

**Wellbeing,**

**Resilience**

**Action**

**Planning**

**Support Person’s guide**

**A mental health promotion tool to increase wellbeing and resilience through preparedness and planning**

**Introduction**

**Most of the time most people do things on a day to day basis to maintain their wellbeing without any conscious thought or planning. We know we are ‘feeling good’, or ‘on top of our game’, often without thinking about what this actually means, how we got to this place of wellbeing or how we can stay this way.**

**During times in our lives when major changes are occurring, whether by choice or not, or when we have experienced trauma or unsettling events, our usual sense of wellbeing can be more difficult to maintain, and require planning and forethought.**

**This Wellbeing, Resilience Action Plan, or WRAP is a simple workbook that is an individual tool which can be worked through on your own or with a support person – whatever works for you. It is designed to help you plan ahead for more difficult times so that when they occur you have a sense of direction and control and a plan to manage maintaining you optimum levels of wellbeing.**

**The most effective way to use WRAP is to express your own personal choices and use it as a tool so you can develop a life style of your “own choosing”.**

**It is over to you whether you keep your plan as a personal document or whether you share it with the people who may support you when things are difficult.**

**Take your time, and enjoy the sense of control that planning can give you.**

**A brief history**

**WRAP was initially developed as a tool for People with the experience of mental illness as a tool to assist recovery, by Mary Ellen Copeland.**

“The ‘Wellness Recovery Action Plan’ is a system for monitoring, reducing and eliminating uncomfortable or dangerous physical symptoms and emotional feelings. It is a planning process that begins by developing a Wellness Toolbox – a list of skills and strategies that you use to keep yourself well and to help you feel better when you do not feel well. The guide includes information on developing a support system, using peer counselling, creative activities, journaling, diet, exercise, relaxation and getting a good night’s sleep. These are self-help skills that ANYBODY can use to IMPROVE THE QUALITY of their life.”

*Mary Ellen Copeland – developer of WRAP*

WRAP is a practical planning process, creating a TOOLBOX – a set of skills and strategies that can be used to support mental, emotional and physical well-being with a strong focus on building support networks.

WRAP can stand for ‘Wellness Recovery Action Plan’ (especially for people recovering from illness, trauma or a crisis) or “Well-being and Resilience Action Planning” (especially for people who are vulnerable to stress, undergoing change uncertainty or poor health, or who would like to actively work at improving their well-being).

**This version or tool has been adapted as a resiliency tool by the Mental Health Foundation with the permission of Mary Ellen Copeland**

**A Wellbeing Resiliency Action Plan is a system for monitoring both positive and negative aspects of stress and change, with a strong focus on building supports**

* It is written by the individual, expressing their own personal choices, reflecting their voice and their personal experience
* It can be produced in a variety of formats to suit an individual’s preferred style and requirements
* It is a way of feeling prepared for both the ‘good times’ and the ‘bad times’ which takes away much of the anxiety of facing possibly challenging situations
* It is a confidence building tool
* It can be used as a way of learning from experiences and helping to avoid the situation again in the future
* It is a way of recording:
  + what has worked well
  + how the person has dealt with challenging situations in the past and managed to work through them
  + reminders of that person’s resilience
  + contingency planning for potential challenges ahead or the great ‘unknown’
* It is best done with the support and agreement of all parties involved in the ***Plan***
* It is valuable for the parties involved to revisit the ***Plan*** and reflect on what the intent of the document is.
* It is a pro-active tool that provides the opportunity to accept and acknowledge each person’s responsibility for their own wellbeing.

**A typical WRAP can include any or all of the following planning tools:**

**SECTION 1**

**Comparison section:**

FOR EXAMPLE

What am I like when I am functioning at my best?

What is my environment like when it is supporting my wellbeing?

What are the indications that I am managing in a mentally healthy way?

**Daily Maintenance:**

Lists the things that I need to do to maintain wellbeing on a daily basis

**General Maintenance:**

Lists the things I need to do to maintain wellbeing on a weekly, monthly, half yearly or yearly basis

**SECTION 2**

**Risk Factors and Stressors:**

*(these are often recognisable as emotional responses to people, situations or experiences eg ‘having too many deadlines makes me feel stressed’ or ‘not being able to express myself clearly makes me feel frustrated’)*

FOR EXAMPLE

What are the things that might impact on my wellbeing

What are the things I already know about that make my life hard or challenging?

