

The Whole Life Recovery Plan

How to use this booklet

- This is a personal Whole life Recovery plan, designed for anyone who wishes to make changes in the way they manage life's challenges.
- It has been developed by drawing on the experiences of those who have found Recovery planning beneficial.
- It is a means of exploring the things affecting a person's general Well-being and takes a 'whole person' approach, taking in to account emotional, mental, physical or spiritual Well-being, as all of these aspects are interrelated.
- This plan is merely a prompt and can be added to, to make it unique for you.
- It is designed for you to 'brainstorm' your ideas and you can make new copies when you wish to change and add things.
- Self management plans can be a useful reflection tool, or an important action plan; you decide how you will use them.
- This plan includes a 'Wellness plan', 'real me' and 'friendship circle' exercise, 'Early warning signs plan', 'Crisis plan' and 'Well-being curve' exercise document.
- It is important to remember that you should take your time with this process and not feel under pressure to do this to make others happy; you should do this if you feel it would be useful to you.

This exercise is one of a series published in the Whole Life Workbook (Eastern Development Centre 2009). Exercise developed by Tanya Kennard-Campbell.

Wellness Plan

A wellness plan is a way of reminding us about what we need to do daily/regularly to support our Well-being. It also reminds us that Well-being is something we will draw on daily to support, educate and lead us through our journey.

Also, that we all have Well-being hardwired into our systems both physically, emotionally and spiritually.

It includes a description of yourself when you are in a state of Well-being and is a good reminder to ourselves and others of when we are moving away from this place.

Your family and friends may know what you are like when well, but a health professional may not and may misinterpret some of your behaviours.

It also gives a good clear picture or reference for what to aim for after a period of ill health.

1. What do you need everyday to keep you well?

Sleep, my cat, healthy food, hugs, time to reflect, my family, etc.

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2. What do you need each week to nurture and recharge?

My friends, time on own, the countryside, a glass of wine, a good laugh, a long run, a good movie/book, the sun on my skin.

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3. What do you need every once in a while to get back in touch with yourself? (Soul Food)

The sea, forests, nature, being with someone I respect/love, being told why I'm loved, reconnecting to my dreams/goals, a good sad movie with a happy ending, remembering and celebrating those I've lost.

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4. What physical things affect you Well-being?

Positively Drinking enough water, fresh air, my medication, sleep and rest.

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Negatively Sugar / carbohydrates, noise, watching too much TV, pain.

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5. What emotional things affect your Well-being? Or 'what makes you feel good or bad?' (You can take some of your answers from section 1, 2 & 3)

Positively Hobbies, my cat, meditation.

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Negatively Pressure, my negative thoughts/voices, not having much to do.

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The Real Me

1. Description of yourself when at your best

What is normal for you? This may include speech impediments and hearing voices, Laughing easily, friendly, quiet, feel in control, open minded, generous.

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2. What do others see?

Ask someone you trust to share the things they admire and notice about you. Creative, loving, quick, reflective, fun.

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3. What dreams did you/do you hold for yourself?

To learn to paint, to travel to Africa, to start my own catering business, to swim in the Indian ocean, to help others, to have singing lessons, to find out about my heritage.

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4. What got/gets in the way?

I don't have the time, other things are a priority, who am I to do this?, it's silly, not realistic, I can't afford it, it seems too hard.

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5. How would it feel to work towards and then achieve this goal?

Scary, frightening, fantastic, amazing, like a dream, unreal.

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6. What can you do to make a start?

Talk it over with someone I trust with my dreams, think a little more, start with the first step.

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7. What have you accepted in your life? And what do you struggle to accept?

That I decide how to live my life, that I am a smoker, that no one else knows what I need like I do, that I am alone, that I am different, what happened to me.

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8. Write a list of the values you live your life by.

Honesty, understanding, good will (trying to see best in people), hope, family, learning, fun, giving back, love, pleasure.

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9. How do you feel emotionally when you're not in a state of Well-being (i.e. not at your best)? Remember to include your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Irritable, less tolerant, easily startled, suspicious, sensitive, thoughts less clear, I think 'what's the point.'

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10. How do you feel emotionally when you're in a state of Well-being? (at your best) Remember to include your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Content, happy, light hearted, confident, easy going, generous, I think 'my life is exciting'.

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11. How do you feel physically when you're not in a state of Well-being (not at your best?)

Tense, back ache, walk fast, knit my brows, can't relax, wake early, crave things.

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12. How do you feel physically when you're in a state of Well-being (at your best?)

Lots of energy, chose healthier food, sleep well, more able to relax.

