



WELLBEING FOUNDATIONS:
ARE YOU READY TO LEAD WELLBEING?

LESSON 1 PLAYBOOK

THEWELLBEINGLAB
A MICHELLEMCQUAID PROGRAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Discovering What Works.....3

Learning How To LEAD Wellbeing..... 6

Designing Your Impact Project..... 11

WHY INVEST IN WELLBEING?

In its simplest form, wellbeing is our ability to feel good and function effectively as we navigate the natural highs and lows we all experience.

Longitudinal studies have found that people with higher levels of wellbeing have more satisfying relationships, more readily take on new learning challenges, are more creative and productive, more willingly help others, experience greater engagement and success at work, earn higher incomes, experience better physical health, and are less likely to abuse substances (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

For example, in workplaces studies have found that when people have higher levels of wellbeing they are:



more likely to feel engaged



more likely to be more productive



more likely to be satisfied in job



less likely to have unhealthy days



less likely to burn out



less likely to quit

In addition, workplaces that choose to invest in employee wellbeing and have happy and engaged workers experience, on average:



fewer safety incidents



lower absenteeism



lower turnover



more likely to be seen as innovative



higher customer ratings



higher over average shareholder return

(Source: The Wellbeing Lab 2018 Report)

The good news is that studies have found that when it comes to caring for your wellbeing, often tiny is mighty provided whatever wellbeing behavior you've chosen is done regularly (Walton, 2014). How? Researchers suggest that small and consistent 'wellbeing wins' amplify our confidence and motivation to care for our wellbeing so we can scale up your efforts over time (Fogg, 2019).

So, what tiny but mighty wellbeing behaviors work best?

DISCOVER | FIND THE SUCCESS FACTORS

- 1 | Quickly ask for volunteers to be your group's:
 - Discussion Leader, to make sure every voice is heard
 - Recorder, to capture the notes in the **online form**
 - Timekeeper, to keep the group on track

(You have about 3 minutes for each person to introduce themselves and share stories and insights.)
- 2 | **Discussion Leaders**, guide the conversation by asking each person to share:
 - What's the smallest and most effective wellbeing support you've seen a small business put in place and stick with?
 - What impact did it have on people's ability to care for their wellbeing?
 - What made it possible for people to stick with this using this wellbeing support?
- 3 | **Timekeepers**, you may want to set a three-minute alarm on your phone to make sure everyone has a chance to share their ideas.
- 4 | **Discussion leader**, once everyone has shared please help your group to prepare your report that contains:
 - **The five most common success factors** across all your stories or insights.
 - **The completion of the following sentence:** "When it comes to designing small, effective, and joyful wellbeing behaviors people can stick with, it's important to remember...."
- 5 | **Recorder**, please be sure to capture these answers in the form provided.

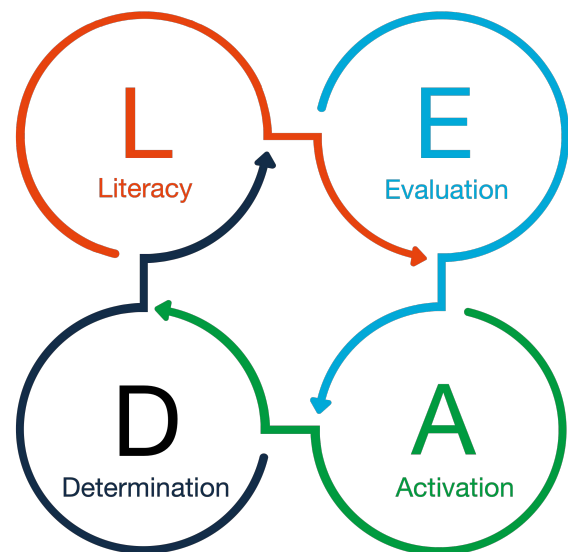
DISCOVER | WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Notes on the stories, success factors or insights of others about the most effective, joyful and sustainable ways to care for wellbeing at the individual level:

CAN YOU LEAD WELLBEING?

Wellbeing habits, attitudes, and actions spread through a complicated web of social connections around us – at home, at work, and across our communities. While studies are still discovering the best approaches for systemically supporting people's wellbeing, researchers suggest looking for ways to care for wellbeing at the levels of “Me” (individuals), “We” (families, teams and groups) and “Us” (your whole workplace) to make it easier for people to thrive consistently. To help people care for their wellbeing at work here are four elements that studies suggest will help you to LEAD these changes:

- **LITERACY** – Having a shared language about caring for wellbeing enables us to have conversations that can positively impact people's thoughts, feelings, and actions about their wellbeing. For example, the Inuit Eskimos have many words to describe dimensions of “snow” which allows them to think about, feel about, and interact with snow in far more ways than our one English word provides. Wellbeing is similar in that it's multi-dimensional and also contextual, so your community context is important to the particular dialect.



