



Reading Guide

This booklet contains a large number of hyperlinks that point to supportive materials. In the pdf, these links can be clicked to access the material directly (in Dutch mostly). In the paper version these links appear as <u>underlined text</u> and the content can be found on the MyFutures.nl website on the 'downloads' page.

Reference

Sleeswijk Visser, F. (ed.) 2018. *MyFutures: The guide*. Delft University of Technology. The Netherlands

The MyFutures Research project (2016-2018) focuses on how people can imagine, plan, and act toward their personal possible futures. MyFutures was part of the Research through Design programme, as project number 14608. The programme was partially financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO and the Netherlands Taskforce for Applied Research SIA.



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About MyFutures

Why MyFutures?

MyFutures is a research project (2016-2018) with the central question: how can we help people in thinking, handling and anticipating for their future old age? The government is asking citizens and organisations to arrange that themselves. People find that difficult. Add to that that people now have a lot more old age than earlier generations used to have.

We found answers to our central question through research, education, case studies, workshops with our partners, and interviews with experts and regular people. Especially that last group has taught us much.

The project was funded by NWO/STW with cofunding from the partners. Designers from the Delft University of Technology and Design Academy Eindhoven worked together with design bureaus (Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken, KoDieZijn, Muzus, and STBY, care organisations (Vivent and Zuidzorg), insurers (Achmea and CZ), municipalities (Rotterdam and Eindhoven) and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities.

Why would *designers* be tackling this issue?

Citizens have to arrange their own old age as part of our participation society. It's a complex societal challenge. Especially knowing that few people do really feel 'old' themselves. The MyFutures team is made up of designers specialised in research and design for societal challenges. Our starting point in design is the needs of people in their everyday lives, and developing practical, new solutions in collaboration with different stakeholders.

de gesprekken die wij hebben gevoerd, blijkt dat ze hierover wel gedachten hebben, maar ze praten er niet dyer.'

Waarom zou je daar Delftse techneuten naar laten kijken? Volgens Sleeswijk Visser, universitair docent industrieel ontwerp, voegen zij iets toe. 'Het ontwerpvak richt zich de laatste tien jaar sterk op problemen in het dagelijks leven, ook sociale kwesties', legt ze uit. 'Het voordeel van ontwerpers is hun optimisme. Ze zien altijd mogelijkheden en zijn gewend te werken met wat er nog niet is. Als je zelf in een bepaald systeem zit, bijvoorbeeld als zorgverlener, is het moeilijker buiten de bestaande structuren te denken.'

i- De onderzoekers kwamen erachter dat het belangrijk is een natuurlijk

Article *Bespreek je oude dag met je kinderel* Nederlands Dagblad, 5 July 2018.

See the MyFutures project (web)page for the process

(http://studiolab.ide.tudelft.nl/myfutures/)

Why is this necessary?

The average Dutch person lives longer than ever before. As a society, we want people to age in a pleasant way. In a somewhat vague reflex, as individuals we often assume that everything will be alright, or that the government will take care of it. That same government, however, now wants us to take more responsibility. It wants elderly themselves to take control of their lives, perhaps helped along by family, friends, neighbours, and other members of the community and where necessary aided by communal facilities, insurers, and care providers. Together we need to find new ways of collaboration to support this.

Personal needs

We can make better choices if we make an inventory of our personal wants and needs for our later life. This prevents us from having to make hasty choices during stressful periods. For instance, when a partner passes away, or when there is an urgent need for medical care, a rushed move due to illness or other urgent situations. Because oftentimes, these decisions are made on practical considerations about the short term only, while they can become a barrier for happiness in the long term.

Nobody feels old

One of the problems in thinking about our old age is that most people don't feel old, even if, objectively speaking, they are somewhat older. "Old? Other people are old, not me". The consequence is that few people think about their later selves. One of our interviewees phrased it quite nicely: 'I don't mind taking some time to think about some preconditions for my later life, but I definitely don't want a clearly defined path.' That is exactly what MyFutures examined: How can you find out now which future preconditions are important for you, as an individual.

Thinking about our own futures

It's not easy to think about our possible futures and our wants and needs. Even if it is expected of us, or it would be wise to do so. On your own and without prompt, you're unlikely to just start thinking about it.

At MyFutures, we think that all of us, citizens, businesses, institutes, government, need to pay more attention to that. We need to take it on together and together help people think about the future. That creates awareness and then everyone of us can define for themselves what they feel is important for their future, when they are old.

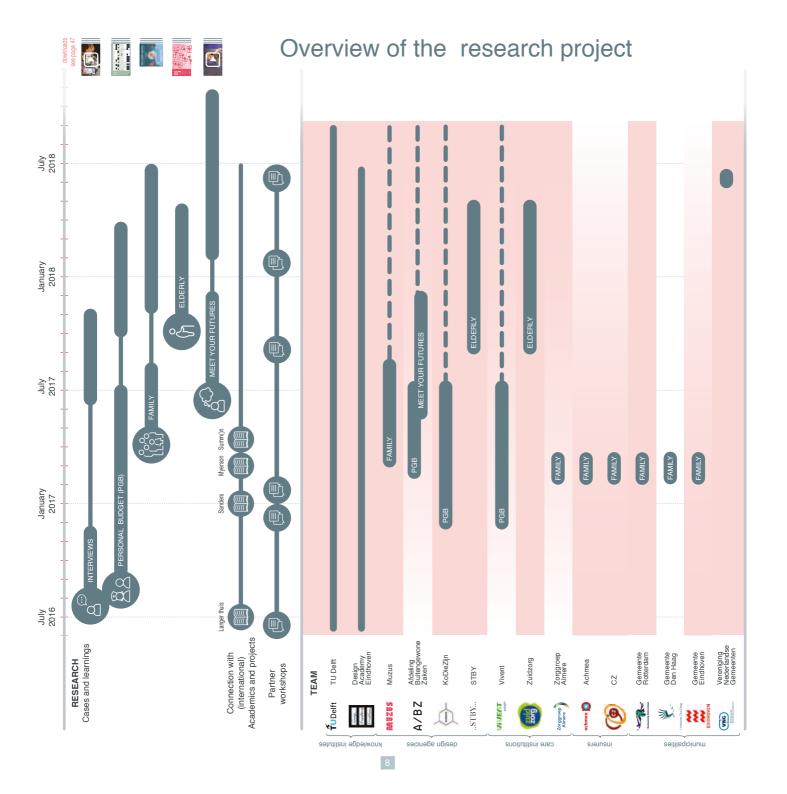
We are convinced that if we expect people to prepare for their future, we should offer them a well-designed, meaningful conversation. That is what this guide is meant to support.

