



Connect 'n' Grow[®]

A WORLD WHERE HEALTH PATHWAYS HAPPEN THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATION

RTO 40518



Students Exploring
Life's Foundations

THE S.E.L.F. PROGRAM

connectngrow.edu.au

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Background

As you approach the end of your schooling years and prepare for the next season in your life, some of you will feel overwhelmed by all the suggestions, options, advice and support from those around you. Others of you may feel overwhelmed at the wide-open space ahead and feel you have very little direction and support about what you're meant to do next, or who you're meant to be. Many of you will find yourself somewhere in between these two scenarios.

A common theme in this season of life is uncertainty around all the choices and decisions you get to make in order to move on in some kind of direction. This is an exciting time in your life but can also be a scary one. It sure is important to have mature adults in your world to look to for advice - yet, if all you have is good advice from the outside, then you'll be making all your decisions based on what others say you should do rather than also looking on the inside to figure out what YOU WOULD like most to do. A good balance of both of these is where your gold lies.

All through school you've been taught to listen to others and to follow the wise counsel of others. Yet there are important skills that are wise to develop during your adult years which will empower you to make your own best choices to live your life fulfilled, flourishing and satisfied.

The life skills you are going to start discovering and developing in this short course are all skills towards developing a healthy and authentic sense of self awareness.

**“make
your
own best
choices
to live
your life
fulfilled,
flourishing
and
satisfied.”**



This is only the beginning. This journey of self-awareness is a life-long one.

It's a journey of continued growth and personal development.

It's a journey every wise person chooses to make, and the earlier you choose to step into it, and the longer you stick with it, the better not only for you - but also for those around you in your world too.

The comment I hear most from people who have started this journey is this: **“I wish I had known about all this earlier on in my life. If I only knew then what I’ve discovered now, I could have saved myself from much disappointment.”**

I am so glad you are here and are getting the opportunity to learn these foundational tools and strategies to make your journey of self-discovery a prosperous one!

Over the years there has been much research into what gives people confidence and what makes people happy. Having a solid foundation in self-awareness gives you many well documented benefits including these:

- reduced everyday feelings of anxiety
- increased self confidence
- increased sense of general happiness
- increased ability to flourish in life

The content I share with you in these modules are broad concepts which have been taught over many years and are well known in the field of personal development. Many years of research, many books and many articles have been written about each of these core concepts individually.

For the purpose of this program, I have simply chosen the concepts I feel are most relevant to you in this season in your life, and I share them here in my own words, and from my own perspective.

I do make reference to one book in this program. This book is my own. It's called *Hiding in the Shade*. It's a fable story about discovering your identity and fulfilling your dreams and purpose.

It has been a wonderful experience for me to have the joy of creating the SELF Program for you. As I mentioned earlier, this course is only the beginning. This is your starting place where you get to take your first steps along your journey towards exploring who you are and why you are here.

You have been created with your own unique purpose and have something special to offer the world that only you can offer in being **YOU**. It makes good sense to spend this time taking well guided steps to becoming more self-aware. There is great satisfaction in knowing that the choices you get to make going forward will be well aligned with who **YOU** have been created to be.

I look forward to meeting you inside.

Kathryn Wiseman



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MODULE 1

Discover
your unique
identity

MODULE 2

Emotional
intelligence

MODULE 3

The truth
about your
values

MODULE 4

Your
purpose and
passion

MODULE 5

Using
choice and
responsibility

MODULE 6

Personal
Wellbeing

INSTRUCTIONS:

Modules 1-6 require you to complete short responses in this workbook. Your answers are private; there is no right, or wrong answer and the workbook is kept by you. You also need to maintain a reflective journal and enter information at the end of each module. This is also private and is not submitted for assessment, however, your teacher will observe that you are reflecting on your learning, writing some answers in your workbook and participating in class activities and discussions.

DISCOVER YOUR UNIQUE IDENTITY

Each of you have been created with a unique, glorious and purposed identity. Being the **YOU** that you have been created to be is the best gift you can give to this world. The world needs you to be you, but before you can be you – you need to know who **YOU** are.

What makes up a person's identity?

Your identity is a combination of all the specific things that identify you to be you. It's a combination of things on the outside – the things others see, and also things on the inside – the things only you know best (or the things you choose to ignore).

Why is it important to know who you are?

The more you know about a thing, the more confidence you have in your capabilities and accomplishments in that area. Think of a time you have had a go at playing sport.

The more you know about it, the more you understand it and the more practice you've had playing it, the more confidence you'll have to play it. When you understand the game well, you will have confidence to play it and you'll also be more likely to enjoy it.

It's the same with you! The better you know yourself and understand yourself, the more confidence you can have in being true to yourself and in making the best choices in living each day the best that you can. When you know who you are, you get to choose to love who you are, and to even like being who you are!

The benefits of developing your self-awareness

Developing a well-grounded sense of self through doing the work to discover who you are, getting to know yourself better and accepting who you are, will go a long way towards increasing your self-confidence. The more self-aware and confident you are, the easier it will be for you to make choices that allow you to be your best **YOU**. The greater your self-awareness and self-acceptance are, the easier it will be to accept, value and love others more fully too.

Having a clear sense of who you are is a foundational key to living a fulfilled and happy life.

The problem with poor self-awareness

- When you don't know who you are, others will be quick to tell you who they think you should be!
- When you don't know who you are you may even feel you need to look to others to tell you who they think you should be. This will leave you trying to be like someone else, someone you are not.
- When you don't know who you are it's so easy to get caught up in the comparison game - always comparing yourself to others and competing with them. Trying to be someone you are not is truly exhausting and you will always feel deflated and feel like you're not enough. Uncertainty and anxiety will become second nature and you will always know that life was **not** meant to be this way. You'll keep wondering - surely there is more?

EXERCISE 1

Complete this exercise privately as what you think about yourself is often personal and something you do not feel comfortable sharing.

a) Write down the first five things that come to mind that you know about yourself.

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b) If you have written negative things about yourself, spend some time writing down five positive things.

We are often our own biggest critic! Self-talk is often negative. Many people have owned the fact that they would never dream of speaking about their friends out loud the same way they speak to themselves in private!

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Your identity consists of three parts:

your **your**
body **soul**
your
spirit

During this first module, we will start by exploring self-awareness and self-acceptance of your body. During Module 2 we will explore self-awareness and acceptance in light of your emotional intelligence and spirituality.

Self-acceptance.

Whether you like it or not, you have been created perfectly. The body you have is the one you have been blessed with. It is the only one you get and is the one you are meant to have. You were born to look exactly as you do, and the sooner you accept how you look, and make peace with how you have been created, the better.

The colour of your eyes, your hair, your skin - these are all unique to YOU. Your natural shape is unique too - Tall or short, apple or pear... Yes, you can diet and exercise to maintain some kind of control over your shape - but some parts of your body are simply the shape they are because it's how you've been created.

We can colour our hair, wear make- up, or even have surgery done, all in an attempt to look like someone else, which in reality rarely ends in true happiness. So often it's the person with straight hair who wishes for curls and the blonde who wishes to be dark. We can do something temporary about this if we choose, and please hear me when I say this in itself is not a problem. I've most certainly done these things myself too.

The real problem is if you find yourself constantly wishing you could be someone you're simply not. These may be hard words to hear, but no amount of wishing is going to give you a different body from the one you have been gifted. In fact, it's all this wishing that will always leave you feeling 'less than'. The sooner you choose to accept ALL the parts of your body just as they are, the happier you will be. There is plenty of research to back the fact that comparing yourself with others will steal your joy!

We live in a world filled with competition and comparison. It's broadcasted everywhere that our aim should be to be prettier, thinner, smarter... from a young age we are told the lie that one kind of body is better than another. Today I want you to know that is all rubbish! Needing to look like someone you are not is simply a waste of energy and will rob you of your joy!



Introducing Tawny

Tawny is a beautiful wedge-tailed eagle who doesn't know he is an eagle. All his friends are lorikeets. He is big, brown and grey and they are small, brightly and beautifully coloured.

Tawny can't understand why he is so bulky and dull and wishes he could look more like his friends. Not only does he wish to look more like them, when he compares himself to them it was easy to notice how quick and agile they were, compared to him. They could flit through small spaces that he could never fit through. They also seemed far happier and more content than Tawny.