What coping strategies do I have to improve my ability to maintain my wellbeing?

**First Signs of Stress:**

*(these are often recognisable as changes in behaviour eg ‘I’m not sleeping well’ or ‘my thinking becomes muddled’)*

FOR EXAMPLE

What coping strategies do I have to improve my ability maintain my wellbeing?

What help do I need from others to use these strategies well?

When do I notify others that I need extra help?

How will others recognise my first signs of stress (even if I don’t) and when do I want them to tell me?

**SECTION 3**

**If things start breaking down:**

*(if the situation reaches the point where a person’s physical/mental health or ability to maintain their wellbeing are affected)*

FOR EXAMPLE

How do I let people know?

What support do I need to bring in?

What can my family/whanau/friends/colleagues do to help?

**SECTION 4**

**Contingency planning:**

*(may be used as a planning tool for an expected situation like parental leave, or in an unexpected situation, such as sudden illness or a family crisis)*

If I am absent from work, what is the plan for my workload?

Who will shop for the family if I cannot?

Who will care for the children if I cannot?

What can the others do?

What can my colleagues do?

**How much of the WRAP should each person use?**

How far an individual takes their ***Plan***, who they involve, how much time and effort they put into it and who they show it to - is up to the individual. Parts of it may be the same for everyone in a group, parts of it could be built into Individual and Team Work Plans. Parts of it will be for the individual alone, or to share with family or trusted colleagues.

The most important, and most frequently used, part of the ***Plan*** is going to be **Section 1**. It contains everyday strategies for maintaining wellbeing and healthy coping practises. It can bridge the gap between work/home/leisure time. It would be recommended that everyone draw up a useable version of this section, either individually, or with peer or family support.

**Section 2** is best done with peer or family support, to give the individual the chance to make use of a more ‘objective’ view in their planning. This section is particularly important if the person wants to build resiliency into their life. It is where they can acknowledge ongoing stresses and strains and introduce coping strategies (avoidance is NOT a coping strategy!) Some of the coping strategies are likely to include third parties, who need to ‘come onboard’ in the ***Plan*** with the individual. For some, it may be useful if a ***Buddying System*** or ***Peer Support*** is introduced to support the WRAP process.

**Section 3** would be best used where situations are known to be stressful or unpredictable, or when a situation is expected to recur. The ***Plan*** could be more operationally focussed (what can be done to ones workload and commitments to alleviate the situation) or more personally focussed (for example, if a person has a recurring illness which requires particular strategies or courses of action to alleviate). In both cases, you may want to include quite specific roles for support people in the ***Plan***.

**Section 4** can be completed to cover various scenarios:

* Planning for an unexpected day of absence (which need be little more than following mandatory organisational procedure around alerting Work and cancelling your appointments)
* Planning for a week’s absence due to illness or a death in the family (which may involve operational tasks such as asking colleagues to pick up ongoing work, friends to deliver children to school, an interpreter to deal with medical appointments, rescheduling meetings, as well as more personal aspects that it would be beneficial to take into account)
* Planning for an anticipated, longer-term event such as parental leave, a course of training, a trip abroad (which may involve a number of operational and personal aspects which will change over the time span of the situation)
* Planning for an unexpected, longer-term absence such as illness or an accident (which may involve a number of operational and personal aspects and will probably affect the period following the situation)
* Planning for a crisis, which could be work-related or personal (and which is most likely to involve a large number of operational and personal aspects at the time of the crisis, and also in the period following it)

***WRAP should never be reduced to a prescribed or mandatory form-filling exercise. It is best used as a record of human resourcefulness.***

* Because WRAPs are usually written down, people can be worried about who might gain access to them.
* A WRAP should always remain in the keeping of the individual.