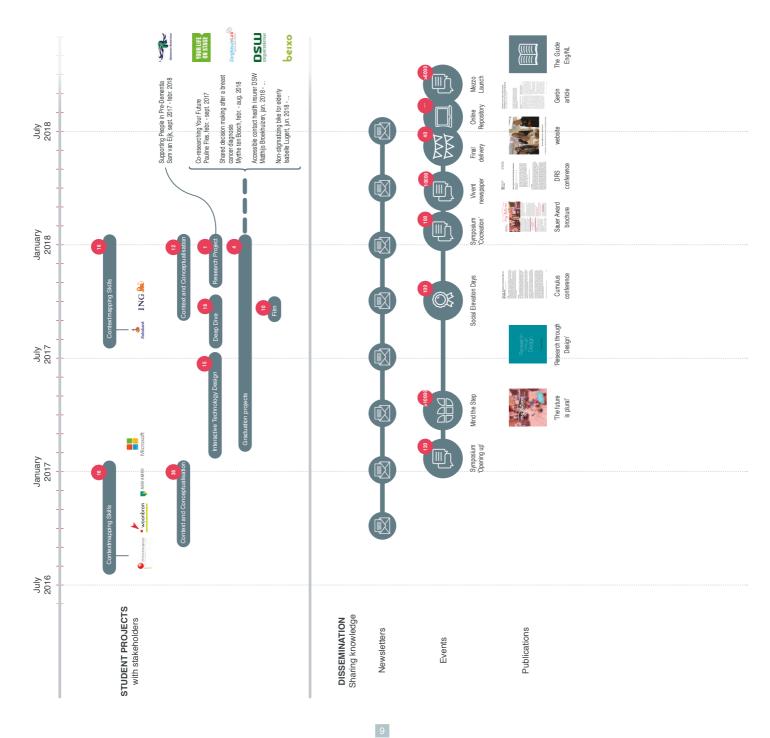


Designing a meaningful conversation about possible personal futures

In the Netherlands, we used to live in a welfare state where the government took care of its citizens in their old age. In today's participation society, everyone has to figure it out for themselves, together with their family, neighbourhood, local governments, and institutions. That is a major challenge for all involved. What will I have to do, what can I do? And, above all, how, when, and with whom will I think about my possible future?

The MyFutures project explored how we can help people think about their future. Especially by having the right conversation about this topic at the right time. And that conversation can be shaped. This guide contains methods, tips, examples, and tools.







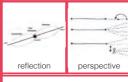
At the closing event of the MyFutures project (June 8th, 2018) six organisations pitched opportunities from the project that they intended to pursue further with new parties involved. For instance, KoDieZijn presented 'Buurt aan Zet', in which they would help to collaboratively re-arrange their village to suit the needs of its inhabitants.

Research outcomes

The outcomes of the research come on 5 different levels with impact relevant for different actors. These levels are: immediately usable implemented solutions, concepts to be worked out in local contexts; guidelines to develop new solutions; contextual knowledge covering all local projects about how future thinking manifests itself in our society; and finally theoretical knowledge on how anticipating the future helps people.

OUTCOMES

1. KNOWLEDGE



SUCH AS

Thinking about the future needs a detour through the past

FOR WHOM

Mostly scientists doing research on how planning processes work

2. CONTEXTUAL KNOWLEDGE



At these moments in life people are more open to thinking about the future Oganisations involved in these moments

3. GUIDELINES



The time, place, discussion partners, a clear topic and relevant content are necessary for a conversation about one's personal futures Oganisations involved in these moments

4. CONCEPTS



Templates that support PGB (personal budget) applications

Oganisations involved in these moments

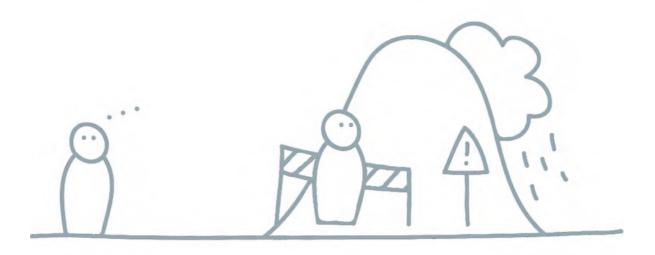
5. SOLUTIONS



The Family Conversation Tool that Mezzo distributed in the Netherlands

For everyone who wants to address future issues with their family, but doesn't know how





Why can't we do it?

There are several reasons why we find it hard to anticipate possible personal futures. For instance, because we can't estimate our needs for the future. Or because we'd rather not think about the possibly negative aspects of aging. That's why we postpone it. And that is sometimes too late, which means that decisions are in fact made for us, in urgent or stressful situations.

The report *Weten is nog geen doen* ('Knowing is not yet acting') shows that not everybody finds it easy to actively make choices and to start doing. Besides thinking power, we also need doing power, and that is a skill that is hard to develop.

WWR-The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (2017). Weten is nog geen doen. Een realistisch perspectief of redzaamheid.

https://www.wrr.nl/publicaties/ rapporten/2017/04/24/weten-is-nog-geen-doen

V

The End of History Illusion is the phenomenon that if I ask you: 'Have you changed a lot over the last 10 years?', you will say: 'yes'. And if I ask you: 'Will you change a lot in the coming 10 years?', you will say: 'not really'. And that applies to all people of all ages. People are really bad at envisaging their future selves

Quoidbach, J., Gilbert, D.T., & Wilson, T.D. (2013). *The End of History Illusion*. Science, 339(6115), 96-98

"To be honest, everyone was, without saying that to each other, walking on their last legs."



"I visited her home a couple of times but, at a certain point, she didn't want to do that [start a new relationship] anymore. She argued that she no longer wanted to guide one more old man towards his end. Because she was scared of losing someone again."

example 1

People are under pressure and then 'that's yet another thing I have to do"

With a Personal Budget, carers make a care planning for the coming year, often making choices in a stressful situation. People are under a lot of pressure to arrange the required care as quickly as possible. At such moments, there is hardly any attention for the long-term needs and wants of the care receiver or the carer.

example 2

We'd rather not think about possible negative aspects of a future life

People count themselves lucky if they don't have to think about (possibly negative) aspects of aging. If thoughts about aging do arise, we quickly try to think of something else. We often also have a negative, stereotypical view of elderly and aging. The far future at times frightens us.

example 3

People who think they don't have much time to live left, often refrain from costly purchases, don't start new friendships, and no longer fall in love

When people feel they don't have much longer to live, they no longer invest in the future. In that (subconscious) decision, negative experiences, reduced mobility, and the norms within a generation (learning something new is of no use) all play a role. This creates a negative attitude with little eye for what is still possible within your own (limited) future.

