

4 PILLARS OF MENTAL RESILIENCE

THE WHY

Almost half of all Australians aged 16 to 85 years will experience mental illness at some point in their life. The most common conditions are: anxiety, depression and substance use disorders, especially alcohol abuse. In addition to this one quarter of Australians aged 16 to 85 years will experience an anxiety condition during their lifetime.*

We are aiming to drastically improve these stats! Our workshops are designed to empower, uplift and equip you, your business, your school, or team members with the tools to not only better manage personal mental resilience but also how to support and recognise when others are in need of help.

We have developed our workshops to encourage positive mental fitness and awareness, as well as to equip you with the tools to better navigate challenges or hard times when they do arise.

During our workshops we share the 4 key pillars of mental resilience; Lifestyle, Physical Health, Mental self care and Support network.

Through practical and theoretical components, workshop participants will be given relevant information and key take-home messages in building stronger support networks. They will participate in team building exercises as well as gain awareness of their own mental health and build personal resilience. Participants will be equipped with quality resources to implement in their own lives to better improve mental fitness on a day to day basis.

* Australian Government Department of Health , 15 December 2020
<<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/mental-health>>

ALIGNMENT

We have aligned ourselves with Mental Wheels Foundation who have the same values and beliefs on both physical and mental fitness which we believe is as important as one another to promote an overall wellbeing. MWF also offer scholarship programs in the area of sport and music as these areas are proven through research to directly improve our mental health.

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YOUR HEALTHY HABITS

WHAT NEXT?

List 3 healthy habits that you can do daily or at least 3-4 times a week to fill your cup and make you feel good. Remember, these are the things that come naturally and easy to you, that pick you up and boosts your mood.

01

02

03

YOUR RESILIENCE CHALLENGES

01

COLD SHOWERS

By taking a cold shower 3-5 times a week you will be challenging yourself mentally and also build resilience to things that place you out of your comfort zone.

THE PROCESS

- Start gradually by ending with a 20 second cold shower. Focus on your breath and try to keep it calm and breathe easy
- Once you have noticed you can maintain a controlled breath, move to a 40 second cold shower.
- 60 seconds is your next target
- Then it's time to reach that 2-3 minute mark while having a smooth controlled flow of breathing.
- Tips: jumping in the ocean or lake etc through colder months is also another great way to immerse yourself in the cold.
- Finally if you have worked up to it, grab some bags of ice and throw in your bath, bin or portable ice bath and get icy.

02

BREATH WORK

Box breathing is a simple way to slow down and complete some simple techniques. Box breathing is also known as four squared breathing.

THE PROCESS

- Inhale for 4 counts
- Hold for 4 counts
- Exhale for 4 counts
- Hold at the bottom for 4 counts & repeat
- This type of breath work is great for stress management, simple to learn and can be performed almost anywhere.
- Just try to find a quiet space where you won't be distracted and practice the flow for even just a few minutes to reap the rewards of a calmer body and more relaxed mind.

This style of breath work has a calm and relaxed feeling which will flow through the body and mind. Box breathing can reduce stress and improve your mood. That makes it an exceptional treatment for conditions such as generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

YOUR BETTER HEALTH TIPS

WATER INTAKE

As a general rule, men need about 10 cups of water every day and women need about 8 cups. On warmer days and days you exercise and sweat more, more water will be required.

SLEEP

We all have our sweet spot when it comes to how much sleep we need each night but if we can hit the hay around the same time every night and wake around the same time each morning, it makes for a better cycle and will make getting up in mornings not as hard if you aren't a morning person. Majority of us should be aiming for 7-9 hours of shut eye every night. More tips on this on the next page.

EXERCISE

Moving our body regularly is super important both physically and mentally. We should do it daily, that doesn't mean you have to go to the gym 7 days a week but at least aim for 60 active minutes per day like a walk, run, swim, ride, hike etc. The benefits of exercising outdoors include getting fresh air, sunlight exposure which increases vitamin D levels and being out in nature which helps to boost our mood. If you are not motivated to do it on your own, find a buddy and keep each other accountable.