They were happy to eat nectar and berries, while he much preferred eating lizards and snakes and baby possums were the best!



EXERCISE 2

a) Write down all the unique things about your physical body that help to identify you as **YOU**.

The colour of your skin

The colour of your eyes

The colour and texture of your hair (fine, medium or thick)

Your height

The shape of your body (lean, big, muscular)

b) What do you like most about your body?

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c) What do you like least about your body?

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d) What else do you notice about your body that identifies you?

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e) What areas of your body would you like to choose to be more accepting of?

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If there is any part of your physical body you really struggle to accept, I encourage you to find someone to talk to about this. Share your struggles with someone wise and mature. Someone you trust. Someone who won't judge you, but who will help you to see yourself through a new perspective.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

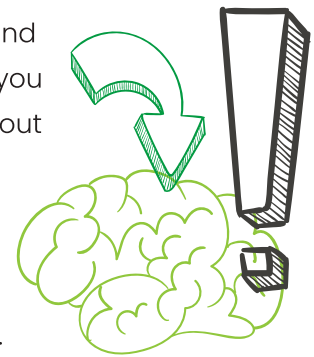
Maya Angelou

There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so!

William Shakespeare

Your mind can be your biggest friend or your biggest enemy. Your mind can truly be like a battlefield. You get to choose the kind of thoughts you want to have about everything - including the thoughts you have about yourself.

We are all shaped by our thoughts. We become what we think about ourselves. Your thoughts create your reality. Your mind is more powerful than you know. So, it's a good idea to choose wise thoughts.



Consider the most common thoughts you have about yourself when reflecting on your character by selecting **10 descriptors** from the list below.

<input type="checkbox"/> Anxious	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Lazy	<input type="checkbox"/> Shy
<input type="checkbox"/> Brave	<input type="checkbox"/> Funny	<input type="checkbox"/> Loving	<input type="checkbox"/> Selfish
<input type="checkbox"/> Bossy	<input type="checkbox"/> Gentle	<input type="checkbox"/> Loyal	<input type="checkbox"/> Sad
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Generous	<input type="checkbox"/> Mean	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-confident
<input type="checkbox"/> Caring	<input type="checkbox"/> Humble	<input type="checkbox"/> Messy	<input type="checkbox"/> Stressed
<input type="checkbox"/> Cheerful	<input type="checkbox"/> Honest	<input type="checkbox"/> Mischievous	<input type="checkbox"/> Studious
<input type="checkbox"/> Creative	<input type="checkbox"/> Hard-working	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful
<input type="checkbox"/> Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspiring	<input type="checkbox"/> Passionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Timid
<input type="checkbox"/> Dreamer	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventive	<input type="checkbox"/> Persevering	<input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy
<input type="checkbox"/> Determined	<input type="checkbox"/> Just	<input type="checkbox"/> Proud	<input type="checkbox"/> Worried
<input type="checkbox"/> Demanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disagreeable		<input type="checkbox"/> Responsible	

Have a look at the 10 words you've ticked describing your character. Think about why you believe these things and who told you this is true about you.

All through life we experience many circumstances and conversations. It's in our human design to search for and to give meaning about ourselves in all of these experiences. And over time, the meanings we have chosen to give about ourselves because of these events become the things we believe about ourselves. What you believe about yourself will hugely impact your emotional responses to life's circumstances!

Scenario 1

Maybe you've previously experienced being bullied. You will give meaning to this event. What if the meaning you gave to this event is the reason others would pick on you? It must be because there is something wrong with you. It must be because you're too small or too fat or uncool or too nerdy... so you search for a reason to believe you're not enough. This belief becomes the filter through which you see yourself. When you believe you are not enough, this belief will impact your emotional responses to all of life's circumstances!

Scenario 2

Maybe you grew up in a home where your parents had you believe you could achieve anything you set your mind to. You have grown up to believe you are clever, resourceful and well-able. Someone picks on you one day, attempting to bully you. Because you know you are enough and have great confidence, you think this: "Wow! This guy must have a problem or must be misinformed to pick on me... He must think I'm someone else, or he must be having a bad day!" And so, you brush it off.

*No one can make you think the thoughts you think
You get to choose!
Every minute of every day, your thinking is yours to decide!*

What about our emotions? Do we get to choose these? The truth is - we do, and we don't.

We don't choose which emotions get triggered. Our emotions are triggered automatically by our brain's response to our external environment. Our brains are wired for safety. Even though our emotions are automatically triggered, we still do in fact get to choose how to respond to them.

EXAMPLES

- When your brain picks up a signal of 'threat' in your environment - it will trigger emotions like fear, anxiety or worry.
- When your brain picks up a signal of discomfort in your environment - it will trigger the emotion most closely aligned with that discomfort for example: frustration, anger, disappointment, grief, sadness
- When your brain picks up a signal of safety and excitement in your environment - it will trigger emotions like joy, elation, freedom.

TAWNY

Tawny: bored, dissatisfied, down, depressed - sees he is not like the others. Things that interest them don't interest him... then he starts dreaming - this quickly lifts his emotions.



Dealing with stress and anxiety

When we are worried, fearful or anxious – if we choose to focus on our worry – we can stir it up, watch it go around and around in circles – and it will grow bigger and bigger.

Can you think of a time when you were worried about something and that was all you seemed to focus on? The great news is that there is another option! You have a choice! You could choose to refocus.

- To refocus means you can choose to look for a solution rather than to focus on the problem.
- You can choose to focus on what you can do, rather than on how helpless you feel.



EXERCISE 3

a) Is there something in your life you are currently anxious or stressed about? Have a think about the situation. Can you clearly name one thing about this situation that is worrying you the most? Try to be as specific as you can.

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b) Now, rather than focusing on the problem, I want you to think about what you could do to take a small step towards finding a solution. At first, you might struggle to come up with any thoughts. If you can't think of anything, ask yourself this: What would someone else in a similar situation do to find a solution?

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c) When faced with a challenge that is making you anxious or stressed, what if you could remember you can always choose to reframe it or to look on the bright side. Have you heard the saying **“Every cloud has a silver lining”**? What if you could choose to believe this? What if every circumstance had a silver lining?

Have a think about the situation that has been worrying you. If there was a gift that could come from this challenge, what could it be?

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You get to choose how to respond to your emotions. You get to choose empowering thoughts or disempowering thoughts. So, choose wisely!

Your spirit

What is your spirit exactly? Each person’s experience of spirituality is unique. Our experiences can also be really diverse. Spirituality is found in meditation, yoga, church, mindfulness, flow, peak performance. Spirituality is about an experience of connectedness. For a religious person this is connection to their God, for someone else it might be a connection to ‘universe’. This can be confusing because the spirit is not something you can see or touch. Your spirit is the deepest part of you, the light in your heart, the breath of life.

Quote:

There is something in the human spirit that will survive and prevail, there is a tiny and brilliant light burning in the heart of man that will not go out no matter how dark the world becomes

Leo Tolstoy

Scientifically, your spirit is your unconscious. It's the deepest most fundamental part of who you are. And it's good to remember that deep down we are all wired differently. If I were to instruct you to "go where the life is", what I'm actually asking you to do is to pay attention to where your spirit finds peace, joy, inspiration, light and fulfilment... and then to go there. You could only choose to go there if you know where there is!

For someone this could look like being alone walking through a forest, or it may be taking a walk along a quiet beach looking out at the vastness of the ocean. For another this could look like losing yourself in a song, or passionately presenting something impactful. For another this could look like playing elite sport at your peak, and for another it could look like being lost in a great book or movie.

d) Deep down, if you were to reflect on the things in your life that light you up, and then were intentional about doing those things, what would you be doing? There is no wrong answer: your own answer simply is.

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TAWNY

For Tawny, 'going where the life is' definitely looks like soaring high, diving and swooping and then soaring upwards again at the highest of speed. He feels a deep sense of joy and being fully alive when his wings are spread wide, gliding on the current of the winds, exploring wide open spaces far and wide, soaring over savannah grasslands - hopefully meeting another eagle.



Your spiritual journey is a deeply personal one. I don't need you to believe what I believe, but it is helpful for you to know what you believe. Many cultures and faiths believe in the concept of God, and spirituality as a beautiful connection to God; they believe when you die your spirit lives on.