Scarcity Theory

People with little money or time behave differently from people with sufficient means. People who experience scarcity use all their abilities and means to solve urgent problems and, because of that, have difficulty with taking smart decisions for the long term. This creates a vicious circle: new problems arise in the future, resources are still scarce, and decisions are still poorly considered.

Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2013). *Scarcity:* Why having too little means so much. New York: Times Books

V

No ability to think without perspective

When we are confronted with life's finiteness, our daily goals and considerations change completely. The better we can imagine our future, the better we can plan for the short term.

Gawande, A. (2014). *Being mortal: medicine and what matters in the end.* New York: Metropolitan Books.

From case Personal Budget

> PDF Planning van zorg met een PGB

From Interviews

PDF (Niet) met je toekomst bezig zijn

From case Elderly

> PDF Samen Speculeren

What can make it work?

It is not easy to think about your own future. However, the MyFutures project shows that there are opportunities available to support people in doing so. It's all about having the right conversation at the right time, and that is something we can design.

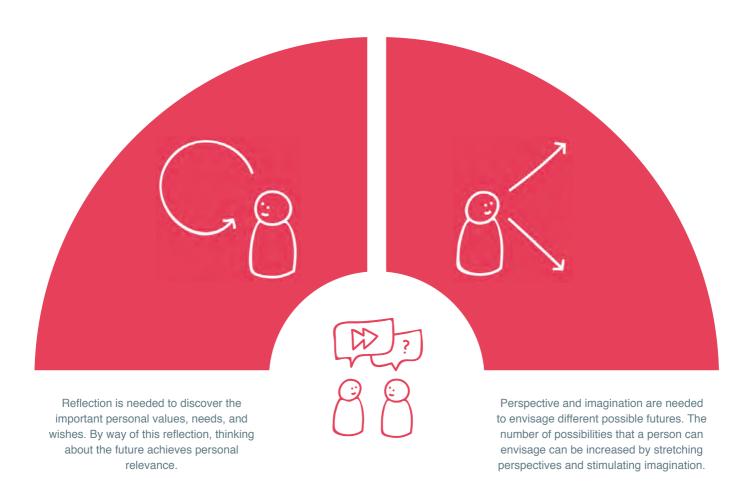
Conversations about the future are of great value. Talking with family members about the future can result in a more nuanced and realistic image of that future. Having a conversation with a care provider about things in life that matter to you can help. Or it can lead to deeper conversations with peers in the same age group.





Two modes of thinking in a conversation

For a meaningful conversation about possible personal futures, two modes of thinking are important: Reflection and Perspective. Reflection is necessary to discover which personal values, needs, and wants are important for someone. Perspective and imagination are necessary to consider multiple options.





Reflection:

Thinking about the future is thinking about your values

Making a plan for a further future is not so much comparing the here-and-now to another situation, but first of all it requires a fresh look at what you find important in life. But how do you think about that? An effective way is to look back at your past experiences, to remember what was good or bad about them, and through this comparison find out what your underlying needs and values were. And then to bring those needs and values to considering new situations. Liz Sanders describes this sequence of thinking from present through the past to the future as 'the path of expression'.

Sanders, L., & Stappers, P.J. (2012). Convivial Toolbox: Generative research for the front end of design.



Perspective:

A (pre)view to having a future

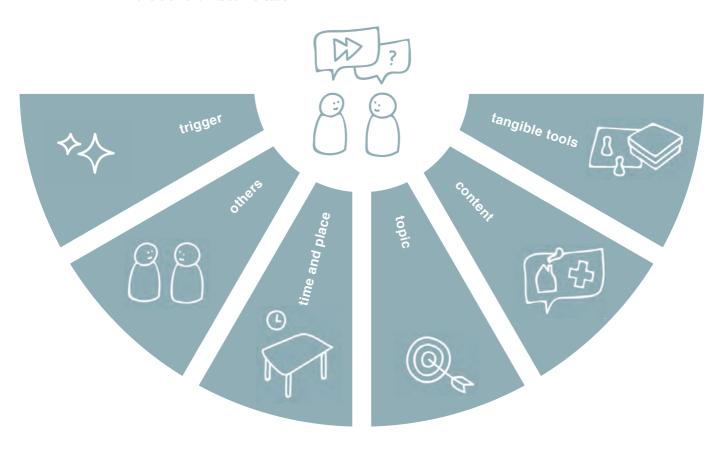
If you feel that you have a large future ahead of you, you will think differently from how you would think if you think you have no future at all. Laura Carstensen (cited in Gawande, 2014) showed that you can extend this ability by using your imagination. Young people often think they can still do anything, older people feel there's nothing left for them. But if they have to imagine they will have to make a long journey soon, both of them act as if they're 'old'.

On the other hand, if they imagine that there is a new medical breakthrough which means they will live for much longer, both of them act as if they're 'young'.

Gawande, A. (2014). Being mortal: medicine

The six elements of a conversation

How do you design a conversation which stimulates both reflection as well as perspective and imagination? The following six elements might be helpful. For each of these elements, we will offer a few examples of ways to incorporate this element in a conversation.





Trigger: Thinking about the future requires a trigger

The absence of a trigger to talk about the future is a reason people postpone doing so. Or, like a participant in a family meeting said: "You think: Well, we'll do that over Christmas, or when the weather is poor. But, in the end, you will always be too busy with other things."

We need a trigger

Fogg's model describes three preconditions for behaviour to occur: ability, motivation, and trigger. Even people who have all the abilities required to do something they really want to do find it difficult to start without a clear trigger.

Fogg, B.J. (2009, April). A behavior model for persuasive design. In *Proceedings of the 4th international Conference on Persuasive Technology*, ACM, New York, Article 40.



How do you achieve that?

Recognise the moments in which people are more open to think about the future and use these moments

Create an opportunity if no opportunity presents itself

(examples p21)

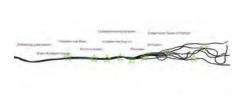
(examples p20)





Recognise the moments in which people are more open to think about the future and use these moments

There are moments in life when people are more open to think about their own future. For instance, the birth of a grandchild or the passing away of an acquaintance. By recognising such moments and capitalising on them, a conversation about the future can feel more natural.



example 1

There are moments in life when people are more open to thinking about the future

At important moments in life, people are more open to think about the future. It is good to know that these moments are particularly suited to have a talk about the future. These moments, however, differ for each individual as well as the impact they have.

