

# Psychological: support mapping for care teams

Receiving a diagnosis of life-limiting illness is a psychologically challenging experience for the person diagnosed and for those closely involved in their life and care. For a person on the autism spectrum this may be further complicated by differences in how they think and process information, and particularly for those who have difficulty labelling and articulating their thoughts and feelings. The person diagnosed with a life-limiting illness will have to cope with loss of emotional wellbeing as they try to come to terms with the implications of their illness and establish their wishes and aspirations for the end of their life.



[www.breakingbadnews.org](http://www.breakingbadnews.org) could be helpful

How can we support the staff team to feel confident having 'difficult conversations'

## Emotions and feelings



What might be the psychological impact on the person following a significant loss of independence and self ability?

Could using **Good About Today/ Bad About Today diaries** help someone reflect on how they are feeling and why?

How does the person you know/support express feelings of fear, depression, anger, acceptance?  
Are they able to label these feelings?  
Do they express them in a typical way?

**How does the person you support express their emotions, are they able to label feelings?**

Terms and phrases used	Understanding of term	Strategies to support understanding/ alternative means of communication

**What was the experience of loss, change or ill health**

**How did they cope?**

**What strategies and supports can we put in place to help with future change and loss?**

**How does the person learn and take in new information?**

## Supporting understanding



**CHANGE Cancer Series: palliative care, end of life care and bereavement** could be helpful

Will the person have difficulty understanding any aspect of what is being communicated to them?

**What is important in the person's life? How can this be used to prioritise information and motivate engagement?**

**How has the person coped with previous experiences of change/loss/ill health?**

**Psychological**  
How can we better understand the thinking style of the person we are supporting?  
How will the news of their diagnosis be received and understood?

**How can we promote peace and wellbeing to counter stress and agitation?**