- **EVALUATION** – Having good quality, meaningful, timely data gives us insights to make more intelligent decisions about what we care enough about to change, and the motivation to take action and change it. It also helps us to experience the glow of having our hard work reflected among a wellbeing coalition. The more frequently we experience a positive sense of progress, the more likely we are to feel motivated, optimistic, satisfied, and connected to others. This doesn't mean our wellbeing scores always needs to go up, but we do need to easily and regularly gauge the impact of our efforts so we can keep learning how to better care for our wellbeing.
- **ACTIVATION** – There is no one magic wellbeing strategy that will help every person be well. Instead, we need the freedom to playfully experiment and activate the wellbeing behaviors that align with our interests, values, resources, and desired outcomes. For example, one team may be more likely to stick with a wellbeing behavior that connects them with other people, while another team may benefit more from a wellbeing behavior that provides them with space for quiet daily reflection.
- **DETERMINATION** – Caring for wellbeing is not a one-off exercise. Going for one run won't suddenly make us fit, and eating one piece of broccoli won't suddenly make us healthy. Behaviors that require our daily dedication are easier to sustain when we have friends, family, or a coalition of diverse stakeholders supportive of our efforts.

HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE WELLBEING LITERACY?

Humans have been attempting to define wellbeing for centuries, from ancient religious practices to the self-help section in bookstores. Every author, scholar, and philosopher has their own definition of what “wellbeing” encompasses. In order to build a shared language of wellbeing, we recommend keeping your words and phrases as simple and easy to remember as possible. For example:

A DEFINITION: WELLBEING IS OUR ABILITY TO FEEL GOOD AND FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY.

Wellbeing gives us the tools to better leverage the “highs” and navigate the “lows,” which are part of everyone’s life, so we can move beyond simply functioning towards intellectual, emotional, social, and physical thriving.

A CONTEXT: WELLBEING COMPRISES MOMENTS OF THRIVING AND STRUGGLE.

Struggle is not a sign that we are broken or in need of fixing, it is an invitation to learning and growth. Provided we have the knowledge and support to respond to signs of struggle, it can improve our levels of resilience and performance.

A GOAL: WELLBEING CAN BE AMPLIFIED BY IMPROVING OUR WELLBEING ABILITY, MOTIVATION, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY.

It is healthy for our levels of wellbeing to ebb and flow as we experience the ups and downs of life. Rather than chasing constant improvement, our goal is to more intelligently and actively care for our wellbeing, regardless of what life throws at us by amplifying our: wellbeing ability (A), wellbeing motivation (M) and psychological safety (P).

A TOOLBOX: WELLBEING CAN BE CARED FOR WITH TINY, DAILY PERMAH BEHAVIORS.

One way to understand, measure, and act on evidence-based approaches for improving wellbeing is by drawing on Dr. Martin Seligman’s PERMAH Framework, which points to six factors of feeling and functioning: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, and Health.

A PROCESS: WELLBEING IS NOT A SOLO ENDEAVOR; IT RIPPLES ACROSS THE “ME,” “WE,” AND “US” LEVELS OF WORKPLACES.

Our wellbeing perceptions, experiences, and behaviors are diverse and spread through an interconnected web of social connections at the Me (individuals), We (pairs, teams, families, and small groups), and Us (workplaces, schools, churches, clubs, community) level.

GRAB YOUR DONE-FOR-YOU LITERACY WELLBEING PRESENTATION TO HELP

CAN YOU EVALUATE WELLBEING?

Harvard Business School Professor Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer (2011) have found that of all the things that can boost people's emotions, motivations, and perceptions during a day, the single most important is the recognition that they are making progress in a task that matters to them. Furthermore, the more frequently people experience a sense of progress, the more likely they are to be creatively productive and to feel more intrinsically motivated, optimistic, satisfied, and connected to others in the long run.

As with all things, wellbeing measures vary greatly in their quality and capabilities. When choosing a measure, we recommend:

- **ASSESSING THE VALIDITY OF THE MEASURE:** Is it replicated? Has it been peer-reviewed?
- **UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS MEASURED:** What data will it give you? How will this data help you track the desired outcomes over time?
- **REVIEWING THE LANGUAGE USED IN THE MEASURE:** Will the language be easily understood by the people you want to have use the measure?
- **BEING CLEAR ON THE VALUE OF THE MEASURE:** Survey fatigue has become an increasing challenge as people often don't see the results of their efforts for some time, if at all. What's in it for the people who will spend their time and energy entering the data?
- **CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE LENGTH AND FORMAT:** The shorter your survey and the easier it is for people to access (e.g., available in different languages, online, pen-and-paper, via interviews), the more people you will have complete the survey.