"After a stroke, my aunt was only just able to opt for euthanasia. Since then, the rules for euthanasia have been changed and now that would no longer be an option. Things like that make you think about the future."

example 2

During key moments, the need arises to have a conversation

Key moments are moments when people feel the need to have a conversation with family members. We've divided them into three categories: Moments of Transition, Moments of Reflection, and Moments of Care. Moments of Reflection seem best suited to take long-term decisions, but the immediate trigger is absent. An example of a Moment of Reflection is 'Noticing that your own parents are becoming elderly'.



example 3

When planning immediate care, some care organisations already have conversations with their clients, in which future considerations are addressed

As soon as someone needs formal care, there is contact with several parties, such as care institutes or municipalities. This means that these parties already discuss how the required care is going to be arranged. We could also use these moments to discuss needs and wishes in their possible futures.

Create an opportunity if no opportunity presents itself

People who have already been thinking 'we really ought to think about...' will happily take the opportunity to have a conversation about the future. If no such opportunity

arises, we can create it ourselves. That also creates a snowball effect. After such a conversation, participants are more at ease to discuss these topics with others.

"Well, you do need a trigger, because it's unlikely to have such a conversation out of the blue. So, my excuse for having the conversation was that I 'needed it for work'."



Participating in design research study is 'a useful trick' to initiate a family talk

When recruiting participants to test the family talk instrument, we asked them why they decided to participate. They told us that they had wanted to talk with family members about living arrangements, care, or becoming older for quite some time. Testing one of the prototypes in this study was a good 'excuse' to organise such a conversation with family members.



example 2

By taking part in an exposition, a thousand visitors considered a130-year life

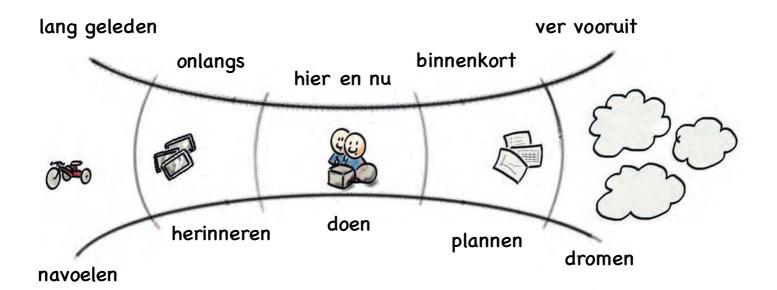
During the Dutch Design Week, over a 1.000 visitors climbed onto the *Mind The Step* exhibition, without prior knowledge. Of those, 452 people recorded their thoughts and ideas about a 130-year life. The installation triggered a personal reflection on the future, without them having to take the initiative. After descending, many continued talking about their ideas.



example 3

Have you considered the *fun factor?*

An important condition for organising personal conversations is that it has to be engaging. Elderly people come to daytime activities to enjoy themselves. A fun factor, like a quiz or a show, gives value to those moments of contacts, which makes it fun to keep returning to it. Ultimately, it is the repetition of those moments of contacts that leads to a positive attitude change in people.



Time is not just a sequence of moments. We are at the centre of it, the present, were we can act. We can plan for the near future, and reflect on the recent past with clear memories. We're not

able to make concrete plans for the distant future, but we can dream about what's important to us. About the distant past we cherish some, often emotional, memories.



Others:

Thinking about the future requires others

Few people will just sit down to stare out of the window with the intention to do some deep thinking about their future. And those who do, don't often get very far. It is during conversations with others that we are forced to clarify our thoughts. In such a conversation we can compare, clarify and develop our thoughts. And come to completely new insights. In discussing together about the future, and asking questions, that future gets shape and more personal relevance. Reflection is nourished by such discussions.



How do you achieve that?

In the conversation, make sure that the participants' thoughts are made explicit, by having them put their thoughts into words

part of the conversation

Decide on who should be

(examples p25)

(examples p24)



In the conversation, make sure that the participants' thoughts are made explicit, by having them put their thoughts into words

"It's funny; last week, my father told us quite clearly that he didn't share mother's ideas of living in a small house in our garden. During the family talk, we discussed our motives and his objections. (...) This morning, he said that he wanted to think about the garden house."

example 1

After such conversations, the individual ideas about the future are more realistic and nuanced

Before the family conversation took place, family members in our study often had certain ideas and things they wanted when it came to living arrangements in the future and possible care needs of a family member. During the family conversation, the family members shared these ideas with each other, which resulted in a more realistic and nuanced view of their own ideas and wants for the future, and those of the others.

Through conversations, we get to learn where the other stands and learn about the expectations and perspective of our conversation partner. Our own expectations and perspectives become clearer when



example 2

Reflecting together is beneficial when exploring new opportunities

If we truly want to collaborate with others, we will have to talk, discuss, and make plans. The communication becomes more intensive. This naturally leads to a more open attitude. Besides that, if we express our thoughts out loud, that also becomes an exercise of exploring our ideas.

we compare and mirror them with those of others. This means that it is essential that thoughts are explicitly shared, so we can listen and respond to each other.



example 3

People who left the chair really wanted to start a conversation with a member of the team. This unexpectedly added an additional reflection step

At the *Mind The Step* exposition, people who experienced the installation were naturally drawn into conversation with the team members at the installation. Those team members' job was to see to the safety of visitors climbing the stairs. But these visitors made a real effort to have a conversation with them about the future. This created an additional reflection step. The trigger got them going.

Decide on who should be part of the conversation

By having a conversation with someone else, we get to learn where the other stands and what our expectations and perspectives are. That is why it's important to decide beforehand which parties you want to involve

in the conversation. Is it a conversation between stakeholders or would you prefer a neutral party, like a professional? And what would their role then be?



example 1

It's often the care givers that apply for a personal budget (PGB) for the person they're caring for

From interviews with PGB holders it emerged that care givers often organise the PGB care. This means that when planning care, both the wants and needs of the PGB holder as well as the care giver should be taken into account.



example 2

The conversation between parents and children about the future is a group process

Care giving is not a task for an individual but a family matter. The conversation between children is important to prevent any disagreement about care for the future. We thought that, in theory, we were designing a conversation between parents and their adult children. But in practice, it often turned out to be a group conversation with different partners at different times.



example 3

Bringing together participants from different phases in life stimulates thinking from a different perspective

Bringing together participants from different phases in life in a group creates a stimulating dynamic, challenging participants to think from a particular perspective. For example, young people can bring imagination, because they often have a more open attitude with regards to the future.





Time and place:

Thinking about the future requires time and a place

If we want to design a conversation about possible futures, we have to actively assign a time and a place for it. If we expect people to think about their future but don't reserve time for it, nothing will happen, which points to poor planning. People with a personal budget often reach the end of their budget with a little of the year left to go. And that's not surprising, because no time was allocated to look further ahead.





