

# ***Wellness Recovery Action Plan***

## **By Mary Ellen Copeland**

### **What is WRAP?**

WRAP was developed by a group of people dealing with a variety of psychiatric symptoms. They came together with shared experiences of working hard to feel better and a desire to get on with their lives. While it has proved beneficial with people in similar situations, it is also easily adapted for people with other disorders and/or life circumstances. The system is intended to help its users feel more prepared and consequently to feel better more of the time, thus improving overall quality of life.

WRAP is a system for monitoring, reducing and eliminating uncomfortable or dangerous physical symptoms and emotional feelings.

WRAP is a useful tool for those looking to create positive change in their life, to increase wellness through pain management (physical & psychological), and even decrease occurrence rates of acute episodes of certain illnesses.

WRAP goes beyond simply learning self-help skills and encourages and allows its author to incorporate these skills into daily living, rather than to rely on them only in a time of crisis.

WRAP recognizes that there are times when it becomes too difficult to manage on one's own and recommends naming supports and health care professionals who will be able to step in during times of need as planned.

### **What's in a WRAP?**

The first step is to develop a *Wellness Toolbox*. This will be different for everyone based on individual ideas and experiences of what has helped in the past, what it will take to maintain wellness, and what can help when you are not feeling well.

It will consist of strategies and skills you need to use on a daily basis as well as those you might use to help yourself feel better or to relieve troubling symptoms.

Having this information will assist in developing your WRAP and is useful should you choose to revise all or parts of your plan.

## **WRAP Contents**

### *Daily Maintenance Plan*

Part 1 is a description of how you feel when you are well. Part 2 lists everything you need to do everyday to stay well. Part 3 lists reminders of things you might need to do to stay on track. Don't worry if your lists seem silly or simplistic it belongs to you alone and you might be amazed at how vital this information is to staying well. Don't take for granted the idea that you will remember or practice even the most routine tasks and/or coping skills should you start to feel worse.

Remember, if you find your lists aren't working anymore, rewrite them.

### *Triggers*

Part 1 identifies events or situations which might result in the onset of uncomfortable symptoms. Part 2 is a plan of what to do if any of these triggers occur.

### *Early Warning Signs*

Part 1 recognizes subtle signs that may show the situation is beginning to worsen.

Part 2 is a plan of what to do if you notice any early warning signs.

### *When Things are Breaking Down*

This section addresses symptoms that occur when the situation has worsened but has not yet reached the point of crisis, so that it is still possible to take action on your own behalf. Part 2 is a plan of what to do if these symptoms occur.

### *Crisis Planning*

The crisis plan looks closely at those symptoms which indicate you can no longer continue to make decisions for yourself, take care of yourself, or stay safe. This plan is developed by you and is to be used by supporters and health care professionals on your behalf as agreed upon.

### *Post Crisis Planning*

This section is a more recent and welcome addition to WRAP. Unlike the other sections of your WRAP this one continues to change as you heal. It takes into account the notion that you will feel better as time passes which may allow for different and/or increased daily activities. After you feel that you are no longer in the post crisis phase, it is time to go back to using your Daily Maintenance Plan and other parts of your WRAP.