Ottawa Personal Decision Guide

Date: _____

Decision: What decision do you face? _____
When do you need to make a choice? _____
How far along are you with making a choice?
☐ not thought about options ☐ thinking about options ☐ close to making a choice ☐ already made a choice
Are you leaning toward one option? ☐ No ☐ Yes, which one? _____

Certainty: Do you feel sure about the best choice for you? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Knowledge: Do you know which options are available to you? ☐ No ☐ Yes
Do you know both the benefits and risks of each option? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Values: Are you clear about which benefits and risks matter most to you? ☐ No ☐ Yes

A. In the balance scale below, list the options and main benefits and risks that you already know.
B. Underline the benefits and risks that you think are most likely to happen.
C. Use stars [★] to show how much each benefit / risk matters to you: 5 stars means it matters 'a lot'; No star means 'not at all.'

	Benefits (reasons to choose this option)	How much it matters (★)	**Risks** (reasons to avoid this option)	How much it matters (★)
Option 1				
Option 2				
Option 3				

Support: What role do you prefer in making your choice?
☐ I prefer to share the decision with _____
☐ I prefer to decide myself after hearing the views of _____
☐ I prefer that someone else decides. Who? _____

Do you have enough support and advice from others to make a choice? ☐ No ☐ Yes
Are you choosing without pressure from others? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Who else is involved? (name) Which option does this person prefer? Is this person pressuring you? How can this person support you?			
	☐ No ☐ Yes	☐ No ☐ Yes	☐ No ☐ Yes

Next Steps: This section suggests some next steps based on your needs. Check any items you would like to try.

Knowledge (If you feel you do not have enough facts):
- ☐ List your questions.
- ☐ Note where to find answers. (e.g. library, health professionals, counsellors)
- ☐ Find out about the chances of benefits and risks.

Values (If you are not sure what matters most to you):
- ☐ Review stars in the balance scale to see what matters to you.
- ☐ Find people who know what it's like to experience the benefits and risks.
- ☐ Talk to others who have made the decision.
- ☐ Read stories of what mattered most to others.
- ☐ Discuss with others what matters most to you.

Support
(If you feel you do not have enough support):
- ☐ Discuss your options with a trusted person. (e.g. health professional, counsellor, family, friends)
- ☐ Find out what help is on hand to support your choice. (e.g. funds, transport, child care)

(If you feel pressure from others):
- ☐ Focus on opinions of others who matter most.
- ☐ Share your guide with others.
- ☐ Ask others to complete this guide. Find areas of agreement. When facts disagree, agree to get more information. When you disagree on what matters most, respect the other's opinion. Take turns to listen and then mirror back what the other has said that matters most to them.
- ☐ Find a neutral person to help you and others involved.

Other plans
☐ Describe

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