Actively allocate time

How much time we allocate, how often, and when, these factors all inform the design of the conversation about the future. It's important that both modes of thinking, reflection and perspective, receive attention. To achieve your goal, you can allocate preparation time or repetitions.



example 1

By creating structure and phases in the conversations, it was also possible to explicitly use some of the available time to explore the needs and wants for the future

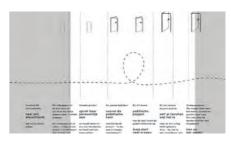
In the old situation, personal budget (PGB) conversations revolved around explaining the legal aspects, setting up the application procedure, and discussing the required care. This took up most of the available time. By instead creating 3 conversations, each with their own goal, room is created to have a conversation about future wants and needs as part of planning the PGB.



example 2

Preparing the conversation beforehand has a positive influence on the conversation

In preparing for the conversation, family members were asked to fill in a set of question cards. It proved useful that they brought this physical record of the answers. It forced them to share their answers, even if they deviated from what others has filled in. If everyone provides equal input, challenging topics are more likely to surface.



example 3

Through repeated conversation moments, you can achieve indepth conversations, even if no trigger is available

Through repeated moments of contacts, we create unity in a group conversation, which leads to a safe environment for everyone to express themselves. When group members see each other more often, trust grows deeper relations emerge automatically between participants. Repeating the moments of contact increases the likelihood of long-term change in attitude because the participants open up more.

Be aware of the influence that a place has

The location affects the mood and the conversation's content. There are always practical matters and limitations to consider. But in choosing the location, we can also encourage one of the two modes of thinking, reflection or perspective.





example 1

The PGB (personal budget) planning conversation most often takes place at people's homes

The conversation about the planning of care with a PGB often takes place in people's home. This location influences the design of the supporting materials. Loose pawns or chips, for instance, are ill-suited for conversations where someone is in bed or a cat can jump onto the table. Besides, the supporting materials must also be collected and taken along in the planner's bag.



example 2

The feeling of being in a safe environment can help in opening up, being vulnerable, and sharing your thoughts out loud

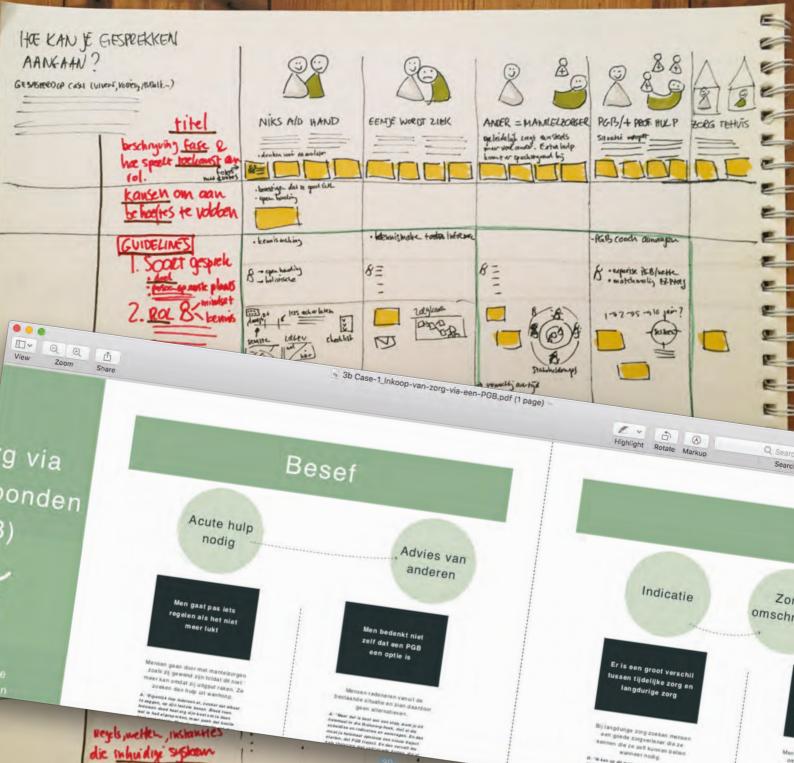
The feeling of being in a safe environment can do a lot to open the door to reflection and perspective, if only a little. When participants feel safe, they open up more and are willing to be vulnerable. This will make them more likely to share their thoughts out loud and make the connection with their personal environment.



example 3

By entering a completely different context, if only for a little while, it becomes easier to think about new options

At the Dutch Design Week, the *Mind The Step* exposition created a new (if temporary) view on the future. Visitors were presented with headphones and were taken out of their usual context. A kind voice speculated about a 130-year life, asked questions, paused. At the end, visitors were asked to give voice to their thoughts by recording them.



D: "A ken op de moment ring dat seggen det ik op desk han mar konnen grov ake nebelieke fit hal geman konnen å med grov ake nebelieke fit og dat den konn i de med ke, af den kons iv de gede den kons i de med ke, af den kons i de



Topic and purpose:

Thinking about the future requires a (demarcated) topic and a purpose

"'You shouldn't think too far ahead, it always turns out different from what you think', as grandma used to say" 'The future' is a much too broad and yet empty concept if you want to formulate precise thoughts. Add to that that the future is unpredictable and it appears useless to even think about it too much. If we do want to explore possible personal futures in a conversation, it can help to know the conversation's purpose and topic.



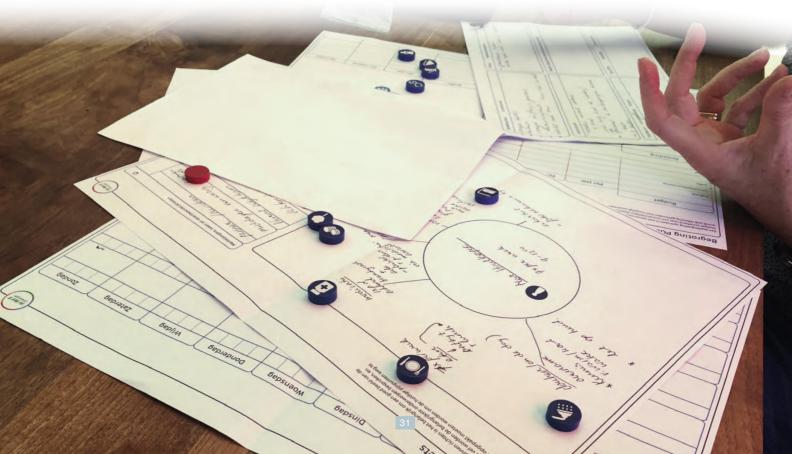
How do you achieve that?