So, how does it help you to know you have a spirit? It's important to recognise that you have one, and to become familiar with yours, because yours is unique to you, and the happiest and most fulfilled people live a life that's well aligned to their spirit and they know how best to tend to it.

If your spirit enjoys alone time, it will be important for you to craft out regular alone time for yourself. If your spirit enjoys running or swimming – make sure you find time for this regularly. If your spirit thrives on music, make sure music is a part of your life. These things are not simply what you do – they are who you are!

If you try to ignore them, or cut them out of your life, if you try to pretend you're someone you're not, that your spirit loves the things it really doesn't, and you do this simply to please someone else, your light will soon burn less brightly. You will feel like something is missing and you'll know deep down that you're not being true to you. A way to feed your spirit is through the practice of gratitude.

A joyful spirit is evidence of a grateful heart. Maya Angelou

Being grateful for what you have brings you joy and 'lifts your spirit'. Focusing on what you don't have will leave you feeling down and depressed, always wanting for more.

e) Think of 10 things you truly have to be grateful for. Write them down:

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Being authentic with yourself and others

Now you have spent some time becoming more consciously aware of who you are, I want you to know that the happiest and most fulfilled people are those who know who they are, accept who they are and are comfortable in being the person they were created to be.

When you make the choice each day to be you, and try not to be someone you're not, you will be free to stop continuously competing and comparing yourself to others. When you choose to be yourself each day, you'll feel less stressed and anxious and will be free to love and accept others for being who they are too.

- f) What is one small action you can choose to take each day to help you to be more authentic with yourself and others this week?

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Choose to be yourself each day

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR VALUES

Much research has been done showing the happiest people are those who live everyday life doing the things they truly value and feel are most important to them. They are clear about what's important to them and so are able to make everyday choices in a way that aligns with their values. So, it goes without saying that it is a good idea to spend some time figuring out what your values are. (It may surprise you how few people ever really articulate what they value most in life.)

The challenge is not stopping to think about what's really important to you, it is when you don't know what's important to you - others will quickly tell you what they think is supposed to be important for you. Growing up, your parents and other significant adults in your life will have taught you a lot about what they feel is important and what is not. This is valuable and where we've had wise adult input, what we've learned should be taken into good consideration. Having said this, as you transition to adulthood, it is important to consider for yourself what your values are so that you can be intentional about pursuing the things that matter to YOU most. When you are not clear about your own values, you'll find yourself saying yes when you'd really like to say no, and you'll also find yourself often trying to "do it all"!

TAWNY

Mr Pigeon had rules and values around safety in the big Mango tree... he is always telling Tawny he is not supposed to soar so high, or to swoop and dive like he loves doing.



Another problem comes when people DO know what they value (or what's important for them), yet they make choices that are not in line with their values. They compromise and settle for less. Because living a life well aligned to our values is such a key aspect of living a happy life, we end up with a deep sense of unhappiness wherever we find ourselves not living out the things that are most important to us. Therefore, when it comes to being happy, it is really important to have a clear view of your own personal values so that you are able to make empowered choices that are in keeping with what you value.

Scenario 1: Core value integrity

One day they get the opportunity to cheat on an exam to get a higher mark. They decide in the moment to do this and get short term happiness from their good grades, but then they quickly discover this nagging feeling that they did something they shouldn't have. They did something that did not line up with their values. Real happiness escapes them until they fix the wrong thing they did and once again operate out of integrity.

Scenario 2: Core value honesty and reliability

One day for whatever reason, they wait until the last minute to leave home for work and end up missing their bus. They know if they leave now, they'll arrive at work really late and risk confronting their boss about why they are so late and unreliable.

So, they decide it's better to stay home and to pretend they are unwell. Even though they have avoided confronting their boss, the whole day they spend at home they feel stressed and anxious about lying or losing their job.

So, if you know that discovering what your values are is so important - how do you go about finding out what they are? The biggest challenge we all face when attempting to answer this question is to be honest about our answers. We have all been taught which things are supposed to be important to us, so many of us simply answer these questions without really considering how honest we are being with ourselves. We are so quick to give the answer we think we should give, rather than to answer these honestly.

Identifying your own values

To help you identify what your values honestly are, here are some well researched questions to consider. What are the things that fire you up? What situations cause you to really react strongly and emotionally? For example: does seeing someone treated unfairly make you angry? If so, what this tells me is that you greatly value fairness or equality.

The following exercise requires you to think about what causes you to react strongly, how you spend your spare time, what you talk about, what you are good at, and to reflect on how this shows what is important to you – what you value.

EXERCISE 4

- a) Make a list of some of the things that cause you to react strongly. How does this list help you to become clear about what is important to you?

Things that cause me to react strongly	What therefore is important to me?

- b) What do you spend your spare time doing when you have a choice? What do these things teach you about what is important to you?

Things I like to do in my spare time	What therefore is important to me?

c) What do you always find yourself talking about? What are the things that you can talk about for ages? What is it about these things that you value?

Things I like to talk about	What therefore is important to me?

d) What are you good at? What do you invest your energy and efforts into in your life? What does this tell you about what is important to you?

Things I am good at	What therefore is important to me?

e) What do you, or could you spend money on without thinking too much about it? Someone might easily spend money on study books or courses, yet don't easily spend money on clothes. What does this tell you about what is important to them?

Things that I like to spend my money on	What therefore is important to me?

Here are a few further questions you can ask yourself in order to figure out what YOU value most in life.

f) What kinds of things energise or inspire you most?

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g) What areas in your life are you most organised and ordered? When are you most reliable/disciplined/focused?

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h) What subjects do you love learning, reading, studying most?

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i) What do these three questions help you to understand about yourself and your values?

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j) Someone has been asked to make a speech about you on the last day of school. What are the key things you would like them to say about you – how would you like to be remembered. Take your time with this exercise and answer it knowing no one needs to read your answer.

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Measuring your values against your life choices

Knowing what your values are is only the first half of this exercise. The second half of this exercise is to work out how to ensure you are living your life in a way that is well aligned with your values. What ‘measures’ do you have in place as a way to know you are living to your values? What’s your standard?

For everything that we feel is important to us, we have to develop ways of measuring our performance. If there is no measurement, then it is impossible to feel like we are living well. One problem comes when the measures we’ve set for ourselves are actually very difficult to achieve. The other problem comes when we look to other people as our measure, rather than having our own personal way to measure how well we’ve done.

EXAMPLES

A person may value their health and living a healthy lifestyle. The way they get to measure being healthy however may be causing them to FEEL unhealthy (even when in reality they actually are healthy). If their “rule” is that in order to be a healthy person they must exercise at least an hour every day and only ever eat healthy foods, then it only takes one missed training session or one junk food meal for them to tell themselves that they are not healthy!

They may only miss their target 5% of the time, yet they feel bad about themselves 95% of the time. This is clearly an unhelpful standard!

EXERCISE 5

a) If you were to think of a more helpful measure to use as a way to know you are being healthy, what would your measure be?

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b) Here are some more examples of the kinds of things people value, along with unhelpful standards versus more helpful standards for you to reflect on, with space for you to add more examples of your own.

Value	Unhelpful standard	More helpful standard
Being a good friend	I must ALWAYS be there for my friends no matter what!	I keep in touch each week, checking that my friend is happy and well.
Being well liked	I must always agree with what the other person wants.	I treat others as I would like them to treat me. It is okay to disagree.
Being generous	It is bad for me to spend any money on myself	I can decide to share what I have and notice when others are in need.
Being a good student	I should always get above 85% on every exam or assignment	I plan well to have time to give my best effort.

Making empowered choices in keeping with your values

In order to discover your measures or rules, ask yourself this: *“How do I tell myself I am living these values?”*

EXAMPLES

- If I value being a good friend – how do I need to behave to be able to say I am a good friend? What does this look like for me?
- If I value having a good work ethic – what does this mean for me? How do I need to be at work in order to tell myself I do have a strong work ethic?

It's important to remember that two people might value the same thing yet have two completely different rules for how they get to tell themselves they are living in line with this value.

Once you've discovered your measure or standard, it's helpful to ask yourself these questions to check how resourceful your measure is.

