

# Alexa & Me

*A Dementia Responsive Guide  
To Your Amazon Virtual Assistant*

By

Ron Coleman

Published by Working to Recovery Ltd  
Copyright Ron Coleman 2020

The author asserts all rights in terms of content.  
No part may be reproduced without his written permission.

You can complete this Alexa & Me guide as a modular course at the Deepness online Recovery College from 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

Go to: [www.deepnessdementiamedia.com](http://www.deepnessdementiamedia.com), select Recovery College, then go to Alexa & Me.

# Contents

<b>Starting point .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 1: What I want from Alexa .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section 2: Getting started with Alexa .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 3: Okay Alexa, this is what I want .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Section 4: Using Alexa apps &amp; skills .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Updates .....</b>	<b>58</b>

## Starting Point

What is it like to find out that your partner is losing his memory? A few years ago, I would have given you an abstract interpretation based on my first five years as a registered mental health nurse, when I mainly worked with families where dementia was present.

Now it is a reality for my family and myself.

Firstly, it's insidious, it creeps in, you doubt its existence, you make excuses for it, deny it, do not see it, banish it. This isn't happening, it's something else.

You notice that the person you love is slightly different, but he has just been through a year of trauma, heart attacks, being stuck in Australia away from the family, of course he is going to be different. It's depression, it's stress, it's tiredness.

It is so hard: on one hand Ron is still writing, he can still perform as a trainer, he is still great as a mentor. On the other hand, a light is going dimmer in his eyes, his body is weaker, he has just had added a diagnosis of mild to moderate heart disease to his list.

Some days he can complete cooking a meal, helping clean the house and then on other days he just retreats inside. He now has his own office where he spends increasing amounts of his time. I think here he can be himself, there is no pressure, he can stare into space or watch loads of Netflix, or write. He doesn't have to perform or try to appear "normal" to us.

There is a future, I know Ron will fight all the way. I just need to find a way that allows us all to feel hopeful, because Ron has certainly not given up on hope and is fighting every step of the way.

## Karen Taylor

### Introduction

Alexa & Me has been written as a guide to help those with dementia, their primary care givers, their family and friends, to both understand and set up the Amazon Alexa Personal Assistant in such a way that it will enhance the autonomy of people with memory problems, dementia or other cognitive impairment.



We believe that the future of people with dementia at all stages can be enhanced by the use of Artificial Intelligence, but only if they are in control of the process through ensuring that its use is subject to essential lifestyle planning as defined by the user in conjunction with the primary care giver.

Given the number of Alexa devices available, this guide has been written in order to maximize the benefits of Alexa using the minimum number of devices. We have also used links to YouTube videos to help people activate the Alexa Skills and to give people some tips on other possibilities.

I would suggest that in order for Alexa to fully enable our environments, we need at least three Alexa devices in our homes. For me, this makes the difference between still being dependent on others and being fully autonomous and interdependent within society.

The Guide will help people to initialise the set-up of Alexa, and importantly to personalise their Alexa to meet their personally defined ways of living through customising how it interacts with the individual. We will update what Alexa can do every couple of months through an online update.

**Ron Coleman**

# Section One

## What I want From Alexa

## Planning My Alexa My Way

If you are like me, you will always try to run before you can walk and probably, like me, you will have a fall and give up before you have even given the task a fair go. Using Alexa technology has the same pitfalls, and the temptation is to run ahead without knowing where you are going, getting lost, then giving up.

A good starting point is a discussion with people you trust to set out what your expectations are from the Alexa.

## Who do you want to be involved in this discussion?

I want the following people involved:

Think about what you want in developing your Alexa Personal Assistant. Two questions that should be asked are:

- 1. What is required for me to stay in charge of my life?**
- 2. How can I stay healthy, safe, and in my life?**

These are simple questions, but they have complex answers. Some of what makes us feel in charge of our own lives can be dangerous or unhealthy. However, if we do not have much of what is important to us in everyday life, then we are more likely to do things that are not safe or are unhealthy.

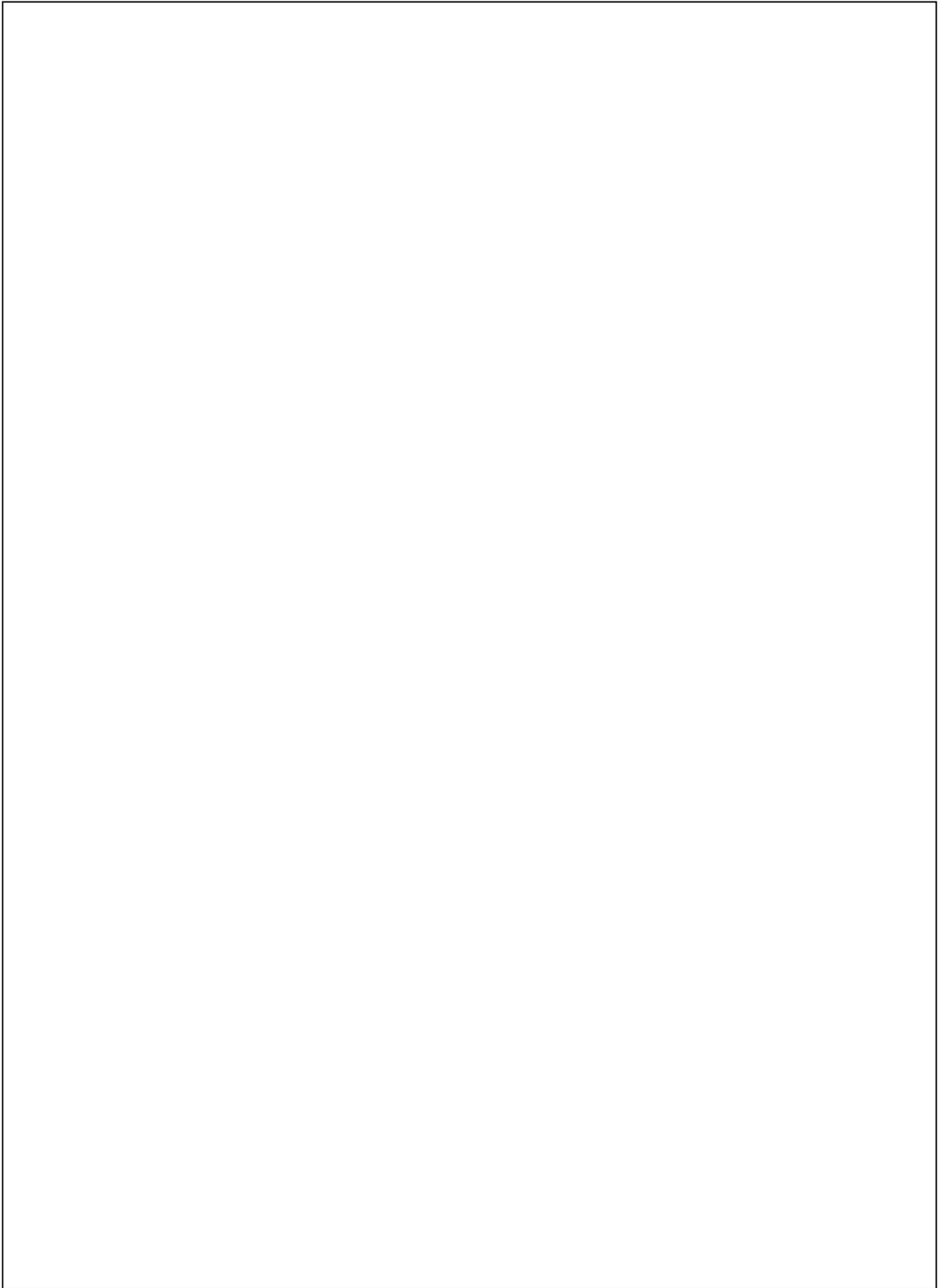
What you are trying to discover and write down is the balance needed between being autonomous and being safe. The balance is different for each of us, including your principal caregivers. You must also remember that these things change over time, so it is important that you review your plan at least once a year.

***Please spend a few minutes answering the following questions before you begin your detail planning.***

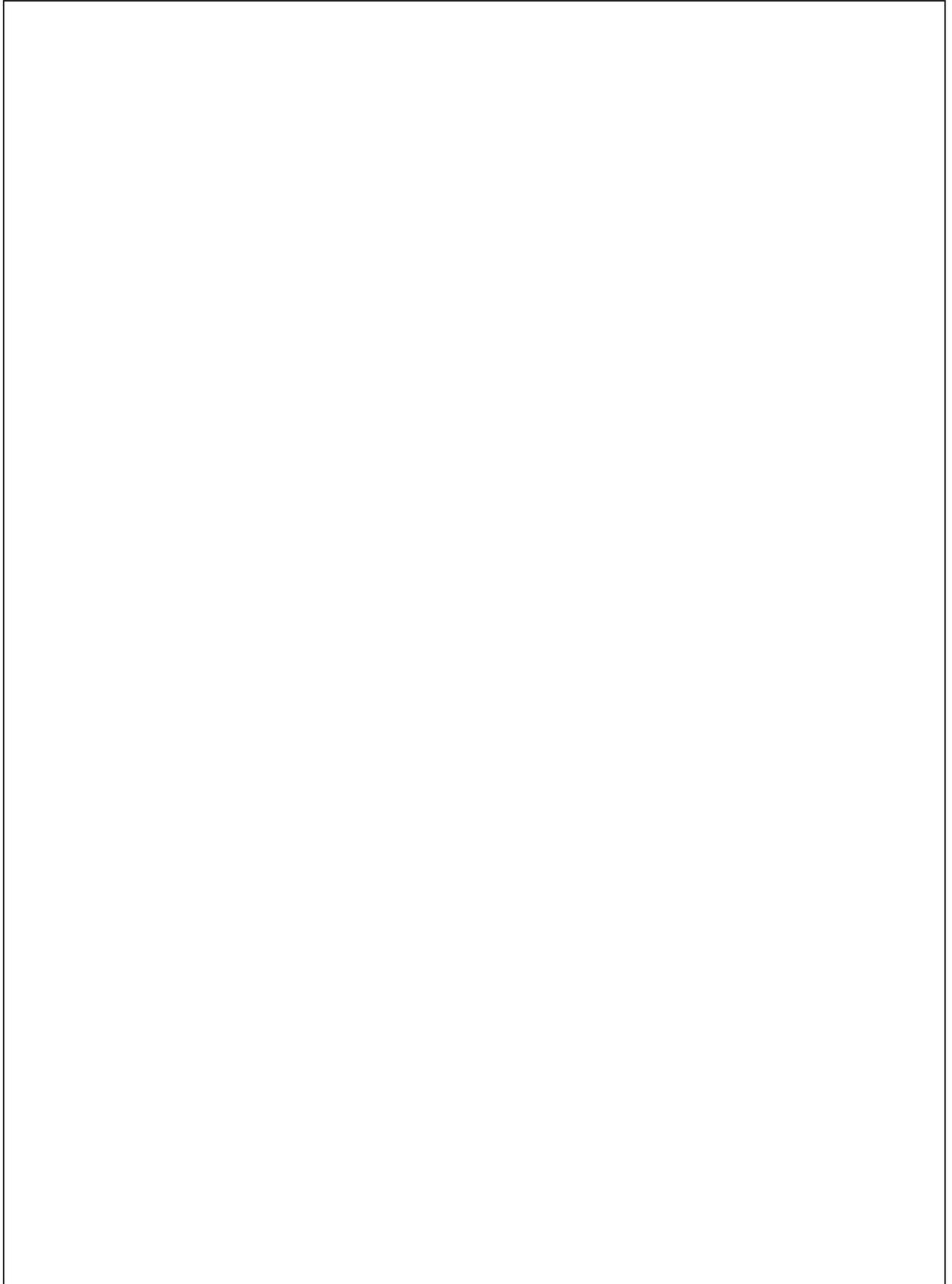
**What do you want your Alexa to assist you with?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

