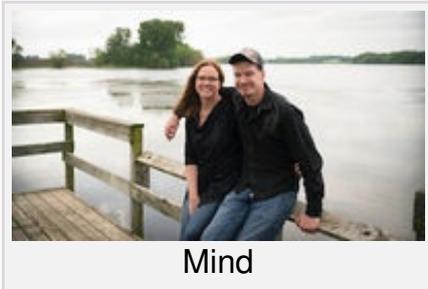


# eWellness magazine

## How We Heal Kevin Amundson ‘The Truck is How I’m going to Get Through This’

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Mind

by Patricia McMorrow

A well-worn pair of cowboy boots, size 13, and a 2003 Chevy Silverado, with a lift kit and mud tires, helped Kevin Amundson of New Prague, MN, heal after a “heart attack of the mind” led him to attempt suicide in September 2014.

Age 20, and suffering from undiagnosed depression, Kevin drove after work to his favorite childhood lake, called the sheriff with his location, and asked that his family be spared finding him. Then he shot himself through the bottom of the jaw with a rifle.

Kevin’s mom, Amy, calls it divine intervention that the sheriff sent up a helicopter immediately, and that Kevin fell backward onto the dock, instead of into the water.

What Amy wrote on Kevin’s CaringBridge website the day after he was saved still holds true: *“We will not attempt to answer the question you will all be asking, which is, ‘Why?’ There is no answer we can offer that will satisfy that question for any of us. We can tell you he is a charming, funny, compassionate, and deeply loved young man, and we believe that neither God nor we are done with him yet.”*

Based on the bullet’s path, Kevin should not be here today. Never mind talking, walking ... or driving.



**But after waking up in the ICU at North Memorial Hospital in Minneapolis, nine days after the attempt, Kevin said he purposely and consciously put himself on a path toward healing.**

***“I saw the pain and the suffering that the attempt caused my family and my friends,” he said. “I wasn’t taking my pain away like I thought. I was just putting it on other people.”***

**For inspiration, Kevin’s family taped to the foot of his hospital bed pictures of the pickup he had purchased a few months before the attempt. It was his baby.**

**He said: *“Every time I would start to get down, I’d just look at the truck and remember, ‘That’s waiting for me. That’s going to be there for me. That’s going to be how I get through this.’”***



*Kevin with his mom, Amy, at the dock where he attempted to take his own life.*

**Neither Kevin nor his mom, his primary caregiver, wish to minimize the physical damage from which he has miraculously recovered. Or overlook that he will always be working toward having depression control less of his life.**

**But having Kevin get back in his cowboy boots was a big deal. And getting behind the wheel of that truck again, when doctors didn't think it could happen, was even bigger. Kevin said, "The fact that the truck is mine, and I can build it how I want it ... that is an additional piece of healing."**

**Amy offers a different perspective, three years after the worst experience of her life. She said, "If being open and talking about how he felt, and what he struggled with, and the things he went through, has the ability to save another person, then the struggle and pain all had a purpose. That is healing for Kevin, and for all of us."**



**Note: We can all help prevent suicide. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides 24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. Dial 1-800-273-8255. The Amundson Family also supports SAVE (Suicide Awareness Voices of Education), founded in Minnesota in 1979. Dial 1-800-273-8255.**

**Watch Videos by Kevin Amundson:**

**Kevin: Before Attempting Suicide, Think of All Who Care**

**Kevin: Depression Will Never Go Away, But Never Stop Fighting**