

Supporting Resources

Through a discipline's lens: A Psychiatry Perspective

Dr Kay Wilhelm's presentation explores the relationship between grief, loss and mental health from a psychiatry perspective. Topics covered include but are not limited to grief as a normal response, complicated grief, disenfranchised grief, melancholic depression.

The activity is delivered as part of the Mental Health Professionals' Network's [Working Better Together Conference 2019](#).

Activity broadcast time:

From 12.30 pm Wednesday 29 May, 2019

The following supporting resources have been provided by Dr Wilhelm to further your learning.

Article

- [Interpersonal therapy in the general practice setting](#). Available from Medicine Today

Online resources

- <http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0390>

WELLBEING CARDS



Introducing skills that promote
wellbeing and emotional
modulation in everyday life

Wellbeing is related to a number of areas:

- Family of origin
- Being active
- Happiness-inducing activities
- Being around happy people
- Standing up for beliefs
- Volunteering
- Listening
- Loyalty
- Faith
- Celebration
- Humour
- Coping well with stress
- Good health
- Lifestyle behaviours – see bran friendly moves below
- Living circumstances
- Enough money to be comfortable...

Introducing the wellbeing cards

Emotional intelligence involves a number of skills, including:

1. Being able to identify your emotions and what they're telling you;
2. Regulating your own emotions: knowing how comfortable you are with specific emotions, how much control you have over them;
3. Being self-motivated, rather than relying on others to get going.
4. Recognising emotions in others: being able to 'read' other peoples' feelings and respond appropriately.
5. Being able to reflect on situations and learn from them.

The wellbeing cards are based on well-known techniques used to promote life skills (strategies for dealing with stressful situations). They may act as prompts to remind you of techniques previously used or a nudge to try out something new. Each card is listed below, with a brief explanation. Each has a suggested time frame.

The cards were grouped into strategies:

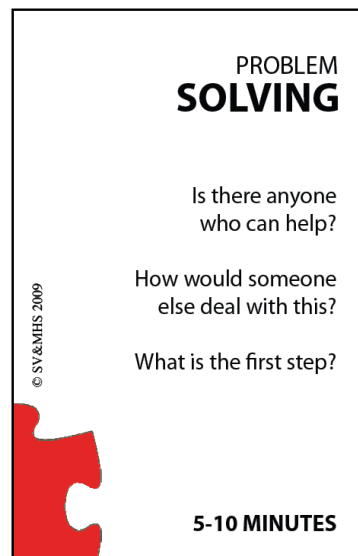
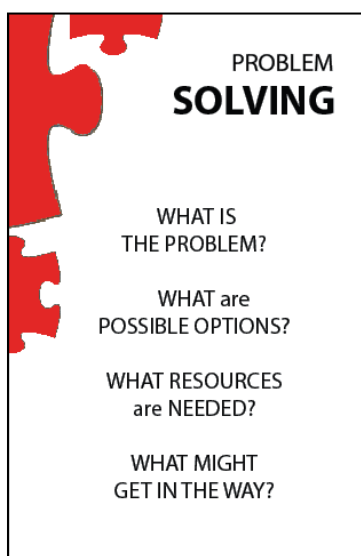
- problem solving and goal setting
- modulating emotions
- using techniques related to mindfulness
- taking a different view (reframing)
- using creativity strategically
- accentuating the positive in daily life

Problem solving in steps

The aim is to tackle **Problem Solving** using a series of steps.

This can be used for any issue affecting you, alone or with family or friends. You can start on an issue you have now, to get used to the technique. The secret is to find a problem that is relevant and possible to solve. This takes practice!

1. **What is the problem?** *How did the problem develop? How to define??*
2. **What are the possible solutions?** *(How many can I think of?)*
3. **What are the pros and cons of each possible solution??** *What resources are needed? What might get in the way?*
4. **Select one solution** *Is there clearly one solution? If not, return to step 3*
5. **Plan the solution** *Is there anyone who can help? Who, what, when, how will the solution be implemented?*
6. **How did it work?** *Can I make some SMART goals?**
7. **What is the first step?** *(How will I know when it's working?)*



SMART goal setting

The aim is to use the SMART goal questions to identify and shape goals that are *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART)*.



