



## Using WRAP as a Suicide Prevention Tool

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As someone who has both attempted suicide and a loss survivor, I have been left with feelings of regret, anger and deep sadness. There is a deep hole in my heart that is as tiny as the head of a needle. This hole also known

as the void has been with me the span of my lifetime. I have come to accept that it is there, and to find ways to move through this world with it.

The WRAP Wellness Toolbox is my first line of defense. I utilize the Toolbox to do things that I have come to love and look forward to being able to do to bring about

peace to my life. In my Toolbox I have many fun things that I love such as fortune cookie slips with nuggets of wisdom, origami made by a friend in Japan, pictures of my god kids, trinkets from those who have attended my WRAP workshops and my bucket list of places to go on day and camping trips.

My WRAP Plan is written to keep me alive; it is my suicide prevention plan. I have successfully used it now for 15 years. The last time I was hospitalized was in 2001; it was also the year I created my first WRAP Plan. I have had close calls; but once I buckle down on my WRAP Plan I make it through.

Utilizing my Daily Maintenance Plan allows me to work through my void. For those familiar with the quote "Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem" the Daily Maintenance Plan reminds just that. I see myself how I feel when I am not feeling my void and when I am satisfied with my life.

As a kid I knew I was different from other kids. As early as I can remember I wanted to announce to the world I was a boy and not a girl. I ran with the boys, ate lunch with the boys and kissed girls. I also learned early that this was not how a little girl should act, so I hid myself away and became as quiet as I could be in all settings. I would no longer show up if I could not show up authentically.

This is where the Trigger section helps me keep myself together. When I was unable to live my authentic self, I would turn my anger inward and use self-harm to sooth the pain.

The Trigger section has helped in recognizing these signs before they put me a place where I want to self-harm. I have to be careful to recognize my triggers as they manifest. In the last 15 years I have learned to manage triggers.

If I am still unsuccessful at managing my triggers, I know am experiencing Early Warning Signs of crisis. I have to recognize and accept what is going on in order to work through for me, what may be a mini-crisis.

For me early warning signs can be disconnecting from the world by not being involved in social activities. And the urge to self-harm becomes stronger.

If I am unable to work through this mini crisis, I start building a plan to leave the world and the pain behind. I have the power to stay or leave.

At this point, I am in the most serious situation of my life. My WRAP Plan has been the most powerful tool I have. It is not easy for me to reach out to my support. So I read through my WRAP Plan from front to back to remember what my life is worth and to read all the good things I have said about myself when I am not feeling these feelings.

I utilize my Action Plan in the breaking down section. My Action Plan for the last 15 years has kept me out of the hospital. There have been close calls, and I have updated this action plan many times. I am still here, blessed and fruitful.

I am thankful for that day in 2001 when I found a pamphlet on WRAP. I am grateful for the AGAPE Reservoir program in Virginia that met every Friday in my early days of recovery. It was there that I first met Yvonne Smith who would then become my first WRAP mentor. WRAP is my first line of defense when it comes to suicide prevention for myself; I wouldn't have it any other way.

*Iden has been a WRAP facilitator since 2004 and an Advanced Level since 2013. In 2014 he launched a WRAP Institute in DC with the hopes of one day becoming a WRAP center of excellence. The Campbell Center will be facilitating WRAP in the future for two specific populations Vets and the LGBT community. We look forward to working with the Copeland Center to expand WRAP in DC.*

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