**How can others be involved in the development of your plan?**



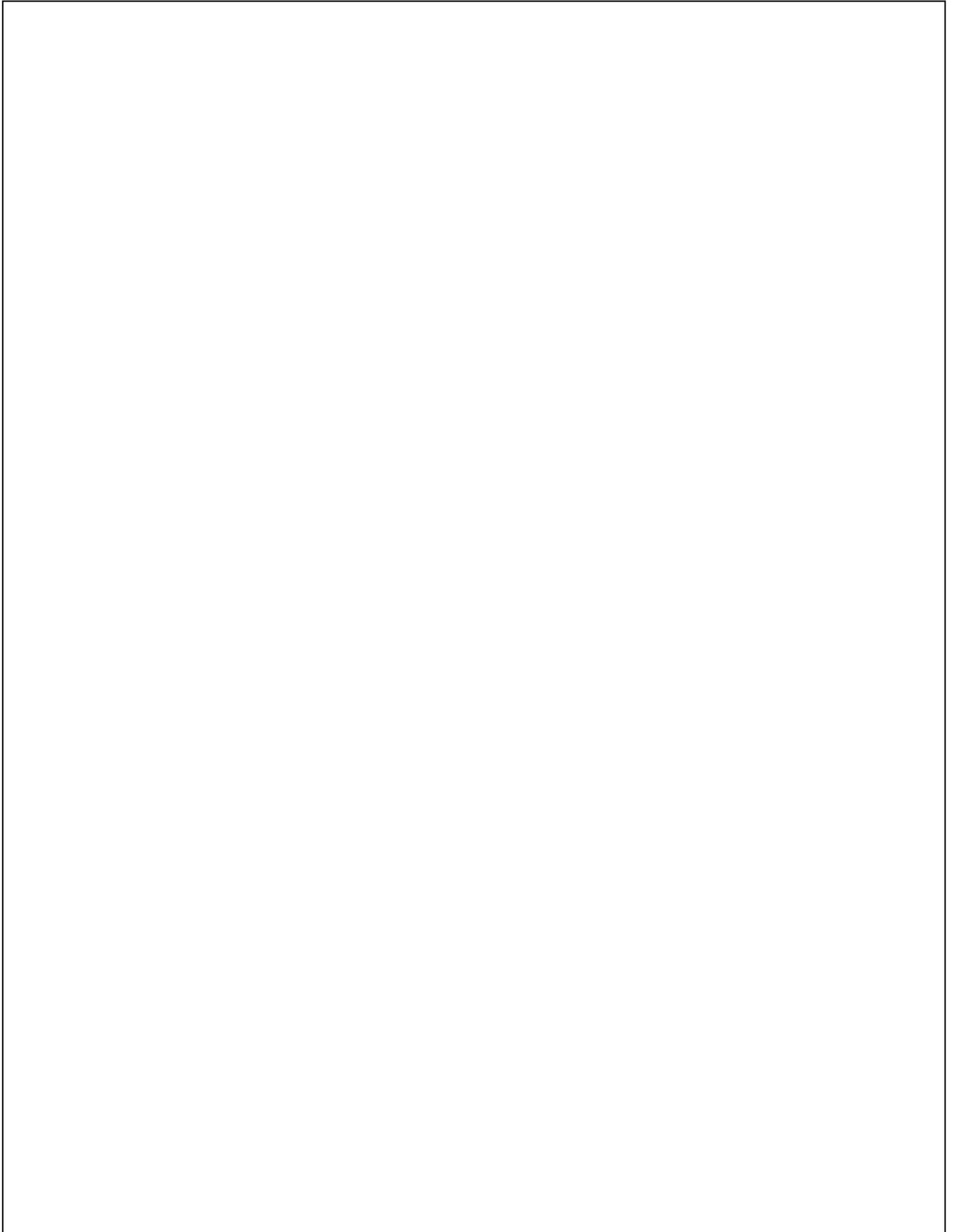
**What ground rules do you want others to agree to?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their ground rules. The box occupies most of the page below the question.

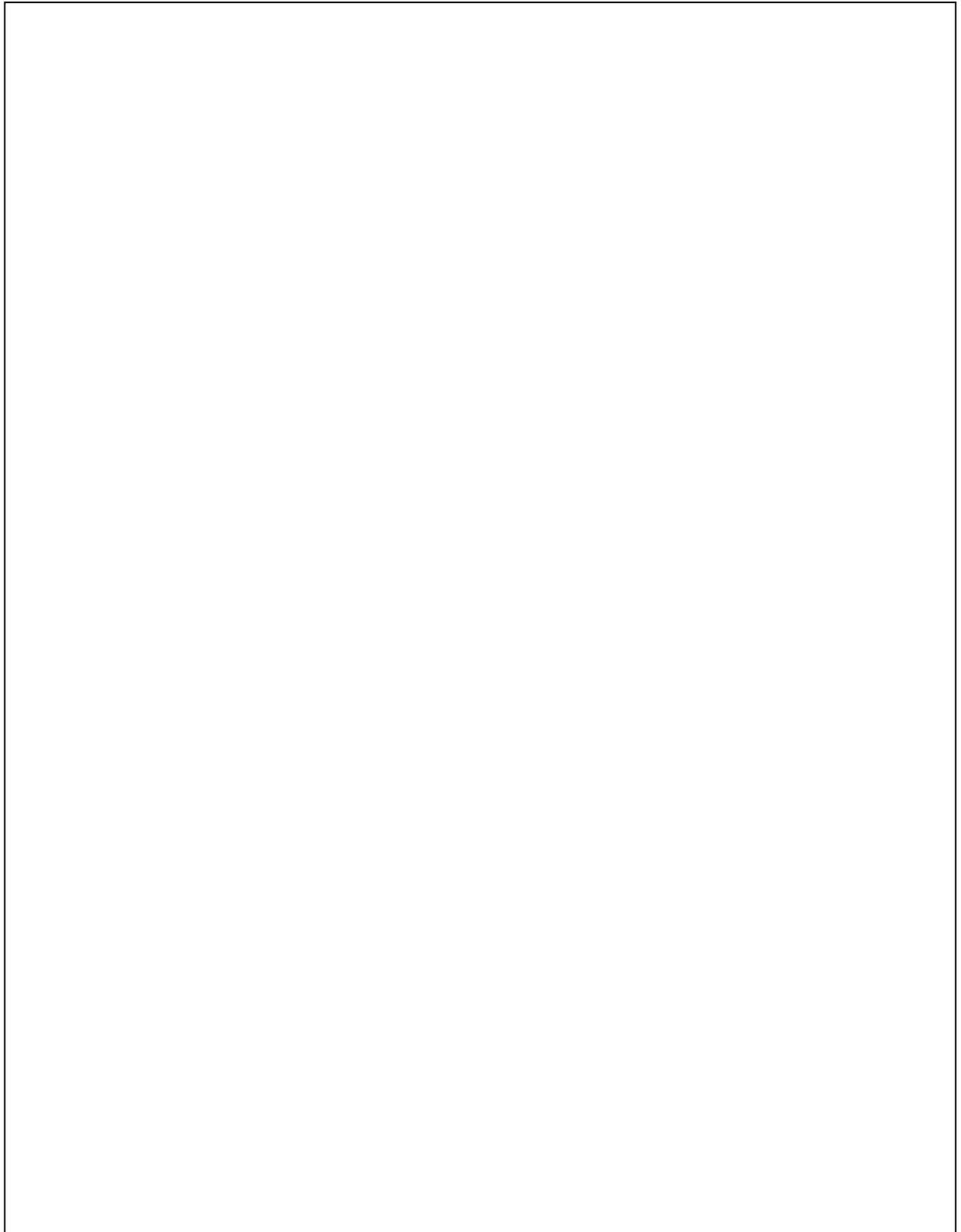
**Who else needs to be involved to make the plan work?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to write their answer to the question above. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space.

**What will you need to feel both in charge and safe within the planning process?**



**What, if any, are the issues of health or safety that you want to address in the plan?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

## Voice or Vision - Picking Your Alexa Device(s)

Having worked out what you want Alexa to do, it is time to decide which members of the Alexa family you want/need in your house to help you do this. The next part of the guide will look at what is available at the moment within the Alexa group. For myself, I have one Echo Show, two Alexa Dots and one kindle fire HD 10. I personally use the Kindle Fire 10 as the device to program and control my Alexa Skills. It can also act as an Alexa Show wherever you are, I use it like this when I am away from home.

### Meet the Alexa Family

---

#### ▶ Echo Dot 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation

Already into its third generation, the Echo Dot is a voice-controlled smart speaker that's perfect for any room. Just ask for music, news, information and more. You can also call anyone with an Echo device, the Alexa App or Skype. The following video explanation and review of the echo dot is one of the best of its type - a must watch in terms of informing your decision-making.

**Video 1:** <https://youtu.be/tDX34ORSrbo>

#### ▶ Amazon Echo 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation

The second-generation Amazon Echo is an affordable, fully capable smart speaker with dual speakers powered by Dolby, which means it sounds much better than the smaller Echo Dot featured above. Its sound quality is more than good enough for most everyday needs. It is

a great starter option. See this really good short review of The Amazon Echo 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation.

**Video 2:** <https://youtu.be/L5MS9AolzEI>

## ▶ Amazon New Echo Show (2018)

The Echo Show is my favorite member of the Alexa Family. The latest version has a 10inch screen and quality speakers. The added value of having the screen should not be underestimated. For me, this comes to the fore when my reminders are not only spoken but also shown on the screen, and the fact that I can see how to cook dishes as I am cooking them. The Echo Show will continue to do more and more and is, I believe, one of the essential components in my journey of living with memory problems. Look at its potential on the video linked below.

**Video 3:** <https://youtu.be/OSUooKEFKB4>

## ▶ Kindle Fire HD10

Though the Kindle Fire is often thought of as a device for books and movies, it is in fact much more. Add a little Alexa magic and you have a massively powerful Kindle Show that you can take on the road wherever you go, and your reminders, diary, brain training and both your morning and evening routines go with you to be accessed via the internet. The following video gives a good and honest introduction into the device.

**Video 4:** [https://youtu.be/VMV\\_MOwHw3w](https://youtu.be/VMV_MOwHw3w)

Though there are other members of the Alexa family, the remit for this manual is to create a dementia responsive system, and through using Alexa devices in my own journey, it seems to me that these are the four devices that can make a real difference in how we live our lives. I am also hoping that you will find a mix-and-match here that will work for you. I may include some other devices in any new edition of this manual once people with dementia have tested them.

I have an Echo Dot in my bedroom and office and the Echo Show in the kitchen.

The Kindle Fire I have with me most of the time, mainly because it is the most versatile device I have and it will activate reminders etc. even when not connected to the internet -though there is obviously a loss of some other functionalities due to no internet access.

## My Devices My Way

---

Having watched the videos, it is time to decide what devices you want to meet your needs. To help you do this, I have completed the following grid that shows what devices I have and where in the house they stay.

Room	Device	Importance
My Bedroom	Echo Dot	Essential
Kitchen	Echo Show	Essential

Study	Echo Dot	Very
Living Room	None/ use Kindle Fire HD 10	Do not need it at present
Other Rooms	Fire HD 10	Works for me

Use the grid below to help you decide what Alexa devices you want and where in the house you want them to be sited.

Room	Device	Importance

Once this decision is made, you are ready to buy your devices and are now only a couple of days away from starting to create your own Alexa house. Remember, look around for the best deal and use PayPal or another payment system that will refund you if your goods are faulty or fail to turn up.

**Let's fast forward three days and move onto Section Two: how to set our devices up and begin to interact with Alexa.**

# **Section Two**

## **Getting started with Alexa**

When all the devices have arrived, it is now time to set up our Alexa system.

In my box I have:

- 1 x Kindle Fire HD 10,
- 2 x Echo Dots 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation
- 1 x New Echo Show

The other important thing to arrive that day for me was my son Rory, a self-proclaimed expert in all things technical. He is also my named care provider and he has brought with him his own Amazon Echo 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation so that he could connect into my system. He also brought his mobile smart phone.

**Note:**

***Having a smart phone or tablet is important for the primary care giver as it is through this that they can access the Alexa App that will then integrate them into your Alexa home system.***

We will now explore how to set the system up; in order to do this in a meaningful way we will work through each of the devices by means of watching a YouTube video as well as some written commentary from myself.

► **Setting up the Kindle Fire HD 10**

When you turn Kindle Fire HD on for the first time, you see a series of screens that help you set up and register the device. Don't worry: there aren't many questions, and you know all the answers.

Connect to your Wi-Fi network. You need this connection to register your device (if Amazon hasn't already pre-registered your device to your account). Follow these steps to register and set up your Kindle Fire HD: Text Version Connect.

**Video 5:** [https://youtu.be/VMV\\_MOwHw3w](https://youtu.be/VMV_MOwHw3w)

A good YouTube video that explains in great detail how to set up your Kindle fire is:

**Video 6:** <https://youtu.be/sxym9MP-EzM>

Since the Alexa App is pre-loaded on the Kindle Fire 10, this gives you the chance to start personalising your Alexa now if you wish. Simply tap Alexa on your screen and then open Show. Once it is open simply say:



*"Alexa, learn my voice."*

Create a voice profile using compatible Alexa-enabled devices so that Alexa can call you by name and improve personalisation of supported Alexa features based on your voice. Select from the menu Settings > Alexa Account > Recognised Voices > Your Voice.

