

*Conversation Tips (originally shared on [coachingforhealth.org](https://coachingforhealth.org) during the COVID-19 pandemic; please feel free to use and adapt to your situation)*

## **Lockdown – a time to review managing a long-term condition?**

For many, this difficult period might be one of reflection. And either because it's time for a client's annual review or just because an opportunity arises, we might want to take the chance to support people living with long-term conditions to reflect on their goals and behaviours.

As usual, we may need to build rapport first, by doing some high-quality listening and reflecting back. And if/when it feels like an opportunity to begin a conversation about an individual's management of their long-term condition, we'll need to introduce it first. And here the framework we might use is TGROW.

- 1. T – Topic**
- 2. G – Goal**
- 3. R – Reality**
- 4. O – Options**
- 5. W – What next?**

### **Topic**

- We may want to set the context around lockdown being an opportunity for many people to reset and reflect, and to decide what's important in their lives.
- You can then ask permission to have a conversation about their health and what they want for the future. Of course, wait for the 'yes'. And if it's a 'no', obviously we have to respect this and we can perhaps agree a future opportunity for this wider conversation.

### **Goal**

- First, we may want to ask for the time horizon that the individual would feel most comfortable thinking about. Would it be the next few weeks, the next six months, the next year?

## Conversation Tips

- We can then elicit an individual's values, by asking '**what's important to you about your condition, over the next \_\_\_\_ weeks/months?**' or '**what do you want to work towards?**'
- From this, you may identify one or more goals. And for each one, try to make them specific (e.g. by asking '**what do you mean by \_\_\_\_?**'), and of course, make sure they're achievable (SMART).
- If you do have multiple Goals at this stage, you may want to ask the individual which one they'd like to focus on first.

### Reality

- If useful, you can then elicit the barriers by asking '**what might get in the way of this goal?**'
- Or their resources – '**what's helped you achieve this kind of thing in the past?**'

### Options

- You can then ask for all their options for achieving their desired goal. You can ask '**what could you do?**' making clear these are just ideas, and the person doesn't need to choose any of them (to take the pressure off).
- Make sure you get a full list.
- If the individual can't think of any options, you may want to go back to Reality to check on the barriers and resources, or to change the Goal to make sure it's achievable.

### What Next?

- Summarise all the Options and then ask the individual which they'd like to take forward first.
- Try to make sure the new behaviour begins in the next 24-48 hours (even if this involves preparation).
- You can ask about review and accountabilities, also. As well as 'Plan Bs' if their desired plan doesn't work out the first time.

Some of the above may be implicit in an annual review template that you're using, but you can create your own using the TGROW model if helpful.