- How well is this rule working for me?
- Where did I get this rule from? Whose rule is this actually?
- Who told me this was how it had to be?
- What would happen if I changed this rule?
- What would be a more helpful rule for me to have for this value?

We need to have good measures in place to know we are living well aligned with our values. Measures that serve us well are always internally referenced (our own measure) rather than externally referenced (someone else's measure). They also need to be easy to achieve. It is really important to become aware of your measures and to observe how well they are serving you.

Emotional self-regulation

A huge benefit of being aware of your values and the standard by which you measure them, is that this empowers you to be able to regulate your emotions with much greater ease. When something triggers a negative emotion (frustration, anger, disappointment), rather than instantly reacting to the trigger, you have a much greater capacity to first stop, to consider the reason you are triggered (which of my values is being crossed) and to choose to respond in a way that will make things better, rather than worse!

EXAMPLE

Let's imagine you greatly value being on time for appointments.

You have an appointment to meet a friend and they arrive late or simply don't arrive at all!

Without being aware of your values, you are likely to feel frustrated and even angry. When you see the other person again, there's a good chance you'll react angrily and say something you'll later regret.

However, when you understand your values, you can stop and reflect on the fact that "of course this frustrates me, because I value my own time!" Then you can choose how you want to respond. (And when you really do stop to think about it, you'll notice you have many options to choose from. This is an empowering thought!!!)


Some options

- You can explain to your friend that you greatly value time and would appreciate if next time they could let you know they'll be late.
- You recognise this friend possibly doesn't value time as much as you do, so next time you make arrangements with them, you can offer to pick them up rather than them picking you up.
- You become clear about which of your friends do actually value time like you do, and next time you know you're meeting a friend who doesn't value time as much as you do, simply expecting that they'll be late allows you to plan for this, so you won't be disappointed if they are late, and can be pleasantly surprised if they are on time!

The trick is to remember, you can only choose **YOUR** own values and you can only choose your own actions! You can't make someone else value something they simply don't value! **You can't control someone else's actions either!** However, when you know what you value, you'll have a greater understanding of your emotions and will be able to better choose your responses.

YOUR PURPOSE AND PASSION

ME



There is a 'me' in every one of us.
There is a 'me' you think you should be
There is a 'me', others want you to be and say you should be
There is a 'me' you don't want to be
There is a 'me' you are afraid to be
Then there is a 'me' you were created to be...

TAWNY

Tawny thinks he should be just like his Lorikeet friends. He thinks he should enjoy the things they enjoy. He thinks he should be satisfied to simply carry on living the only life he knows.

Mr Pigeon has his views on who he thinks Tawny should be. He should always fly close to the mango tree. He should carry on being on the look out to keep the tree protected from other predators – just like he always has done.

The me Tawny doesn't want to be is the 'me' he realises he has become – he is bored, restless, irritable... He is unhappy, disillusioned and even a bit depressed.

He has started to have dreams about leaving all he knows to go and explore more of the world. He dreams of discovering great savannah grass lands where he can soar and swoop. But he is afraid to be this 'me'.

What will happen if I leave everything I know, everything familiar, to follow my heart? What if I don't find what I'm looking for? What if I get lost and can't find my way back? What if it is dangerous out there?

Then he is visited by the wise old owl – the wise owl gives him the astonishing news that he is an eagle. He was born for adventure. He was born to fly high, to soar and swoop wildly. He was born with the sharpest of vision so he can hunt and explore... He was born to feast on flesh and not on pollen... His big brown body and vast wings are not dull, but beautiful – He is an eagle – made for eagle things.... That is the 'me' he was made to be.



EXERCISE 6

a) Who is the 'me' you think you should be? Who says you should be this?

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b) Do you sometimes feel like you are trying to live someone else's life? In what way do you do this? What for? Who for?

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c) Have you noticed things that you love doing, that others perhaps don't? Or vice versa, are there things others really love doing, that you don't? Make a list of the kinds of things you really enjoy doing.

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Your internal versus your external purpose

I believe everything on earth has been created on purpose and for a purpose. Including you. You are no mistake!

Internal purpose is your God-given purpose - it is what you've been created for. It brings freedom and meaning to your life. It is how you are wired. Your internal purpose ignites passion inside of you and empowers you every day of your life. You come alive inside your spirit when you are living your purpose.

External purpose is imposed purpose... and it drains you! It is what others impose on you and is usually tied in with “assignments” rather than true purpose. It is assigned to you or expected of you by others.

Living your life aligned to your internal purpose will give you a much deeper and richer degree of joy and fulfilment in your life than any level or degree of imposed or external purpose.

Imposed purpose will sometimes give you short-term satisfaction, but eventually you will be left feeling unfulfilled. Imposed purpose is often driven by fear, ego, and an obligation to live up to the expectations of other people in your world.

There are some big challenges we all face when it comes to this:

Firstly: You may have a career or educational purpose imposed on you by your parents, teachers, counsellors, or elders. For example, studying a particular course, taking a particular job, earning money, continuing a family business, becoming successful, achieving certain social status. Any purpose you are assigned by others. Some of you will feel obligated out of honour or duty to follow this advice. This is okay. It certainly won't be the best thing for everyone to do this, but we are all different, and if you really feel it's best for you to honour them, then go with what you believe is best for you. This is **YOUR** choice to make.

However, if you do choose to follow a path someone else desires for you, out of a feeling of honour, I greatly encourage you to still be aware of your internal purpose so you can purposefully and intentionally also include activities in your life that do actually light you up and align with your internal purpose too!

Secondly: Media often imposes false purposes and values on its viewers in various areas of life. For example, how you should look, dress, be... The careers you are supposed to desire.

Thirdly: You may have a deep desire to follow a certain career, yet don't believe you have what it takes. You are fearful of daring to dream about following the path that lights you up. What if no one in your family ever studied further after school, and there is no expectation that you will either?

It's wise to discern what is right to do. For example, if you value honouring your family values, you may feel it's better to follow an imposed purpose than your internal purpose. This is neither right nor wrong. What is important is to know you have been created with internal purpose. So, if you choose to follow imposed purpose in one area of your life, consider how to include and nurture internal purpose in other areas of your life.

Discovering 'who I am'

What is in **your** heart? What have **you** been created for?

Take a moment to reflect and then answer the following questions for yourself as honestly as you can. You may find these questions hard and may not know the answers immediately. That's okay. The strategy here is to teach you a set of great questions to ask yourself in the future when you're unsure of the decisions you are making.

EXERCISE 7

a) Make a list of the kinds of things you don't enjoy that others around you do.

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b) Are you thinking about which path to choose for your life by trying to satisfy the expectations of others? Or are you considering your future career choices by thinking about what you'd really love to do? If you're choosing your career path to satisfy others, name one or two ways you can still choose to get to enjoy the things that light you up inside.

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c) Who is the 'me' others want you to be?

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d) Is there a 'me' you don't want to be? Who is that 'me'? Write down anything that comes to mind.

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There are clues threaded through our everyday life giving us information about the 'me' we've been created to be. It's really useful to have insight into what to look for to discover these clues.

Each day we are confronted by tons and tons of information. If we were to notice and process ALL this information, we'd be overwhelmed and wouldn't get much done, so we filter all this incoming information by only noticing or seeing what we are choosing to see. In other words, we only see what we are looking for. If you're not looking for the clues that point to who you are - you won't see them. Many of us are so tuned into looking at who others are and then trying to be like them. We compete and compare - and forget who we really are.

e) The following are really great questions to ask yourself to help you focus on looking for the clues to discovering **YOUR** passion and **YOUR** purpose.



From the list below tick **5** which describe your true nature.

<input type="checkbox"/> Bold	<input type="checkbox"/> Just	<input type="checkbox"/> Powerful
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> Truthful
<input type="checkbox"/> Creative	<input type="checkbox"/> Loving	<input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy
<input type="checkbox"/> Faith-filled	<input type="checkbox"/> Loyal	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncompromising
<input type="checkbox"/> Faithful	<input type="checkbox"/> Merciful	<input type="checkbox"/> Wise
<input type="checkbox"/> Gentle	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Humble	<input type="checkbox"/> Passionate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inspiring	<input type="checkbox"/> Persevering	

f) Now have a look at this further list of words. Which of these best describes what drives you or what motivates you most? Tick five.