Once the data has been gathered, be sure to use it to spark generative conversations across your community. On average, most communication efforts around change have been found to be under-communicated by at least a factor of 10, so go broad in terms of reach and repeat the same messages again and again. You might consider:

- **BROADCASTING WELLBEING CONVERSATIONS** – Leveraging existing workplace communication platforms – websites, social media, podcasts, newsletters, bulletin boards, regular forums, or meetings.
- **KEY INFLUENCERS & ENERGIZER CONVERSATIONS** – Invite leaders and workplace influencers (people who are known for their ability to be uplifting problem-solvers) into conversations designed to create new connections and new ideas across your workplace around caring for wellbeing.
- **TEAM REFLECTIONS** – Give your influencers and energizers easy ways to share the information (i.e., talking points, presentation packs, posters, postcards, social media templates, etc.) and offer to be a guest speaker if they need someone.

Just remember, your wellbeing evaluation goal is not to continually chase improving scores, but to use the data and insights to help people become more intelligent and active participants in caring for their wellbeing.

GRAB YOUR DONE-FOR-YOU PERMAH WELLBEING SURVEY TOOLS TO HELP

CAN YOU ACTIVATE WELLBEING BEHAVIORS?

Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky (2007) notes that there is no one magic strategy that will help every person be well. We each have unique needs, interests, values, resources, and inclinations that undoubtedly predispose us to put effort into, and benefit from, some strategies more than others. For example, Sonja's research has found that some people are best served by working on an area of specific weakness (whether it's pessimism, overthinking, or problems with friendships), and others profit from engaging in a happiness strategy that meshes with their personal ideal of wellbeing (be it positive thinking, gratifying relationships, or fulfilling work).

When it comes to activating behaviors to care for people's wellbeing, some studies suggest it may not even matter which type of program or content is shared provided that people feel their perspectives are acknowledged and respected, that self-regulation and self-direction within the context is fostered, and that meaningful choices and options are provided (Sheldon, Joiner & Williams, 2003).

Why might this be the case? Professor Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2008) suggest that a sense of autonomy – the opportunity to choose our own actions – has a powerful effect on individual wellbeing, performance, and attitude. Autonomy allows us to willingly want to be involved in tasks because we feel we're acting in accordance with our own interests and values – which allows us to be both autonomous and happily interdependent with others.

We can support people's need for autonomy by allowing them to choose their wellbeing:

- **BEHAVIORS** – A meta-analysis of the most effective positive psychology interventions suggests that multi-dimensional wellbeing theories – like PERMAH – result in better wellbeing outcomes than single theories – like gratitude – as they provide more autonomy for people to choose their wellbeing behaviors (Donaldson, Lee, Donaldson, 2019).
- **TECHNIQUE** – Whether it's creating a tiny habit, joining a bootcamp, or taking on a shared challenge, people need the freedom to choose from a variety of wellbeing techniques to find what works best for them. Typically, people have been found to practice up to eight different wellbeing activities at a given time (Parks, Della Porta, Pierce, Zilca, & Lyubomirsky, 2012).
- **TIMING** - Timing wellbeing activities in ways that generate the greatest boost in positive emotion and minimize boredom is critical when caring for our wellbeing. Giving people the freedom to choose the frequency, duration, and time of day that works best for their chosen wellbeing behaviors can support their autonomy (Nelson & Lyubomirsky, 2012).
- **TEAM** – People who have autonomy-supporting relationships with others who encourage them to care for their wellbeing have been found to see larger improvements from their wellbeing behaviors (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013).

GRAB YOUR DONE-FOR-YOU TINY WELLBEING HABITS TOOLS TO HELP

HOW CAN YOU FUEL DETERMINATION?

While lamenting our lack of willpower is common when it comes to caring for our wellbeing, studies are increasingly suggesting that the most determined people don't necessarily have more self-regulation. In addition to knowing how to sustain their motivation, improve their abilities, and leverage prompts, they also find ways to have psychological safe spaces where they can talk about caring for their wellbeing with others.