**Video 7:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3rCa0VL4AE>

**Note for the primary caregiver:**

***Do not worry if you are using another device, just follow the same process by going through your Alexa App. You can do the same thing from your mobile phone once you have downloaded the Alexa App.***

## ▶ **Setting up the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Echo Dot**

Setting up the Echo Dot 3<sup>rd</sup> generation has been made really easy as the following video shows:

**Video 8:** [https://youtu.be/hmG\\_PbLQZdU](https://youtu.be/hmG_PbLQZdU)

## ▶ **Setting up the Echo Show 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation**

Once again, the detail of the video below removes the need for me to say much about setting this up. It is so easy even I got it right first time by following this video!

**Video 9:** [https://youtu.be/8U-QAM\\_8H7Y](https://youtu.be/8U-QAM_8H7Y)

**My Big Tip:**

***During set-up, use only ONE App device to integrate everything. Kindle Fire HD 10 is ideal because of the 10inch screen, and it also allows you to get used to using the device.***

## ▶ Mobile Phone

The Mobile phone is an absolute must for the primary care giver as it becomes their platform for the Alexa App. Access to the App can be found in your App store, it is a free download that you can then connect to the Alexa Amazon account of the person you are supporting. Prompts throughout make this process easily do-able.

You should now spend a few days getting used to the things you can do. It may be useful to revisit Video 2 and try out the commands on your system, but be warned if your Alexa is on, it will respond to hearing the prompt from the video unless you have personalised your system. Alexa Show will also prompt you to try new commands by showing them on screen.

**Now let us move to section three and see what Alexa can really do.**

# Section Three

# **Okay Alexa, This is What I Want**

In order to get the best from Alexa, we need to ensure that we input the proper information. To do this, it is important that we use a quality-planning tool, and for me that tool is an essential lifestyle plan.

The following is a short description of essential lifestyle planning that will hopefully give the reader some understanding of the process.

## An Overview of Essential Lifestyle Planning

Adapted from an article by Michael Smull and Susan Burke Harrison, Essential Lifestyle Planning is a guided process for learning how someone wants to live and for developing a plan to help make it happen. It's also:

- a snapshot of how someone wants to live today, serving as a blueprint for how to support someone tomorrow
- a way of organising and communicating what is important to an individual in "user friendly", plain language
- a flexible process that can be used in combination with other person-centered planning techniques
- a way of making sure that the person is heard, regardless of the severity of his or her disability

Essential lifestyle plans are developed through a process of asking and listening. The best essential lifestyle plans reflect the balance between competing desires, needs, choice and safety.

Developing plans that really reflect how people want to live require:

- the perspectives of those who know and care about the person
- their stories about good days and bad

- what they like and admire about the person

Good plans reflect the perceptions of the focus person and those who know and care about him or her. Learning how people want to live is just the beginning, helping people have their own lives requires changing:

- how we think
- how we are organized
- how we act

This is now at the center of how I live my life: **an individualised person-centered process, geared to helping me retain as much autonomy as possible.** As part of this, I mapped out all of the things that are essential to me on a daily basis, starting from the moment I wake up until my time of going to sleep. It sounds easy enough but when you start to write down everything you do in a day that is essential for your wellbeing, the list grows and grows, then grows some more.

My current list (Jan 2020) is broken down into 8 sections. These are:

- ▶ Wake up
- ▶ Morning
- ▶ Lunch
- ▶ Afternoon

- ▶ Late Afternoon
- ▶ Dinner
- ▶ Evening
- ▶ Bedtime routine

These sections are just the essentials for when Karen is not around, and when she is around my daily essentials may change. This is also true for weekends and holidays. My planning system must therefore be flexible enough to adapt to an ever changing me, and yet keep me on track in being able to maintain control in my life. An example of this subtle difference between essential and desirable can be when I eat breakfast, the essential is that I eat the desirable is what I eat.

My future Essentials plan would look something like this:

### ▶ **Monday - Wake me up**

Alexa Alarm is set for 7.00am. The alarm goes off and heavy metal music plays. This is to ensure that I respond to my alarm and wake up.

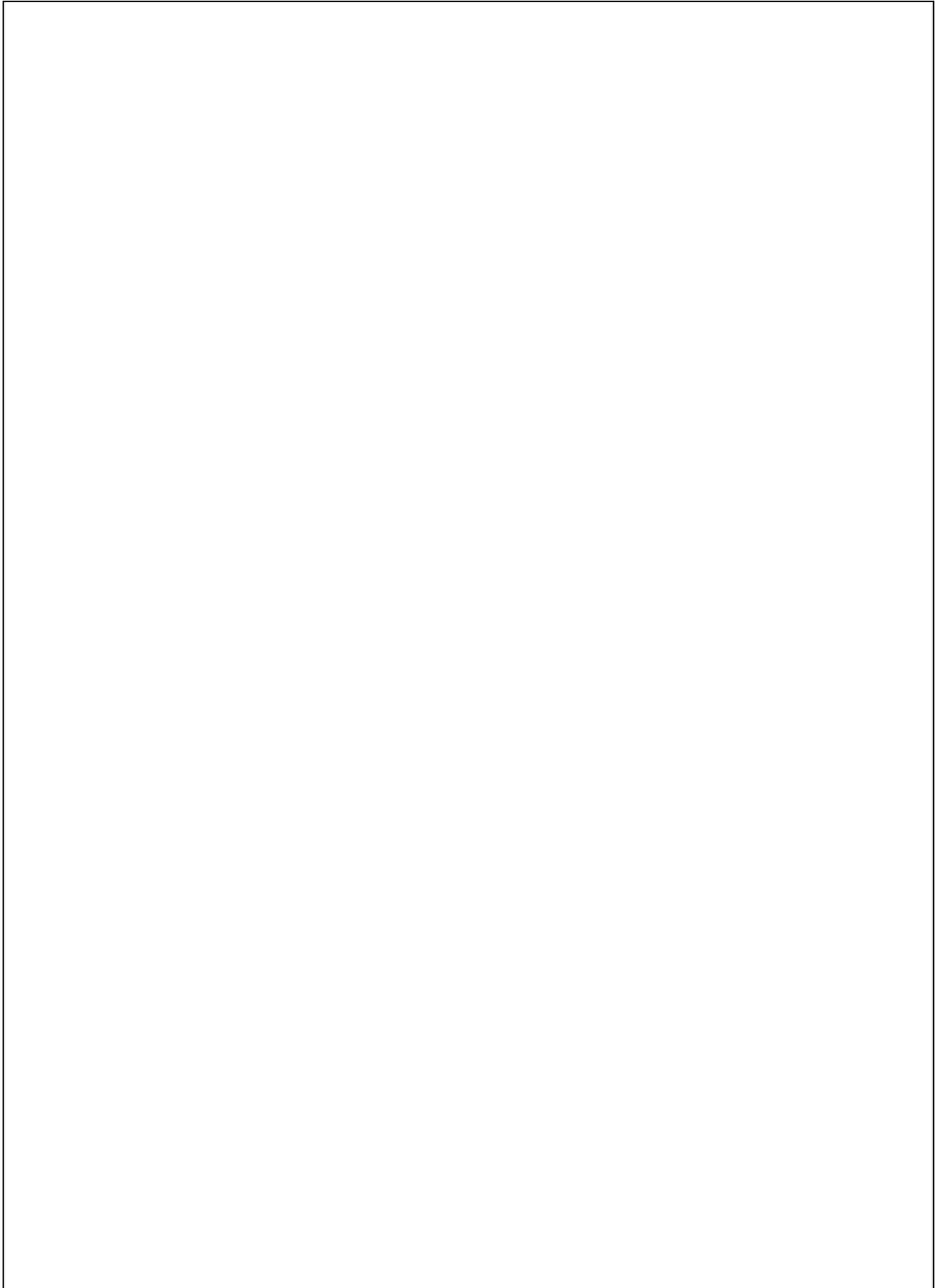
I then instruct Alexa to tune into Radio 4fm to listen to thought for the day. I will also get the latest news briefing from the BBC via Alexa.

At 8.15am, I will get a reminder from Alexa about having a shower, then I will go have a shower, which will also be operated by Alexa in terms of controlling temperature, thereby ensuring my safety. Alexa

will also be able to control turning the water on and off both via voice control and by use of a reminder timer.

***On the next page write your 'wake me up'.***

## ▶ Your Essential Life Plan: Monday - Wake Me Up

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their essential life plan for Monday.

## ► My Morning

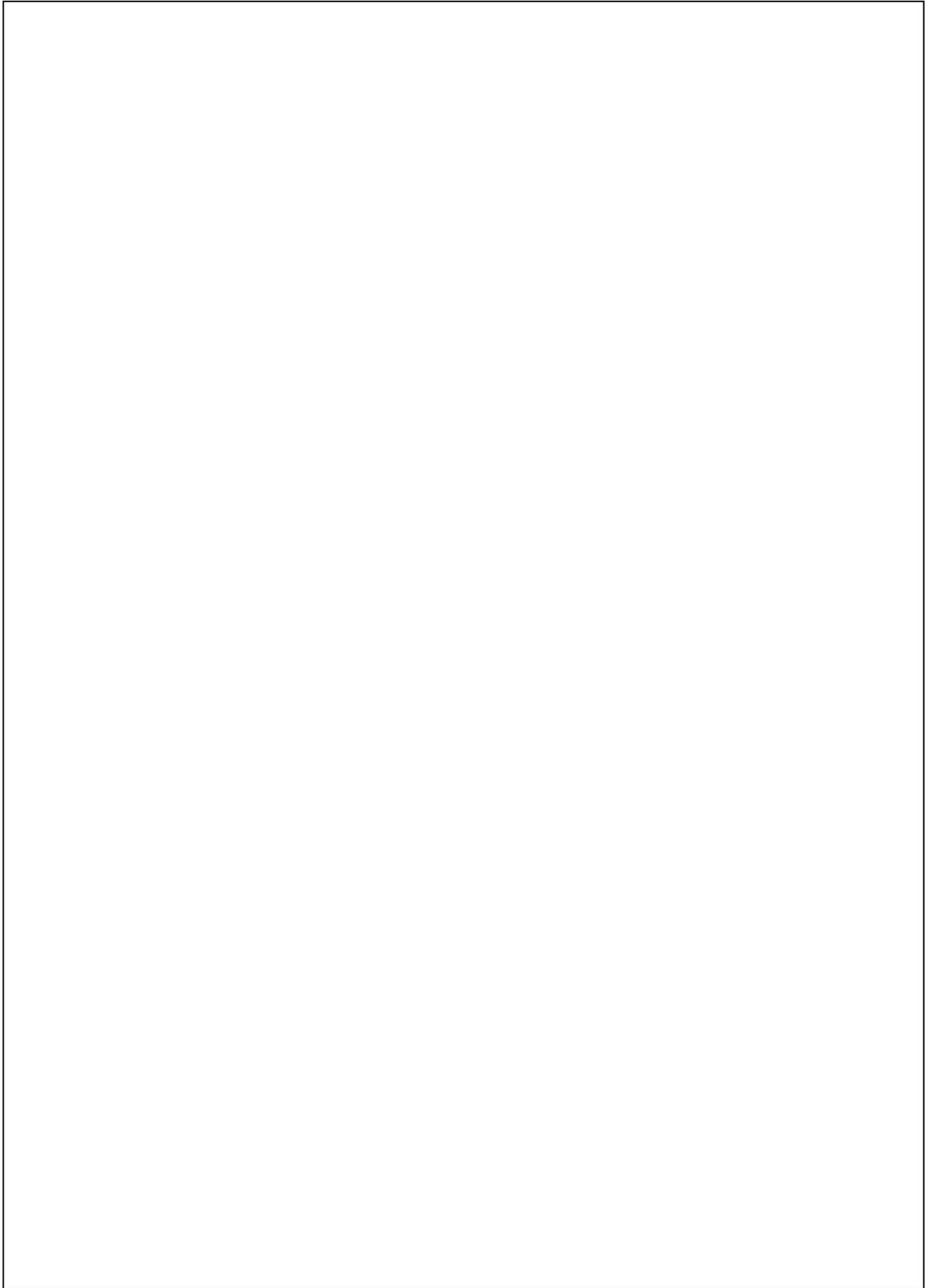
Once dressed, my morning begins with breakfast. This is normally fresh fruit and yogurt with a strong cup of tea.

After breakfast my day really begins, and at 9.30am until 10.15am I do some brain training using my kindle. This is part of my neuroplasticity effort and involves finding five letter words in a set of seven or eight letters. This helps get my brain going in the morning, but also makes me use parts of my brain involved in short-term memory retention.

After brain training it is time to go to my house office and start work, normally dealing with e-mails, checking Facebook and other social networks, and posting things as required.

At 12 Noon Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday I stop to watch the Daily Politics, stopping half an hour earlier on Wednesday as it begins at 11.30am.