Choose a specific topic about the future

Decide on the conversation's purpose and structure

(examples p32)

(examples p33)





Choose a specific topic about the future

The choice of a very specific topic makes it easier to speculate about the future. A question like: 'What does your future look like?' is difficult to answer. But a question like: 'Where will you live in 10 years time?' invites participants to consider several options.



example 1

When people think about their future living arrangements, other aspects of their future life will (automatically) come to the surface

Moving to a new home has a major impact. By thinking about it, people often also have thoughts about their future daily life and what they value in it. If we choose a specific topic, for instance: "Where do you want to live in 10 years time? important details often emerge. Much more so than in a generic conversation about 'your future'.

"If I think about a 130-year life I feel hesitant. Costs come to mind. Deterioration as well... Old age comes with loss. I'm not sure if the human body was made for that."

example 2

Some people defined a number of preconditions, before they could begin to speculate about a 130-year life

These preconditions were, for instance, good health, sufficient funds, a good global climate, and a society that accepts the elderly. These people found a topic like "What new options does a 130-year life have to offer?' still too broad. By setting these preconditions, they made the topic more specific for themselves, which made it easier for them to speculate about the possibilities.



example 3

Something concrete and tangible, like VR goggles, helps to give the conversation a topic

Something concrete and tangible gives the conversation a topic. It makes it possible to create a connection with someone's private life, their values, and needs. Especially when it is something quirky or unknown. Elderly were initially rather sceptical of Virtual Reality goggles, for instance, but once they had experienced them themselves, they could imagine a place for it in their own lives. They could, for instance, 'join' their cat when it went exploring outside.

> PDF (Niet) met je toekomst bezig zijn

Decide on the conversation's purpose and structure



It's important to have a clear idea of the conversation's purpose. That, in part, informs the content and structure of the conversation, and whether it was successful. A conversation whose purpose is to explore multiple possibilities differs greatly in structure from a conversation where decisions need to be made.



example 1

The purpose of a care conversation depends on the personal situation

The life stage our interlocutor is in often determines the purpose and topic of the conversation. If everything is fine, the purpose of the conversation is an informal exploration of possible futures. When there is an acute need for care, on the other hand, the purpose of the conversation is to make decisions with far-reaching consequences. In each stage of life, the topic can be the same, but the purpose wholly different.

MOTHER: "Well, there is actually only one thing that I hope for and expect, which is that, when I am old, that you make sure that I still look a bit presentable. That is so important."

DAUGHTER: "But others can take care of that in part, right?"

MOTHER: "Yes."

example 2

In the family conversation, expectations and needs are discussed, but no choices are made during the conversation

Without an instigating occurrence, it may seem too soon to have a talk about the future. Because, what do we need to talk about if we have no idea about that future? That is why the purpose of a family conversation isn't to make choices, but to explore values and expectations. To know how the others think about certain topics. That can be quite illuminating.



example 3

A tool can give structure and an overview of a multi-faceted conversation

The goal of the personal budget planning conversation is to achieve an appropriate care planning within the available yearly recources. By adding a tool to such a conversation, like the scenario wheel, possible future scenarios are also discussed, such as deteriorating health, possible holidays of care takers, or changes in financial situation. In this way, such scenarios are automatically considered when deciding how to allocate the budget.





Content:

Thinking about the future requires content

The purpose of a meaningful conversation about the future is to bring together the thinking moves of reflection and perspective and imagination. That requires multiple kinds of content, in harmony with each other. That's why we need to consider beforehand how to structure the conversation and what content we need to achieve that. You can do that in multiple ways.



How do you achieve that?

Provide content in the form of existing, relevant information

(examples p36)

Give content in the form of a comparison

(examples p37)

Provide content in the form of new stimulating facts

(examples p38)





Provide content in the form of existing, relevant information

There is no reason for the content of the conversation to be new. At times, it's clear what existing information needs to be part of the conversation. That can either be factual information, such as relevant rules and regulations, or personal experiences and needs. Create explicit space in the conversation for that kind of information.



example 1

The pawns & chips give the carer and cared for the opportunity to indicate future worries and wants

In existing conversations for planning the personal budget, there was no room to discuss the worries and wants for the longer term, while those topics are relevant in making a plan for the coming year. With the set of red chips, these topics are part of the conversation and demonstrate their value.



example 2

To understand the future situation of a personal budget, an overview with explanation of the various care regulations is required

In existing PGB conversation, much time was lost in explaining the rules and regulations around long-term care and a personal budget. This is made much easier with an information overview sheet. People can also review the information, as well as the relevant notes, at a later date. This step was necessary to create clarity and structure, which created room to also discuss other topics.

"Well, my mum can become lonely quite quickly and she mentioned that as well, luckily. She wouldn't like to live alone and she had fond memories of how her own mother had things to do during the day and that is something she values too."

example 3

Sharing personal experiences with each other helps in clarifying what family members may (in the future) find important themselves

'Have you been a carer for someone?' The reflective nature of this question often led to a discussion about the value of caring for someone and what that requires. Family members shared personal experiences and what these taught them. Those experiences are relevant in having a meaningful discussion about care for the future.

Give content in the form of a comparison

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Sometimes, imagination can be helped along with good examples from others. If we see a possible, personal future for someone else, and we put ourselves in their position, this personal reflection will happen easier.

"If I think about it, Leen's wife is selling her home. And she hasn't yet got anywhere else to go. So she wants to move house, because now, if she wants to see her grandchild, that's a 100km drive. She wants that down to 50 km. She has two children and she wants to live somewhere between the two, so each is a 50km drive away."

example 1

Using others as an example can help you create an image of your own future

During the conversation between family members, they regularly referred to examples from other people's situation. Family members could use those examples to indicate whether they saw their own future in a similar way, or differently.



example 2

Behind the chair, people could hear a selection of thoughts shared by other people, considering what new possibilities they saw for themselves

At the *Mind The Step* exposition, during the Dutch Design Week, some visitors were reluctant to climb the installation themselves. Nevertheless, they were stimulated to consider a 130-year life by listening to the answers of other people. Visitors could agree with the answers, add to them or juxtapose their own thoughts. The thoughts of others served to stimulate people to formulate their own ideas.

"But, who knows, that might change in time. As you visit friends or relatives who live in an apartment and you see the space and the environment, you might start to think: 'hmm I could picture myself living here.'"

example 3

For people to imagine what a new situation in the future might mean for them, let them consider, as much as possible, the real experience

It may help if they visit, or at least talk to, someone who currently lives in such an apartment.



