

The Change Star™

The Outcomes Star for behaviour change for men

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The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of the Outcomes Star over its long evolution and we would like to thank all the clients, workers, managers, funders, academics and commissioners who have generously given their time and expertise.

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We would particularly like to thank UnitingCare Queensland for collaborating with Triangle to develop this version of the Star and For Baby's Sake who also piloted this Star.

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Introduction

The Outcomes Stars suite of tools

The Outcomes Stars are a suite of person-centred tools for supporting and measuring change when working with people. They are both keywork and outcomes tools, supporting effective interventions and giving management data on progress towards the end outcome. Because of this dual role, they bring together measurement and service delivery and can provide a shared language and framework across operations and data management for departments and between commissioners and service providers.

All versions of the Outcomes Star have five- or ten-point scales arranged in a star shape. Each point on each scale has detailed descriptors setting out attitudes, behaviour and sometimes skills or circumstances typical of that point on the scale. Underpinning these scales is a model of change (the Journey of Change) describing the steps towards the end goal that both the service and service user are trying to achieve.

The Outcomes Star suite of tools are different to other approaches to assessment and outcomes measurement¹. They are designed to empower service users within a collaborative process of assessment and measurement that supports a positive conversation and is integrated with support work, rather than being a separate activity. The Star is closely aligned to person-centred, strengths-based, co-production and trauma-informed approaches and can support people and organisations to put those values into practice:

- **Person-centred:** The Star encourages and enables workers to listen to the perspective and priorities of service users and to work with them collaboratively. It helps engage service users to develop realistic action plans based on where they are on the Journey of Change
- **Strengths-based:** The Star is holistic and enables people to focus on aspects of life that are going well rather than have an assessment focused entirely on areas of difficulty. The scales focus on what service users can change, rather than the severity of their problems or circumstances

¹ The Outcomes Stars share the core principles of Participatory Action Research (O'Brien, 2001; Carr & Kemmis, 1986) – empowerment, collaboration and integration – extending these beyond research into assessment and outcome measurement. Participatory Action Research seeks to empower the subjects of research, collaborate with them and integrate research into practical action to improve people's lives. The Outcomes Stars seek to empower service users within a collaborative process of assessment and measurement that is integrated with support work rather than being a separate activity.

- Co-production: The collaborative approach to completion means that the service user and worker produce the assessment and measurement together and build a shared perspective as a basis for action. This is in contrast to expert assessment or self-report approaches in which the two perspectives remain separate
- Trauma informed: The collaborative nature of the Star helps to give the service user control, which has been shown to be important in building a sense of safety for people who have experienced trauma. The focus of the tool is primarily on how things are now, rather than past experiences that might trigger someone's trauma and put them outside their safe "window of tolerance". In addition, the guidance for use emphasises the importance of building of a trusting relationship and a shared perspective as an essential foundation to moving forward.

For a fuller description of the values and approach underpinning the Outcomes Stars suite of tools, see MacKeith (2011).

Background and further information about the Outcomes Stars suite of tools can be found at www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

The Change Star™

The Change Star is for use with men who are participating in a behaviour change program or other service for perpetrators of domestic abuse – men who use or have used violence against female partners. The overall aim of the Change Star is to keep women and children safe, so the emphasis is on how men can become safer for their partners and children to be around.

The Change Star includes the following resources:

- The Change Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan for use with men
- The Change Star User Guide, with both brief visual scales and detailed scale descriptions, which can be shared with men as needed
- Short, illustrated Scales to help engage men in discussion
- Guidance for Workers
- A web application for online completion and analysis at www.staronline.org.uk

This Development Report provides a detailed description of the development process of the Change Star.

Development process for the Change Star™

Methodology

The methodology for developing all versions of the Outcomes Star is based on Action Research (O'Brien, 2001) and the Existential Phenomenological research method (McCall, 1983). Action Research is a collaborative process of identifying issues, trying out solutions and assessing what works. This phenomenological method places a strong emphasis on understanding the subjective experience of the person or people being researched and the meaning of the experience for them.

The development process comprises four main stages:

Stage 1: Exploring the scope and need for the tool

Stage 2: Creating the pilot version of the new Star in consultation with the working group

Stage 3: The pilot

Stage 4: Finalising the tool

Below we describe how this process was applied to create the Change Star.

Stage 1. Exploring the scope and need for the tool

UnitingCare Queensland, a health and community services provider across Queensland and the Northern Territory in Australia, approached Triangle to develop a version of the Star for men in their behaviour change programs relating to intimate partner violence. We then carried out a scoping process, involving:

- An exploratory literature review of relevant models, tools and research
- Checking prior interest and enquiries from other services for a similar or the same version.

