

## d) Ottawa Personal Decision Guide\*

### OTTAWA PERSONAL DECISION GUIDE

*For Health or Social Decisions*

The Ottawa Personal Decision Guide is for people who are facing tough decisions. It will help you identify your personal needs, plan the next steps, track your progress, and communicate your views to others involved in the decision. The skills you learn here will also help you make other decisions in the future.

**You will be guided through 5 steps:**

1. Clarify the decision.
2. Identify your role in decision making.
3. Assess your decision making needs.
4. Weigh the options.
5. Plan the next steps.

The guide can be used more than once to track your progress in decision making. The first time you use the guide, please place your answers in the first column. The next time, please use the second column.

### 1. Clarify the decision.

What is the decision you face?

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What is your reason for making this decision?

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When does this decision have to be made? Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### How far along are you with your decision?

(Check ✓ the box that applies to you)

	First Time		Changes	
	Date _____ mm/dd/yy		Date _____ mm/dd/yy	
a. I have not yet thought about options	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. I am considering the options	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. I am close to choosing an option	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. I have already made a choice	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Are you leaning toward a specific option?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>If yes, which one? Specify:</b>				

## 2. Identify your role in decision-making.

(Check  the box that applies to you)

	First Time Date _____ mm/dd/yy	Changes Date _____ mm/dd/yy
a. I prefer to decide on my own or after considering the options of others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I prefer to share the decision with:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I prefer that someone else decides for me, namely:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 3. Assess your decision-making needs.

People make better decisions if they feel confident in four areas. 1. Knowing the options; 2. Feeling clear about what is important to them; 3. Having enough help from others in deciding; and 4. Feeling sure that they are making the best choice.

The questions below can help you see how confident you are in the four areas. Please circle your answers to the questions and date each column.

AREAS		First Time Date _____	Changes Date _____
<b>What I know</b>	Do you know which options you have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Do you know the good and bad points of each option?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>What's important to me</b>	Are you clear about which good and bad points are most important to you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>How others help</b>	Do you have enough support from others to make a choice?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are you choosing without pressure from others?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>How sure I feel</b>	Do you feel sure about the best choice for you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If you answer 'yes' to all of the questions in an area, this shows you feel confident. People who have answered 'no' to one or several questions are more likely to delay their decision, to have trouble sticking with their choice, or to feel regret about their choice or less satisfied with their decision. Therefore, it is important to work through steps 4 and 5 to gain more confidence in each area.

## 4. Weigh the options.

Use the balance scale below to help you compare the options and, if you wish, show others involved in the decision.

### What I know

- A. Please list and review the options you are considering on the balance scale below.
- B. List the pros and cons of each option.
- C. Underline the pros and cons you think are most likely to happen.

### What is important to me

- D. Show how important each pro and con is to you by placing one star (\*) to five stars (\*\*\*\*\*) beside each item. More stars show more importance

### How sure I feel

- E. Circle the option with the pros that are most important to you and most likely to happen. Avoid the option with the cons that are most important to avoid and most likely to happen.

	<b>PROS</b> REASON TO CHOOSE OPTION	<b>PERSONAL</b> IMPORTANCE ADD * TO *****	<b>CONS</b> REASONS TO AVOID OPTION	<b>PERSONAL</b> IMPORTANCE ADD * TO *****
<b>Option #1 is:</b>				
<b>Option #2 is:</b>				
<b>Option #3 is:</b>				

### How others help me

- F. Complete the table below to keep track of others involved in this decision.

<b>LIST THE PERSONS WHOSE HELP OR OPTIONS MATTER MOST TO YOU</b>	<b>CIRCLE THEIR OPINION ON THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOU</b>			<b>THINGS THEY CAN DO TO HELP YOU IN THIS DECISION</b>	
<b>1.</b>	Neutral	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3	
<b>2.</b>	Neutral	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3	
<b>3.</b>	Neutral	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3	

## 5. Plan the next steps

√ Things making the decision difficult	√ Things you are willing to try
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not enough information about options, pros and cons</b>	Having enough information makes it easier to participate in decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> List your questions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> List the sources you will use to find this information (e.g., health-care professionals, librarians at a health centre, internet, etc.).</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not enough information about the likelihood of the pros and cons</b>	People make decisions based on their perception of what might happen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get advice from your health-care professional or counselor about how likely the pros and cons are to happen in your situation.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unsure about which pros and cons are most important to me</b>	Finding out what was most important to others who made this decision may help clarify what is important for you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Talk to your health-care professional or counselor about other people who made this decision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review stories about others who made this decision (e.g., on the internet). Whose views match yours?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Talk with people you know who have gone through this decision. Please specify who: _____</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lack of support or resources</b>	Support from other people or groups can help your decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> List the resources or practical help you still need.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get advice from a professional you feel comfortable with.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose a trusted person who will help you work through the decision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bring someone with you to medical or other appointments to take notes</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pressure from others to make a specific choice</b>	Focus on the opinions of people who matter in this decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Share your decision guide with others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask others to complete a guide themselves. Identify areas of agreement and differences. (People usually can agree on the facts, but may differ on what they value most. It is the person who will be most directly affected by the choice whose matter most).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find a neutral person to help you and others to find solutions to the disagreement.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other factors making the decision difficult</b>	List everything else you need to help you.

If you would like to share this information with your health-care practitioner or other health-care professional, please complete this section with some information about yourself.

Current Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex:  Male  Female

Highest completed education:  grade school  
 elementary school  
 some high school  
 high school diploma  
 university degree

Language most often spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnic origin: \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., Caucasian, Asian, African, Hispanic)

Medical conditions that might affect your decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate your health:  excellent  
 good  
 fair  
 poor

Family composition: (Who lives at home with you?) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss your options and views with your health-care professional or counselor.  
 Before making a final decision, discuss your situation with your health-care professional or counselor. Every individual's needs and health concerns are different.  
 For additional copies of this decision aid/and an interactive version, visit [www.ohri.ca/decisionaid](http://www.ohri.ca/decisionaid)