



# Patient Module: Creating a Life Plan

## What is a life plan?

A life plan is a roadmap to help you get the things that mean the most to you. A life plan is built around personal goals and dreams. The goals can be things such as going back to school or work, volunteering, traveling to a place you always wanted to visit, or spending time with family. Here are other examples of personal goals.

- Health and well-being
  - ◇ Make healthier meals
  - ◇ Join a yoga or dance class
- Community
  - ◇ Volunteer at a local non-profit organization
  - ◇ Attend church and join activities



## Should I have a life plan?

Yes! All people should have a life plan. That includes individuals with kidney disease.

## Is my life plan the same as my dialysis care plan?

Your dialysis care plan is about your kidney care and health. The goals focus on things like your dialysis routine and your treatment choice. For example, the plan could have goals about moving from in-center to home dialysis or getting a transplant. The plan could also include your medicines, kidney diet, treatments for other health conditions, daily exercise, and social connections.

Your life plan is about personal goals, like travel. Many times, your dialysis care plan can help you achieve your life plan. For example, you may want to travel around the country and visit all the national parks. But you don't want to stop in a different city three times a week for dialysis. You can talk with your healthcare team about the possibility of peritoneal dialysis to give yourself flexibility.

## Will my life plan change?

A life plan is always changing because life circumstances are ever changing. Visit your life plan regularly. Check off the goals you have achieved. Look at the goals that you are still working on. Ask yourself what you need to do to reach them. Maybe the goals have changed, or maybe you have a new goal. If so, change your life plan to match. Be sure to back up your goals with steps to achieve them. Talk with your dialysis care team and family about how they can work with you to reach your goals. Let's get to work and make a life plan!

## Why should I write down my goals?

By writing down your goals, you create a contract with yourself. At first, this might seem silly, but once you get started, you will see how putting your goals in writing helps you achieve them. Here are reasons to put your goals in writing:

- Helps you figure out what you want:
  - ◇ You might start to write your goal one way and find yourself erasing what you wrote and starting over. That's okay! The writing helps you see what you really want to achieve.
- Motivates you to act:
  - ◇ Much like a to-do list, writing goals becomes an action plan.
- Lets you see your progress and celebrate your accomplishments.



# Creating a Life Plan Worksheet

Steps to Creating a Life Plan	Questions to Ask Myself
<b>Step 1</b> <b>Identify Your Personal Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are my personal goals? What have I always wanted to do and keep putting off?</li> <li>• What do I want to achieve in my life? Why do I want to do this?</li> <li>• What is the benefit of reaching my goals?</li> <li>• What is stopping me from achieving my goals?</li> <li>• Are my goals realistic?</li> </ul>
Make notes here:	
<b>Step 2</b> <b>Figure Out How to Reach Your Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do I know what it will take to reach my goals? What steps do I need to take?</li> <li>• Who can help me?</li> <li>• What things might slow me down?</li> <li>• How do I want my goals to look when they are complete?</li> </ul>
Make notes here:	
<b>Step 3</b> <b>Define the Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When am I going to start working on my goals?</li> <li>• When do I want to reach these goals?</li> </ul>
Make notes here:	
<b>Step 4</b> <b>Stay on Target</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How am I going to check my progress?</li> <li>• Who can help me stay on target as I work toward my goals?</li> <li>• How will I know if I need to make changes in my plan or goals?</li> <li>• How will I know I've met my goals?</li> </ul>
Make notes here:	
<b>Step 5</b> <b>Celebrate Your Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who has helped me reach my goals? Who can I invite to celebrate my success?</li> </ul>
Make notes here:	
<b>Step 6</b> <b>Always Keep Making New Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are new goals to add to my life plan?</li> <li>• How can I help others create a life plan, so they too can achieve their goals?</li> </ul>

For more information about creating and achieving goals, visit the ESRD NCC website patient resource:

[Goal Setting: Getting Back to Me](#)