MINDFULNESS

Allocate some time. You don't need a meditation cushion or bench, or any sort of special equipment to access your mindfulness skills—but you do need to set aside some time and space.

Observe the present moment as it is. The aim of mindfulness is not quieting the mind, or attempting to achieve a state of eternal calm. The goal is simple: we're aiming to pay attention to the present moment, without judgment. Easier said than done, we know.

Let your judgments roll by. When we notice judgments arise during our practice, we can make a mental note of them, and let them pass.

Return to observing the present moment as it is. Our minds often get carried away in thought. That's why mindfulness is the practice of returning, again and again, to the present moment.

Be kind to your wandering mind. Don't judge yourself for whatever thoughts crop up, just practice recognising when your mind has wandered off, and gently bring it back. For more tips like these visit mindful.org OR more advice, check out the referrals page.

YOUR BETTER HEALTH TIPS

GETTING BETTER SLEEP

Stick to regular sleep patterns

Help your body establish a healthy sleep routine by going to bed and waking up at about the same time each day.

Spend the right amount of time in bed

While 8 hours of sleep is recommended for adults, some people require more sleep and some require less. Limit your time in bed to no more than 9 hours.

Use your bed for sleep, not screens

Computers, phones and TV can disrupt your sleep. Your mind needs to associate being in bed with sleeping rather than watching TV or using your computer. Don't stay in bed if you're wide awake.

Relax before bed

Establish a 'buffer zone' before bedtime where you're not trying to solve any problems or are thinking about tomorrow. Find a relaxation technique that works for you instead. Avoid using your computer or phone during the 'bedtime buffer zone' (if you can't avoid this try using some blue light glasses for any evening screen time)

Avoid alcohol, caffeine and cigarettes

While alcohol might make you sleepy initially, it can disrupt your sleep cycle, leading to poorer quality sleep. Caffeine and cigarettes are stimulants that can also stop you from sleeping well.

Don't watch the clock

If you can't sleep, checking the time can heighten your anxiety about not sleeping. If possible, take the clock out of your room.

Avoid sleeping pills

Sleeping pills, which can be addictive, don't address the cause of your insomnia and won't help you in the long term. Sleeping pills should only be prescribed by a trusted doctor who fully understands the reasons why you might be struggling to get good quality sleep.

YOUR NUTRITION

**By Lui Kidner - The Naked Seed Nutrition
BHSc Nutritional Medicine**

Nutritional medicine is exactly as the name suggests- using food as medicine. But as a practice, it is not as simple as many people think. Not only do I evaluate what you eat and the quality, but I look deeply into assessing every other aspect of your health that may also impact your digestion and the way food is being metabolised. This includes your habits, behaviors and relationship with food, your mental and emotional wellbeing, your physical health and then individually whatever else may be going on inside and outside your body to impact your personal health picture.

Every system in your body is connected and continuously communicating. No system is stand-alone. Which is why our digestive system and nutrition play such an integral role in our mental health.

One key system in the body that plays a vital role in influencing how your mind functions is the gut. You may have heard about the gut being our "second brain", but I truly believe that for some people, it takes rank as our "first brain" quite often in their lives. The gut-brain axis consists of bidirectional communication between the central and enteric nervous system. Our mental and emotional state in the brain creates gut reactions. The reaction or sensations are then felt in the gut and communicated back to the brain. This also works the opposite way with the gut

feeling/sensation being the predictor of the brain reaction. These two vital systems continue "speaking" back and forth 24/7.

Our digestive system, also known as the gut, gastrointestinal tract or gastrointestinal system is the powerhouse that encompasses everything from the mouth, esophagus, stomach, to the small and large intestine. It also includes accessory organs; the pancreas, liver and the gall bladder. ALL of these organs play a role in breaking food into micro and macro nutrients, absorbing and assimilating these and then removing all of the unwanted waste, toxins, byproducts and creating poop! When this is not functioning well, you guessed it- you'll be feeling pretty yuck!

