



Ways to support yourself: build your psychological fitness and reconnect with yourself in time of rapid changes



Focus and objectives for today

Today is about ...

Ways to support **yourself**: Build your psychological fitness

- Reconnect with your strengths, purpose
- Explore strategies and tools to manage unhelpful thoughts and master unpleasant feelings
- Learn approaches to reframe your current situations and maintain a healthy and productive mind
- Explore strategies and tools to manage unhelpful thoughts and master unpleasant feelings
- Discover ways to stay grounded, access calmness and serenity
- Re-imagine what is possible for your future



I aspire for you...

- To be more aware of your inner experience
- To use the tools and practice consistently
- To cultivate a growth mindset
- To be discipline in strengthening your mental health

Ground Rule

- Safe
- Confidentiality
- Fun



What is stress, anxiety and Other common emotions
What are the causes?



Alert ! I sense threats in time of crisis..



Unsafe (both physical and psychological)

Food , Health, Shelter, Job

Physical disconnections with friends, colleagues and family (e.g. Loneliness)

Lockdown (e.g. Lost of freedom of movement)



Lack of control in our environment (how we cope)

Panic buying

Cleaning

Read lots of news



Sudden changes

Ways of studying (time pressure to adjust)

Ways of relating others – sense of belonging (racism), relating to friends from other cultures and backgrounds

Ways of living

Uncertainty (Anticipatory stress, not knowing, ...what if...what if...)

1st sign : Physiological responses to stressors/threats



FIGHT
ANXIETY/ ANGER

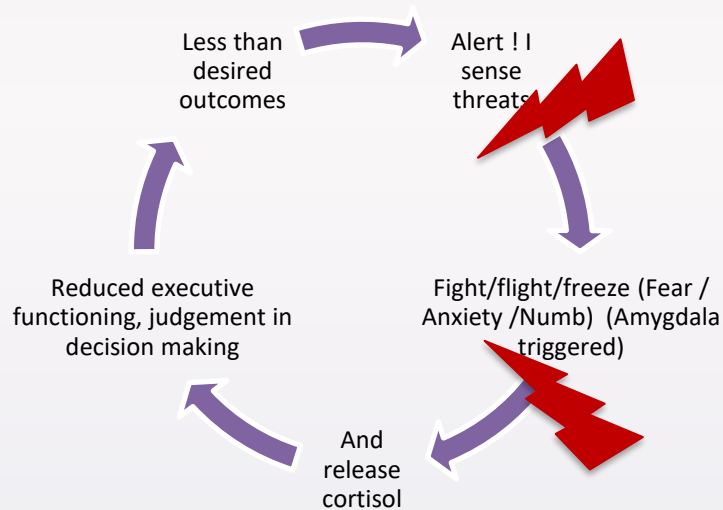


FLIGHT
YOU HIDE/ SHUT DOWN



FREEZE
NUMB

Meanwhile, in your mind and body....



- Reactive, easily triggered and automatic
- Your mind & feelings control you
- You have strong bodily sensation
- No space between feeling and actions – it becomes an automatic reaction



Psychological fitness cycle



*A **process** for integration and **optimisation** of **mental, emotional, and behavioural abilities** and capacities to optimise **performance** and strengthen the resilience when facing stressful situations*

Preventative approach to mental health

PSYCHOLOGICAL FITNESS

Your psychological fitness cycle

- Each stage has its own function, no good or bad, even in the vulnerable phase
- It's a cycle not a linear process
- Process – 'exercise' to improve
- How fit are you? 2 check points:
 - How efficient you move through the stage
 - How long you can stay in optimisation phase

PsychFit cycle

01. Vulnerable Phase

Feature: Reactive

Fight & Flight, On defense, easily triggered, clouded thinking, poor concentration, it takes longer to feel positive

02. OK Phase

Feature: Habitual

A sense of control with your thinking and feelings, regularity, feel positive when external conditions are good.

03. Optimisation Phase

Feature: Flow

Mental, emotional and behavioural freedom are at optimal. Can stay positive without depending on external conditions.

Poll: Which phase do you think you are in?

- Vulnerable
 - OK
- Optimisation



Take Proactive steps to move from vulnerable to optimisation



What is mental wellbeing?