As with any new version of the Star, this phase also included scoping the capacity for both UnitingCare Queensland and Triangle to undertake the development within the budget and timescale needed. Based on this, Triangle's conclusion was to proceed with this new version of the Star.

Triangle developed and published a separate Star for women who have experienced domestic abuse in 2011 – the Empowerment Star.

Stage 2: Creating the pilot version in consultation with the expert working group

An expert working group was established to collaborate in the development of the new Star. The group comprised of eight domestic violence program facilitators, eight managers and a professor specialising in this area.

This expert group played a central role throughout the development process, providing in-depth knowledge of the issues faced by clients, the intended outcomes of service delivery and the process of change towards those outcomes. The working group's input was organised around three workshops in Brisbane, Australia. The first two contributed to the creation of the pilot version of the tool, and the third and final workshop reviewed the results of the pilot and contributed to refining the tool to create a final version (see Stage 4).

In addition to input from workers and managers as part of the working group, interviews were conducted with three program facilitators.

Workshop 1 (August 2018): A one-day workshop with professionals working with this client group was held to identify intended outcomes and processes of change in work with perpetrators of domestic abuse. The workshop included a series of focus groups to provide insight about their experiences and what the key outcomes were for them.

The key questions explored in Workshop 1 were:

- What are the main areas in which services and clients are seeking to create change?
These areas become the points of the Star
- What is the desired outcome of the change process? *This becomes the end point on the Journey of Change that underpins all the scales*
- What model of change describes the steps that clients take on the journey towards that end point? *This is described in a series of steps – the Journey of Change – showing a clearly discernible, qualitative difference between each step of the journey.*

A range of techniques were used to draw out participants' experience and knowledge including:

- Using the "outcome triangle" tool to identify the overall aim of services, the specific outcomes they are trying to achieve and the activities they carry out to achieve these changes
- Bringing to mind an individual who has undergone a substantial change and identifying the key steps in their process of change

- Hearing feedback about suggested outcome areas and discussing how they would work in different situations and with different clients.

Triangle compiled all the material gathered from the working group at Workshop 1 and reviewed it to allow meaning and common strands to emerge. On the basis of this combined with the literature review carried out in Stage 1, a provisional model of change and outcome areas for the Change Star were developed. These were then used as an outline or “skeleton”, from which the first draft of the Change Star was created.

Once the first draft was completed there was an iterative process of sharing, listening, refining and sharing again to hone the outcome areas, Journey of Change and descriptions of the steps towards change in each outcome area until they resonated with the client group and workers participating in the development process. The process included checking that the first draft took into account key themes that emerged from the literature review, and a second workshop with the expert working group.

Workshop 2 (August 2018): A one-day workshop was held to present the first draft of the Change Star to the expert working group and to hear feedback to inform the pilot version of the Star. On the basis of this feedback and the other activities listed above, the early draft was refined to create a pilot version of the Change Star with the Journey of Change and outcome areas listed below:

The pilot Change Star Journey of Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Being respectful 4. Learning new ways 3. Acknowledging 2. Engaging 1. Stuck
The pilot Change Star Outcome Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking responsibility 2. Thinking and attitudes 3. Safe actions and reactions 4. Being a good partner 5. Role model for children 6. Well-being

Stage 3: The pilot

Unique Outcomes² trained 24 workers from UnitingCare Queensland (Australia) to use the Change Star in October 2018. In addition, in December 2018 Triangle trained 3 workers and a manager at For Baby's Sake, a project run by the Stephanou Foundation in the UK. Between them, these workers then piloted the Star with 147 of their clients over the 14-month pilot period – 110 by UnitingCare in Australia and 37 in the UK. Of these 147, 85 were reviewed once, so had two Star readings.

Clients returned brief feedback forms on their experience of using the Star.

Summary of analysis of client feedback forms

Triangle received 12 completed questionnaires from clients who had used the Change Star during the pilot period, of which:

- All said that the scales helped them to describe how life was for them at that moment
- 92% said that the scales helped them to understand what they needed in the way of support
- 92% found it encouraging to see the progress between Star readings

Psychometric analyses of the pilot Star data

Analyses of the Star data from the 147 initial Star readings and 85 second Star readings showed the following:

Distribution: Readings were well distributed across the Journey of Change, with no deviation from normality.

Item redundancy: Most inter-item correlations were below .70, but two were just above this threshold ("Taking responsibility"- "Thinking and attitudes" and "Being a good partner"- "Safe actions and reactions").

Internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha was .86 – above the threshold of .70, suggesting good internal consistency.