Studies have found that having someone who can offer a person positive feedback about their efforts, encourage them when their motivation is waning, provide a place for public accountability, and be a compassionate, wise, and kind friend when they are struggling makes it significantly more likely people will sustain their efforts to care for their wellbeing. You can help people in your community fuel their determination by:

- **FORMING A WELLBEING COALITION** – Gather a diverse group of stakeholders across your workplace or community to support wellbeing. The tribe that forms the coalition should be a diverse and equitable representation of your community, so keep asking yourself, “Who is not at this table yet?”
- **SETTING UP WELLBEING BUDDIES** – Make it easy for people to find a wellbeing buddy – someone else in your workplace or community who is also trying to improve their abilities and sustain their motivation for caring for their wellbeing. It can be as simple as providing a daily text message, a weekly phone call, or even a monthly coffee or lunch with someone. Once people are matched, give the buddies a simple guide to support their wellbeing check-ins. Monitor how different buddies are going and build on what's working well to continue improving the resources your community provides to help the wellbeing buddies provide psychologically safe spaces for each other.
- **HOSTING WELLBEING CHECK-IN CIRCLES** – These support groups can be 30 – 60 minutes and provide an easy way to meet others in the community who are actively working on caring for their wellbeing. These check-in circles can be held within a workplace for employees, in a school for staff or students, in a church group, in a senior living community, or with an open invitation for anyone to attend in a community location. Think Alcoholics Anonymous – one of the most successful wellbeing programs in the world – but for anyone wanting some social support to care for their wellbeing.
- **WORKING WITH WELLBEING COACHES** – Invite qualified wellbeing coaches in your workplace or community (or train people to have these skills) to provide free wellbeing coaching for those in need. This is a great option for those who can't afford more one-on-one support and choose not to use community counselling or psychological services.

To help guide these wellbeing conversations, use the bonus tool for wellbeing coaching check-ins.

GRAB YOUR DONE-FOR-YOU WELLBEING CHECK-IN TOOLS TO HELP

YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING PROJECT

Your mental wellbeing project plan must be submitted by June 15 through the web link provided by the department.

IT MUST INCLUDE:

- A letter of recommendation from your coach
- Confirmation that one of your representatives has completed the 10-hours of live wellbeing training
- An invoice for \$15,000 for the grant payment

Please allow up to five working days for the department to review your project.

If your project is approved, please allow up to five working days for the funding to be paid into your account.

Please remember, you must complete a final report on your project for the department by August 31.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS CAN YOUR GRANT BE USED FOR?

- ✓ Improve mental wellbeing, resilience and recovery in Business Communities.
- ✓ Enable collaboration, connections and networks in Business Communities.
- ✓ Educate, inform and empower Business Communities in mental wellbeing.
- ✓ Increase the uptake of other Victorian business oriented mental health support programs.

Grant funding may also be used to deliver projects other than these examples, including for outsourced services.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS CAN'T YOUR GRANT BE USED FOR?

The following activities can not be considered for grant funding:

- ✗ Service provision of psychosocial treatments and business mentoring such as those offered by the Victorian Government, including the Partners in Wellbeing Helpline (including wellbeing coaches, financial counselling and business advice).
- ✗ Retrospective support for projects that have already commenced delivery or have been completed prior to receiving funding approval, including equipment purchased, contracts entered, or construction started.
- ✗ Large scale digital infrastructure projects.
- ✗ Projects requiring ongoing funding from the Victorian Government.
- ✗ Ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies, except where a salary subsidy provides direct project delivery, management, or administration.
- ✗ Costs to meet regulatory requirements.
- ✗ Purchase of vehicles, land, or buildings.



WELLBEING FOUNDATIONS:
THE SURPRISING TRUTHS ABOUT WELLBEING

LESSON 2

THEWELLBEINGLAB
A MICHELLEMCQUAID PROGRAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Measuring Wellbeing.....	15
Caring For Wellbeing.....	18
Impacting Wellbeing.....	23

DISCOVER | WHAT ARE YOU LEARNING ABOUT ACTIVITY 1 CARING FOR YOUR WELLBEING?

- 1 | In small groups, you'll have five minutes each* to reflect on your PERMAH Wellbeing Survey results (to the extent you feel comfortable sharing):
 - What's working well when it comes to caring for your wellbeing at work?
 - Where are you struggling when it comes to caring for your wellbeing at work?
 - Reflecting on your results what surprising truth did you learn about caring for your wellbeing at work?
- 2 | Once everyone has shared please use the online form to prepare a group report that captures the surprising truths you're discovering about caring for wellbeing at work.

CAN YOU TRAVEL THE LEARNING LOOP?

Nature wired us each to be perfectly imperfect, so that as the world around us changes we can adapt and evolve as needed. While bumping up against your limitations can feel frustrating, and falling short of your ideals can be disappointing, it's important to understand that these uncomfortable and often stressful feelings are simply nature's invitation to learning and growth.