<input type="checkbox"/> Creating things	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicating	<input type="checkbox"/> Comforting
<input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging others	<input type="checkbox"/> Showing love to others	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting
<input type="checkbox"/> Inspiring others	<input type="checkbox"/> Giving	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovating
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaking truth	<input type="checkbox"/> Serving	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating
<input type="checkbox"/> Transforming	<input type="checkbox"/> Bringing joy	<input type="checkbox"/> Justice finding
<input type="checkbox"/> Freedom fighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Caring	<input type="checkbox"/> Building unity

Use the words you've ticked to help you answer these next questions

g) What do these words help me discover about my internal purpose?

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h) Is there a 'me' I secretly long to be? Write down all that comes to mind.

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i) Is there a part of this 'me' you're afraid to be? What are you afraid of?

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EXERCISE 8

Often when asked what their passions are, people are not really sure. The following questions will help you to answer this big question for yourself:

a) What topics make you light up when you talk about them?

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b) What subjects at school have been your favourite subjects?

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c) If money were no object and you could do anything - what would you choose?

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d) Is there at least one thing you're good at and enjoy doing that features in the options you're considering following after school? What is it?

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e) In light of all you've discovered about yourself during this program so far, I encourage you to take a moment to reflect how you would describe yourself to a future friend.

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f) How would you confidently describe yourself (reflect on your character, your values, your passion and purpose) to a future employer?

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We all long for a life of purpose. Other words used to describe purpose can be “significance” or “impact”. We are wired to want our life to contribute to something, to have meaning, to make a difference. Your impact could be as big as inventing something that impacts our world for good, or it can be as small as bringing a smile to another person.

g) How can I benefit the life of at least one other person today?

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h) If there was an area in life you dream of making an impact, which would it be?
What do you dream of being or doing in order to make a positive impact in the world?

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USING CHOICE AND RESPONSIBILITY

It's amazing though how many people lament each day over how bad their situation is and that they simply have no choice. This absolutely feels like their truth - when in fact it's not the truth at all. The truth remains that we always have choice!

Having choice is not always easy and comes with responsibility. Sometimes choosing one thing over another can be a very difficult thing. The good news is you now have the strengths and knowledge you've learned about yourself over the past four modules to draw on. Knowing what you've discovered in the previous modules will make it easier for you to confidently make wise choices for yourself! Remember, what can be a great choice for one person, may not be the best choice for another.

Some of the most distressing and stressful times in our life come as a result of finding ourselves in a situation we didn't plan to be in. This often leaves us feeling hopeless. When we feel there is no hope for change, and we feel like we have no choice, we feel stuck, disheartened and even depressed. In this state we have a tendency to look for something to blame. We are quick to make excuses. Even though our excuses may seem totally valid and relevant, the problem with them is that they get us nowhere. Making excuses and shifting the blame to something else or someone else may leave you feeling better about yourself for a short while, but the situation still remains the same.

So, if this kind of thinking leaves us stuck and helpless - is there an alternative? Is there a better way to think? The great news is that there is a much more empowering way we can choose to think. It's this:

"I may not be able to choose this circumstance, but I can always choose how I'd like to respond. I can figure out a way to move towards a better outcome."

TAWNY

Once he knew he was an eagle and his purpose was to explore, to fly to the highest of heights and to soar and swoop and dive, he was able to choose to leave his familiar mango tree and his friends. Even though this felt scary, he knew it was the right choice! However, after a few days of exploring, hoping to find another eagle and the savannah grasslands - and yet not discovering them, he started to doubt himself.



He started to feel lonely. He started to doubt the counsel of the wise owl, he started to doubt his identity and he started to feel afraid. He also started to feel angry. He started questioning things - Why had his mom deserted him? Why did she leave him in a silly mango tree where eagles are not supposed to live? Why was he so unhappy and confused? Why did Mr Pigeon keep trying to stop him from enjoying the only thing that gave him life? In that moment he felt hopeless.

... BUT then he started to remember the words of the wise owl and how he knew they were true. He started to remember who he was, why he had chosen to go on his adventure, what he hoped to find, and how he would feel if he had never chosen to give it a try. When he started to focus on the fact that he was truly an eagle in search of adventure, hope resurfaced and he resolved to take responsibility for his choice to leave his comfort zone. It was clear to him that it was far better to continue on his adventure - to follow it through - rather than to give up and go back to the familiar.

Living below the line

When we believe other things outside of us are the cause of our problems, we call this “living at the effect of external things” or “living below the line”. When we live below the line, our thinking is like this:

- I'll just go with the flow and see where life takes me.
- I say things like “whatever will be, will be”.
- I make excuses and give reasons for why I couldn't do the things I should have, or why not achieving something is not my fault.
- “I couldn't do my homework because I had no time or because I didn't understand it or because I had to help my mum cook dinner”.

When we think like this, we start to use language like “I feel hopeless” or “This is too hard” or “I can't do this” or “I'm such a failure”. We've all felt like this before and we've all said things like this to ourselves before.

Curious reflecting

The simple act of becoming curious about why you think the things you think and why you do the things you do is a great tool to use for growing in self- awareness. Reflect on the following statements and write down some personal examples.

EXERCISE 9

Think about a time when:

- a) You felt as though the results you were getting were not in your control, were not your fault, were affected by other people or circumstances.

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- b) You felt as though you had very little choice about where you are or where you want to be.

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c) You felt stuck in your story: "If you knew what had happened to me, you would understand...", and "It's not my fault".

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Think of times when:

d) You gave yourself a label (or accepted a label from someone else) to justify your behaviour e.g. It's because I'm too young, too slow, too fat, too tall, depressed, dyslexic, not clever... You tell yourself this story because it makes your behaviour okay.

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e) Living with a certain problem actually did give you a great pay-off such as: a reason to opt out of something, safety, comfort, attention from others, pity, self-pity, protection from failure, nothing big required from you.

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We ALL have had thoughts like these before. The reason we all think like this at times is because inside each of us there is a 'mini me' constantly working very hard to keep us below the line because there is a MASSIVE pay-off (benefit) in staying below the line. It feels safe!!!

It feels easier, safer and way more comfortable being able to find excuses for our short comings and to blame things outside of ourselves. It feels safer to make excuses than to own up! The problem however is that as long as we stay below the line, our self-confidence will drop, and our self-esteem will shrink. The very thing that feels safe in the short term has long term side effects. What does the opposite of this look like?

What does it look like to “live above the line?” – living above the line is the best tool to build self- esteem and increase your confidence. When you live above the line, you recognise and believe that **YOU DO** have choices about every situation in your life and **YOU ARE** willing to take full responsibility for the outcomes you get. When you believe this, your language automatically shifts. You say things like “I’m choosing to”, rather than “I can’t”, or “They made me do it”. You get to say things like “What if this is happening for me?”, “What if this challenge has a gift to help me to grow stronger?”, rather than “I can’t believe this is happening to me! This is so unfair!”

When you dump all the reasons, stories and excuses for why you can’t and why life is so unfair, all you have left are your choices, your responses and your results. When you live above the line (even when it feels scary and hard), you create your greatest opportunity and potential to achieve the outcomes you want.

So, if you are not getting the results you want, rather than impulsively blaming someone or something else, have a go at asking these questions:

- How could I get the results I want?
 - What would I need to change?
 - What would I need to do differently?
- f) Think about a time in your life when you thought you were actually in a place where you have chosen to be (even if you don’t like it). This is okay, because you know that if you really want to change where you are right now, you can always make different choices to get to where you actually **DO** want to be.

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- g) What is it about your story that gives you an excuse to not change? If you could choose to change, what changes could you choose to make?

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Now I know what you're thinking. What about the things in life I can't choose? I can't choose my height. I can't choose my family. I can't choose to not have cancer. I get it. There will always be circumstances we can't choose or control – yet we can always choose our response to those circumstances!

Tawny couldn't change the fact that he didn't know his real mum or that he grew up with other creatures. Yet he had a choice in how he wanted to respond to his circumstances.

At the end of the day it takes great courage to accept that you are fully responsible for the results you're getting or the ones you want to get in your life. Yet there is a ton of research that shows the only place you'll find great self-esteem, confidence and success is when you choose to face up to life's challenges and take 100% responsibility for yourself and your own choices in life! This is how you get to tell yourself at the end of the day that you are enough, and you do have what it takes to be happy!