## ▶ Your Morning

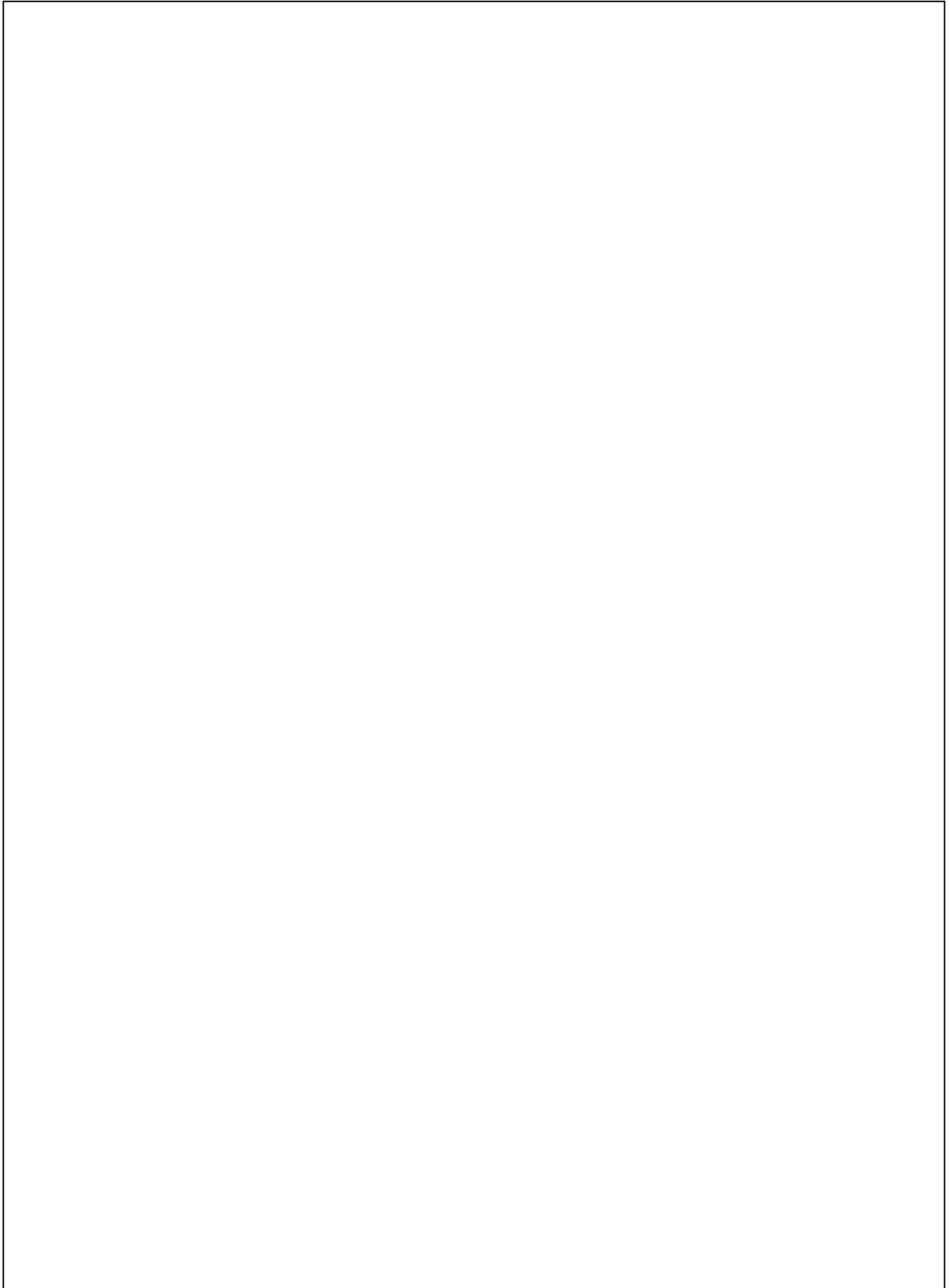
A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their morning routine or thoughts.

## ▶ My Lunch

Lunch for me starts at 1 o'clock after I have watched my political program. I like to vary my lunch, though I am partial to salmon, sweetcorn and mayonnaise. I also like soup in the winter, though I do get embarrassed when I end up wearing the soup.

I do not mind eating lunch with my family, but I am not so good when eating lunch with people I do not know so well. I also take my medication before lunch finishes at 2 PM and it is time for me to go back to work.

## ▶ Your Lunch

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing or drawing. It occupies most of the page below the title.

## ► My Afternoon

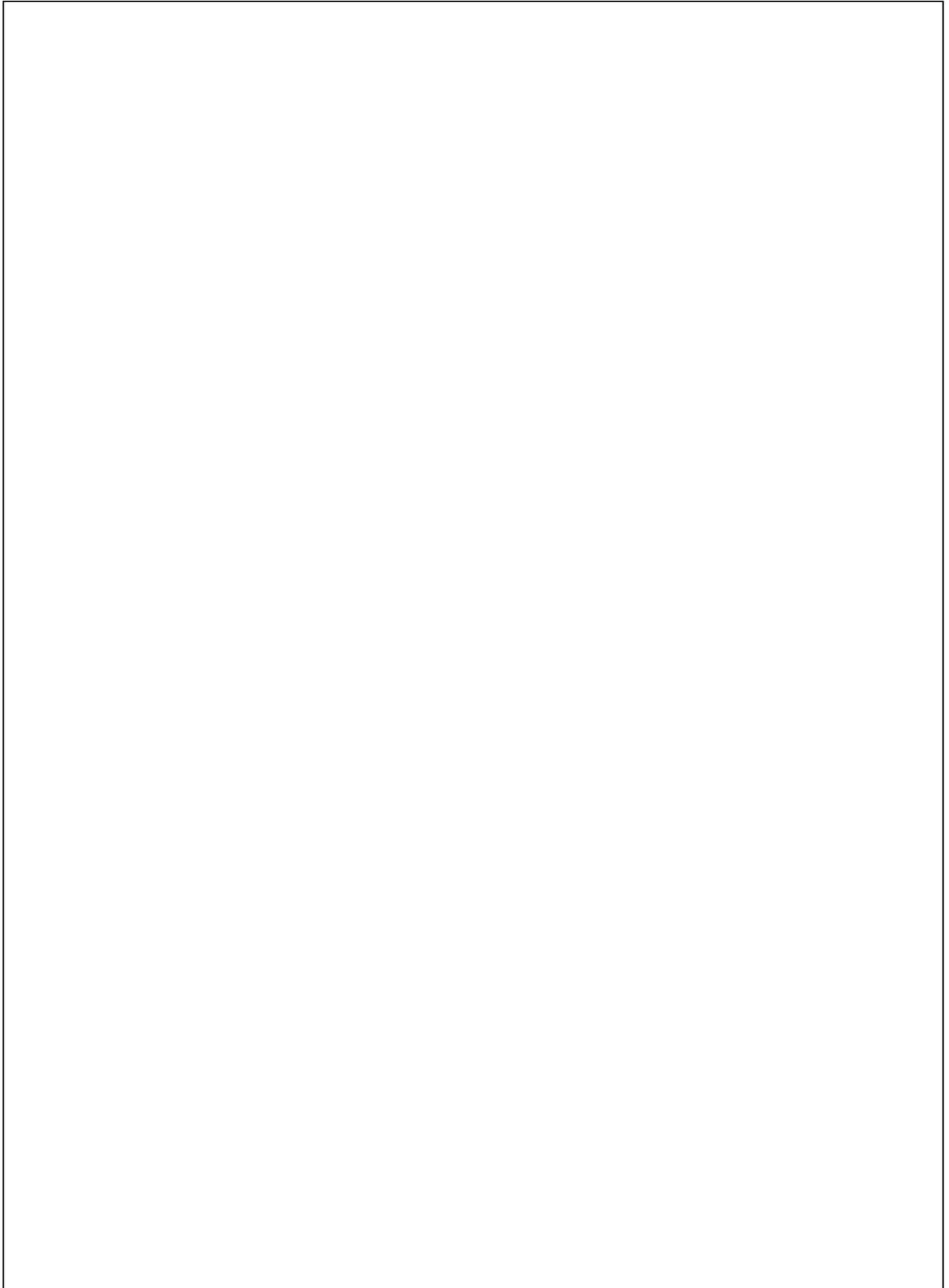
I am normally much better in the afternoon, so I tend to do work that requires more concentration or needs me to think more about what I'm doing. I also want to spend at least one hour in the afternoon writing my journal, so I can keep my writing up to date.

I am also happy to do Skype calls in the afternoon.

At around 4:30pm during the school week, I need to spend time with my youngest daughter when she comes home from school, so we can keep in touch with what is happening in each other's lives. This will also stop me from isolating myself in my study room, as this is something I am liable to do if I do not have other things in place to stop me.

I also enjoy tea and a biscuit (or two) at around 3.30pm, though the biscuit is not an essential - well, not every day.

## ▶ Your Afternoon

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing or drawing. It occupies most of the page below the title.

## ▶ **My Late Afternoon**

Late afternoon is the one part of the day that can change a lot depending on what is happening both in my life and in the lives of the rest of the family.

At this point of the day, I do like to catch up on what is happening in the world, hence Radio 4 is always on in my office.

This would be a normal time for me to call my mom and also my sister.

## ► Your Late Afternoon

## ▶ My Dinner

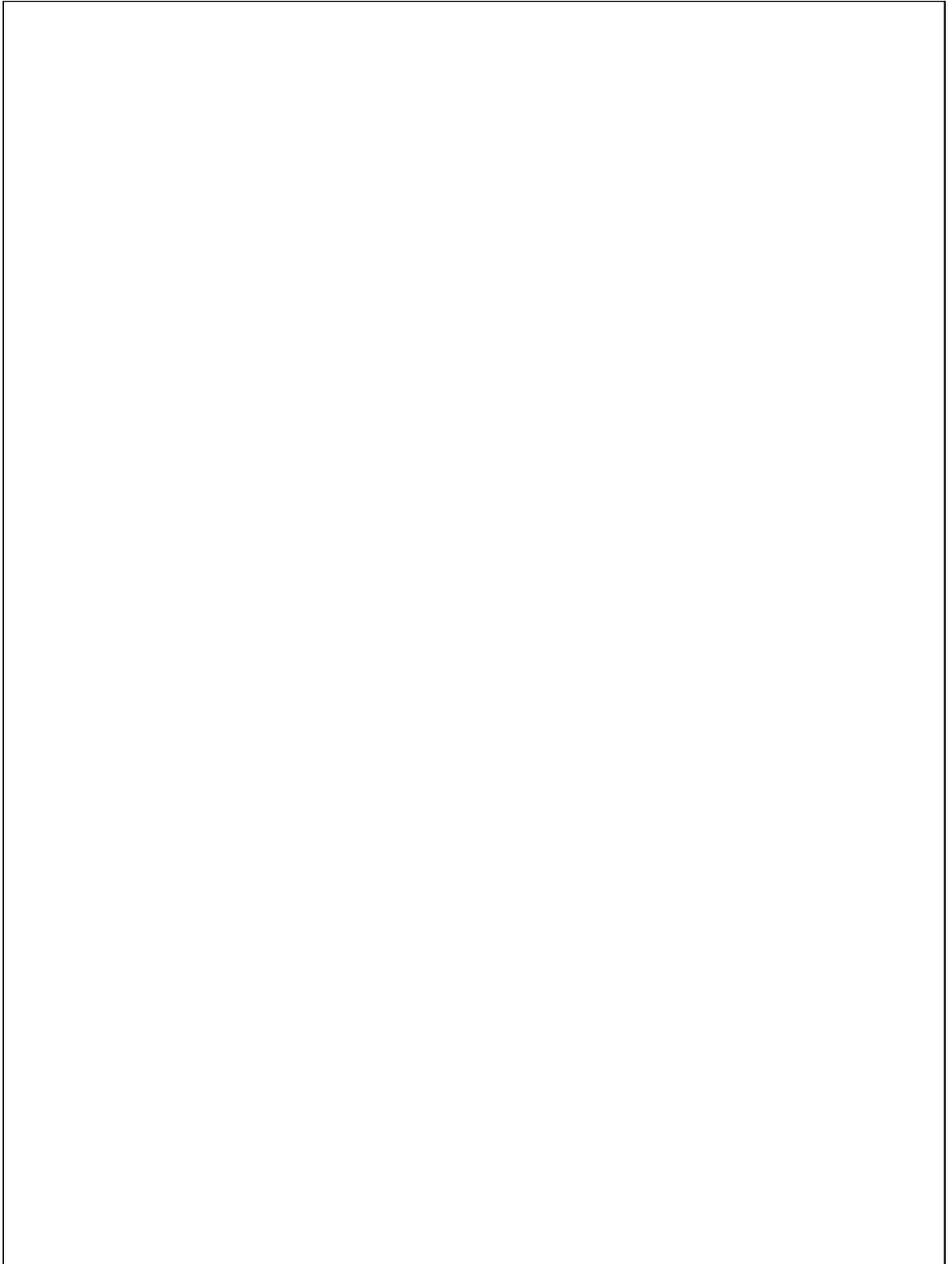
Dinnertime is a family time and we all eat together around the table. Television is switched off and we use this time as a chance to catch up with each other.

