

A photograph of a dirt path leading through a vast field of bright yellow flowers, likely rapeseed, under a clear blue sky. The path is flanked by green grass and leads towards a distant horizon. The overall scene is bright and open, symbolizing a journey.

*MyRAP*

a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

## **MyRAP is ...**

*'A personal book that allows people to tell their story.'*

*'Very helpful to my wellbeing and staying well.'*

*'User friendly and appealing.'*

*'Interesting and challenging.'*

*'Helps identify and prioritise problems, set goals and aids reflection.'*

*'Better than therapy!'*

*(quotes from people who have used or are using MyRAP)*

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Cover photo "Yellow Fields and Tracks" by Lars Lunstrom (at iStockPhoto.com)

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## Introduction: What is My Recovery Action Plan (MyRAP)?

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MyRAP is a self help / self management tool to help support you with your own well being and recovery. It will enable you to identify your strengths and build on them. Using MyRAP is an opportunity for you to take control by helping you reflect on your own experiences and learn from them.

There may be a number of reasons why you may have picked up a copy of the MyRAP booklet:

- You may be mentally well and simply wish to learn more about staying well
- You may currently be unwell and being supported by mental health services but would like to take more control over your own recovery through self-management
- You may be experiencing concerns about someone else's mental health and wellbeing and are keen to look at what you can do to support them in their recovery

## Guidance

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### Timing

*'You can work through it at your own pace.'*

You can begin to use MyRAP whenever you choose. Some people have told us that they benefited from MyRAP when they began to feel a bit better

You can either work through it on your own or with a supporter

There is no pressure on you to 'complete' the booklet as recovery is very much a journey

*'Some parts were irrelevant at the time but you could still focus on what you need.'*

You might find that not all sections of the booklet apply to you but that's okay as some may be more relevant than others at certain times.

### Who will see MyRAP?

This booklet belongs to you and only you unless you wish to share it with someone you trust as part of your recovery journey.



*'Glencoe' by Donald Thompson*

*'When I was diagnosed I never thought about recovery but, given time  
and a lot of help and support, I made it.'*

## my story

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*'Writing it down is sometimes better than talking about it.'*

Telling your story is a very personal choice. Some people embrace the opportunity and others decide it's not for them. It's entirely up to you. If you do decide to tell your story, there is no right or wrong way for you to tell it. You could write, draw, stick in pictures or photographs, poems, words from songs. It's your story so be as creative as you like!

You can start your story from the beginning or from any significant point in your life. You may wish to think about where you are now and what led you to this point. It's up to you how much personal information you put in. Remember, this will only be seen by people you choose to share it with.

If you'd like some ideas and support on how to begin your story, you can:

- Have a look at other people's stories on the Element website at <http://www.element.org.uk/lanarkshire-recovery-network/lanarkshire-recovery-stories.aspx>
- Chat with your Mental Health Worker
- If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact Lanarkshire Links on 01698 265232



## My Story ...

*'I used to keep things to myself before I started working on MyRAP.  
Now I have got a lot of weight off my shoulders.'* (Diane)

## My Story ...

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## steps towards recovery

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*'I now want to get better. I want my family back and I know I need to RECOVER.  
Thanks for giving me HOPE'.*

## Recognising Wellness

An important aspect of recovery is recognising what wellness means to you. This is an individual experience but some things are common to many of us.

Use the blank pages to record your own ideas and experiences.