EXERCISE 10

Take a moment to consider these questions:

a) Am I willing to embrace full responsibility for my life and the results I'm getting?

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(b) Am I fully aware that where I am now is where I have chosen to be? (e.g. If I feel like a victim it's because I'm choosing to be the victim)

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Remind yourself: I can always make new or different choices to help me get more of what I'd really love to have in my life.

When you notice you really do want to make changes in your behaviour, but find yourself constantly slipping back into old habits, it helps to understand that at the basic foundation of human behavioural science, we only continuously do things that work for us. If something was honestly giving you absolutely NO reward or gain, you simply would not keep doing it!

So, when you feel as though your situation is really bad, and yet you haven't made changes to shift things, the question to ask is this: Why am I still here then? If this is so terrible, why don't I do something about it and change something? Often, it's because we perceive we have no choice.

HOWEVER, the great news is that there is always some kind of choice!

You may not have chosen the circumstance, and you definitely can't choose how others react or what they do, but you CAN always choose how YOU respond and you can always create a better solution that works for you.

Examples of things we feel we want to change, and the reasons we don't.



I always say yes when I want to say no, because saying yes makes me feel like a good, caring, and generous person.



I always seem to attract friends with issues, because I feel good about myself when I get to help fix other peoples' problems. (Always being available for others gives me significance).



I am overworked because I don't like to delegate, others don't do the job as well as me.



I always procrastinate making decisions because I don't want to miss out on something better if something better comes up instead.



I keep the label of depression and choose to stay depressed, because then I have a good reason to say no to things I don't want to attend. I have a reason to stay in bed.



I stay in a job I hate, because it's easy and gives me a reliable pay cheque at the end of the month. Changing jobs is hard work!



I always agree with others even when I really don't want to, because then I don't need to face confrontation and have difficult conversations.

Some common reasons we secretly don't want our problems solved.



Because then we will need to take on added responsibilities.



Because it might mean we need to take some difficult steps like leaving a career or a relationship.



Because it would mean facing the world and facing up to a problem.



Because it will be hard work, e.g. losing weight, going back to work, learning something new for work, quitting an addiction.



Because we are scared we will fail. We are scared we don't have what it takes.

When we understand this, we can see that trying to fix a problem we are actually holding on to is like trying to mop the floor with an open tap. First close the tap. Second figure out what you are gaining by holding on to the problem. Third create a better way to still get the thing you are hanging on to.

When I find myself always saying 'yes' even when I really want to say 'no'. I can stop and ask why? Why do I keep saying yes? What is the pay-off? Maybe I realise it gives me a sense of significance to say yes. It's how I get to tell myself I am a great person. It's how I get to know that others will like me.

Now I understand if I really do want to stop saying 'yes' all the time, I first need to choose a different and more resourceful way to tell myself I am still a great person, and am still likeable, even when I choose to say 'No'.

Activation

Notice the kind of language you easily use most commonly when talking to yourself and others. When you notice yourself using 'below the line' language - **STOP**. Ask yourself "what for?"

Ask: what could I replace this language with so it's far more empowering to me and 'above the line'.



**When I say "I can't" ...
I can rather choose to
say, "I have chosen
not to".**



**When I say "It's his
fault" I can rather
say "I do have a choice
here and I can choose
to help myself".**



**When I say "I'm a
failure" ... I can rather
say "I've discovered
what doesn't work
and I can choose to try
again".**

PERSONAL WELLBEING

The secret of happiness, you see, is not found in seeking more, but in developing the capacity to enjoy less. Socrates

Happiness can exist only in acceptance. George Orwell

Can happiness only be achieved when you have accepted yourself and your reality and learn how to appreciate life as it is?

Through the previous modules you have had an opportunity to reflect on your unique identity, your values, your passions and the choices and tools you have to be an authentic YOU. The knowledge, skills and strategies you have learned through these activities have led to an understanding of personal wellbeing which will be explored in more depth in this module.



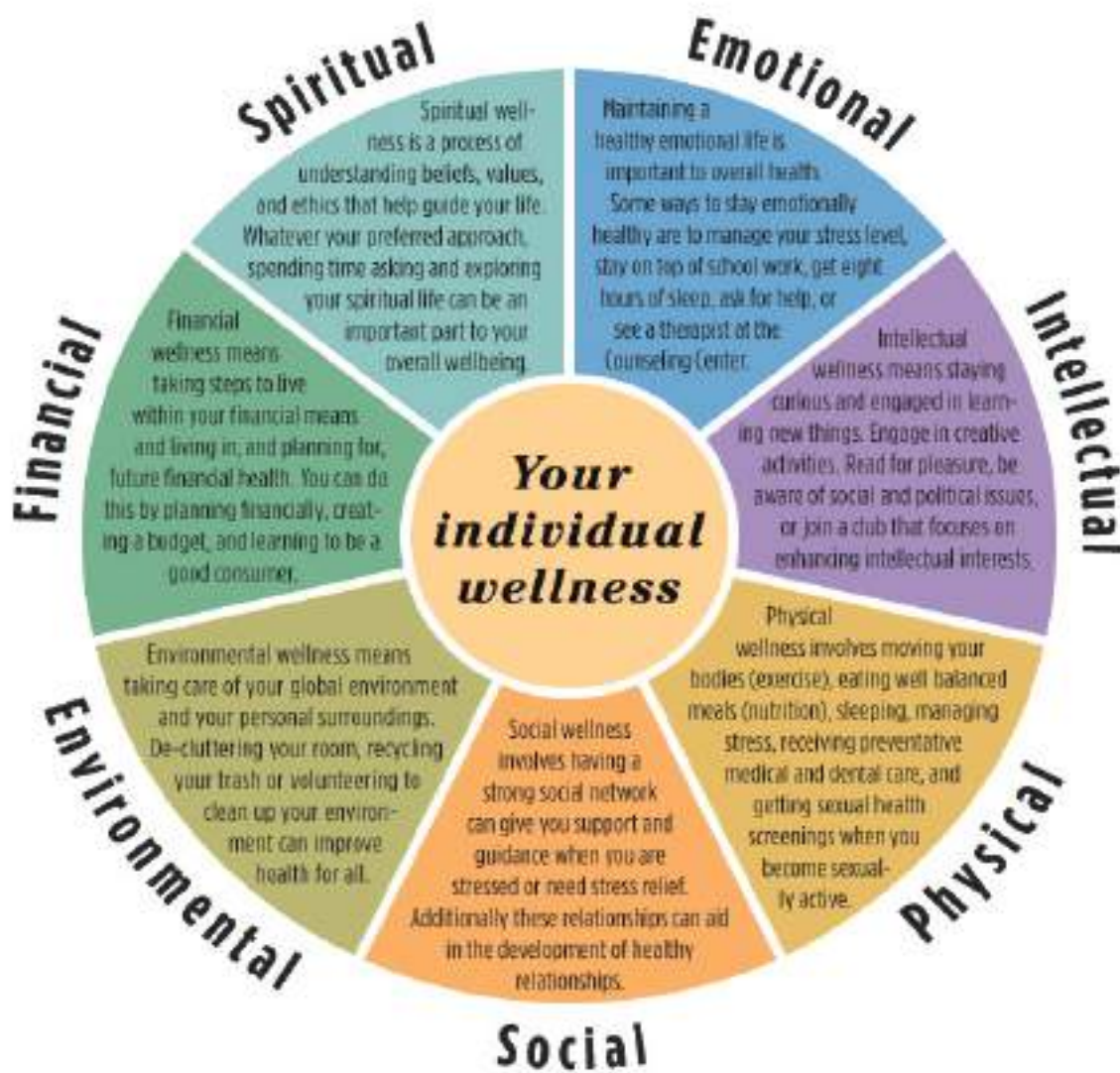
Wellbeing definitions

Wellbeing is described as “enabling people to develop their potential, to work productively and creatively, to form positive relationships with others and to meaningfully contribute to the community”. (Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project 2008).