Provide content in the form of new stimulating facts

For a broader perspective, it can be very effective to bring new, stimulating facts into the conversation. The thinking behind that is to disrupt the proceedings somewhat and

stimulate the imagination. New, stimulating facts can suddenly shed a new light on existing ideas or open new avenues to consider.

"Start dating again. I'm 65 now, but if I would live much longer, I would go looking for a partner again. And I would keep on working for a bit longer. I was planning to retire soon, but if I still have so much time left, I would, health permitting, work for 5 years more."

example 1

"Close your eyes and take a moment to imagine what new opportunities a 130-year life would bring you" is an example of a new, stimulating fact

Closing the eyes and asking very clear questions about new opportunities stimulates the imagination: it's a literal assignment to come up with something new. For elderly, a 130-year life means to live much longer than they assumed. For them, this assignment was most stimulating. They often came up with truly new opportunities for them.



example 2

An alienating object can, like a Trojan horse, help to subconsciously open a door to the future

When someone isn't actively considering their futures, an unknown object or new technology can, almost like a Trojan horse, bring them to approach the topic of future from a different angle. Thinking about a new technology, like Virtual Reality for instance, helps us to make a real leap into the future. In that way, people subconsciously move towards thinking about their future and speculating about several possibilities.



example 3

By not evading 'the uncomfortable' in conversations, we get to use it as a stimulating factor

Although broaching personal topics, or asking how something affects their own life, may initially create tension, at the same time, it also creates a feeling of togetherness. The sharing of private matters contributes to a stronger group dynamic, through which participants naturally bond with each other. And the better we know somebody, the more likely we are to share our thoughts with them.



Tangible Tools: Thinking about the future requires tangible tools

Because a personally relevant conversation about possible futures doesn't just spontaneously happen, it helps to support the conversation with tangible tools. These can serve different functions in a conversation.



How do you achieve that?

Create a tangible overview

(examples p40)

Use 'things' as a neutral conversation guide

(examples p41)

Ensure ownership

(examples p42)



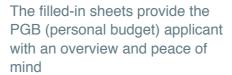


Create a tangible overview

Making information visual and tangible almost automatically leads to coherence and an overview. For that reason, you should make and use tangible aids to discuss complex topics. We can, for instance, ask questions about specific topics, just by pointing to it, or changing things, or adding things.



example 1



By making a visual overview of the situation, together with the carer and care-recipient, all urgent stress factors are discussed and are given a place on the sheet. This overview gives peace of mind and creates the space necessary to broaden the perspective and discuss values, wishes and needs in the longer term as well.



example 2

The large poster helps to pinpoint complex insights about needs for care conversations

An overview of phases of a care makes it easier to have a conversation with other care workers about the type of care conversations in these phases. This poster presents insights and opportunities in four different phases of people's lives. The phases describe a couple, one of whom slowly gets more ill. It starts with 'no care at all' and ends with 'being hospitalised'.

Use 'things' as a neutral conversation guide



A tangible object can serve as a neutral conversation guide. For instance, if we want to discuss five topics, and there are five 'things' on the table that need to be discussed, the 'agenda' for that conversation is clear at a glance. An object can also function as a 'Trojan horse' to guide the conversation to certain topics.



example 1

If you take something concrete and tangible that, at first glance, isn't too personal, it can serve as a starting point in a conversation to slowly but surely make the connection to the personal situation

A tangible object gives the conversation a topic and can help slowly guide the conversation towards the personal.

When we know what has value 'now', and what had value in the past, this also makes it easier to recognise and

distinguish the values and needs for the future. When the physical object that is used is somewhat quirky, like a totally different environment for instance, it is even more likely to spark the imagination. Because it's unknown for all conversation partners alike, we can speculate about it together.

A question like: "In what kind of building would you like to live in the future?" can then serve to guide a conversation about future living conditions.



example 2

Pawns and chips can serve as neutral conversation guides. Picking up a chip marks the moment to move towards the next topic

During the planning conversation, the chips proved useful to ensure several topics were discussed. But they were also used to at times interrupt a long-winded story and change the topic: picking up a chip serves as an interruption. Instead of having a conversation partner blurt out an inappropriate suggestion like 'consider a difficult aspect', a chip can suggest the same in a more neutral way.



Ensure ownership

We can own a tangible object. Especially if it is something we made, it really becomes 'ours'. By having people making something small, we ensure a greater personal involvement with the topic.

"I made photos of the cards because I want to keep this information."



Preparing on paper has a positive influence on the content of the conversation

It is useful to have the answers on paper, physically. People are more likely to share their answers, even if they don't correspond with those of others. By filling in the preparation questions on paper, it becomes part of their conscious process. Participants in this study, for instance, really wanted to have the cards they filled in returned to them.



example 2

The pins created a feeling of being part of a group during the tour

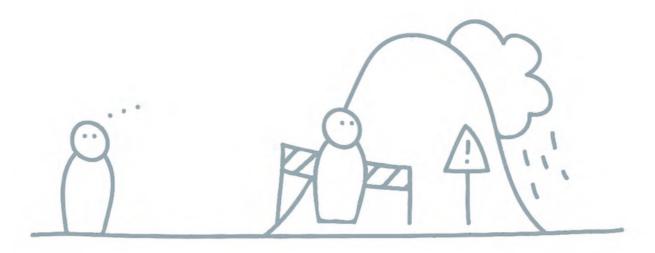
A simple pin for each participant made a group recognisable and visible during the tour. This created a feeling of being part of a group for the participants and, in doing so, helped create a safe space within a new and stimulating context of the Graduation Show of the Design Academy Eindhoven. This feeling was only made stronger by seeing the other visitors recognise them as such.



example 3

Working together towards a final result, such as a movie, creates pride and, with that, ownership

Because the activity's participants at several moments worked together on a single final result, they were very proud of what they had achieved. When the movies were shown, one of the participants even recorded the screen to immediately share the result with family members.



Next steps

During the closing event, a number of opportunities for further development and implementation were presented by parties that want to act upon the generated insights and ideas. They pitched their plans and invited other parties to join them and make collaborative efforts for further implementation. Because these calls focused very much on the local, Dutch situations, we present only three themes. The complete calls and contacts are in the Dutch edition of this guide and on the website.



A selection of these further plans



Addressing personal futures in care conversations

Addressing personal futures in care conversations can also be opportunities to help clients start thinking about the longer futures. During the project for instance, we came up with a conversation planner for people with a personal budget.

However, there are many more moments in which a conversation about one's personal futures seems to provide added value.



Designing futures of neighbourhoods together

Living at home for as long as possible can only work if people in neighbourhoods share their wishes en ideas about their futures. If you postpone this until you are 75, it is too late, because real adjustments can no longer be made then.

