Health & Wellness
Guide to improving mental wellness and wellbeing

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What is wellness?

Wellness tends to relate to one's physical health, for example the physical fitness of an individual. In summary, the absence of illness implies wellness.

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing tends to be viewed as more than one's physical health, for example also including their mental health. Wellbeing centres on judging one's life positively and feeling good.

"Wellbeing integrates mental health (mind) and physical health (body) resulting in more holistic approaches to disease prevention and health promotion." – Jim Purcell, Founder, Returns on Wellbeing Institute

Why are these important?

Wellness and wellbeing are critical to an individual's good health, happiness, fulfilment, and purpose, as well as providing the ability to therefore judge one's life positively and provide the feeling of being engaged in all aspects of their life.

There are two ways we can increase our resilience and promote good mental health:

Reduce our everyday stresses: often, we push through our small, everyday stresses, expecting we can continue to make it work even when they start to pile up. But if we get enough of these stresses, we tend to find ourselves sitting close to the line of vulnerability, even without major life events.

Ensure our resilience is as high as possible: making sure we are in the best physical and mental health possible. This will help us stay on the right side of our line of vulnerability and cope with any major life events which may occur.

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What can I implement today?

Health is a critical part of wellbeing, which means looking after ourselves is important. Things you can implement immediately to improve your wellbeing include:

- Improving your **sleep** pattern
- Regular **exercise**
- Improving your **nutrition** (breakfast anyone?)
- Practicising **mindfulness**

Four quadrants to inspect as part of your own wellbeing review:

Sleep

Research shows we need an average of 7 - 8 hours of sleep per night. Anything less than this and you're asking your mind and body to work on overdrive. And be sure to get at least 1-2 hours of that before midnight to keep your circadian rhythm working optimally.

Exercise

Physical exercise releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good – boosting your self-esteem, helping you concentrate and sleep, as well as look and feel better. Getting 30 minutes of heart racing exercise three times a week has been shown to have a significant impact on both our physical and mental health, increasing our resilience.

Nutrition

Nutritious food leads to a healthy body and mind. We need the proper vitamins and minerals to maintain a robust immune system. Eating well will help you beat tiredness and fatigue, improve your concentration and can help improve moods. International evidence even suggests that a number of mental health conditions can be influenced by dietary factors.

Mindful rest

In today's day and age it can be hard to find time to 'switch off' or reflect on our stress levels. When we don't create enough space to think, we can get overwhelmed. It is important to take time for 'breathing space' every day, in order to gather your thoughts, reflect on both the good and bad, and then move on. This is one manner of mindfulness.

For more visit www.mh101.co.nz/wellbeing/tips-for-wellbeing