

2DHB Staff Welfare & Wellbeing - Te whare tapa whā

Taha hinengaro - mental and emotional wellbeing

Taha hinengaro is your mind, heart, conscience, thoughts and emotions. It's about how you communicate, recognising that your mind and body are inseparable. Taking care of taha hinengaro is important for everyone, regardless of whether or not you've experienced mental illness or distress. When your taha hinengaro is strong, you can better cope with the ups and downs of life.

Spread a little kindness

Mother Teresa once said, "We cannot do great things on this earth, only small things with great love."

Small acts of kindness resonate in all our lives, for example:

- Letting someone in front of you in a line
- Stopping to talk with an elderly neighbour, even though you are in a rush
- Lending a helping hand to a colleague who is super busy with their work
- Sending a values eCard to thank someone for their efforts.

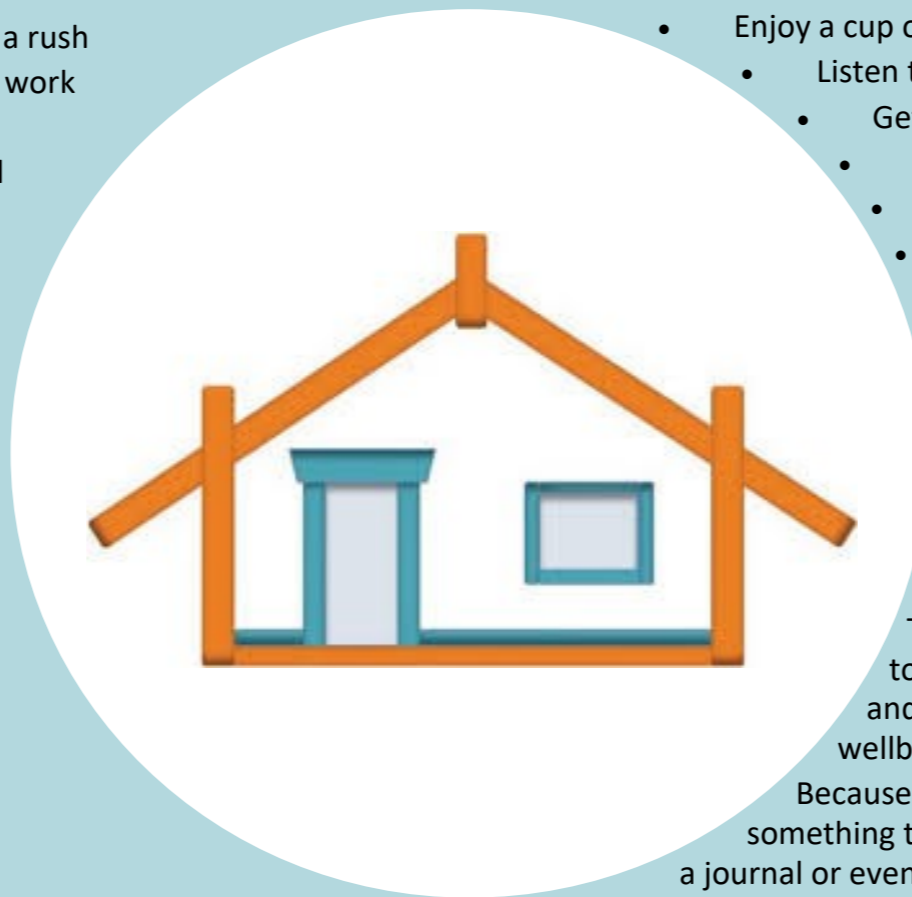
Kindness is linked to happiness and contentment—at both psychological and spiritual levels. Kindness also promotes empathy and compassion; which in turn, leads to a sense of interconnectedness with others.

Practising random acts of kindness makes you and others feel good.

Improve your mood with food

Just like filling up your car, the kind of food you use for fuel is key to how well your brain performs and how you feel mentally and emotionally. Try including a wide range of the following foods to help increase your vitality and wellbeing:

- vegetables (e.g carrots, dark leafy greens, cucumber)
- fruits (e.g bananas, apples, citrus, berries)
- legumes (e.g lentils, chickpeas, beans)
- wholegrains (e.g rice, oats, breads)
- nuts and seeds
- oily fish and lean meats
- good oils (ie, most plant-based oils).



Take time to focus on you

When you take the time to strengthen and sustain your own wellbeing, you're in a better position to care for others. Make sure you carve out a special moment each day to do something nice for yourself - even small things will have a positive impact on your mental health:

- Enjoy a cup of coffee with a hoamahi (colleague)
 - Listen to your favourite song
 - Get outdoors and go for a short walk
 - Read because you want to, not because you have to
 - Get creative in the kitchen
 - Listen to a podcast
 - Do guided breathing or a meditation exercise.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness is the process of bringing your attention to the things occurring in the present moment. It involves becoming aware of your thoughts, feelings and body sensations as you experience them.

The good thing is that mindfulness is a quality we already possess, we just have to learn how to access it. Becoming more mindful helps reduce tension, stress and anxiety and boosts happiness! It also helps you notice what supports your wellbeing.

Because there are so many different ways to practise mindfulness, take the time to find something that works for you. It may be mindful eating, yoga, breathing exercises, writing in a journal or even mindful walks.

Build your resilience to help you thrive

Resilience means being able to bounce back from, or manage your way through any challenges life may throw at you. It doesn't mean being happy and trouble free all of the time. We can think of a resilient person as being like a spring... they can bend and stretch and get a bit bent out of shape, but eventually they spring back to shape and continue to function as they normally would. The resilience strategies found to be most effective in helping to build and maintain resilience are: the importance of practising healthy habits (exercise, diet and sleep), diaphragmatic breathing (to help you manage stress), flexible thinking (practical problem solving strategies to manage life challenges), and optimism (having an optimistic outlook on life and positive self-talk).

Using these strategies can help you better cope with life's ups and downs, make the best use of resources knowing that life is often not perfect, and recognise what you can control.