For example, everything you've ever learned to master in your life – from walking, to speaking a language, to building good relationships with others – you did by taking three simple steps:

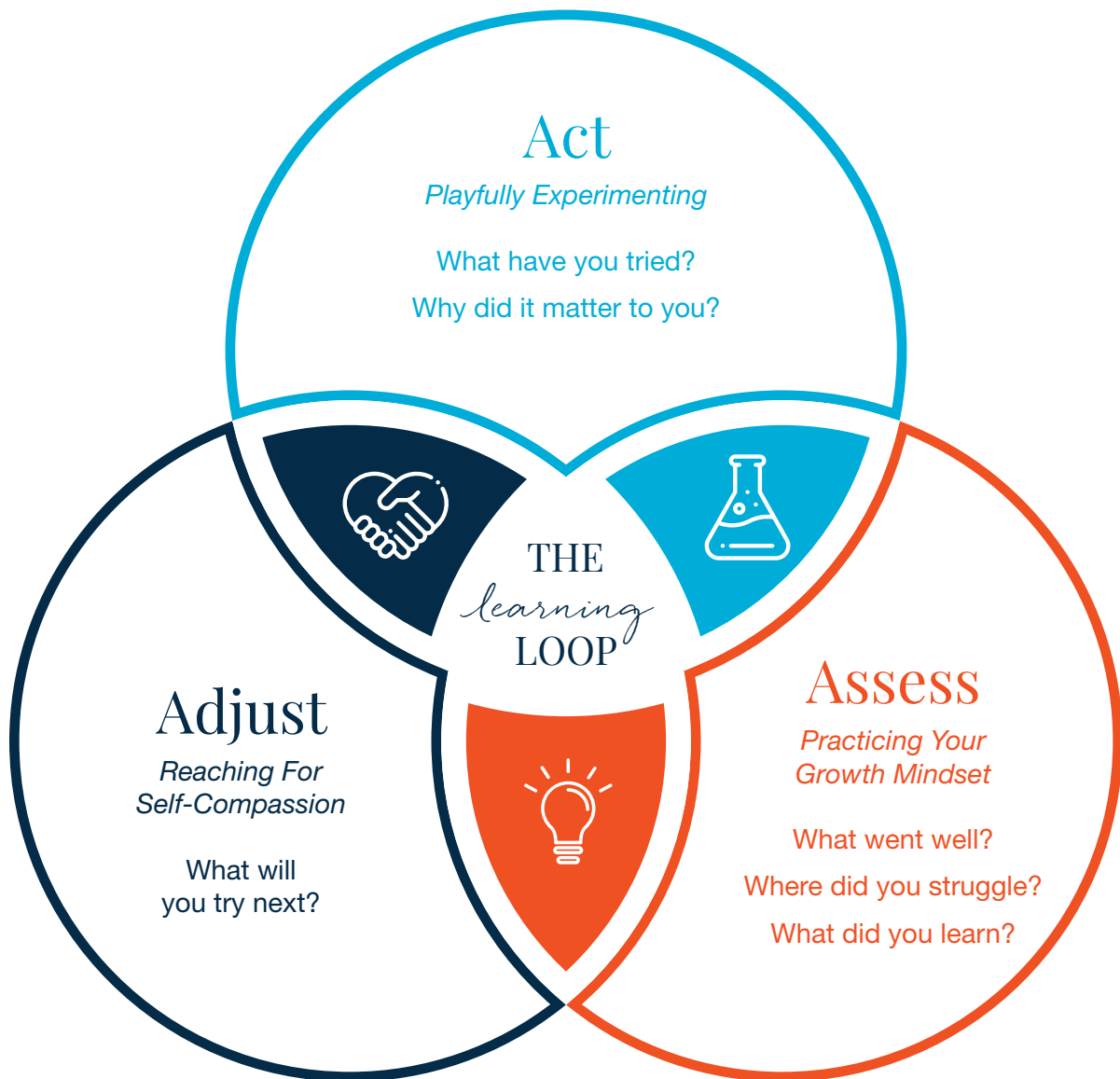
- **ACTING** – You've drawn on your curiosity and creativity and maybe even the wisdom of others to playfully experiment with different ways to accomplish the behaviors that have mattered most to you.
- **ASSESSING** – You've used your curiosity to reflect on what's working, what's not working and how you can use what you're learning to continue improving.
- **ADJUSTING** – You've used your learning to adjust your behavior until you can consistently achieve the outcomes you've wanted.