We tend to eat very healthy meals, particularly we eat vegetarian at least three times a week. Karen drives this healthy lifestyle and she often faces protest from the two children and I about the meals we are given.

Sometimes it might appear that we protest too much, as we always eat the food in front of us. It is important that I do eat healthily as it is clear that good nutrition is important when dealing with memory loss.

I also take my evening medication at dinner time.

## ▶ Your Dinner

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for a drawing or a written response related to the 'Your Dinner' section header.

## ► My Evening

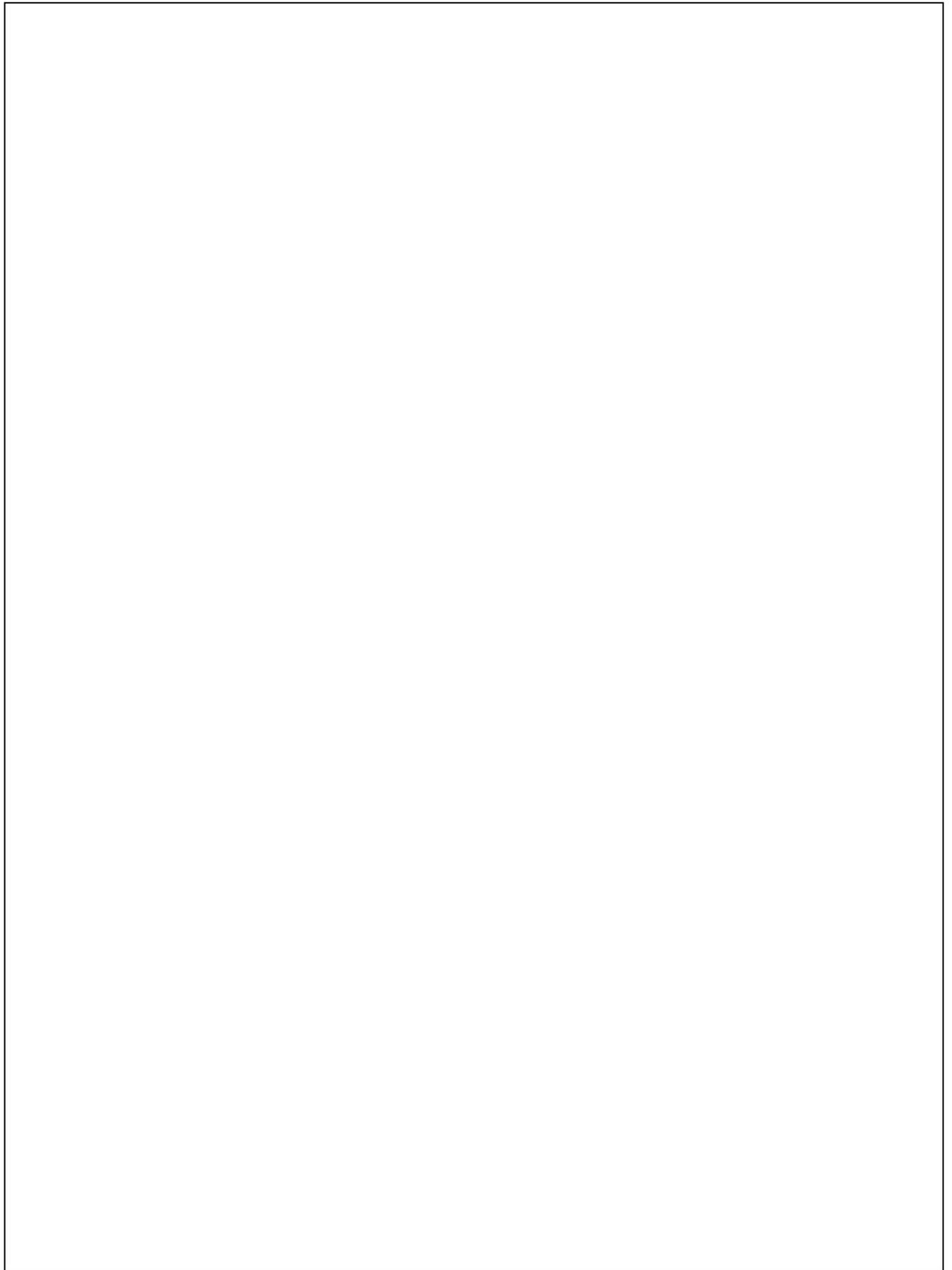
I often refer to the best way of living our lives as living 'a Mars bar day'. The reason for this is simple, we need to learn to work rest and play. Eight hours a day of work leaves us 16 hours to rest and play, and getting this balance right is essential to ensure our wellbeing.

Play is something I find difficult, mainly because I am too competitive to play games. It also requires social interaction and this is something that I do struggle with.

It is really important that I take time to play in the evening, indeed I would go as far as to say that play for me is an essential part of my life, whether I wish to play or not.

I may also in the evening do one or two Skype calls with people from other continents. This should however never exceed three calls on any evening.

## ▶ Your Evening

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their notes for the evening.

## ► My Bedtime routine

I guess the most important part of the day for me has to be my bedtime routine. The first thing I do as I prepare for bed is to take my final medications of the day.

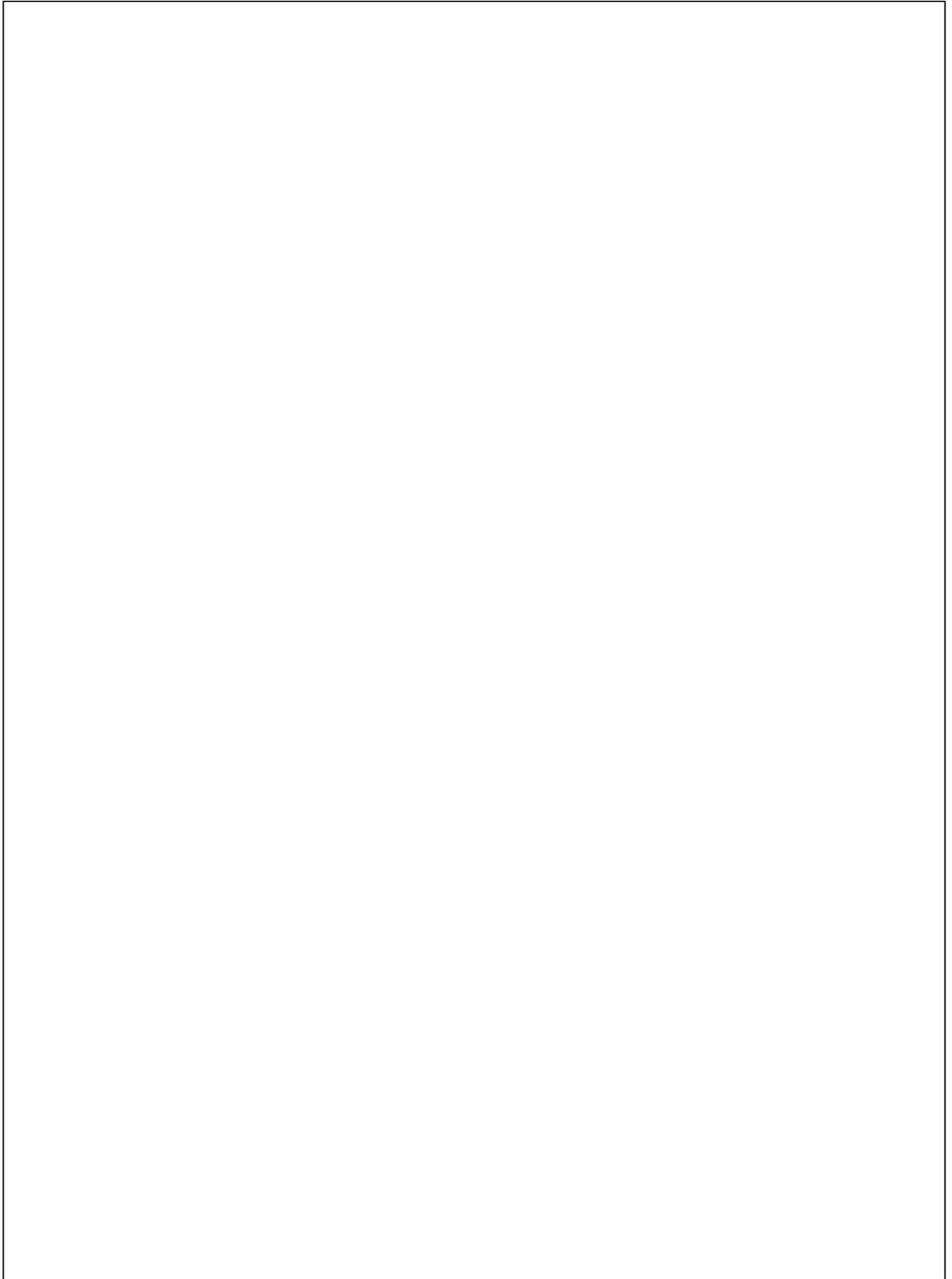
I then get a hot drink taken upstairs to my bedroom, and more often than not go for a bath to relax my muscles, especially in my legs. This is important as it helps me to stop thrashing about in the bed. This not only helps me, but it also helps Karen who suffers a lot if I do not prepare properly.

Along with my medications, I also take magnesium as part of my bedtime routine.

At my bedside I keep the following: spray for angina, paracetamol for pain, a cold drink and my kindle in case I cannot get to sleep. I also use the Kindle as a light if I have to get up through the night.

Having done all this I can now jump into bed and try to get some sleep.

## ▶ Your Bedtime Routine

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a user to write their bedtime routine. The box occupies most of the page below the title.

This way of planning takes up a lot of time in the first instance. What you have read up to now is only my routine for one day, and in order to create a plan that would honor my routine I would write up my essential routine over the period of one month. This would then give me a smorgasbord of things that I could do every day. In other words, I would create a weekly plan to ensure diversity in my life. I have always thought that surprises were an important part of our lives, so **building surprises into the plan is really important.**

Understanding your own or another person's story or narrative is also essential if we are to get the planning process to work properly. This meant that I would have to work with my whole team in an open and honest way, therefore I would have to learn to trust them very quickly. This will always be difficult to achieve for me, as one of the things I have noticed is my tendency to become paranoid very easily.

Though my paranoia has its roots in things that have happened, and I know this, I still have great difficulty in bringing this under control and as a consequence I often find myself losing my temper when I feel paranoid. Being aware of these things has many drawbacks, the main one being you know when not to speak to people, as well as when you should speak to people.

How we hear a person's narrative is also important and we should ensure that we do not rush this process. I am a natural storyteller and when I tell my story, I wish to tell it as a storyteller. This again is something I must consider when it comes to telling my team.

Person Centered Planning is not an easy way to work and it is fraught with pitfalls, but it is also filled with opportunities. **If we are going to change the way people with memory loss are treated in our society, then we must start by changing the way we plan.**

This is how I intend to have my life mapped out as I face what the wheel of time has set before me. Personally, I am not yet ready for a formal and detailed essential life plan, so what the above plan contains is the bare bones of my plan that will in time be fleshed out and turned into a plan that can be implemented on a daily basis.

The major challenge in this type of planning centers around how we deal with the significant others in a person's life. For me, it would be how can we ensure that Karen's needs are met whilst at the same time keeping me in the centre of the process.

There is no easy answer to this and therefore we must rely on our ability to negotiate, whilst making sure that we honor the process. Another challenge when planning, especially where there may be some differences in what the people are asking for, is to **ensure that we hear from as many people as possible who are involved directly in providing services to the person.**

This should also involve people who are providing non-paid services as well as those who are recompensed for their time. I am sure that this will be an area of discussion that we will come back to as my journey continues.

## Conclusion

I should mention that there are other person-centered tools that can be used to help a person plan, such as PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) which is a tool that we would recommend. The main thing, of course, is that the person at the centre of the planning process is in charge of which tool or tools are used.

In the next section I will explore the use of technologies that can be helpful and easily available, and also my experience with Alexa as I try to train this AI to become my personal assistant, thereby really helping me to go forward into the future with confidence.

# **Section Four**

## **Using Alexa Apps & Skills**

The final section of this manual will explore how we can use Alexa Apps and Skills in ways that will enhance our lives. For me, how I get up in the morning sets the mood for the rest of the day.

I have used Alexa routines to help make sure that my mornings start the best they can. My daily routine, with small changes depending on the day of the week, looks something like this:

- **Alexa alarm goes off**
- **Rock music goes on via Alexa, plays for five minutes**
- **my News Flash briefing from the BBC plays**
- **the weather forecast then plays**
- **Alexa plays twenty minutes of Glam Rock**
- **Alexa will then tell me it is time to have a shower (I have also programmed her to tell me that if I don't shower, I will**

All of this happens, and I have still not said anything. She can also put my kettle on or a teasmade if I have one, so I can get my first cuppa of the day.