Things to consider

- How you might feel

- What you might be doing

- How others might recognise or describe this in you

## Your strengths, skills and personal qualities

To begin, you might want to consider and write about

What you have learned about yourself

What others who know you would describe as your strengths and skills

How you have demonstrated these strengths, skills and personal qualities

How these have helped you in the past

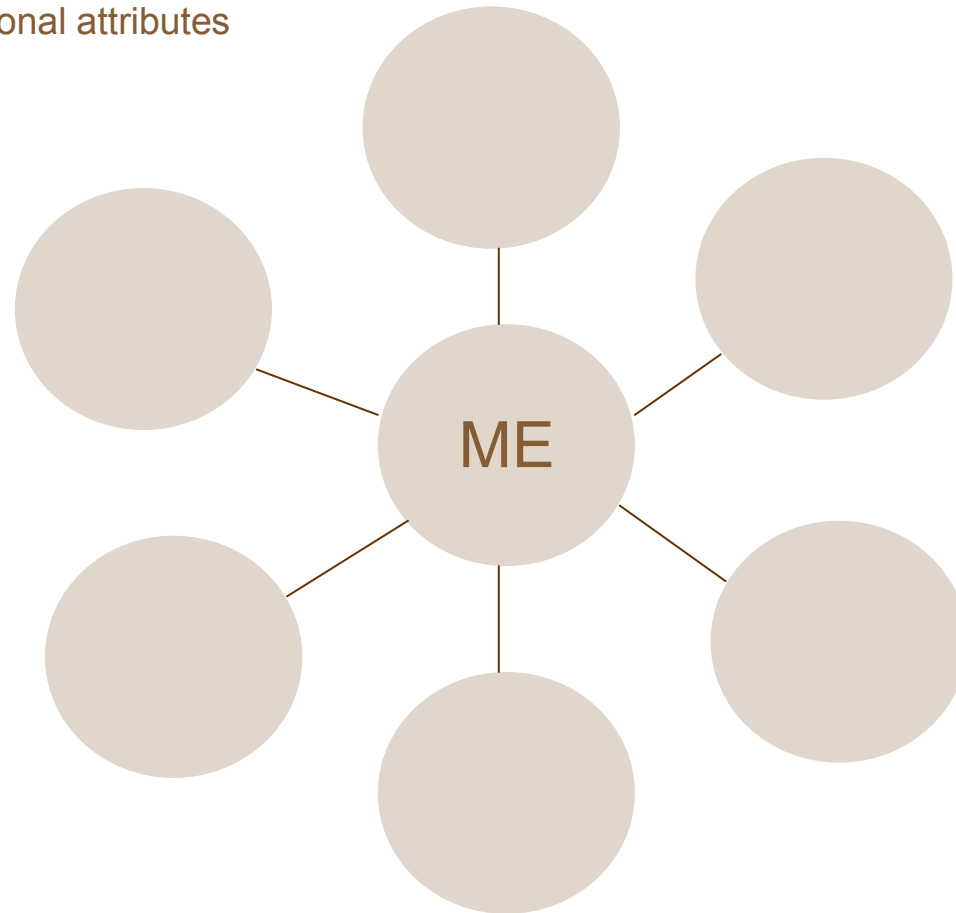
*'It helped me to see that I was stronger than I thought I was.'*

**My thoughts ...**



*'Wheels' by John O'Connor*

Write down your strengths,  
skills and personal attributes  
in the circles



Other things you might want to consider, for example:

Exercise and activity

Rest and sleep

Medication

Healthy diet

Seeing friends and family

Taking care of yourself and your appearance

Spirituality and beliefs

What gives your life a sense of meaning and purpose



**My thoughts ...**



*'Glasgow Night' by Donald Thompson*

## Steps to staying well

It is important to acknowledge thoughts, feelings and difficulties you have had previously as these may be helpful with your steps to recovery.

You might want to consider:

How you felt

How did it affect your life

What were you unable to do

Did you recognise how you were feeling

Did anyone else recognise how you were feeling

If you find any of this difficult choose a person you trust to support you with this.

**My thoughts ...**

**My thoughts ...**

*'MyRAP gives people a chance to think about the future and what informs their recovery.'*

## my recovery

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*'Recovery is being able to live a meaningful and satisfying life, as defined by each person, in the presence of symptoms. It is about having control over and input into your own life. Each individual's recovery, like their experience of mental health problems or illness is a unique and deeply personal process.'*

*(Scottish Recovery Network)*

This section is all about recovery and what that would be like for you.

Think about what recovery might mean for you:

How might you feel

Where might you be

What might you be doing

What might you be learning

What might you be good at

Who might you be with

**My thoughts ...**



*'Carluka flower yellow' by Dominic McEwen-King*

## **What next**

A key aspect of recovery is getting back to what is normal for you so it is good to begin with the basics. Now you are gaining in confidence in your recovery it may be useful to build on this.

It may be re-establishing previous roles and positive routines. In some cases this might even mean changing past behaviours or relationships that you know contributed to your ill health. Or it might simply be doing something new.



## Getting the basics right

What are the things you need to do for yourself as well as others every day?

Things to consider

- Think simply and positively

- Positive routines, for example, sleep, diet, exercise

- What makes you feel good

- What are your responsibilities

- Who relies on you

- What are your priorities

- Remember you have choices

## My thoughts ...

*'[MyRAP] gives people a chance to think about the future and what informs their recovery.'*  
*'Helps people reflect on what they've learned.'*

## **Coping strategies**

You might know from experience that some things are able to help you cope with stressful events.