Mind : Develop a flexible mindset which focus on positivity and growth

Function : To efficiently access your perceptions, knowledge and reasoning



Heart: Achieve a high level of emotional health and intelligence

Function: To understand your own feelings, connect with others with empathy and increase your feelings of joy and peace



Body : Live with a vital and energetic body

Function : To stay active and ways to achieve more in a 24- hour window

3 Areas
4 Strategies
8 Toolkits



- 1** Reconnect with self
Take notice : Be mindful
Toolkit 1-5
- 2** Connect with others:
Maintain meaningful
Connections (4th Aug)
- 3** Reinvent yourself
Keep growing
- 4** Be active
Toolkit 6-8



Mind





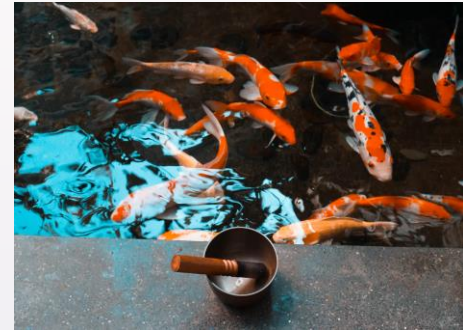
Toolkit #1

Take notice: Be mindful and train your mind to stay focus

Learn to calm your sensations, focus on the here and now, not what has gone before or what might happen next. Stay present in the moment.



DEEP BREATHING (4-7-8
SECONDS)



MINDFULLY OBSERVE YOUR
ENVIRONMENT, ENGAGE YOUR 5
SENSES

Reflections:

What is in your control?

What is out of your control?

What can you influence?

Where have you been placing your focus on?

What's the next small step that lead you seeing results?

Circle of concern

Circle of influence

Circle of control



Toolkit #2
Stay
Organise



Poll: What is in your control now?

How much hour do you study?

When to graduate?

What others think of me?

The outcome of my study?

The way I think of my future?



Toolkit #3

Get to know your thoughts and feeling intimately

- ✓ What are your dominant thoughts?
- ✓ How does these thoughts make you feel?
- ✓ What was the situations when you were having those thoughts and feelings?
- ✓ What does these feelings mean?

Top tip:

Keep a journal

Write to yourself in the third person



Toolkit #4

Acceptance : managing unhelpful thoughts

Find an object /image to represent
your thoughts

Emotional agility, Dr Susan David

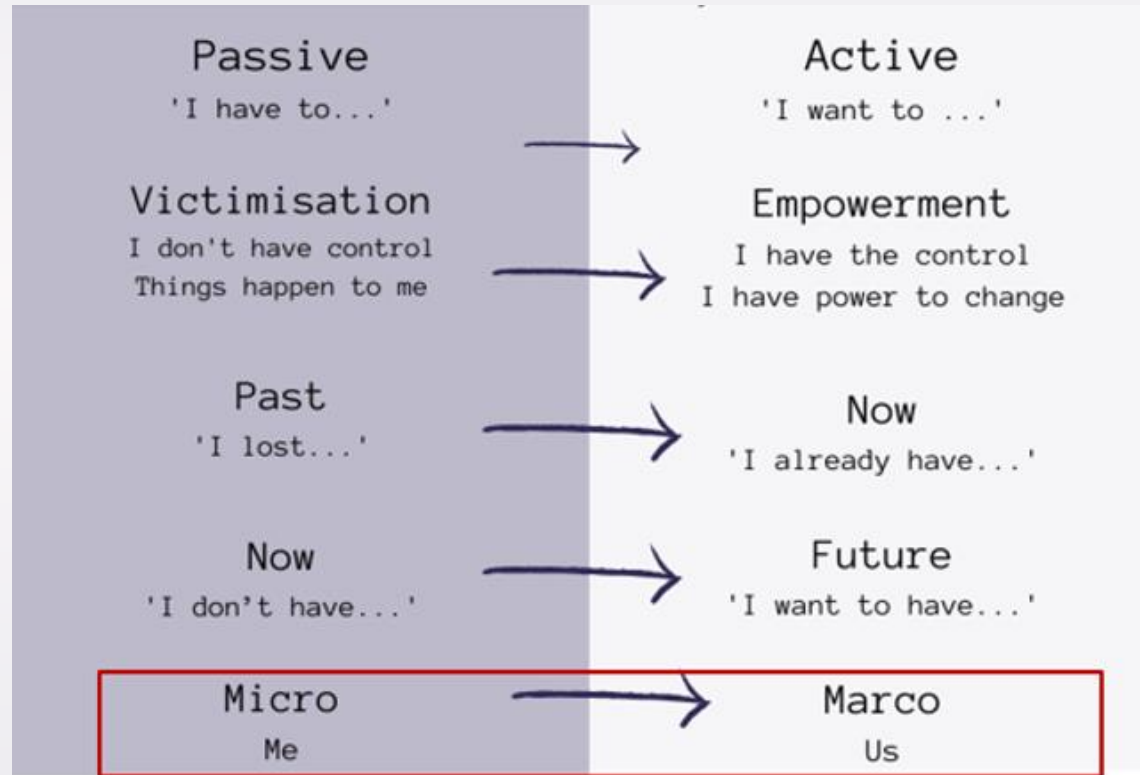
Acceptance and commitment therapy





Toolkit #5

Reframe:
What am I shifting in my thoughts





Toolkit #6

Access your inner strengths

Poll: Your VIA strengths

What is your top strength?