² Unique Outcomes are responsible for training and supporting organisations in Australia and New Zealand to use the Outcomes Stars

Factor structure: A unidimensional factor structure was advised, with one factor explaining 77% of the variance.

Responsiveness: Effect sizes were medium–large for “Taking responsibility”, “Thinking and attitudes” and “Safe actions and reactions” and medium for the remaining three areas.

See the Appendix for more detail on the findings from the Star data.

Further research into the psychometric properties of the final published version of the Change Star was initiated following publication. For the latest information on this, please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

Stage 4: Finalising the new Star

After the end of the pilot, Workshop 3 was held to draw together the learning from the pilot.

Workshop 3 (January 2020): The third and final meeting of the expert working group gathered in-depth feedback on the process of using the tool from a wide range of people in different contexts. It also focused on the detail of the tool itself – the areas covered, Journey of Change, scale descriptions and range of materials.

The working group was asked some specific questions about the Change Star and the responses are briefly summarised below.

What worked in the pilot Change Star?

There was positive feedback from those who had used the pilot version of the Change Star, including:

“This is a really valuable information that we would never had before – for us and for them”

“The Star supports training of staff and them being able to have the conversations we want them to be having”

“Part of resistance to change is fear of the unknown so the Star helps by showing them what the next step is like”

“It's good to see change at the end – at the end men are more able to say that they are only at 4 due to greater honesty and more insight”

“Men can admit to areas where things are not OK because other areas are positive”

“Descriptions help us to challenge participants”

“The wording of the scales is good and can even be read in full to men on the program”

What didn't work in the pilot Change Star?

There were some issues around forming agreement with the clients about where they were on the Journey of Change:

“Unrealistically high start readings due to lack of awareness but it is helpful to use at the start of the program because it's a good conversation and helps if men know the tool at the start”

“We don't necessarily agree after appropriate levels of challenge”

There was also the question of how to gather the perspective and experience of women partners about where the men are on the Change Star, with discussion about how to complete it with women partners, especially where support is brief and mostly by phone - completing it over the phone was not recommended because it wouldn't be appropriate to send it to the woman as the man might see it

Changes made to finalise the Star based on learning from the pilot

On the basis of the post-pilot questionnaires, psychometric analyses, and Workshop 3 feedback, a number of changes were made to the pilot version of the Change Star to create the final version. The main changes are summarised below:

- The “Being a good partner” area was renamed “Communication” (and expanded so that if the man is not in contact with their ex-partner it can be used to discuss communication within other relationships)
- The “Role model for children” area was renamed “Being a good father”.
- The “Well-being” area was changed to “Your well-being”
- Minor changes were made to wording throughout the scales.

The final Journey of Stage changes and outcomes areas were as follows:

The published Change Star™	5. Being respectful
Journey of Change	4. Learning new ways
	3. Acknowledging
	2. Engaging
	1. Stuck

The published Change
Star™

Outcome Areas

1. Taking responsibility
2. Thinking and attitudes
3. Safe actions and reactions
4. Communication
5. Being a good father
6. Your well-being

Completion

Once these changes had been made, the draft final version of the Star went through final checks:

1. UnitingCare Queensland was invited to review and comment on the final draft
2. It was reviewed again by Triangle to ensure clarity of descriptions and distinctions between each stage of each scale
3. It was edited and proofed before being typeset

The Change Star was published on the Star Online in June 2020.

