

yell<sup>4</sup> santam  
yellow



MENTAL WELLBEING  
PASSPORT



## YOUR PASSPORT TO MENTAL WELLBEING

We often find ourselves drifting from day to day as if we're on autopilot – an unconscious, reactive state of being based on past experiences and projecting this into the future. When we are not truly living in the 'now', we are missing out on life.

This is why mental wellbeing is so important – so that you can feel good about yourself and the world around you. It's about living life the way you want and being mindful about the actions you take.

### WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and aware of our surroundings, thoughts and emotions in any given moment, without criticism or judgement. We all naturally possess the capacity to access this state of mindfulness, we just need to cultivate it through mental training. To be mindful, we must learn the skill of stopping, becoming aware and taking action.

# HOW TO IDENTIFY STRESS

Everyone has signs that tell them when they are not in a healthy space of mind. Do you know what your red flags are? Follow these steps to find out.

1

Identify three **physical symptoms** you experience when you are mentally exhausted. These can include:

- Disrupted sleep pattern
- Sugar cravings
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in weight
- Acute repeated infections
- Fatigue/low energy
- Inflammation/body aches
- Brain fog
- Digestive symptoms

Now that you have identified your red flags, what could you do to recuperate?

2

Identify three **emotional symptoms** that get activated when you are in a negative state of mind. These can include:

- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Emotional outbursts
- Mood swings
- Overly sensitive
- Aggressive
- Tearfulness
- Feeling hopeless/helpless
- Apathy

Now that you have identified your red flags, what can you do differently to shift your mind set?



3

Identify **three behaviours** you notice when you are not in your best state of mind. These can include:

- Tardiness
- Disorganised
- Lowered performance
- Forgetfulness
- Lowered interest
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Isolating oneself
- Poor time management
- Lack of attention to detail
- Hyperactive or lethargic

Now that you have identified your red flags, what could you say to yourself to break that behaviour?

## WHEN TO TAKE ACTION AND WHEN TO LET GO

Depending on the level of influence you have in a situation, decisions can either fuel you or deplete you. Knowing when to act or when to let go, is important in conserving your mental energy and maintaining a healthy mind.

The right time to act is when you have a high enough influence over prevailing conditions, as success is reasonably certain. The unwise time to act is when you have little influence over the prevailing condition, as you are likely to be wasting energy.

**Key takeaway:** Know when to take action and when to let go, and rather wait for a better opportunity.

## HOW TO PRACTISE MINDFULNESS

Mindful is a natural capacity that we all have and to turn it into a skill only requires a few minutes of dedicated, focused practice every day. People who practise mindfulness say they feel kinder, calmer, more playful, friendlier and are open to exploring new things.



### The Classic Technique:

- Bring your full attention to the task at hand
- Engage all your senses, becoming aware of every detail
- Exclude all other thoughts and sensory experiences outside this task
- Give your attention without a sense of time or judgement

### The 6 Rs Technique:

- Recognise: Learn to identify your red flags
- Reboot: Shut off the autopilot and become fully present
- Reflect: Think about what is creating stress, negativity and fatigue
- Rebalance: Initiate a self-care routine
- Refocus: Step up or step out of difficult situations
- Restore: Take time out to recuperate

### The ABCD Training Technique:

- **A:** Anatomy. Take note of your body and sit comfortably with a straight back and relax your neck, shoulders and arms. Keep your eyes shut.
- **B:** Breathing. Focus on breathing naturally from your belly, in a deep rhythmic flow of in and out breaths.
- **C:** Counting. Practise your breathing by counting from 1 to 10 and back down 1. Each in/out breath is counted as 1. Repeat this cycle.
- **D:** Distractions. Gently dealing with distractions is a large part of mindfulness training. As distractions arise, relax, release and return back to the breath.



## MINDFUL TIPS

- Take up a new hobby
- Use a different route to work each day
- Learn a new language
- Learn to play a musical instrument
- Cook from a new recipe
- Change up your daily routine
- Engage in creative tasks
- Reorganise your cupboards
- Be physically active
- Try out a new place of interest
- Listen to a different style of music
- Take a yoga class with Yell for Yellow
- Go for a walk
- Eat more fruit, vegetables and oily fish
- Laugh every day



## MONEY AND MENTAL WELLBEING

Everyone wants to be able to provide for their family, and anyone who has experienced financial insecurity of any kind, knows that it can lead to anxiety, panic or depression. If you take on more debt than you can easily pay off, or you're unable to feed your family month-on-month, it can take a toll on your mental health.

## UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL STRESSORS

Knowing how your financial circumstances affect psychological stress might help you to better manage your financial and mental wellbeing. **Taking a balanced and informed approach could set you on a path of financial happiness and success.** If you apply for credit, such as a personal loan or credit card, it is important that you do so for the right reasons and that you can meet the minimum debt commitments, without putting a burden on your financial situation.

**Key takeaway:** Approach your money matters with a thoughtful and mature attitude, and you'll have a far greater chance of being financially and mentally free.



Depression drains your energy, hope, and drive, making it difficult to take the steps that will help you to feel better. Sometimes just thinking about the things you should do to feel better, like exercising or spending time with friends, can seem exhausting or impossible to put into action.

Taking the first step is always the hardest. But going for a walk or getting up and dancing to your favourite music, for instance, is something you can do right now, and it can be a **mood and energy booster your body and mind needs**. By taking the following small, but positive steps, day by day, you'll soon lift the heavy burden of depression and find yourself feeling happier, healthier, and more hopeful again.

- Reach out and stay connected
- Do things that make you feel good
- Exercise regularly
- Eat healthily
- Get a daily dose of sunlight
- Challenge negative thinking

**Key takeaway:** Start small and set yourself up to achieve your goals, so that you can stay positive to tackle the next one.

## BE YOUR BEST

To live a healthy life, you need a healthy mind. Yell for Yellow's unique benefit programme is designed to help you and your family live purposefully with access to a user-friendly digital platform available 24/7.

As a Yell for Yellow member, you can access a range of services that take over time-consuming tasks, so that you can refocus your thinking and be more mindful at home and work.





To alleviate stress and put your mind  
at ease, use:

- **Teacher** to help your children with homework
- **Assistant** to help you get through your to-do list
- **Wheels** if you're experiencing car problems
- **Comparative shopping** to find  
the best deals on products or services

Visit [www.yellforyellow.co.za](http://www.yellforyellow.co.za) for more.