If young and old people in a neighbourhood are able to develop what they need together, new convivial services and ways of living together can emerge, and better address personal needs...



Family conversation tools

At some time in our life, each of us will have to deal with care, either directly or indirectly. But preparing for this is difficult. How do you raise the topic of giving care to each other before the need is urgent? A discussion about the future always feels too early, until it is too late. We believe that to come to

a sustainable situation of formal and informal care, it is essential that families address the issues in conversations. To have a talk about later. To get to know how we and others feel about this. To discover, together, which futures are possible. And which things matter for you.

- Developing new business models to organise care differently at people's homes.
 These new models will intergrate the needs of personal caregivers, nurses, and other parties involved together.
- Developing an optimised design for a Family Conversation Tool tailored to the context of intakes in a nursing home.

- Introducing imagination exercises for people in villages to collaboratively imagine future possibilities of living together on social neighbourhood evenings.
- Developing a service design process to engage all involved parties to design their ideal neighbourhood of the future in six prototyping steps.
- Facilitating municipalities to develop concrete images of what the city or neigbourhood could look like in 10 to 20 years given the rise in the ageing population.
- Developing a new version of the Family Conversation Tool through digitalisation and connect these to the practice of using group-apps within families.
- Developing tailormade versions of the Family Conversation Tool for younger children, adolescents and partners specifically.

Colophon

This booklet contains the findings stored on the MyFutures repository website. The repository was conceived and produced by the MyFutures team. Corrie van der Lelie helped to produce this pdf version, and Laurent Willemsen helped in translating our Dutch to English. The repository and downloads can be found on www.myfutures.nl



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Scientific publications

- > PDF MyFutures Opening Edition: The Future is Plural
- > Paper: Structuring roles in Research through Design

Sleeswijk Visser, F. (2018). Structuring roles in Research through Design collaboration. In *Proceedings of Design* Research Society, Dublin, Ireland, 25-28 June 2018, pp. 368-380.

> Paper: Speculative care and support futures in the

Raijmakers (2017) My Futures-imagining speculative care and support futures in the Netherlands. Presented at Cumulus Conference "Letters to the Future", Bangalore, India, 2017

- > Chapter: Research through Design Stappers, P. J., & Giaccardi, E. (2017). Research through Design. In M. Soegaard, & R. Friis-Dam (Eds.), The Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction. (2nd ed., pp. 1-94). The Interaction Design Foundation. Chapter 43
- > Projectbeschrijving Hans Sauer award

MyFutures Downloads

General

> PDF MyFutures: Een zinvol gesprek over de toekomst



(Niet) met je toekomst bezig zijn (Interviews)

> PDF Case: (Niet) met je toekomst bezig zijn



Plannen van zorg met een PGB (case Personal Budget)

- > PDF Case: Plannen van zorg met een PGB
- > Poster: Inkoop van zorg via een PGB
- > Poster: Fases voor adviesgesprekken in de zorg
- > Poster: Overzicht van zorgsysteem PGB en ZIN

Familiegesprekken (case Family)

- > PDF: Case: Familiegesprekken
- > Poster: Familiegesprekken tussen volwassen kinderen en hun ouders
- > Poster: Sleutelmomenten voor familiegesprekken
- Tool: Het Familie Gesprek

Samen speculeren (case Elderly)

- > PDF: Case: Samen speculeren
- > Poster: De waarde van diepgaande contactmomenten
- > Poster: Het sociale leven van ouderen
- > Poster: Is de toekomst oprekbaar?
- > Poster: Ontwerpbeslissingen

(case Meet Your Futures) Een 130-jarig leven?

> PDF: Case: Een 130-jarig leven?





The Family Conversation Tool was launched by Mezzo, an organisation supporting informal carers. In their 2018 Dutch nationwide campaign for informal care awareness, already in the first month, 6000 people requested a copy of the toolkit.

Interested?

The family conversation tool (in Dutch) is freely available as a download. To use it download the pdf, and give each family member one A3 doublesided print, folded as shown below.





The tool is an invitation and instruction set for all participants. Currently, only a Dutch language version has been made, and tested with Dutch families. Parties interested in further dissemination or development of the tool should contact

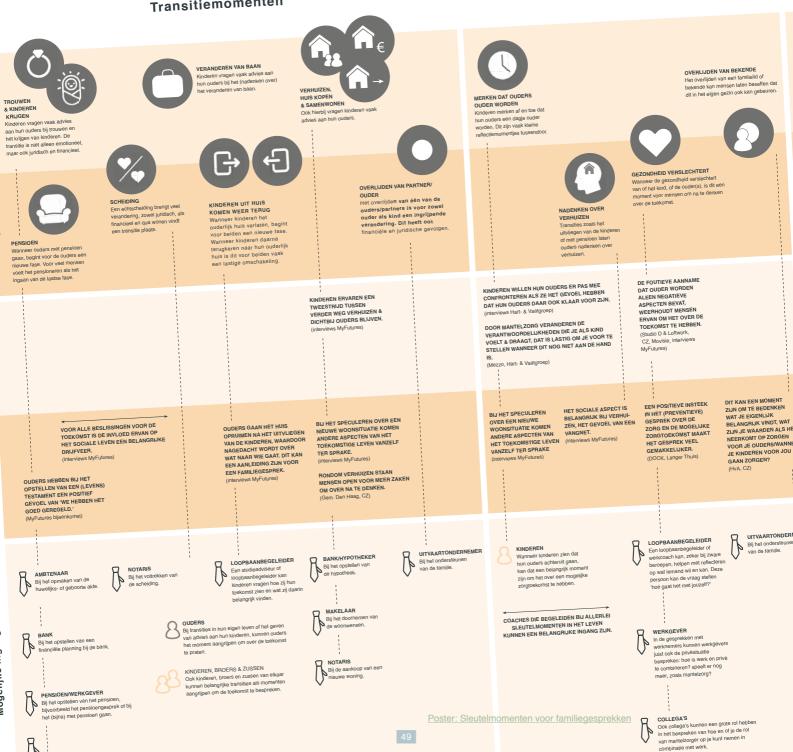




Transitiemomenten

NOTARIS & OUDERS

Reflectiemomenten





Facing increasing life expectancy and a retreating government, people need to arrange more for their old age themselves. However, making plans for the future and discussing these with family, friends, neighbours and local organisations is not easy.

In the MyFutures project we explored how individuals can deal with this challenge; with each other as individuals and with organisations. The outcome is a set of guidelines aimed at all kinds of organisations (residential, care, social) to make possible futures, including what's important for each person, a subject of discussion in conversations.