**TIPS FOR SUPPORT PEOPLE**

**REMEMBER:**

* The Plan is written by the individual, expressing their own personal choices, reflecting their voice and their personal experience
* Be positive and encouraging but do not try to influence the person you are supporting
* The Plan needs to include all the things that are important to the individual and their physical, mental emotional and spiritual wellbeing. It should reflect all aspects of their background, life experience and culture

**Ask the person you are supporting to think about things like:**

* Coping strategies they have used in the past that have worked and helped
* Observations they have made about peoples behaviour – who is supportive, who backs off, who would the individual want to avoid at all costs! etc
* What has worked well in the past, what hasn’t?
* How did they deal with challenging situations in the past and manage to work through them
* Examples of the person’s resilience
* What are they like when they are feeling well and happy?
* What is their environment like when it is supporting their wellbeing?
* What are the things that they need to do to maintain good health and wellbeing?

**Triggers or Stressors:**

*(These are often recognisable as emotional responses to OUTSIDE FACTORS - people, situations or experiences. For example:*

*“not having a job makes me feel stressed” or “not being able to be with the rest of my family makes me feel unhappy”)*

* What are the things that you know impact on your health and wellbeing?
* What are the things you already know about that make your life hard or challenging?
* What happens at home, at work, in the community, in your home country and so on that have an affect on your feeling of wellbeing?

**Signs of Stress:**

*These are often recognisable as changes in behaviour – INSIDE FACTORS. For example:*

*“I’m not sleeping well” or “my thinking becomes muddled”*

* What do you know you do when things aren’t going well?
* What do you find yourself telling yourself when you’re feeling under pressure?
* Are there physical signs that you are feeling stressed?
* What help do you need from others at these times?
* When do you tell others that you need extra help?
* How will others recognise your warning signs (even if you don’t) and when do you want them to talk to you about it?

**Contingency planning:**

*(may be used as a planning tool for an expected situation like an illness, or in an unexpected situation, such a family crisis in NZ or in your home country)*

If I am absent from home, what is the plan for my family?

* Who can I get to help in this situation?
* What will they do?

**My Wellbeing**

Words that describe me when I’m doing well:

Words that others use to describe me when I’m doing well:

**Personal Checklist for Wellbeing**

Things to do daily to keep myself well in mind, body and spirit:

Things to do weekly:

Things to do once in a while:

Things to do more often:

On the following card write down the most important things you need to do daily from the previous page to keep yourself feeling good.

Cut out the chart and put it in your wallet or someplace you will see it every day.



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| **Daily Reminder Card** |

# Difficulties/Pressures

(these are often recognisable as emotional responses to people, situations or experiences eg ‘having too many deadlines makes me feel stressed’ or ‘not being able to get a park when I come back from a meeting makes me feel frustrated’)

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| **Things that are currently happening in my life that make feeling OK more difficult:** | **Actions I can take to reduce the impact of these (be specific):** |
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| **Things that could happen that would make feeling OK more difficult are:** | **Actions I can take to reduce the impact of these (be specific):** |
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**Key Points for First Signs of Stress**

* Avoidance is **not** a coping strategy - if a person is not ready to try something new, then work up to it by taking small steps
* Try to provide at least three coping strategies – ensure they do not all include a third party
* Be specific about coping strategies (Remember people may be producing and trying to implement the Plan when in a highly anxious or depressed state)
* Try to establish supports in the community other than Government Organisations
* Always ensure if a third party is involved that they are aware of it and their permission is obtained

# Signs that I am Upset

These signals or changes in the way I feel or act show me that I am not managing as well as I sometimes do. (These are often recognisable as changes in behaviour e.g. ‘I’m not sleeping well’ or ‘my thinking becomes muddled’)

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| **Sign that I am not ok** | **What I will do about it.** |
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**My Support Network**

People, agencies or others I could talk to for support at this time if I felt it would help:

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| Name | Telephone number |
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**What Helps Me**

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| **Things I find useful from others when I am having problems in my life:** | **Who ( name and number)** |
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# EMERGENCY PLANNING

**Thinking ahead – My plan**

(if something happens and I need help, who do I ask)

FOR EXAMPLE

* Who will help with the children?
* Will I need an interpreter?
* If I am absent from work, what is the plan for my workload?
* Fire?
* Medical emergency?

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| **List of Emergencies** | **What to do** |
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