Food and its nutritional benefits are our body's fuel. This fuel should never be seen as simply as: energy input to support energy output. It is so much more than that. Food is nutrients, phytochemicals, minerals, vitamins, fiber, fats, carbohydrates and protein. These all feed multiple systems, playing single or various roles to support our brain, our mind our gut microbiome, our blood, our eyes, our muscles, every cell...our entire beings! Food also holds emotional meaning associated with joy, traditions, and celebrations and can have other positive and sometimes negative mental attachments too.

Our digestive system is embedded with it's own nervous system- the Enteric Nervous System. This is made up of 50-100 million nerve cells, which is as many as are contained in your spinal cord!

In times of stress, overwhelm, mental and emotional trauma the sympathetic nervous system is triggered, which tells the body you

are not safe and simply put- you have to "fight, flee or freeze". All energy and blood flow will divert away from your digestive tract slowing function until you are safe again (hello fermentation, gas, bloating, constipation or diarrhea, cramping, bacterial overgrowth & so much more= unhappy gut, brain fog, fatigue and mood swings.

When you are calm, happy, rested, relaxed and not stressed (physically, mentally, emotionally), your parasympathetic nervous system is triggered and energy and blood will flow freely to the gastrointestinal tract to create a happy digestive environment, which is why this is called "rest and digest". This is when digesting and eliminating is optimal and recharging, relaxing, healing and restoring is able to take place; physically and mentally.

Unfortunately in society today, the most potent form of stress comes from psycho-social stress. "The lion's of yesterday have become the people of today" - Dr Mithu Storoni. Today, the same type of stress response that was triggered by running from wild animals, is triggered by our environment- our neighbors, the people we commute with, our colleagues at work, social media and social stress. It has become very common for people to function in "fight or flight" mode more often than not, which is why caring for our digestive system and nutrition is more important than ever.

Another incredible fact is that 95% of serotonin is stored in the gut! Serotonin is not JUST the "happy hormone", it is crucial for sleep, metabolism, digestion and motility, memory, learning and mental health. Serotonin is highly influenced by the billions of bacteria that make up our microbiome. These

bacteria can influence what you digest and absorb, they can also influence your food choices and cravings and can impact inflammation throughout the body, as well as mood and energy levels. We are actually made up of more bacteria than we are human cells. Our gut lining also contains more immune cells than we have circulating in the blood or residing in the bone marrow.

The human body is complex but incredible. Nutritional medicine focus's on enhancing your whole health picture. Starting with the mind and the food we eat, and working through the whole body to ensure your physical and mental health and wellbeing is optimal and thriving!

If you would like more information specific to you please contact:

Nutritionist: The Naked Seed
Email: thenakedseednutrition@gmail.com
Instagram: [thenakedseed](https://www.instagram.com/thenakedseed)

YOUR SUPPORT

If you feel that your support network needs strengthening, or you would like to add to your continue learning more about some of the techniques we covered today, please use our list below to help you get you started.

MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS: Mitchell Woods Performance Coach
email: mitchell@mitchellwoods.com.au
instagram: [Mitchellwoodsperformancecoach](#)

MINDSET & PERFORMANCE COACH: MAPP
email: simon@mapplife.com
Instagram: [Mapp_life](#)

NUTRITIONIST: The Naked Seed
Email: thenakedseednutrition@gmail.com
Instagram: [Thenakedseed](#)

BREATH WORK: Breathless
email: info@breathlessexpeditions.com
Instagram: [Breathless_expeditions](#)

PSYCHOLOGY: Berry Collective Psychology
email: admin@berrycollective.com.au
Instagram: [Berrycollectivepsychology](#)

GYM/PERSONAL TRAINING: Fit State Of Mind
Website: www.fitsom.com.au
Instagram: [fitsom_](#)

ONLINE PSYCHOLOGY: My Mirror
Website: www.mymirror.com.au
Instagram: [mymirrorau](#)

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID CERTIFICATE: Steve Gambler
Email: steven@mananchor.com.au

SUPPORT SERVICES:

Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636
www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline - 13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au



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