times you have cared for or supported someone else - formally or informally. This could include parents, children, siblings, pets, babysitting, etc.

In those times, were there things that “didn’t work” - that made it difficult for you to do the things you wanted or needed to do to maintain your well-being and continue to move towards your good life? List some ideas of barriers or challenges you want to be mindful of and/or avoid repeating.

Moving Forward

What needs to be in place to maintain or improve my own well-being while continuing to care for others?

What would be helpful to you in achieving your vision of well-being and a good life? Think about what has worked in the past - is there something you need to continue or begin again?

Look back at the kinds of information and skills, opportunities for connecting and networking, and the goods and services that are part of your vision.

What would you prioritize from those supports as “next steps” to help you in maintaining or enhancing your well-being, even/especially as you care for others?

What are things that could compromise my well-being or my caring for others, that I need to be aware of?

As you consider what your personal well-being and good life looks like, what may slow you down or stop you from moving toward that vision?

What could happen that may take you to where you don’t want to go? What do you need to keep in mind and/or plan for to ensure you and your loved one are able to live your good life?

What is the focus of your brainstorming?

Vision

Vision for my physical, mental, and emotional well-being:

After describing your good life - think about what well-being means or looks like for you? What is important to and for you related to your physical, mental, and emotional health? What would you like to see or how would you know that you are satisfied or comfortable with your physical, mental, and/or emotional state?

What kind of information, navigation, or skill-building would promote my well-being? Think about what you need to know or want to be able to do to ensure you are physically, mentally, and emotionally well and able to live your good life?

How would opportunities for connecting and networking with others contribute to my well-being? Are there formal or informal relationships that are supportive to you and that you want to pursue? What social and/or physiological supports would be beneficial?

What good and services (physical, financial, or material) would promote my well-being? Are there specific services YOU need to help you to be physically, mentally, and emotionally well?

Vision for a Good Life:

It is suggested to begin here to describe what you want for your life? What would you describe as a “good life” for you personally - what would this look like from day-to-day, or week-to-week. There is no right or wrong answer, and this can be as specific or broad as you prefer. Capture what YOU want for YOUR good life.

What I Don't Want

What do I not want to have happen because my needs are unmet?

What are some of the fears or concerns you have about what may happen if you are not doing well physically, mentally or emotionally? What do you want to avoid because you are not able to care for yourself or others?

What is not good physical, mental, and emotional wellness?

What do you NOT want for your personal well-being? What is important to you to avoid regarding your physical, mental, and emotional wellness?

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Above: Example image of the Life Trajectory, Caregiver Well-Being Tool with support prompts.



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