SMART GOALS

Make your GOALS

Specific: What is my aim?
What do I want to achieve?

Measurable: How will I know
when I've got there?

Achievable: Can I achieve this?
What do I need?

Realistic: What are the likely
problems? Is this possible?

Timely: Am I willing to do this?
Is the timeframe reasonable?

You can make a table like this to enter
your goals in different time frames

	Self	Relationship	Work
Within one week			
Within one month			
Within own timeframe			

Strategies 24/7

The aim is to have variety of strategies that are useful day and night

Please put at least one idea in each box

	Strategies for daylight hours	Strategies at night-time
Strategies for indoors		
Strategies for outdoors		

Stress management and emotional regulation

Most people tense their muscles when stressed and depressed, leading a feeling of being on edge and tight, which, in the longer term can lead to pain.

Tense and relax is a simple, effective and widely used muscle relaxation technique to release tension. This technique requires regular practice so that it is 'on tap' as needed.



Anger is constructive if it helps you overcome an obstacle. However, unresolved anger can lead to depression and health problems. **Defusing anger** involves 'stepping back' and appraising the emotional buildup and its triggers.

60 second Reality Check also has the aim of taking a more 'helicopter view' of emotionally taxing situations. This card is intended for people who experience a rapid emotional buildup that seems overwhelming at the time.

There are many useful books and websites: Here are some examples.

- <https://www.wikihow.com/Control-Anger>; <https://www.wikihow.com/Control-Your-Temper>
- Siegel DJ (2009) *Mindsight: change your brain and your life*; (2013) and *Brainstorm* (2014).
- Mackay M, Rogers P, Mackay J (2003) *When anger hurts: Quieting the storm within*.
- Brantley J, Millstine W. (2005) The 'five good minutes' series (for morning, night, etc).

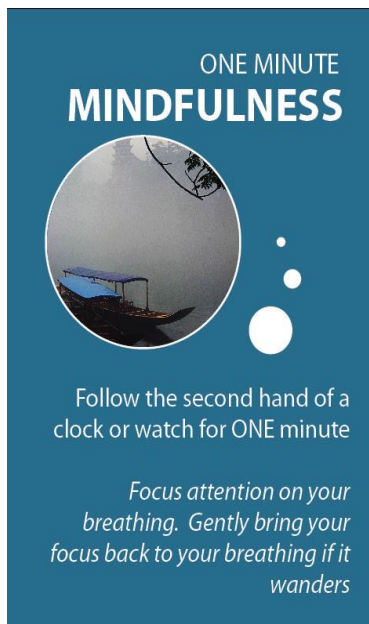
Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a practice based on Eastern approaches to life but is growing in acceptance in the West. It involves 'staying in the present', to help you focus and to declutter your thoughts. It also improves brain plasticity.

One Minute Mindfulness is a deceptively simple strategy involving a simple focus and breathing technique. It is amazingly effective once you have mastered it and is a great starting point.

Mindful Body Scan is another technique to train your focus to remain mindful and accept any sensation that arises. This promotes a mindful approach to your general health and can help sleep, pain and being more in touch with your own bodily sensations.

Notice Five Things is the most intensive of the three: it gets to the heart of focussing on the present.



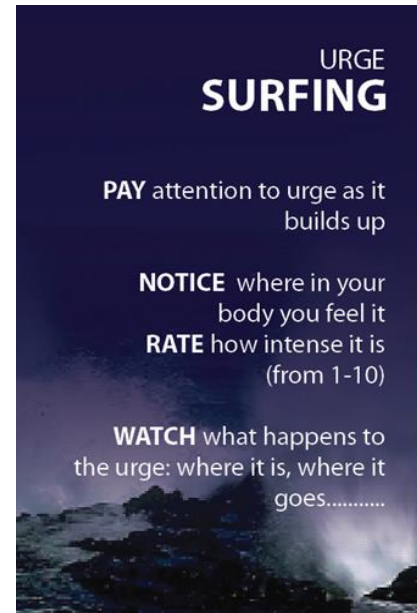
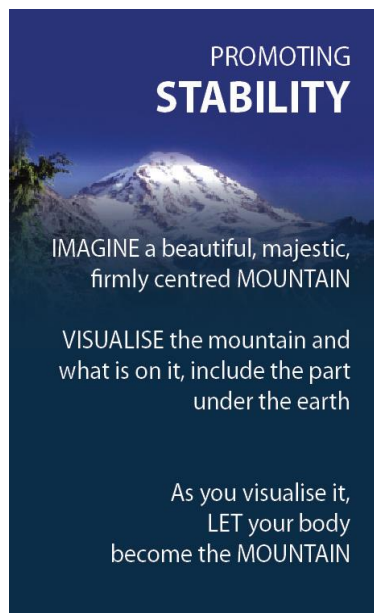
Guided mindfulness exercises: last one good for sleep

