How do I start my Circle of Support?

Start by thinking about who you would like to have in your circle. It may help to talk about this with other people who know you.

Choose where you would like to have your first circle meeting. It may be in your home, someone else’s home or in a pub, café or wherever you will feel comfortable.

Choose a day and time. This could be any day of the week. It could be the daytime or an evening.

Invite the people to a first circle meeting. You may find it easier to give them a written invitation so they have the information they need. You can ask someone to help you to do this.

Before you have the first meeting it may be helpful to think about what you would like the people in your circle to help you with. You could talk to someone who knows you well. They may have ideas as well.

Circle meetings are best when they are friendly and fun. It helps to think about how you can get people to enjoy themselves. A cup of tea and biscuits (or whatever you enjoy) can help.
At the first meeting you, or someone else, could tell people about circles of support. There is a DVD that you could show which might help people to understand if it is their first circle meeting.

You could also tell people the ideas you have about what you would like support to do. They may have other ideas.

It is helpful to write down these ideas. Then you can make a plan. This will help to get things to happen.

Make sure you agree who will do what and when they will try to do it.

Before your circle meeting finishes you may want to look at what has worked well. You could also look at what has not worked well. You can then make changes for the next time you all meet.

Before you end the circle meeting it is a good idea to arrange when you will next meet.