Things you might consider

- Taking time out

- Talking to friends or family

- Tackling the problem or issue

- Complementary therapies

- Maintaining positive routines

- What you have learned from previous experiences

- Remembering how you coped before

- Your personal strengths and abilities

**My thoughts ...**



*Night-time in Glasgow by Donald Thompson*

## **if you are experiencing problems with your mental health**

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*'1 in 4 British adults will experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any one year.'*

*(Mental Health Foundation)*

Mental health is about how we think and feel and there are many factors that affect our mental health. At times we can all feel stressed, anxious, worried or afraid. We may also have experiences that are difficult to cope with but doing something positive can make all the difference to our mental health.

This self-help booklet can help you get well. It will not only help recognise where you are at the moment but it will benefit you in thinking about how you might want to move on in your recovery.

You might want to consider the practical things that will help reduce anxieties

- What you will need organised at home for example; childcare, bills, work, home safety, collecting benefits

- Any financial issues or concerns you might need support with

- Ensuring you have a supply of medication

- The importance of routines in your life that need to be kept going

**My thoughts ...**

## Becoming unwell

There might be some early signs that you are able to recognise when you are becoming unwell.

Things to consider

Are you sleeping more, or less, or crying, feeling low or anxious

How might others recognise this, for example, avoiding the phone or being irritable

Using too much alcohol/caffeine/cigarettes

Stressful relationships and people

Unhelpful behaviours and activities

Too much television, video games, social media

Things you know from experience that are unhelpful to you



**My thoughts ...**

## Triggers and warning signs

Early warning signs are tell tale signs that you may be becoming unwell. Knowing about these and planning ahead can increase your ability to cope.

Things you might consider

- Family stress

- Overdoing things

- Work stress

- Stopping your medication

- Alcohol/drug use

**My thoughts ...**

*'A good way to face your problems head on.'*

**My thoughts ...**



*'Mum and Ducklings' by Dominic McEwen-King*

## Overcoming the difficulties

It will be helpful for you to think about ways you deal with problems to reduce their affect on your life and produce a better outcome.

You might want to reconsider:

- What your strengths and skills are

- Your previous experiences and how you coped before

- What practical steps can you take to manage in the future

- Who might support you

- What you have learned about yourself

- How you might organise your day

- How you might learn new problem solving and coping skills

## Steps towards getting better

This is an opportunity to consider things you need to do to keep yourself well. These are the things you have done in the past, or could do in the future, to help you stay well.

You will be able to use these steps to develop your personal MyRAP. Take time to think about the following:

Your strengths

Recognising what wellness is for you

A daily maintenance plan

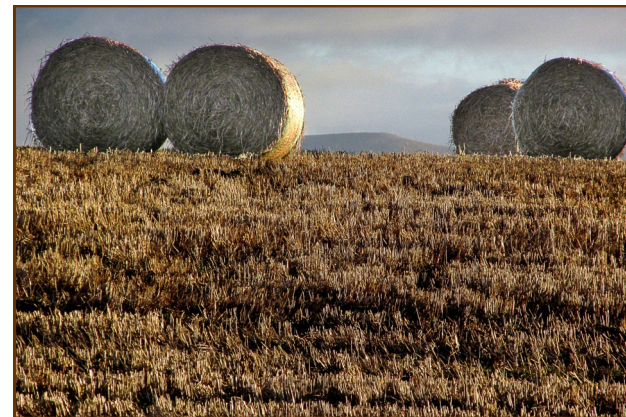
The challenges

Identifying triggers

Early warning signs

People and things that are important to you

**My thoughts ...**



*'Straw' by Donald Thompson*

## **What you know you should avoid or at least limit**

You might want to consider how some things may be unhelpful.

For example:

Alcohol / caffeine / cigarettes

Relationships and people

Behaviours and activities

Television, video games, social media

Becoming over tired



**My thoughts ...**

## Staying Safe

Staying safe is important step for everyone. What can you do to stay safe?

Make a detailed plan

What or who has helped in the past

Who can you contact and how will you do this

Remember you are not alone

Comforting and diversional activities such as music, exercise, writing

Alcohol and other substances will make you more vulnerable

The more ideas and strategies the better!