Over and over again you've travelled this simple Learning Loop – often without even been conscious of the steps you were taking – until you've reached mastery.

Unfortunately, we often misread bumping up against our limitations, falling short of our ideals, or wrestling with obstacles and setbacks as signs that we are “failures” instead perfectly imperfect human beings who are still learning and growing. And while travelling the Learning Loop doesn't always guarantee your desired outcomes, it does provide you with the opportunities to realize your true potential by helping you to:

- **ACT** – Rather than expecting yourself to go from zero to mastery instantly, try to playfully experiment with different ways to accomplish the behaviors that have mattered most to you. You can level up by investing in learning, grab a buddy or coach to inspire you, or trigger your desired actions with tiny habits, environmental nudges or mindful signposts.
- **ASSESS** – Instead of letting your negativity bias run riot and point out only your failings, be sure to ask: What went well? Where am I struggling? What am I learning? Even in your worst moments, something will be working, so you want to identify and build on these strengths. Likewise, even in your best moments there will still be room for improvement. Just remember, more important than the outcomes you're working towards (can you even remember what you were trying to achieve six months ago?) is the learning that you can carry forward towards achieving your potential.
- **ADJUST** – Try to avoid beating yourself up with self-criticism in an effort to motivate yourself to try again. Instead reach for self-compassion and like your wisest and kindest friend, coach or mentor hold yourself accountable for the mistakes you've made while reaching for the strengths you can build on to get back out there and try again. Far from being soft, studies suggest that self-compassion.

THE LEARNING LOOP



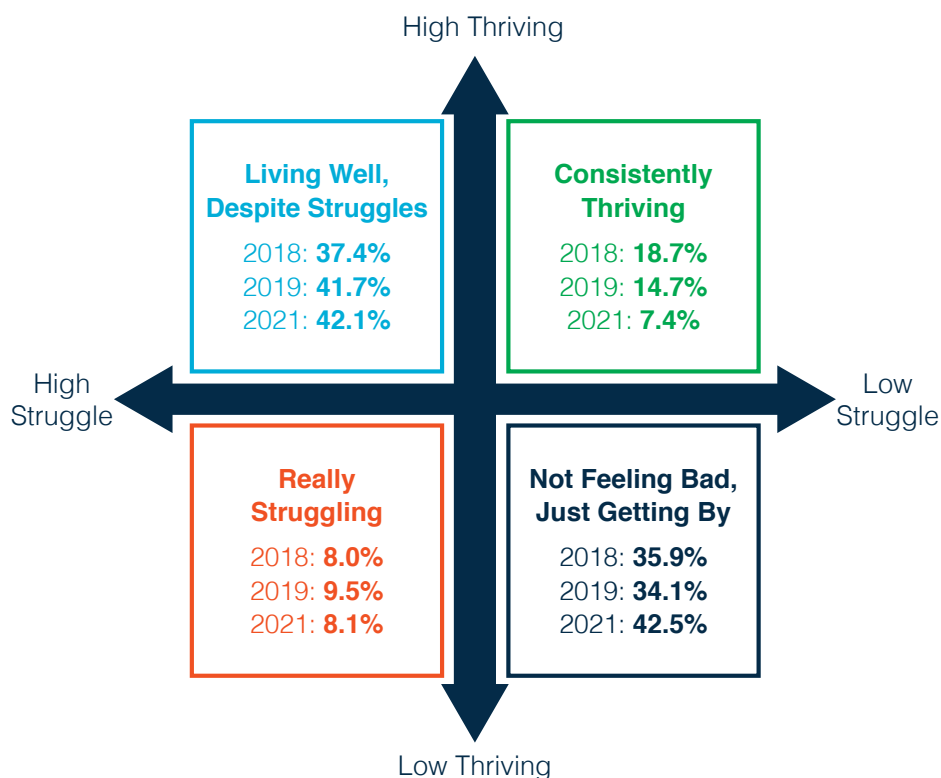
(McQuaid & Melville, 2019).

WELLBEING ≠ STRUGGLE FREE

Wellbeing ranges from languishing (low levels of wellbeing) to thriving (high levels of wellbeing). Across five different surveys with thousands of Australian and American workers we have replicated the findings that workers who reported that they were *consistently thriving* as well as workers who reported that they were *living well, despite struggles* were statistically more likely than other workers to have higher levels of job satisfaction, better performance, and greater commitment to their organization. They were also more likely to report higher levels of performance for their team and their organization.

Even during a global pandemic and a significant economic downturn in 2020, we found that it was possible to thrive despite struggle, and it was also possible to not experience wellbeing even in the absence of struggle.