- <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/health/features/stories/2012/10/25/3618470.htm>

Other techniques associated with mindfulness

These involve 'taking a step back' and observing feelings and behaviours dispassionately while in a mindful state.

Letting thoughts go encourages you to label distressing thoughts and allow them to drift off or float away.



Promoting stability (emotional grounding) involves identifying with the mountain's strength and majesty, as something cool and strong.

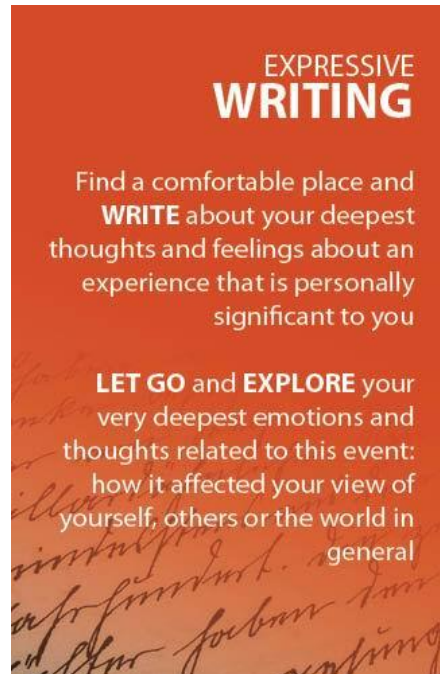
Urge surfing (or emotion surfing) also involves standing back and observing and then surfing the emotion - using the power of the emotion or urge rather than fighting it.

This is helpful for people experiencing cravings for nicotine, gambling or other addictions but will also work for a rapid build-up of panicky feelings.

These are all very empowering but need practice so that you have the technique in place when needed.

Using creativity

Music can calm, arouse emotions, energise and help focus. It has profound effects on our wellbeing. **Experience Music** asks you to consider what music suits you and to select music for different contexts.



Writing about one's own personal experiences is recognised for its influence on our thoughts and feelings. It takes a number of forms, including journaling, memoirs and letters. All these enable the writer to make sense of their thoughts, express emotions and ideas they may not wish to or cannot verbalise, to record secrets, reflect on experience and to create a narrative.

Expressive Writing* is a technique that can improve mastery over stressful events. It is based on writing studies by James Pennebaker (instructions on the next page).

Other useful modes of writing include making lists, writing songs and poetry, including haiku, stories, and writing letters to express an issue. These letters are often best put in the bottom drawer and not sent.

Another form of writing, Gratitude Writing, asks you to think of someone important to you and write to express your gratitude. You can then read it to the person you wrote it to, if you wish.

Instructions for expressive writing*

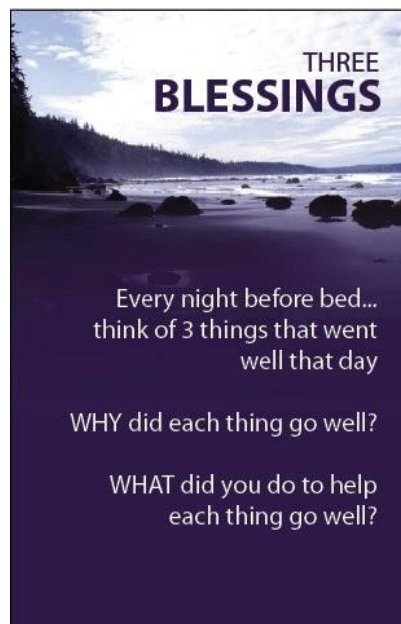
1. **Write for 15 minutes a day for 3-4 days in a row, without stopping or worrying about spelling, grammar or sentence structure. where you are private, safe and comfortable.**
2. Each day, write about your deepest thoughts and feelings about an experience that is personally traumatic or significant to you. This may be the most traumatic experience of your entire life or another personally upsetting or stressful experience or it may be an extremely important (positive or negative) emotional issue that has affected you and your life. It could be something that you are experiencing now or from the past.
3. In your writing, explore your very deepest emotions and thoughts related to this event. You may write about how this experience has affected your view of yourself, of others or of the world in general. You might tie your topic to your relationships with others, including parents, lovers, family, friends, or relatives, to your past, your present or your future, or to who you have been, who you would like to be, or who you are now. The most important thing is that you really let go and explore you very deepest feelings and thoughts in your writing.
4. Keep the journal entries as you first write them – don't go back and change them. You can write about the same event more than once or change to different topics.
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6. You can write about the same event more than once or about different event. It is entirely up to you.
7. You can then, if you wish, turn this technique around and write about benefits in situations that have been traumatic.