Alexa also reminds me to take my morning medications and will continually remind me on my Echo Show until I tell her to stop. Other parts of my routine covered are my daily diary, and my to do list.

All of the above happens because my Alexa Alarm acts as a trigger to my morning routine and I am therefore able to start each day in a safe and secure way.

Using routines helps me create a dementia responsive smart home through triggering devices or getting news, traffic, and weather info, either at a certain time, when I enter a certain location or when I say a specific phrase to an Alexa-enabled device (e.g. the [Echo](#) or [Echo Dot](#)).

In addition to toggling smart devices and triggering skills, there are a number of other things you can do with routines:

- **Time-limited music: if your routine includes music, you can instruct Alexa to turn it off after a certain time**
- **Wait actions: Alexa can turn the lights on at the start of your routine, and then play music 20 minutes later**
- **Announcements: Alexa can send a pre-recorded message to all of your Alexa devices as part of a routine**
- **Notifications: your routine can send a custom push notification to other members of your household**
- **Do Not Disturb: Alexa can enable Do Not Disturb for a designated period of time**

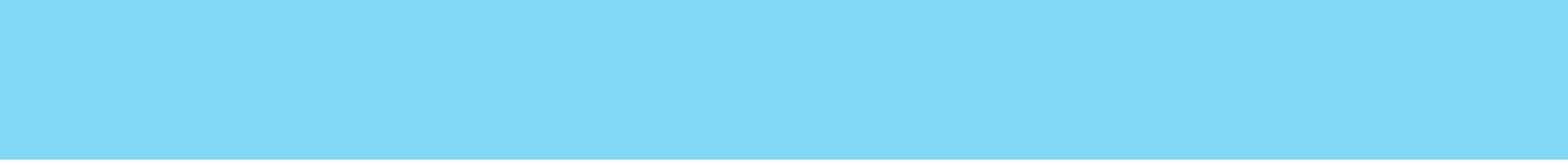
The following video takes you through the process of setting up routines

**Video 10:** [https://youtu.be/US8bi-K\\_63o](https://youtu.be/US8bi-K_63o)

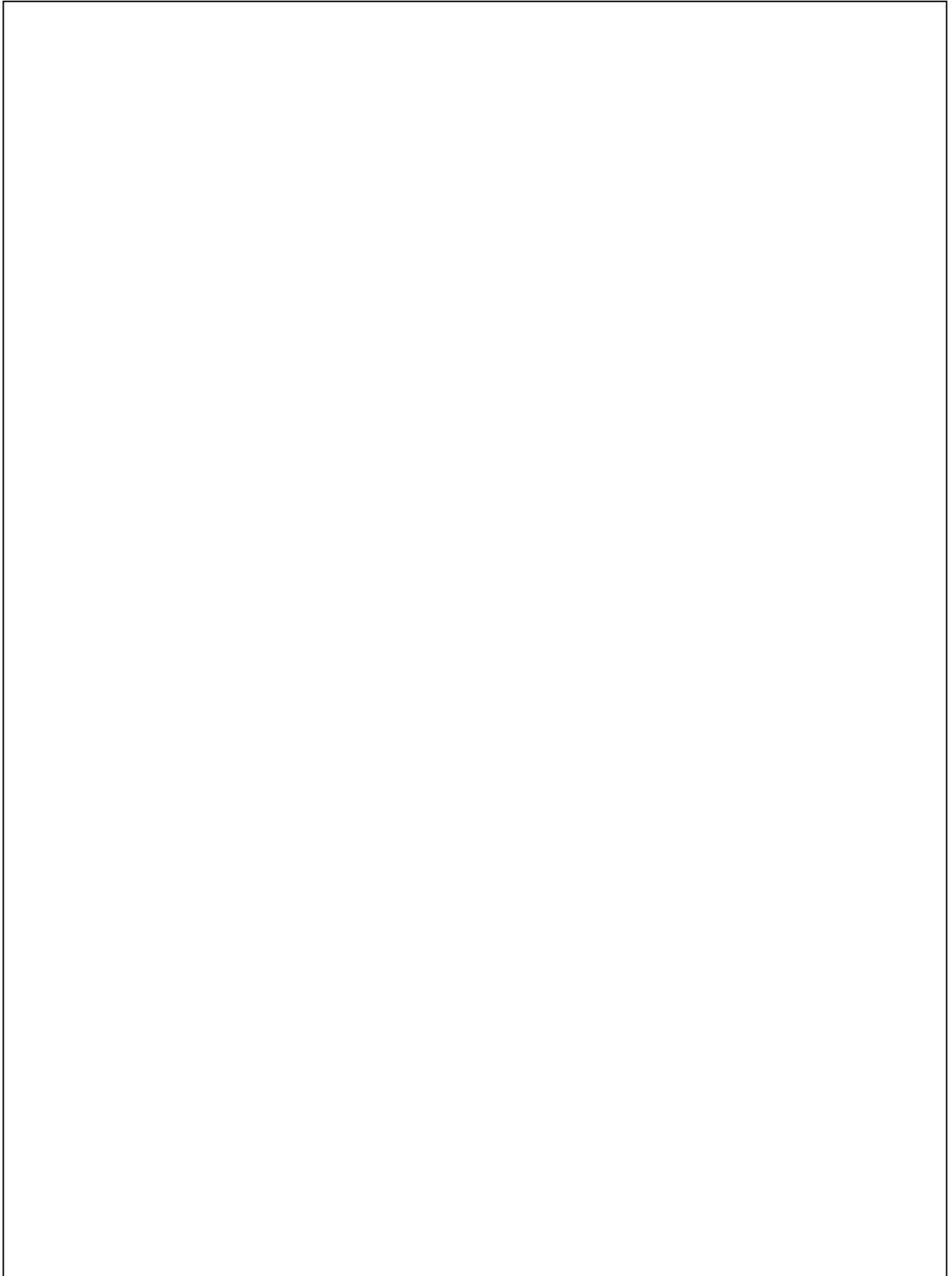
One way of determining what should be part of your Alexa Routines is to answer the following questions:

- ▶ What are essential routines for you in the morning?
- ▶ What are essential routines for you during the day?
- ▶ What are essential routines for you for bedtime?

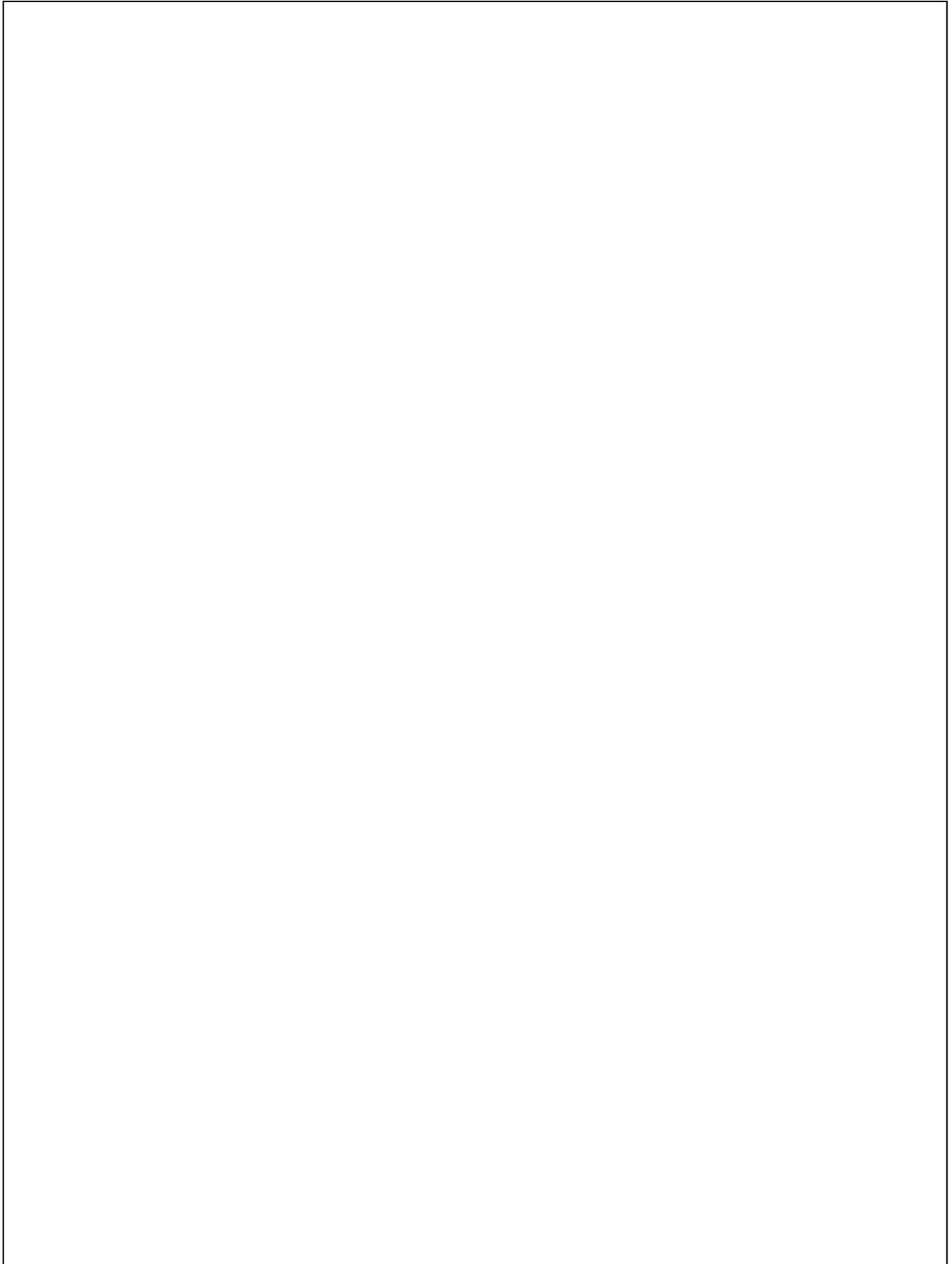
***Use the next few pages to answer these questions, remembering that we are dealing with essentials here, not what we want.***



► **The essential routines for me in the morning are:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their morning routines. The box is currently blank.

► **The essential routines for me during the day are:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their essential daily routines.

## ▶ My essential routines for bedtime

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down their essential bedtime routines.

## ► Things that may affect my routines and how to deal with them

*Use the following pages to write what you want people to do if things happen that affect your agreed routines. It is also useful to give examples.*

(continued)

By setting times for routines we can allow Alexa to interact with us when we need or want her to most, without having to say anything. It is useful, but by no means compulsory, to allow your primary care giver access to your routines.

Personally, I enjoyed working through all the questions in this manual with members of my family.

Simple commands can be used to do a lot of the tasks that we do on a daily basis such as:

***"Alexa, set a reminder"***

***"Alexa, set an alarm"***

***"Alexa, create a to do list"***

***"Alexa, add to my to do list"***

***"Alexa, create a shopping list"***

***"Alexa, add to my shopping list"***

I often use the above commands, almost as a digital part of memory, not only to remind me of appointments but also what I want from the appointment. My partner can use her mobile to read things like my shopping list, add to it, remove items or, in our case, send it to my local shop for same day delivery.

When you use any of the above commands with Alexa, she will prompt you in the required interaction to achieve your desired outcome. This means that much of what we need to begin to make our spaces dementia responsive is already available.

Connecting Alexa to other systems takes a bit more work: getting her to turn a lamp on or off for example, requires an Alexa enabled appliance. This doesn't need to be the lamp, in fact it is easier to make your electric sockets Alexa enabled than to go to the expense of buying an Alexa enabled lamp.

There are a number of plugs for Alexa on the market, the ones I use are called Teckin. The following video explains how to connect your Teckin plugs and use them with your Alexa device.

**Video 11:** <https://youtu.be/cBXjdrqi0og>

You can connect any appliance through this system and it is useful to name them, for example I call my kettle plug 'Kettle' so the command is "*Alexa, turn on Kettle*". My lamp plug is called Lamp, so the 'keep it simple' principle is the best way to operate your system.

You can also connect CCTV cameras to Alexa, I use motion sensor-controlled ones. That will become more important as my condition progresses. The cameras can be fitted in different areas of the house, for example there are none in my bathroom or bedroom (my space) but there is one in my study, kitchen and living room. I only have one camera at the moment, but I can move it between rooms, and I am planning to get two more permanent ones so I can stop having to move them.

The other camera I will be getting is a doorbell with attached camera and motion sensor. Setting this camera system up can be done in

stages, as I am doing, or it can be done in one fell swoop. Doing it in stages for me is not about the finance, rather it is about getting used to using one camera at a time.