Overall, however, as circumstances dramatically changed, the number of workers who reported they were *consistently thriving*, halved from 14.7% to 7.4% and the number of workers who have reported that they were *not feeling bad, just getting by* increased by 8.4% from December 2019 to August 2020. This might suggest that despite reporting high levels of thriving in good times, when struggles escalate, people who lack the resilience to be *living well, despite struggles* find their wellbeing and performance quickly diminishes.



[DOWNLOAD THE FULL WORKPLACE WELLBEING REPORT HERE](#)

WHAT MAKES CARING FOR WELLBEING CHALLENGING?

Although most people are wired to have reasonably healthy levels of wellbeing and resilience, when it comes to achieving these kinds of positive results there are some common wellbeing myths that often bring our efforts unstuck. They include:

- ONCE I FIX MY WELLBEING, EVERYTHING WILL GET EASIER**

The truth is that while multiple studies have found that improving your wellbeing can help you to have more energy, feel happier and healthier, improve your relationships and make you more productive and resilient, your wellbeing is a day-by-day proposition. Just as going for one run won't suddenly make you healthy, doing one activity to care for your wellbeing won't suddenly mean you're consistently thriving. Instead, looking after your wellbeing requires a little bit of intentional, joyful effort each day.
- MY GOAL SHOULD BE TO MAINTAIN PERFECT LEVELS OF WELLBEING**

The truth is that your wellbeing will ebb and flow based on your efforts and what is happening in the world around you. This is not only normal; it is healthy. Rather than shooting for a perfect wellbeing score, our research has found that a more worthy goal is working to improve your levels of wellbeing motivation and ability so that you are able to wholeheartedly show up and be fully engaged in work and life — whatever it throws at you.
- IF I'M STRUGGLING OR STRESSED THEN MY WELLBEING MUST BE SUFFERING**

The truth is that feelings of struggle and stress are not signs that you are unwell or 'broken,' they are signs that something important to you is happening and needs your attention. Feelings of struggle and stress don't have to undermine your wellbeing or performance – in fact, they can even enhance it – provided you have the wellbeing knowledge, tools and support to intelligently respond to these signs. This playbook is designed to put these tools at your fingertips
- I'M TOO BUSY TO CARE FOR MY WELLBEING**

The truth is, no matter how many people are demanding our time (and in our lives this includes bosses, clients, colleagues, family and pets), to a large extent we are each busy with what we've chosen to say "yes" to. As hard as this may be to initially accept, the good news is that it means you can prioritize even just a few minutes a day to look after your wellbeing, if you choose to. And if you find it hard to believe you are worth the time to look after yourself, then start by doing it so that you have the energy to look after all the other people who are relying on you.

HOW CAN YOU AMPLIFY WELLBEING?

Researchers have found that it is possible to care for your wellbeing by regularly engaging in wellbeing habits and activities. These activities are known as “positive interventions” and include activities like keeping a gratitude journal, breaking the grip of rumination, developing your strengths, finding meaning in small tasks, and overcoming self-doubt (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

Now, does this mean that if you create daily practices of positive interventions and stick with them, you’ll always be thriving? Well, not quite. Feeling good and functioning effectively ebbs and flows, depending on what’s happening around you and the choices you are making. Rather than setting the goal of thriving all the time, remember the real prize is in becoming an intelligent, confident, and active participant in shaping your own wellbeing, so you can wholeheartedly show up and be fully engaged in life – whatever it throws at you.

The truth is, most people struggle to care for their wellbeing, not because they lack willpower, but because they lack the knowledge, tools, and support that makes change easier. However, our research has found that people are more likely to thrive when they have higher levels of:

- **WELLBEING ABILITY** – is your capacity – the knowledge, tools and opportunities – you have to take actions that care for your wellbeing. Studies suggest (Fogg, 2019) that the most reliable way to improve your abilities is to start with small wellbeing behaviors that you can do consistently and be successful at immediately. This gives you the opportunity to build upon your wellbeing strengths, flexibility and skill and as your abilities grow and you experience success, you can experiment with more challenging wellbeing behaviors over time.
- **WELLBEING MOTIVATION** – is your commitment to consistently prioritize caring for your wellbeing. Too often we focus on abstract desires and outcomes (we want to be happier, healthier, wealthier) and the things we feel we “should do.” As a result our motivation fluctuates (one moment you have it and the next it’s gone). Sustaining your motivation requires clear future aspirations or measurable outcomes (your ‘why,’ e.g., I want to be fitter) that is matched to small, specific, high impact behaviors that you want to do (your ‘how,’ e.g., run for 10 minutes each morning) and can succeed at.
- **PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY** – Thriving in the face of ongoing struggle not only requires skills and ongoing commitment, but also the support of others around you. Psychological safety exists when you have safe spaces to talk openly and honestly about how you’re trying to care for your wellbeing, what’s working well, where you’re struggling and what you’re learning without the fear of being judged. Unfortunately, 8 out of every 10 workers report that they feel it best to keep their struggles to themselves.