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Friendship Circle

This exercise will help you identify

- Who your friends and supports are
- How close they are to you
- Who you would like to know better
- If you want to extend your support network and how

Take a look at diagram one and think for a moment about who your current friends and supports are. Fill in the names of those who are currently in your life. You can include those who you have lost touch with and those you would like to know better. Put the names of those closest to you currently near the centre, those who have the least contact on the outer rim and those that fit in between in the middle.

What do you notice now you have filled this in?

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What is it about those in the middle that make them so important and what do you do to maintain these relationships?

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Are these skills you can use with those you wish to know better? Yes No

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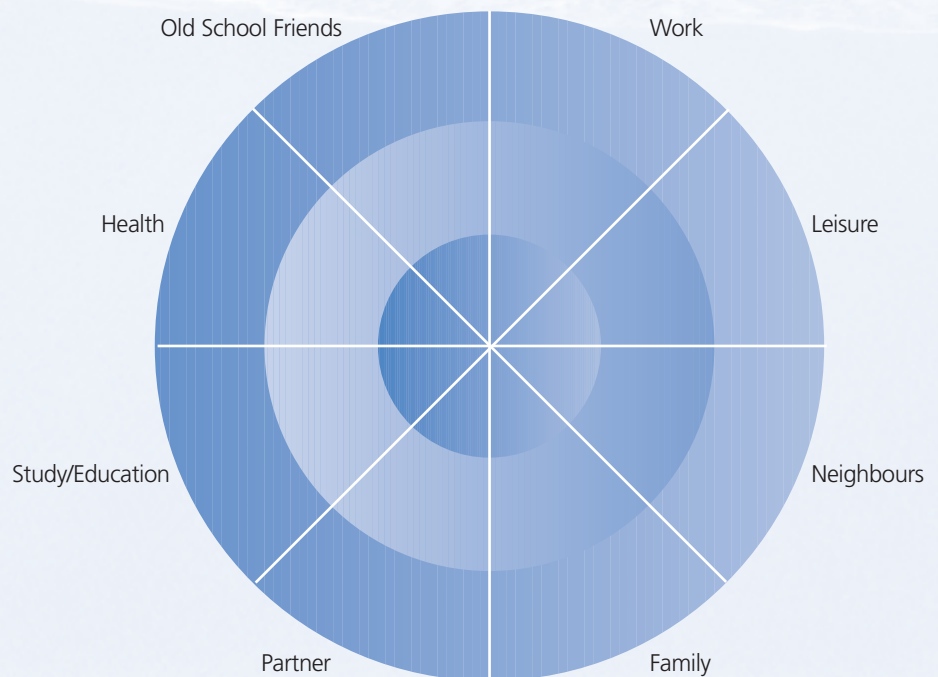
Is there an even spread, or do most of your supports come from a small part of your life?

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Are you happy with your friendship circle? Yes No

What can you do about the things you have noticed?

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Well-being Curve

This exercise will offer you a visual account of how you look and feel at your best and worst. It will also offer your own solutions on what helps in seeing these periods through.

Included is an example of how a 'Well-being curve' could look when completed and a blank copy for you. The curvy line shows how our moods or Well-being go up and down. Do you have big dips (low moods) and very few peaks (high moods), or how is it for you? Some of us experience more low moods when things aren't good, and some of us also experience highs which also indicate things aren't good.

Remember, you may only need to fill in the dips, peaks, or both, depending on how it is for you. With a pen or pencil draw a dotted line, marking the range within which you function at your best and which would describe 'Well-being' for you.

Well-being range

In this range, you will feel your best and is when you are in touch with your Well-being, wisdom and the real you. This is where you make your best decisions and have the best perspective.

How does it look/feel

Using the things you have identified in the 'Real me' exercises 1 and 2, fill in the bullet points 'How does it look/feel?'. *Remember to include thoughts, feelings and behaviours.*

What helps

Using the things you have identified in your 'Wellness plan' exercise, fill in the 'what helps' bullet points.

What hinders

Using the things you have identified in your 'Wellness plan' exercise 4 and 5, fill in the 'what hinders' bullet points.

Triggers

Using the things you have identified in your 'Early warning signs plan' under 'triggers', fill in the 'trigger' bullet points, as these are perceived threats to your Well-being.

Outside the Well-being range

The areas falling outside of this range are where you have moved away from your Well-being. This is not the best place to make major decisions or engage in activities that push your comfort zones. Your thinking is not likely to be of the best quality and not something you should invest energy in or take too seriously.

If you are a voice hearer, voices experienced in this place are also more likely to be of poor quality and once again, the meaning these have may not be the type of reality you want to invest in right now.

Whenever you re-engage with your Well-being, you will regain your perspective and healthy thinking. However, just because you are in a bad place does not mean that your wisdom and health doesn't still come through in moments of insight. This is where learning what to listen to is important.