One of the benefits of the doorbell camera is that my partner is alerted via the motion sensor when anyone is at our door. She can then view and talk to who it is, including to me if I am going out perhaps by

mistake. I would suggest the camera below because of its ease of connection.

Setting up a camera is relatively simple, watch the following video showing us how to connect I41EJ PT camera to Alexa:

**Video 12:** <https://youtu.be/FqUsxOY0d38>

For the doorbell I would use a Ring camera system, given that they have been well tested and have a great reputation for quality of picture, and once again are easy to use. This is the best video I could find for setting up your camera doorbell:

**Video 13:** <https://youtu.be/iRfBXgxv6-c>

The following videos are all set up videos that can be used with Alexa and that will help you get the most out of it.

**Video 14:** [https://youtu.be/G2P\\_jFN0Pr8](https://youtu.be/G2P_jFN0Pr8)

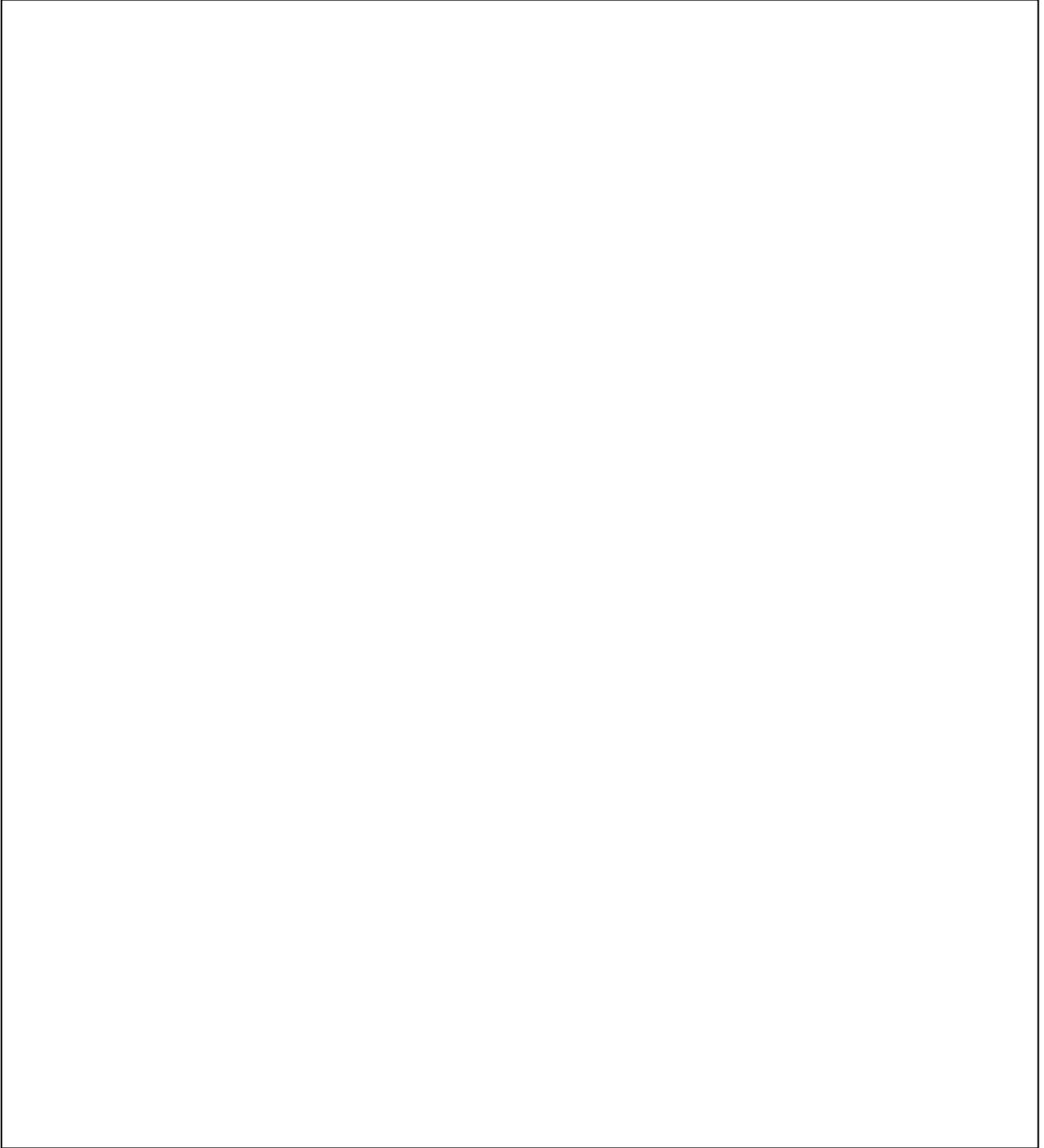
**Video 15:** <https://youtu.be/EUdeCs7h2Zg>

# Updates

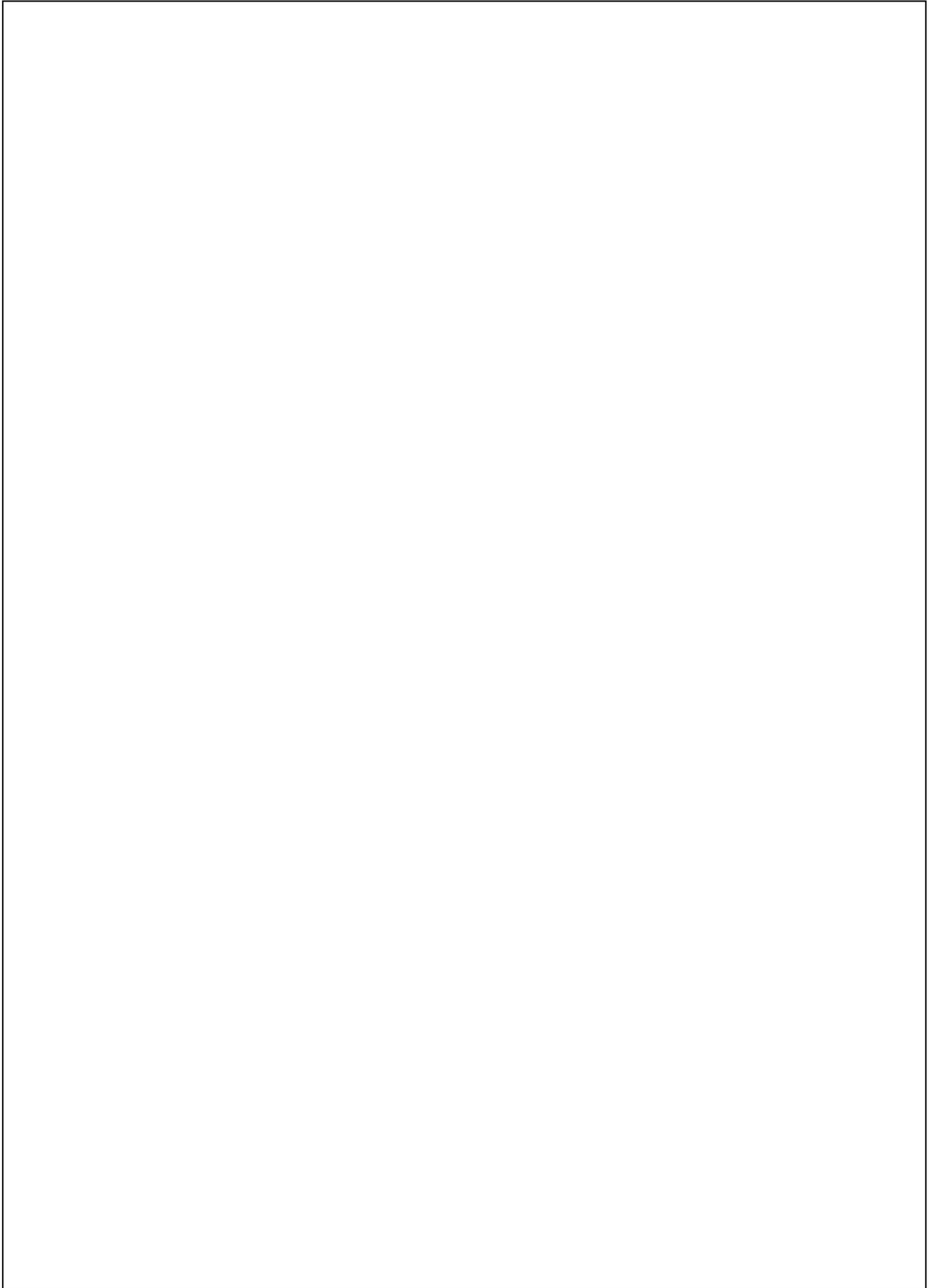
## **First Update Coming in October 2020**

In our first update we will look at how we can use Alexa for larger home devices, such as heating systems, safe showers and most importantly for cooking safely.