Remember your top strengths are ones that feel energizing, effortless, and easy to use





Access your inner strengths

Reflections: Write down your responses



Reflect on a time when you
feel proud of yourself



Why did your friends come to
you?



Think about a time when you
feel energizing and effortless
when completing a task



Examples of leveraging your strengths to boost your mental health and collect with others

- Start a group of your neighbours on one of the social media platforms to ask how can you help? (kindness, teamwork)
- If you don't feel like it, don't follow what most others are doing, but also empathize with them and don't criticize (open-mindedness)
- Pay attention to and make a list of small things which improve your day (prudence, humility)
- Start an online repository where your friends (and their friends) can share their skills and resources for those who needed most (teamwork)
- Reflect and list things you are grateful for, despite challenging circumstances. Share your gratitude with your loved one, especially if it relates to them (gratitude, social intelligence)
- Do something for at least 10 minutes daily which deepens your connection with nature, such as walking, gardening, recycling, listening to birds (appreciation of beauty)



Reflection: Please type your responses in the chatbox

What can you do with your top strength to contribute to your own wellbeing and help others?

Let's play

Game 1: Practice spotting strengths in your favourite Netflix, facebook, Instagram, YouTube, or TikTok videos. Share them with your friends and see who can spot the most!

Game 2: Top strengths Bingo

Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence (Awe, wonder)	Bravery (Speaks up for what's right)	Teamwork (Loyal, works well with others)	Love (Compassionate)	Forgiveness (Doesn't hold grudges)
Curiosity (Asks questions, explores)	Humility (Focuses on others)	Perseverance (Sticks to tasks; overcomes barriers)	Hope (Positive outlook, expects the best)	Kindness (Caring, generous)
Creativity (Inventive, has unique ideas)	Gratitude (Thankful, feels blessed)	WE HAVE ALL 24! FREE SPACE	Fairness (Cares about what's right)	Sense of Meaning (Sense of purpose, strong beliefs)
Perspective (Wise, gives good advice)	Humor (Playful, sees the funny side of things)	Honesty (Truthful, genuine)	Social Intelligence (Understands others' thoughts and emotions)	Prudence (Careful, practical)
Judgment (Critical thinker, open-minded)	Zest (Active, energized)	Leadership (Encourages others, organizes groups)	Self-control (Disciplined, manages thoughts and feelings)	Love of Learning (Enjoys building knowledge and skills)

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Body





Toolkit #7

Be active: Healthy habits

Goals: Take small doses of mood booster regularly in order to feel good and energised.



Healthy diet/Good food



Physical Exercises



Touch (Making things)



Music or singing



Nature



Play



Social Connections



Good quality sleeps



Physical environment



Toolkit #8

Keep growing: Practice imagining what's possible in the future

Future (know where you are heading to)

Visualisation. Morning Affirmation.

Set goals: What's the greatest self you want to show up today?

Grow (know what you need to get there)

Learn something new that align with your future goals

Does this support the (work) life I'm trying to create?



YOUR WELLBEING ACTION PLAN

GOALS

Think about all the toolkits.
Which one will you intentionally
practice today?
When will you use it?
Think about your top 5
strengths? How are you going to
use them today?

Reflect

At the end of the day, think about how
it went.

- Did you use the toolkit/ strength?
How many times?
- How did it feel when you used it?
- Did it make a difference or change
outcomes for you? How?

Your wellbeing action plan



DO

Make your plan happen!
Create a visual reminder (a
post-it note) to remember
to do it /use that strength!
Keep track and check it off
as you go!

BE PROUD
SHARE
KEEP GOING
PAY IT
FORWARD.

#inthistgether



More Support

- ✦ Lifeline
- ✦ Beyond Blue
- ✦ Your education providers' social and counselling services
- ✦ International student hub in Melbourne and Queensland



Resources

On 'Minions' – Understand your own feelings and manage unhelpful thoughts

- The Happiness Trap : Dr Russ Harris
<https://www.actmindfully.com.au/product/the-happiness-trap/>
- Emotional Agility by Dr Susan David
- TedTalk:https://www.ted.com/talks/susan_david_the_gift_and_power_of_emotional_courage?language=en
- ↳ Book: <https://www.susandavid.com/new-index>



What's next

4th August

3-4:30 pm

Connecting during times of
Disconnection: Ways to
connect with and support
each other



Q & A





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