The report on the State of the Environment, Commonwealth of Australia 2017–2018 states that human wellbeing goes beyond physical health and defines wellbeing as the life quality and satisfaction of people and communities comprising –

- health
- living standards
- community and social cohesion
- security and safety
- freedom, rights, recognition and self-determination
- cultural and spiritual fulfilment
- connection to Country and nature.

This state of wellbeing goes far deeper than merely being happy – it encompasses your health and physical wellness, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development, the environment, your social and financial wellbeing. Personal wellbeing defines how satisfied we are with our lives, our sense that what we do in life is worthwhile and our day-to-day emotional experiences (happiness and anxiety).



**Physical wellness**

A healthy you who exercises, eats balanced meals, establishes good sleeping patterns and manages stressful situations.

**Intellectual wellness**

A curious you who engages in learning to enhance knowledge and skills.

**Emotional wellness**

An emotionally healthy you who experiences positive emotions like love, joy, and satisfaction with life.

**Spiritual wellness**

A spiritual you who has defined beliefs and values, a sense of purpose and a feeling of peace.

**Financial wellness**

A money-wise you who lives within your means, budgets, spends wisely and plans for the future.

**Environmental wellness**

An environmentally aware you who cares for your physical surroundings.

**Social wellness**

A social you who has a sense of connectedness to friends, family and community and feels valued and respected.

Wellbeing or “being well” – that is something you have control over as it is the things you do and the way you think that impacts on your wellbeing.

Wellbeing therefore -

- ✓ Provides a feeling of happiness and contentment.
- ✓ Enables one to experience life in a positive and optimistic way.
- ✓ Facilitates positive relationships and engagement and connection with others.
- ✓ Enables you to have control over your own life, to be confident and to have a sense of purpose.

People who report higher levels of wellbeing tend to be:

- ✓ More involved in social activities and community groups.
- ✓ Environmentally responsible.
- ✓ Experiencing better family and social relationships at home.
- ✓ More likely to be working or studying full-time.

Wellbeing does not mean that you never experience feelings or situations that you find difficult, but it does mean that you feel you can cope with tough times.

EXERCISE 11

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- a) Provide a one sentence definition of your understanding of wellbeing.

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- b) List three dimensions of wellness that are important to you.

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Wellbeing factors that matter

<p>What we do</p>	<p>If we are employed and satisfied with our job. If we are a volunteer. If we participate in arts, sports, hobbies. If we are engaged in formal or informal learning.</p>
<p>Personal wellbeing</p>	<p>If we are satisfied with our lives. If our lives feel worthwhile. If we are happy or anxious. If we feel able to cope with challenges. If we are satisfied with our health. If we are satisfied with our access to income.</p>
<p>Our relationships</p>	<p>If we are in happy relationships/friendship groups. If we have people we can rely on. If we feel lonely.</p>
<p>Where we live</p>	<p>If we feel safe in our community. If our community has good services and green spaces. If we have a sense of belonging in our community.</p>

Benefits of connecting with others

Our relationships with others contribute to feeling good and increase our feeling of happiness, belonging and self-worth. Spending time with positive people can improve your own psychological wellbeing.

Benefits of learning

Learning new things can be fun and can boost your self-confidence and self-esteem and connect you with others. Learning throughout life can help you enjoy life more, and improve your knowledge, thinking skills and ability to cope with stress. Broadening your mind helps you to gain insights about yourself and the world around you.

Learning is about challenging yourself to do something different or to do something in a different way. Learning does not take place just at school - it is more than getting good grades or achieving qualifications.

Benefits of practising gratitude

This means to take the time to recognise, acknowledge and appreciate the good things about your life: the things for which you are grateful. Practising gratitude makes us happy and can improve our self-esteem and reduce our stress by making one more resilient.

Resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.

The Benefits of Gratitude



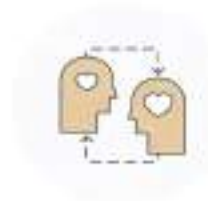
IMPROVES PHYSICAL
HEALTH



IMPROVES
SLEEP



IMPROVES
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH



INCREASES
EMPATHY



REDUCES
AGGRESSION



MORE SOCIAL
CONNECTION



ENHANCES
SELF-ESTEEM



IMPROVES MENTAL
STRENGTH

Things you can do to improve your wellbeing

- Make connections, healthy relationships: socialise with friends, families and others.
- Take care of yourself while also caring for others.
- Be active: exercise, walk, swim, participate in team sports.
- Live a healthy life: nutritious diet, 7 hours sleep, physical activity.
- Take time out to relax, go for a walk, read a book, listen to music.
- Create a space where you feel safe and can have a quiet time: practice mindfulness, meditation.
- Learn new skills that are of interest to you.
- Reflect on the positive things in your life: practice gratitude.

Commit to a growth mindset that enhances intelligent decisions, personal motivation, acceptance, and inspiration.



Personal development is a process that contributes to personal growth. Self-improvement is outcome focused. (Transcribed from the podcast "Self Improvement Daily" presented by Brian Ford).

A growth mindset means that you believe your intelligence and talents can be developed over time. A fixed mindset means that you believe intelligence is fixed—so if you're not good at something, you might believe you'll never be good at it.

<https://www.mindsethealth.com/matter/growth-vs-fixed-mindset>
Article by Jennifer Smith)

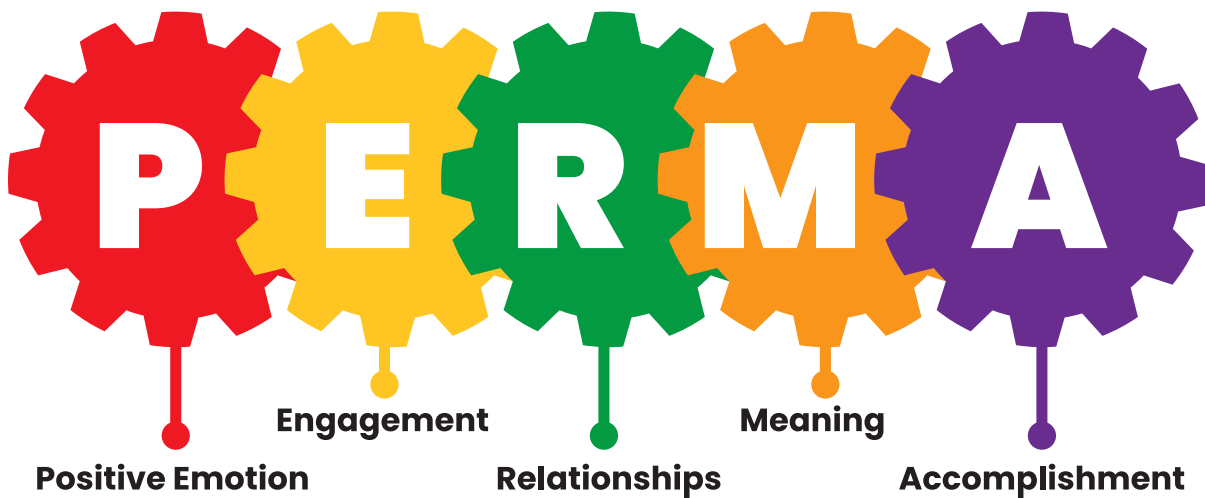
Positive psychology

Positive psychology focuses on character strengths, optimism, life satisfaction, happiness, wellbeing, gratitude, compassion, self-esteem, self-confidence and hope, to help people flourish and live their best lives.

Martin Seligman developed a model for positive psychology that encompasses -

- Positive emotions – seeking positive emotions alone does not boost your wellbeing, however experiencing positive emotions is an important factor.
- Engagement – being engaged or immersed in an activity that you enjoy and do well at.
- Relationships – having deep, meaningful relationships are vital to wellbeing.
- Meaning – to find meaning in your life and to work towards a cause that is of benefit to others.
- Accomplishment – achieving our goals, to succeed and to better ourselves.

Positive Psychology



EXERCISE 12

a) List three things you can do to improve your wellbeing.

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b) Describe one thing in your life that you are grateful for.

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c) Provide a definition for the following:

Positive psychology	
Growth mindset	
Resilience	

d) List three of your strengths eg creative, fair, teamwork, kind, leadership, honest, diligent.

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SELF-CARE

The opposite of wellbeing is being unwell, that is being stressed, anxious, unhappy. In Module 2 we looked at stress and anxiety and the effect it can have on our wellbeing. It is therefore important to identify the triggers that cause stress and seek ways to care for yourself.