For some people during periods of stress, ill health and crisis, they have thoughts about or have harmed themselves in some way. Although this may not reoccur, it might be useful to consider how this can be prevented or minimised in the future.

## My thoughts ...

*'If MyRAP was outside, I wouldn't be inside [hospital]'*

## What things do you find helpful

You might want to consider

Relationships and people

Information

Complimentary therapies

Medication

Activities, hobbies and interests

Using particular strengths or skills

Sharing responsibilities

Work

Positive and helpful behaviours

Personal strengths and qualities

Prioritising

How will you achieve this - first step

What is next - break it down

How will you know you have succeeded

How will you keep it going

What are your creative skills

Changing unhelpful behaviours

**My thoughts ...**



*Ryeland Lambs Sleeping by Dominic Ewen-King*

## People who can help you

There will be people you are more likely to trust who can support you if you are becoming unwell. Think about who they might be.

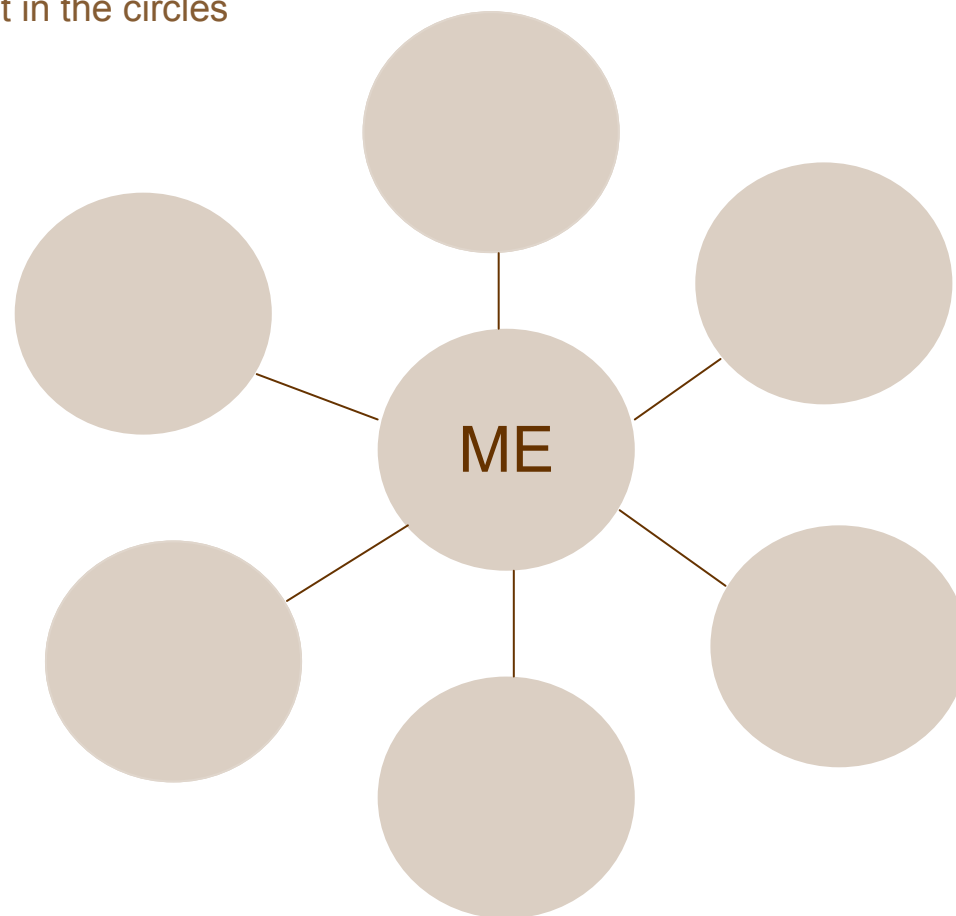
Things to consider

Who has previously supported you

It might be helpful to discuss with them how they can let you know if they are becoming worried

*'MyRAP ... helps you get things off your mind.'* (Lauren)

Write down the people who can support you best in the circles



**My thoughts ...**



*'Horse' by John O'Connor*



## next steps

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*'a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'*

## Getting involved

Are there areas you would like to become involved in? Use the blank pages to record your thoughts and ideas.

Things to consider

Getting involved in local community

Voluntary work

Support groups

Can you make a difference

Using your skills, personal qualities and interests

What can you do just for the fun of it!

**My thoughts ...**

## Things you can do later

There are things that you might want to consider for your future.