Some important Don'ts

1. Don't substitute writing for making plans and taking action.
2. Don't substitute for medical or mental health care.
3. Don't use this to justify what you did/didn't do, or to complain.

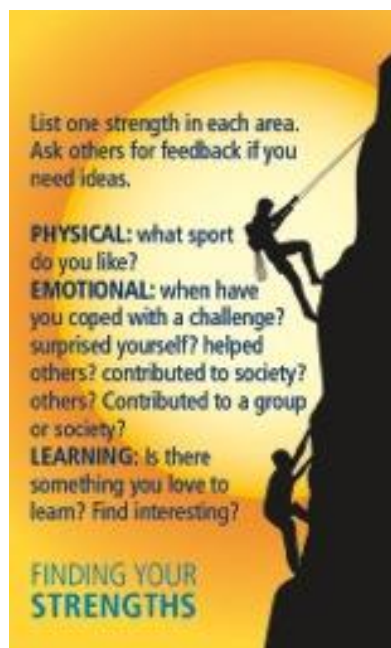
*Pennebaker JW, & Smyth JM. (2016). *Opening Up by Writing It Down: Third Edition. How Expressive Writing Improves Health and Eases Emotional Pain*. The Guildford Press: New York.

Accentuating the positives in you and your daily life



Celebrating the good things in your life can improve mood and wellbeing.

Finding your strengths



Develop an action plan for making a goal for each strength you

Websites related to happiness and promoting positive thinking

- <http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu> on happiness and positive psychology
- <http://www.actionforhappiness.org/take-action/find-yourstrengths-and-focus-on-using-them> provides more about strengths
- <http://eqi.org>: useful website on emotional intelligence

5 brain-friendly moves:

1. Get plenty of refreshing sleep.
2. Exercise daily. Exercise Aerobic activity and weights relax the mind, increase oxygen to muscles, tai chi, yoga increase .
3. Eat well. Include fresh foods and plenty of water.
4. Avoid nicotine. Use in moderation: caffeine, other stimulants, nicotine, sugar, alcohol and paracetamol.
5. Find a 'Stress Buddy', someone who has good coping style, who you can turn to and knows what helps when you are stressed.

Visit these websites for added advice and programs:

1. ABC Health and Wellbeing website: <http://www.abc.net.au/health/>
2. Health insite: http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/Health_and_Wellbeing
3. Mental Health triage Line 1800011511
4. MensLine Support Line Australia 1300789978
5. Relationships Australia 1300364277
6. Worksheets on a range of issues
<http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/consumers.cfm>
7. Wikihow <http://www.wikihow.com/Category:Relationships> has practical advice on a wide range of topics, including emotional issues, eg how to be a good friend, gain closure, set boundaries, be calm when jealous, deal with loneliness, be mindful, start an exercise program, etc.

Websites offering programs to support a range of mental health issues

8. <http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au/> to help 'tone up' your mind to fend off depression and e-couch <https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/>
9. myCompass <https://www.mycompass.org.au/> is an interactive self-help service that aims to promote resilience and wellbeing.
10. This Way Up clinic <https://thiswayup.org.au/clinic/> - their programs on sadness, shyness and worry are free - other programs have small (affordable) fee
11. Wellbeing cards are available online. <https://cards.med.unsw.edu.au/user>