

# WHAT IS A WRAP® AND WHY HAVE ONE?

## What is a WRAP?

A Wellness Recovery Action Plan® (WRAP®) is a way to help you take better care of yourself. It recognizes that you are the expert on you! WRAP® helps you understand, monitor, and plan ahead to respond in healthy ways when you experience negative events, stress, and/or uncomfortable symptoms. A WRAP® is usually an organized, written document that you create with peer support as part of a group, or by using WRAP® brochures and resources, and/or guidance from treatment staff. There are many ways to create your own WRAP®!

## Why have a WRAP?

- Everyone has freedom to strive toward wellness over illness. You have the power to make changes in your life that will allow you to become the person you want to be, regardless of “diagnosis” or “behavioral history”.
- A WRAP® is a reminder to yourself to choose your response to whatever life throws your way! You create a WRAP® while you are in a relatively strong place, and/or in a supportive environment, so that you can recall and act upon your options and choices at times of difficulty, and can communicate these to others you might want help from.
- Creating a WRAP® offers you an opportunity to build skills and strengthen the principles and practices that are universally known to improve human wellness:

**Hope • Personal Responsibility • Education • Self Advocacy • Social Support**

- A first step is identifying things for your personal *Wellness Toolkit*, which are the activities, settings, habits, and supports that help you be well and that you can draw upon and add to throughout your life!
- WRAP® guides you in the creation of your *Daily Maintenance Plan* which, when followed, will help you stay mentally sharp, emotionally stable, motivated and connected with others.
- In WRAP®, *Triggers* describe those aspects of your external environment or circumstances that may lead you to negative coping skills (i.e. feeling unwell, thinking and/or behaving in ways you do not want and that get you into difficulty). Learning how to respond well when triggered is very important to lifetime wellness. WRAP® helps you to apply your own best ways to avoid or handle things that trigger you.
- In contrast to triggers, *Early Warning Signs* are internal states such as feelings, thoughts and out-of-control behaviors that signal you should pay closer attention to your state of wellness. They are indicators that you may be slipping into old patterns or habits, and serve as “reminders” to stay in touch with those things that help keep you well, such as your daily maintenance plan and wellness toolkit.
- Sometimes either external stressors and/or internal states may overcome you and demand immediate, urgent attention. Recognizing how and when this occurs, and what you want to do and have others do is important to building a good WRAP®. This may include planning ahead for how to maintain as much control over your options as possible should there be a *Crisis* and for the *Recovery* period that follows.
- A great feature of a WRAP® is identifying and sorting out who you want involved, in what ways, and how your support team can help guide decisions with you based on what you lay out in your WRAP®.

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