We call these your wellbeing AMPlifiers

WHICH WELLBEING FACTORS SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED?

One way to understand, measure, and action evidence-based approaches for improving wellbeing is by drawing on Dr. Martin Seligman's PERMAH Framework (2012), which points to six wellbeing factors that enable us to feel good and function well:



POSITIVE EMOTIONS – Prioritizing moments of regular heartfelt positivity – spending time in nature, finding a reason to laugh, taking a break, practicing mindfulness – to fuel your resilience.



ENGAGEMENT – Using your neurological strengths – the things you're good at and enjoy doing – to feel more confident, energized, and engaged



RELATIONSHIPS – Making time to genuinely connect with other people – expressing gratitude, showing kindness, being compassionate – and savoring the feelings of warmth and trust.



MEANING – Understanding how what you do each day has a positive impact on others and feeling connected to something larger than yourself.



ACCOMPLISHMENT – Embracing a learning mindset and cultivating the grit you need to accomplish the things that matter most to you.



HEALTH – Eating well, moving regularly, taking time to recover, and sleeping deeply each day to ensure you have the energy to consistently thrive.

Dr. Seligman suggests that we think of these wellbeing factors like the dashboard that allows a pilot to fly a plane – there is no one dial that indicates how an airplane is functioning. Rather, the fuel gauge, the airspeed indicator, the altimeter, and the interaction between them provide all the information needed.

To thrive, you need to cultivate each of the PERMAH factors. But how much you'll need of each will vary depending on the type of person you are, the situations you're in, and the outcomes you want to achieve. This means there is no single blueprint for wellbeing (Lyubomirsky, 2007). The right plan looks different for each of us.

We've chosen the PERMAH framework to guide the Certificate, because we've found it to be an easy and helpful way for people to understand, measure, and take action using evidence-based research and tools that meet their unique needs, interests, values, resources and inclinations. We did not choose it because it has been conclusively proven; after all, good science is never proven but is an evolving process of ongoing learning and refinement - and the PERMAH framework is no exception.

HOW CAN WE IMPACT WELLBEING ACROSS A WORKPLACE?

Workplace wellbeing is more than just the sum of how individuals within an organization are feeling and functioning. In fact, researchers suggest that workplace wellbeing is shaped by multiple interacting factors at the individual level, team/group level and organizational level and that there is a reciprocal impact at each of these three levels (Oades & Dulagil, 2017).

The reality is that caring for our wellbeing is not a solo endeavor. Our wellbeing perceptions, experiences, and behaviors are diverse and spread through a complicated web of social connections in our workplaces. For example, people with higher levels of wellbeing tend to enhance the wellbeing of their co-workers and even their customers (Lyubomirsky Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

This is why we structure our approach to caring for workplace wellbeing around:

- **THE ME LEVEL (INTRAPERSONAL)** – our individual choices to care for our wellbeing.
- **THE WE LEVEL (INTERPERSONAL)** – our relationships and ability to co-ordinate with each other (i.e. our colleagues, our team mates, our clients, our suppliers etc.).
- **THE US LEVEL (SYSTEMIC)** – our workplace environment (i.e., vision, values, culture, strategy, leadership, structure, policies, processes, communication, built environment, etc.).



REFLECTION | HOW MIGHT YOU BUILD WELLBEING INTELLIGENCE?

- 1 | How might your Community Impact Project normalize struggle as part of caring for our wellbeing?
- 2 | How might your Community Impact Project amplify people's ability, motivation, and psychological safety to care for their wellbeing?
- 3 | How might your Community Impact Project provide a multidimensional approach to caring for wellbeing?
- 4 | How might your Community Impact Project apply a systems lens to caring for wellbeing?
- 5 | How might your Community Impact Project measure people's wellbeing in ways that help them to more actively and intelligently shape their wellbeing?

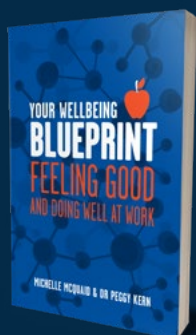
WANT MORE?

For more ideas, be sure to check out other ways you can care for your wellbeing:



Want to learn more about caring for your wellbeing?

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