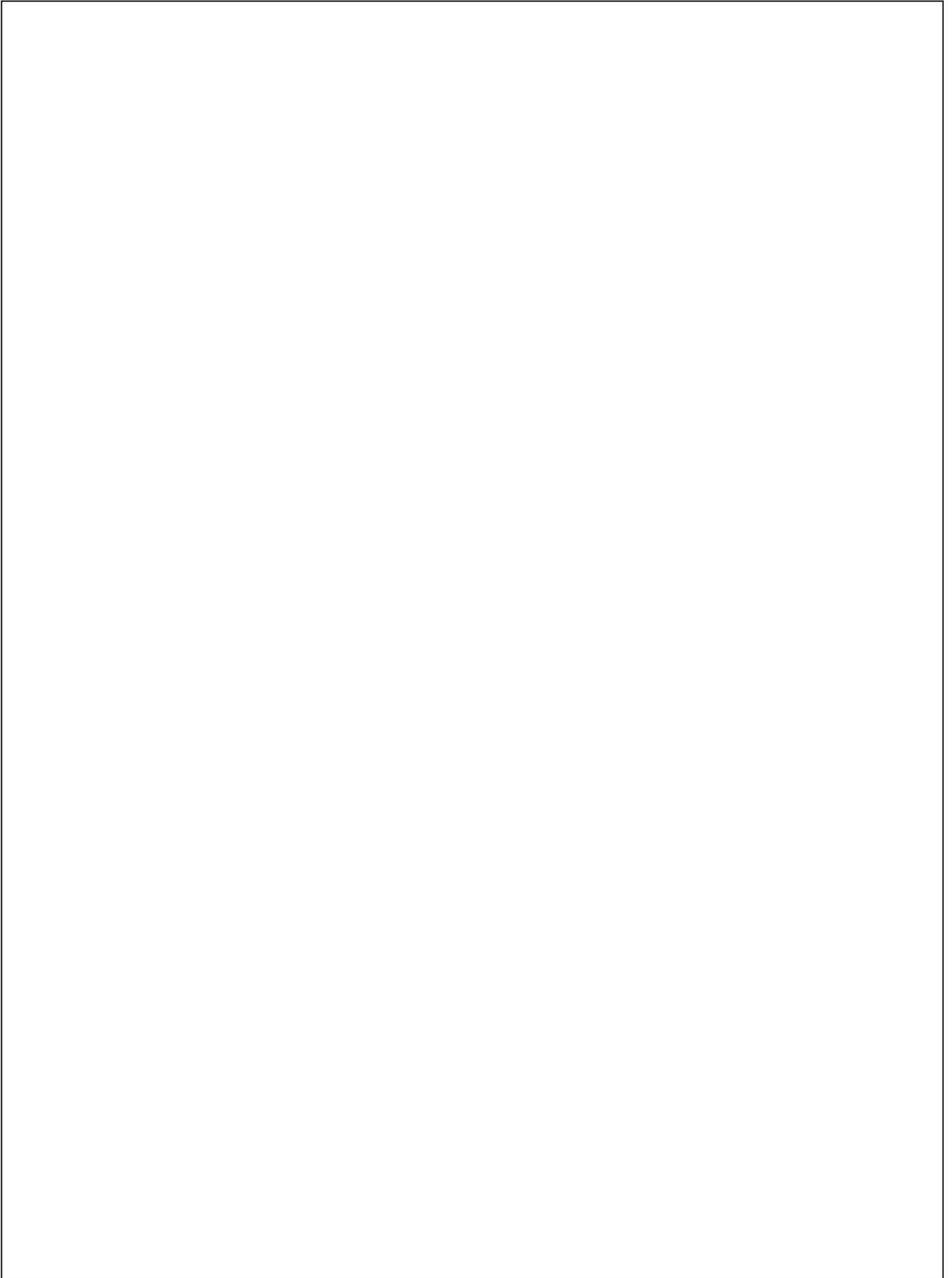
## My Notes Update One



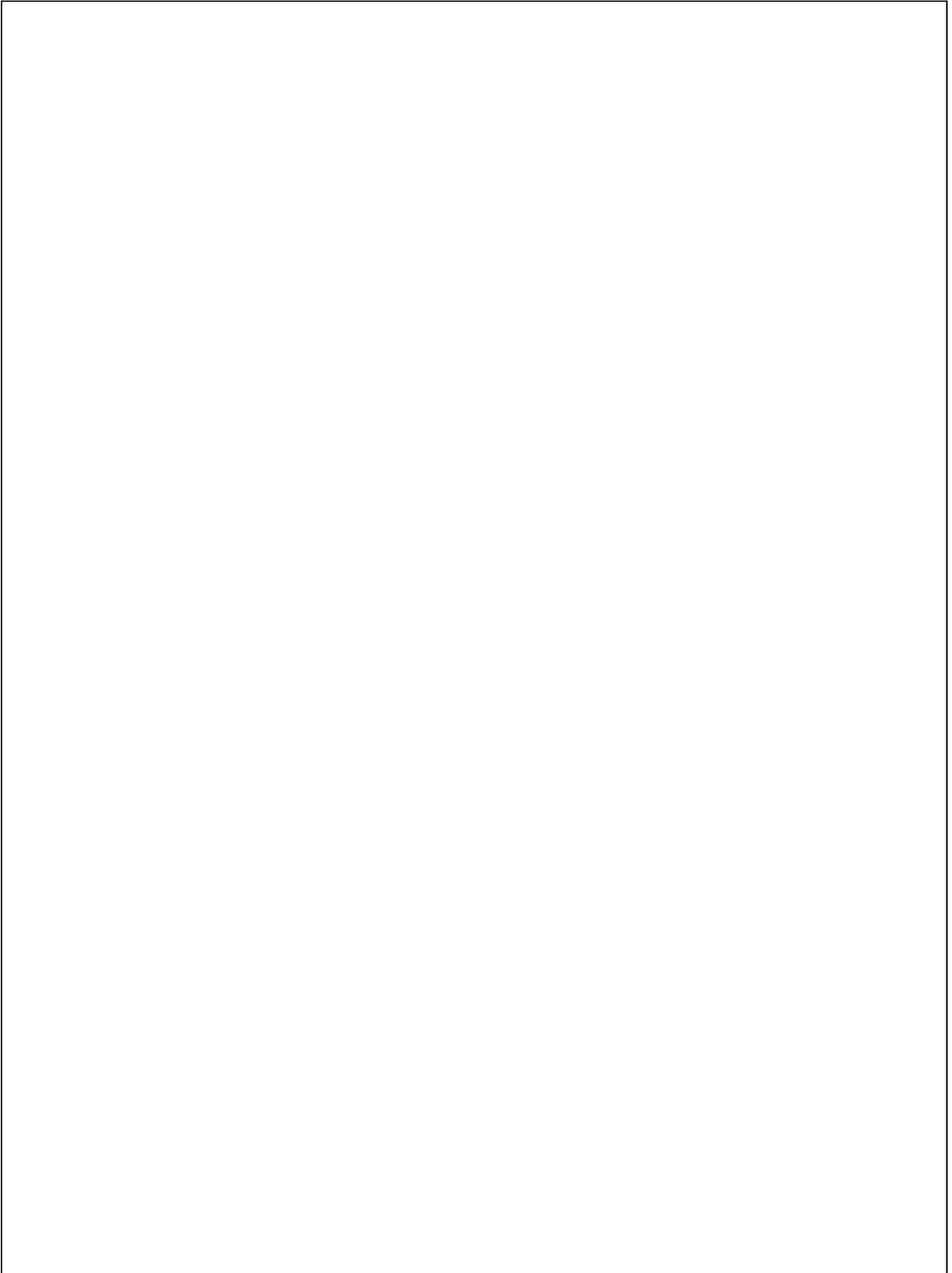
## My Notes Update Two



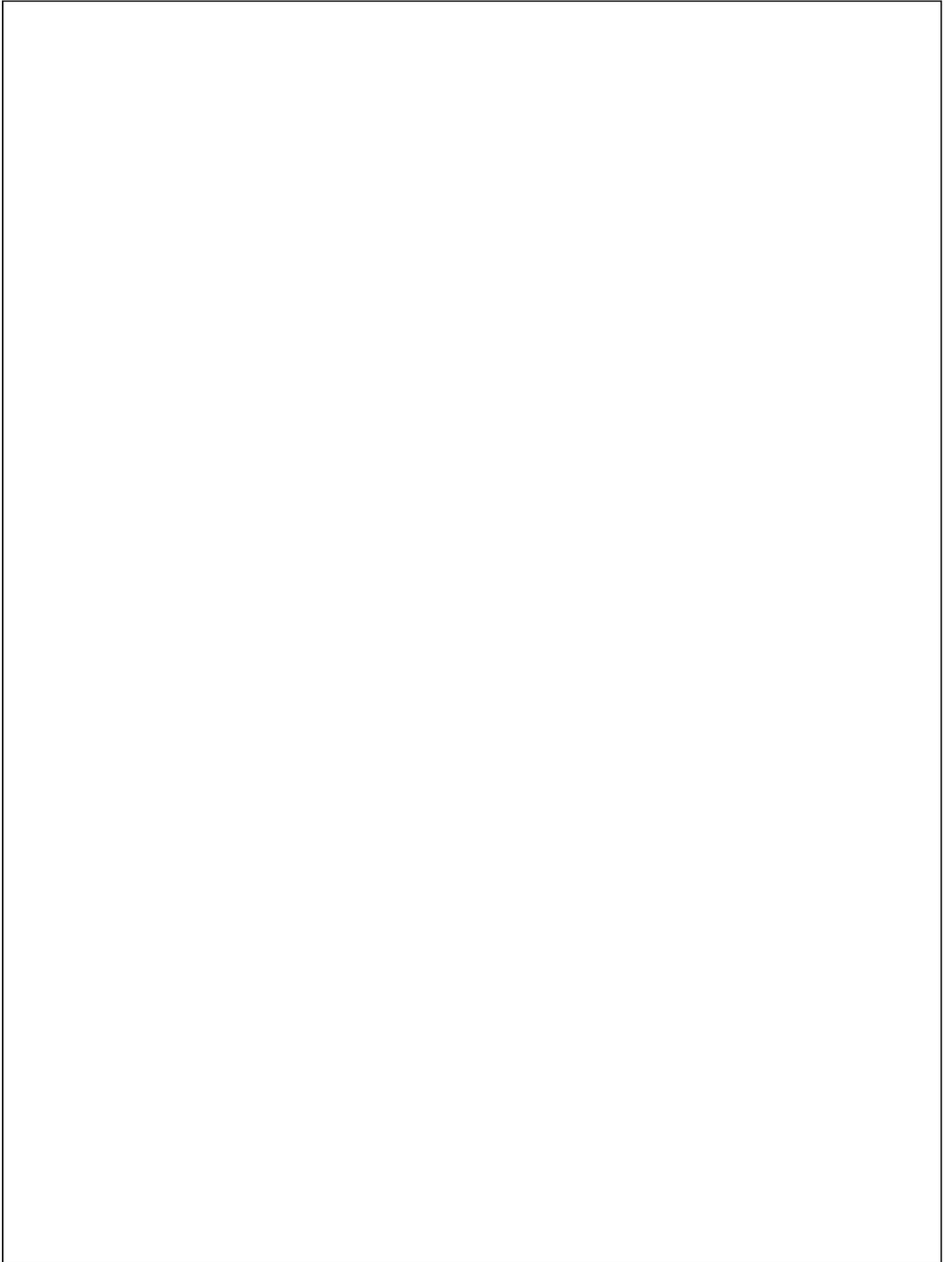
## My Notes Update Three

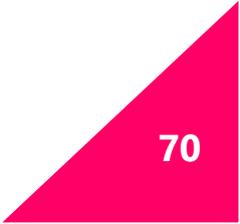
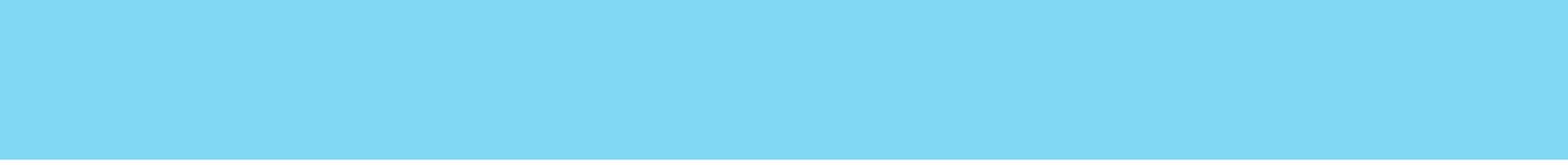


## My Notes Update Four

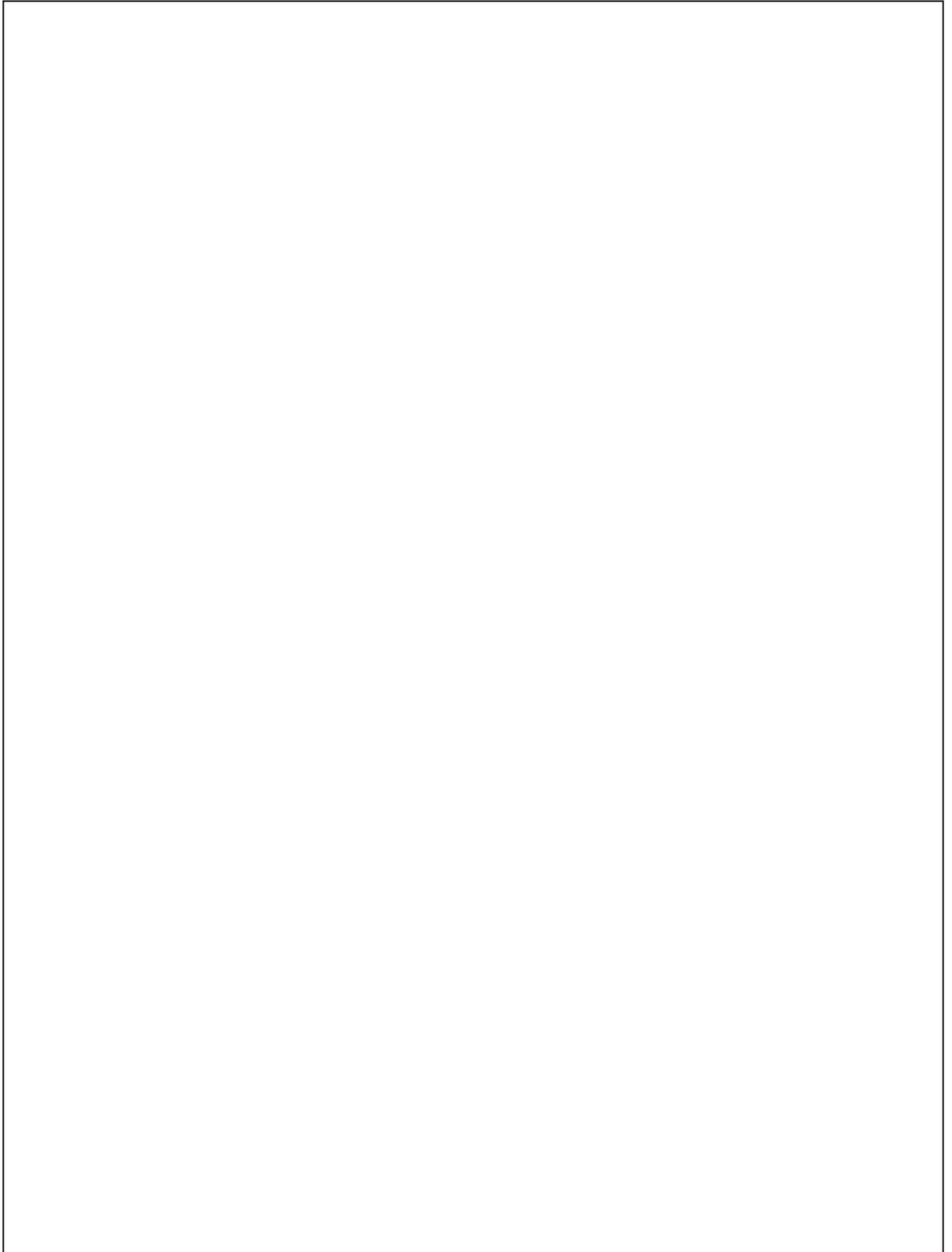


## My Notes Update Five





## My Notes Update Six



***Please send us thoughts, changes you would like and other devices we might get videos for.***

**[ron@deepnessdementiaradio.com](mailto:ron@deepnessdementiaradio.com)**



Life Changes Trust  
Edward House  
199 Sauchiehall Street  
Glasgow G2 3EX

0141 212 9600

<https://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/>