People respond to stress in different ways due to their personality or physiological factors, stamina, personal strengths or resilience. Stress can be caused by many factors such as major life changes, relationship difficulties, an inability to accept change, negative self-talk, unrealistic goals and expectations.

Stress management relates to your own sense of wellbeing as well as to the environment in which you live and work. Stress management techniques can be learnt and with practice, you will find that you can cope better in stressful situations. Your goal is to find a balance between expectations, relaxation and enjoyment to improve your personal wellbeing.

Strategies to minimise stress

<p>Your body</p>	<p>Know your stress triggers. Recognise early warning signs and symptoms. Practice relaxation or meditation. Eat a well-balanced healthy diet. Exercise 30 minutes a day. Aim for 8 hours sleep every night.</p>
<p>Your thinking</p>	<p>Worry less about things you cannot control. Set small achievable goals. Choose a positive attitude. Take time out to visualise a calm place. Develop a sense of humour.</p>
<p>Your behaviour</p>	<p>Plan and organise ahead to allow enough time to complete tasks. Set priorities by using a "to do" list. Be open with people rather than hiding your feelings. Create a balanced lifestyle for yourself. Reward yourself for achieving your goals.</p>

Balancing the competing demands on your time requires reviewing and reassessing your priorities regularly eg

- ✓ Set goals around what you value
- ✓ Manage time more effectively in line with your values
- ✓ Build resilience and a positive attitude
- ✓ Avoid mental exhaustion
- ✓ Care for yourself
- ✓ Enjoy yourself
- ✓ Surround yourself with supportive people

The optimal stress level is when the body is relaxed but energetic and a person has a feeling of wellbeing. Positive stress will enable a person to be alert, self-confident, interested, and enthusiastic about work.

Sample personal stress management plan

Problem solving skills	Physical wellbeing
<p>I will have positive thoughts.</p> <p>I will not anticipate worries.</p> <p>I will focus on the holiday time coming up.</p> <p>I will set achievable goals and establish priorities.</p> <p>I will block people who send negative messages on social media.</p>	<p>Exercise - I will incorporate exercise into my daily routine and exercise three times a week.</p> <p>Nutrition - I will eat healthy balanced meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>Relaxation - I will use 10 min before bedtime to relax and turn off all devices.</p>

Wellbeing in the workplace

Many employers run health and wellbeing programs for staff in order to improve work performance and productivity, reduce staff absenteeism and improve the culture of the workplace. Workplace wellness programs which focus on communication and employee feedback assist staff in adapting and growing to face challenges and new experiences.

Employees can also be referred to an Employee Assistance Program where trained practitioners or counsellors help staff to address experiences of stress, anxiety and depression.

EAP Assist is an Australian company that was established in 2008 to provide employees with confidential phone or on-line counselling support. The aim of the service is to resolve both work and personal problems before they impact on one's wellbeing. Common issues include workplace conflict, difficult working relationships, stress as well as personal issues such as grief, anxiety, self-esteem and communication problems.

Mental Health Services and resources

A range of services are available to individuals who are facing challenges with their personal wellbeing.

- Beyond Blue 1300 22 46 36 <https://forums.beyondblue.org.au/> <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/young-people/helpful-contacts-and-websites>
- Headspace <https://headspace.org.au/>
- Queensland Health <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/mental-health-services/for-teens/>
- Lifeline 131 114 <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>
- Your GP
- Head to Health Government service providers <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/service-providers/explore-all-service-providers>
- Black Dog Institute <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/research-areas/youth-mental-health/>
- Better Health Victorian Government <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/getting-help-for-a-mental-illness#help-for-children-and-teenagers>
- Kids Help Line 1800 551 800 <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens>
- E safety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people>

EXERCISE 13

It's likely certain things raise your stress levels and make distressing or challenging situations more difficult to manage. If you know what your triggers are, then you can anticipate them and put strategies in place to manage them effectively.

- a) List two triggers that increase your stress levels and the strategies you use to manage them.

Triggers	Strategies

- c) Explain why workplaces have wellbeing programs.

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- d) List the name, number and website for two mental health support services available to young people.

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OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

CRITERIA	Satisfactory	Requires attention
GENERIC SKILLS		
Participated actively in activities, completed tasks in an efficient and timely manner and took responsibility for all work.		
Communicated with others in a polite, confident, and considerate manner.		
Was a co-operative and effective group member using active listening skills in class discussions.		
Responded appropriately to different personal and cultural perspectives.		
SELF SKILLS		
Showed willingness to learn and develop new skills.		
Reflected on own ideas, feelings and thoughts.		
Identified own strengths and areas to improve.		
Demonstrated awareness of own values and how they reflect decision-making.		
Established realistic personal goals that reflected personal interests, ambitions and values.		
Responded positively to feedback and considered ways to act on feedback and resolve issues.		
Reflected on strategies to improve personal wellbeing.		
Evaluated own performance and reviewed goals .		
FEEDBACK FROM TEACHER		
Signature:	Date:	

SELF ASSESSMENT

CRITERIA	YES	NO	COMMENTS
SENSE OF SELF			
Identified my strengths.			
Identified my values.			
Determined ways to describe myself.			
Learnt to accept who I am.			
SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY			
Considered the responsibility I have to care for self.			
Reflected on what I offer to friends and others.			
Questioned that my choices reflect my values.			
RELATING TO OTHERS			
Appreciated the views and feelings of others.			
Learnt to accept my uniqueness and to show my authentic self to others.			
Communicated my ideas confidently to others.			
Respected the values of others.			
CARING FOR SELF			
Acknowledged what wellbeing means to me.			
Identified ways to improve my wellbeing.			
Considered strategies and resources to minimise stress.			
Student signature:			Date:

THIRD PARTY REPORT

Student's name:			
Third party name:		Relationship:	
Purpose of report:	This report provides information relating to the student's ability to demonstrate an awareness of self, to set realistic goals, to make informed decisions that reflect personal values and strengths and to establish priorities for the future.		
The student is able to:	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Describe personal strengths, attributes, and values			
Behave towards others in an acceptable and appropriate manner			
Work in a supportive and co-operative manner with others			
Reflect on choices prior to making decisions			
Establish realistic, achievable goals for now and for the future			
Seek advice, assistance and constructive feedback from others			
Accept responsibility for own actions			
Evaluate own performance honestly and demonstrate the motivation to learn new skills			
Comments:			
Third party signature:		Date:	



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RTO 40518

STUDENTS EXPLORING LIFE'S FOUNDATIONS

THE SELF PROGRAM

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

NAME:

TOPIC 1: YOUR UNIQUE IDENTITY	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

TOPIC 2: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

TOPIC 3: THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR VALUES	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

TOPIC 4: YOUR PURPOSE AND PASSION	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

TOPIC 5: USING CHOICE AND RESPONSIBILITY	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

TOPIC 6: PERSONAL WELLBEING	
What was the key message in this topic?	
What were some of the important things you learned?	
What more would you like to learn about this topic?	
How did this topic help you to understand yourself?	

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STUDENT PROFILE – SELF

Congratulations on completing the SELF Program. The following page needs to be completed and signed by both the Student and Supervisor and emailed to self@connectngrow.edu.au. Once reviewed, Connect n Grow will issue and email a Certificate of completion.

STUDENT DECLARATION – STUDENT TO COMPLETE

I declare:

- The work submitted is my own work and has not been written by any other person.
- References and sources of information have been credited where necessary.

STUDENT SIGNATURE:.....DATE:.....

STUDENT NAME:.....LUI:.....

SUPERVISOR'S NAME:.....SCHOOL:.....

TOPIC	WORKBOOK SIGHTED	JOURNAL SIGHTED	OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	SELF ASSESSMENT	THIRD PARTY REPORT	S/US
Discover your unique identity						
Emotional intelligence						
The truth about your values						
Your purpose and passion						
Using choice and responsibility						
Personal wellbeing						
Satisfactory achievement		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Forward to Connect'n'Grow <input type="checkbox"/>		Date forwarded:.....
Supervisor's signature:.....		Student signature.....				
Office Use Only: Date received by CnG.....		Date forwarded to QCAA.....				

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