References

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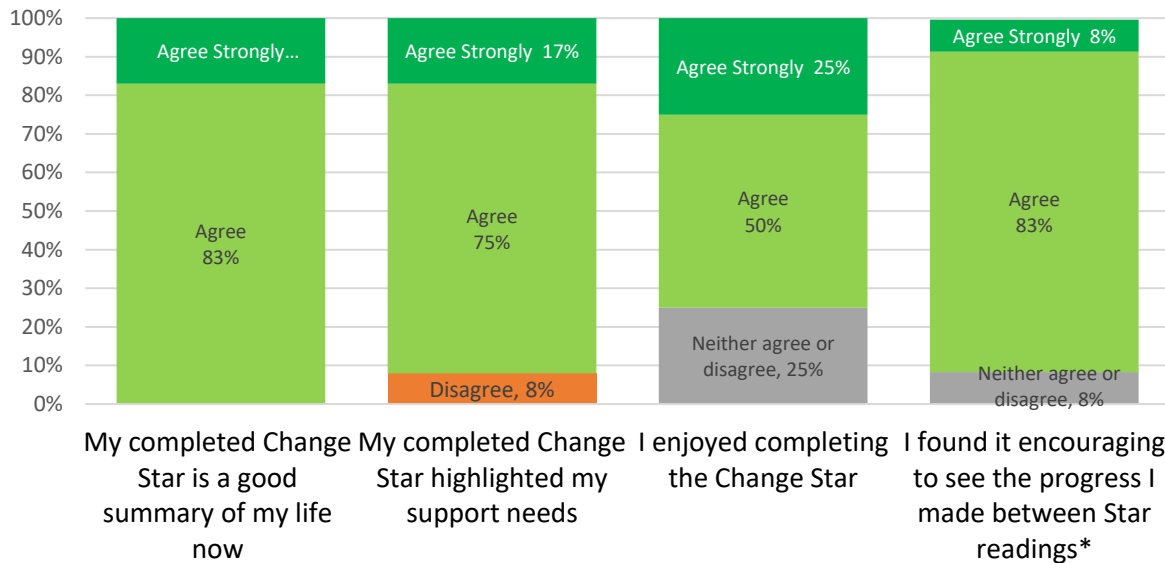
O'Brien, R. (2001). An overview of the methodological approach of Action Research. In Roberto Richardson (ed.) *Theory and Practice of Action Research*, Joao Pessoa, Brazil: Universidade Federal da Paraiba (English version).

Appendix

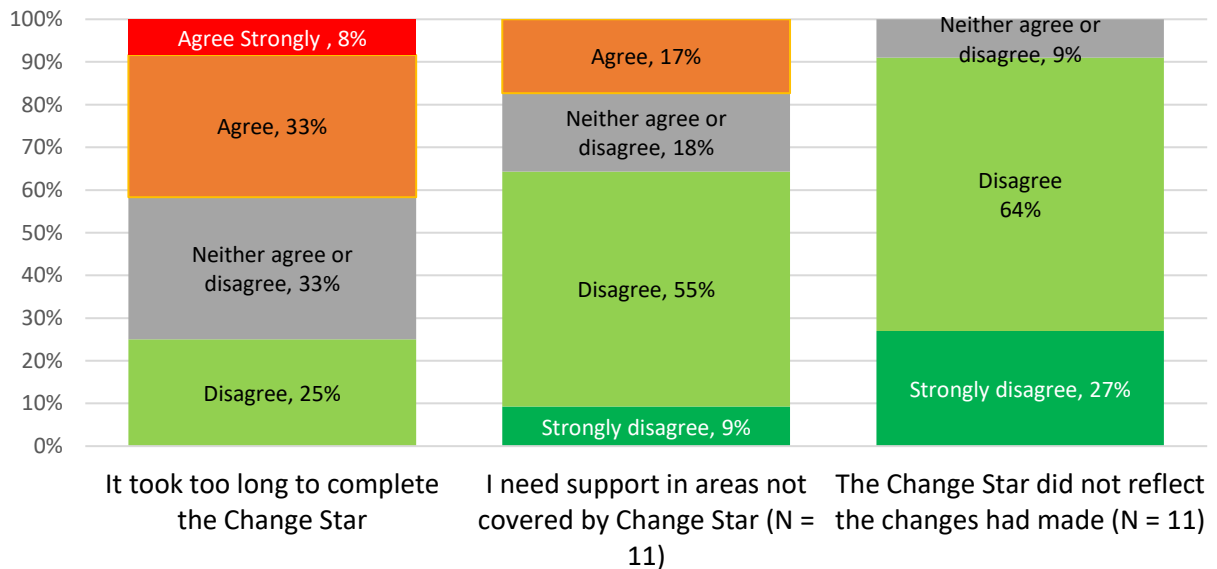
Client feedback following the Change Star™ pilot

Feedback from 12 clients

Positively phrased questions



Negatively phrased questions



Details of the psychometric analyses of the pilot Change™ Star

Distribution of initial Star readings across the Journey of Change stages during the pilot of the Change Star



	Skewness statistic	Result
Taking responsibility	.14	Approximately symmetric
Thinking and attitudes	.07	Approximately symmetric
Safe actions & reactions	.15	Approximately symmetric
Being a good partner	-.14	Approximately symmetric
Role model for children	-.14	Approximately symmetric
Well-being	.10	Approximately symmetric

Table showing the pilot Change Star inter-item correlations

Correlation matrix showing relationships between outcome areas (N = 147)

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Taking responsibility					
2 Thinking and attitudes	.73				
3 Safe actions & reactions	.62	.63			
4 Being a good partner	.67	.65	.71		
5 Role model for children	.47	.60	.52	.51	
6 Well-being	.50	.39	.51	.52	.34

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