These areas (outside the Well-being range) will look and feel very different and come with their own alarm bells.

How does it look/feel?

The alarm bells that you have identified in your 'Early warning signs plan' should be included in the bullet points under 'How does it look/feel'. *Remember to include thoughts, feelings and behaviours.*

Helps

Now fill in the 'What helps' bullet points from the 'Response plan' in your Early warning signs plan, or from any section of your wellness plan.

What hinders

Now fill in the 'What hinders' bullet points, taking the answers from exercise 4 and 5 from your 'Wellness plan', but please add others if you can, as when we are not feeling our best, different things irritate and affect us.

Your Well-being Curve

How do you look/feel?
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Waht helps?
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Waht hinders?
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How triggers you?
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Waht helps?
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Waht hinders?
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How helps you?
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Waht helps?
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Waht hinders?
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Early Warning Signs Plan – Triggers

Triggers are external or internal events that trigger unpleasant responses for you. These are normal reactions to life stresses; however, for some, they can lead to prolonged discomfort or the onset of unpleasant symptoms.

By increasing your awareness of triggers you will find an increased ability to plan for how to deal with them effectively.

List triggers

People

Family tension, comments taken the wrong way.

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Activities

Pressure, change in circumstances, benefit review.

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Life events

Winter, anniversaries, family reunions.

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Plan/Responses to triggers

Talking it over, choosing one of my 'soul food' activities, physical activity.

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Early Warning Signs Plan

Early warning signs are often subtle internal signs that we are moving away from our Well-being.

Our body naturally equips us with physical and emotional alarm bells to let us know that this is happening.

Awareness of our alarm bells or early warning signs allow us the opportunity to make changes before they become worse.

My early warning signs or alarm bells

Physical

Headaches, wake early, increased appetite, trouble concentrating, forgetting people's names.

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Emotional

Over-sensitive, mood changes, voices (louder/worse/more insistent), fearful, suspicious.

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What do others see?

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Response plan (What helps?)

(Ensure these are achievable, accessible and won't frustrate you even more)

Make sure I achieve something from my wellness plan.

Do some 'soul food', meditate, listen to music, paint..

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Late Warning Signs

Late warning signs are advanced warning signs and alarm bells that can indicate that things are breaking down and we need to take immediate action to prevent a crisis.

Physical

Can't keep still, sleeping very little, pressured speech, everything seems loud/bright.

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Emotional

Believe others are going to harm me, can't think straight, feel out of control, feel like there's no point.

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What do others see?

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Response plan (What helps?)

(Ensure these are achievable, accessible and won't frustrate you even more).

Increase my meds/take PRN (for some).
Do some 'soul food'.
More regular contact with support people.

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Crisis Plan

A crisis plan is a system of planned responses to a pending crisis situation that outlines what you and others can do to help get you out of crisis and back to your Well-being.

Crisis means different things to us all and you should be as clear as you can in its description. For some it indicates the need for more assertive interventions. It is often difficult to do as we don't like to remember or think about bad times, but it is important to be as realistic as you can about what may happen for you. It can be like your 'living will' where you have your say when you may be too unwell to do it for yourself.

1. Description of yourself when well

(What is normal for you? This may include speech impediments and hearing voices).

Laugh easily, friendly, quiet, feel in control, open minded, generous.

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2. Description of Crisis

(Use descriptive words) I can't string a sentence together, I feel I can't go on/not wanting to live, I feel out of control, the world becomes separate from me.

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3. What do others see?

Very isolated/withdrawn, can't look me in the eye, speech not understandable, funny look about you, misread everything I say.

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4. Things that help me, (What others can do, things I need to do, spiritual/cultural practices).

Hold me/don't hold me, room to pace, quiet, dark, one-to-one time.

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5. Treatment approaches – Preferred

Touch, one-to-one nursing, my own room, family stay with me.

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6. Treatment approaches to be avoided

Seclusion, ECT.

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7. Treatment facilities (Including clinicians)

Preferred

Respite (e.g Hotel), home based carers, Parsley ward, Dr Hummer

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Avoided

PICU, Joe

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8. Medications

Preferred Medications

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Medications to avoid

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Current Medications (Space to add your own).

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9. Supporters

List who they are, what their roles might be and how to contact them. Include G.P and agencies you want involved.

Name	Role	Contact	Aware? Yes/No

Name	Relationship	Why? (optional)

Statement

This Crisis plan has been written when I am well.

It was completed on(Date)

Those involved: (Names)

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Any plan with a more recent date supersedes this one.

Copies are held by: (Names and contacts)

Name	Role/Relationship	Contact Tel no.	Date	Signature