

Put on Your Oxygen Masks



Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a personal thing, defined by your own sense of what is right for you. It cannot be given to you but you can be given tools to achieve it.

What Do You Focus on?

Weaknesses or Strengths

Negative or Positive Events

What are you spreading?

**Attitudes and Emotions can be
contagious**



Remember the frog

Don't stay in a situation that adversely impacts on your wellbeing.



5 Ways to Wellbeing

New Economics Foundation

Connect

Be Active

Take Notice

Keep Learning

Give

Quick and Easy Wellbeing Strategies

Breathe

Take a walk

Take a mental break

Rehydrate

Switch tasks

Quick massage

Posture

Stretch (especially your neck)

Aromatherapy

Have fun



Strategies for Building Resilience

Take care of / nurture yourself – this can help you boost your resilience and be ready to face any challenges life throws at you.

Develop a strong social network – good relationships are critical to our emotional health and wellbeing and foster resilience.

Identify a sense of purpose in your life and/ or work – finding a sense of purpose in life or at work by participating in activities that are meaningful to you (Amy Wrzesniewski's research)

Embrace change – change is a part of life, develop flexibility to deal with changes that occur and accept that there are some things/ circumstances that cannot be changed.

Develop self efficacy – remember the little engine that could, self efficacy is your ability to believe that you can accomplish what you want to accomplish.

Avoid viewing problems as insurmountable – highly stressful events will occur we cannot control these, however we can control how we interpret and respond to them. Look beyond the present circumstances to see how future circumstances may be a little better.

Set goals and take action towards them – set realistic goals for yourself and take regular action to work towards these, even if they are just small steps (remember how to eat an elephant).

Take action to solve problems – do not be an ostrich and put your head in the sand this will prolong the crisis. Identify actions you can take to resolve the issue and take steps to make these happen.

Have fun and laugh – these provide fantastic health benefits and increase resilience, especially if we can learn to laugh at ourselves and not take ourselves too seriously.

Strategies for the Future

Happiness Virus – The results of research suggest that happiness can spread through a population like a virus. Train your brain for happiness and wellbeing and start infecting others. Smile (genuinely) at everyone you pass by. Strike up a friendly conversation with a stranger, maybe on the bus or at the shops. Spend more time around happy people. Play, laugh and create a happy environment for those around you. See what a difference it makes when you catch the happiness virus and pass it on.

Pay it Forward – Giving is more rewarding than receiving. The same area of the brain lights up when acting charitably as when having sex, eating chocolate or winning the lottery. The giver is left with a feeling of overall wellbeing and happiness. At least one time every day this week pick someone and ask yourself “what would make them happy right now?” Do that for them without expecting anything in return. This new habit will train your brain to focus on situations where you can make a difference, and this will lead to increased happiness and wellbeing.

Leave it Behind – Sometimes after a challenging day you may struggle to be present and relaxed at home. This particularly impacts on relationships, especially those that nourish you. When you are distracted, angry or worrying about other things you cannot give the people you love quality attention. Before meeting your loved ones each day pause, take a deep breath and leave the thoughts and worries about your day behind. Use the trigger of getting your keys out or placing your hand on the door knob as a signal to leave all the garbage from the day behind. When you greet your loved ones focus right here and now and be present for them, giving them quality time and attention will do wonders for your connection.

Come to your Senses – Your 5 senses link your mind to the present moment and research has shown that people who are more aware and engaged in the present moment experience a more calm and focused mind and greater wellbeing. Every day spend 5 minutes connecting with a slice of nature. It might be your back yard, a small park that you can go to in your lunch break, or the view of trees on your way to work. Take this time as a mental break – an opportunity to clear your mind and connect with each of your senses. Notice the smells, sights and sounds around you as well as the textures and possibly even a taste. Once your mind is calm and relaxed try and take this with you for the rest of the day.

Gratitude Journal/ 3 Good things – Choose a time of day when you can sit down and reflect on the good things that have happened to you today and choose 3-5 things which you are currently grateful for. The means by which you go about counting your blessings will vary depending on your personality. Those that are drawn to writing may like to write in a gratitude journal to document their blessings and why they are grateful for them. Others may simply contemplate each of their blessings and reflect on why they are grateful for them and how their lives have been enriched by them.

Have a Beautiful Day – Set aside one free day per month and indulge in your favourite pleasures, pamper yourself. Design the day outlining what you will do from hour to hour, do not let the bustle of life interfere. Seek out significant others in your life to share experiences with. Make sure you build memories of the day by taking mental or actual photos of the place/ event or maybe even a physical souvenir so you can reminisce later with others.

Savouring – When you savour an experience you deliberately pay conscious attention to the experience, especially the experience of pleasure. Focus on certain elements e.g. taste, smell, sights, sounds and block out others – if you're listening to music you might close your eyes to help you savour the moment. Finally let yourself get totally absorbed in the moment – completely immersed in what you are doing. Do not remind yourself of other things you should be doing, or worry about what's coming next or consider ways it could be improved. Simply relax, use your senses and enjoy.

Gratitude Letter and Visit – Select one important person from your past who has made a difference in your life and to whom you have never fully expressed your thanks. (Do not choose this person based on new found romantic love or with the possibility of some future gain from them). Write a testimonial/ letter just long enough to cover one laminated page (you'll be leaving the laminated page with them as your gift). Take your time composing this and then when it's finished invite that person to your home or go and see them. It is important to do this face to face and do not tell the person the reason of the visit in advance – simply say “I just want to see you”. When you are both settled and comfortable read your letter aloud, slowly, with expression and making eye contact. Then let the other person react unhurriedly. You can then reminisce about those events that make this person important to you. (Seligman, 2002)

References

Foresight (2009). *Mental and Capital Wellbeing Project* undertaken by the New Economics Foundation. <http://neweconomics.org/projects/five-ways-well-being>

Seligman, M (2002) *Authentic Happiness*, Random House Australia

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