These might include:

- Activities that can wait until later

- Ambitions and dreams

- New skills you can learn

- Changes in your life

- Hobbies and interests

## My thoughts ...



*'Tinto in Snow' by Donald Thompson*

## Advance Statements

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This is a written statement, drawn up and signed when someone is well which sets out how s/he would prefer to be treated (or not treated) if s/he were to become ill in the future.

It must be witnessed and dated.

The Tribunal and any medical practitioner treating the person must have regard to an advance statement.

If the wishes set out in an advance statement have not been followed the medical practitioner must send to the Mental Welfare Commission (and others) a written record giving the reasons.

Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

If you would like to know more, either ask your mental health worker or contact The Advocacy Project on 0141 420 0961.

We hope MyRAP has been helpful to you in your recovery journey.

Remember that recovery comes from within and people will come to understand what recovery means to them in their own time and in their own way.

Some people might not be ready for MyRAP but this doesn't mean that they will not be ready at some point in the future.

*'MyRAP was interesting and helpful.'*

## Useful contacts

Organisation	Telephone	Website
Bipolar Fellowship	0141 560 2050	<a href="http://www.bipolarscotland.org.uk">www.bipolarscotland.org.uk</a>
Breathing Space	0800 838587	<a href="http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk">www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk</a>
Lanarkshire Links	01698 265232	<a href="http://www.lanarkshirelinks.org.uk">www.lanarkshirelinks.org.uk</a>
Lanarkshire Mental Health Resources & Information		<a href="http://www.element.org.uk">www.element.org.uk</a>
Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland	0800 3896809	<a href="http://www.mwscot.org.uk">www.mwscot.org.uk</a>
NHS24	08454 242424	<a href="http://www.nhs24.com">www.nhs24.com</a>
Samaritans	08457 909090	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>
Scottish Independent Advocacy	0131 260 5381	<a href="http://www.siaa.org.uk">www.siaa.org.uk</a>
Scottish Recovery Network	0141 240 7790	<a href="http://www.scottishrecovery.net">www.scottishrecovery.net</a>
Support in Mind Scotland	0131 662 4359	<a href="http://www.nsfscot.org.uk">www.nsfscot.org.uk</a>
The Advocacy Project	0141 420 0961	<a href="http://www.theadvocacyproject.org.uk">www.theadvocacyproject.org.uk</a>
Welfare Rights Advice (North Lanarkshire)	01698 332552	<a href="http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk">www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk</a>
Welfare Rights Advice (South Lanarkshire)	0303 1231008	<a href="http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk">www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk</a>



# MyRAP questionnaire

We hope you enjoyed using MyRAP and found it useful. Your feedback is of great value to us as we strive to improve our service and our resources. We would appreciate you taking the time to complete this short questionnaire and return it to us. The information you provide will be used for evaluation purposes and remain anonymous.

If you would like to participate please complete the two page tear-off questionnaire and return to the address provided overleaf. Thank you.

✂ tear off and return—thank you

## Where did you find out about MyRAP?

- Hospital in-patient services
- Internet
- Family
- Friends
- Community services (please specify)

## What did you find most useful about MyRAP?

- Language easy to understand
- Able to work through it myself
- Taking control of my wellbeing
- Helped focus on my strengths
- Reflecting on experiences
- Helps me stay well
- Other**

**What did you find most challenging?**

- Working through it on my own
- Difficult for me to take control
- Found it hard to identify my strengths
- Did not like thinking about my past experiences
- Too time consuming
- Other

**The MyRAP booklet?**

- Was user friendly
- I liked size of booklet
- It helped seeing photographs by service users
- It helped to read quotes from service users
- The font size was appropriate
- I liked the colours used
- I liked the cover image
- Other

**Would you recommend MyRAP?**

Yes  No

**Why?**

**Send to:** FREEPOST, RRXL-BSER-KZHY, Lanarkshire Links, Dalziel Business Centre, Rooms 3.5-3.6, 7 Scott Street, Motherwell, ML1 1PN

or

**Complete online:** <http://www.elament.org.uk/self-help-resources.aspx> and email to [LRN@lanarkshirelinks.org.uk](mailto:LRN@lanarkshirelinks.org.uk)

✂ tear off and return—thank you

## **Acknowledgements**

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For further information on mental health and wellbeing visit the  
Elament website.

**[www.elament.org.uk](http://www.elament.org.uk)**

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