

What this fact sheet covers:

- Five Ways to Wellbeing research
- Connect
- Strategies to connect with the people around you
- Activity — Connect

Five Ways to Wellbeing research

The UK government commissioned over 400 experts in psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience, education, and economics from across the world to review current knowledge on mental health and well-being. The research shows there are some simple evidence-based strategies that everyone can incorporate into their life which promote wellbeing and resilience:



<https://neweconomics.org>

Connect

Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Resilience is the ability to “bounce back” from stressful or challenging experiences.

Strategies to connect with the people around you

Make contact with others

The fast-paced nature of today’s world means we often miss opportunities to engage with people. Little daily interactions may seem insignificant but what they do is adding to your fuel tank — and that’s what keeps you more resilient and robust against isolation and loneliness.

Put yourself out there, no matter how uncomfortable you may feel — even chatting to the cashier at the supermarket or organising to meet up with a friend you haven't seen in a while can have positive effects.

There's a chance you have been turning down opportunities to socialise without even realising it. Look into your existing social networks, how are you interacting with them, the nature of the conversations you are having or the type of people you are with — are they fulfilling that need for you.

Get involved with the community

Both rural and urban areas have programs which help people stay connected, whether through sport, walking, music, cooking or art. A great place to start is by seeing what is available around you and connect with like-minded people who share similar interests. You never know, you may unlock a hidden talent in the process!

Volunteering

Volunteering allows us to make meaningful connections with people while establishing a sense of purpose. Research has shown the benefits of regular volunteering in reducing feelings of loneliness so why not give it a go? Volunteering Australia is the national peak body and allows you to search for available positions based on your skills and location.

Online groups

The internet offers a plethora of people from all over Australia that we can connect with instantly from the comfort of our own space. Facebook's discover section allows you to browse groups by topic and covers everything from 'sport and fitness' to 'science, technology and math', so you are bound to find something that interests you. If you are living in a rural area you can even try creating your own.

[Meetup](#) is another site that offers similar groups — the goal, though, is to organise offline meetings, participating in activities that align to everyone's interests. Meetup gives opportunity to expand your social groups and meet with like-minded people that you might not be able to access in your day to day.

For young people, [Reach Out Forums](#) provide a supportive, safe and anonymous space where you can chat to people who are experiencing similar feelings as you.

Remember that if you do arrange to meet up with anyone you've met online, make sure you've taken safety precautions such as finding out as much as possible about them and choosing several safe and well-lit public places to meet.

Resources

There are organisations in the UK who have developed additional resources and ideas to help implement the Five Ways to Wellbeing:

- NHS — [Connect for mental wellbeing](#)
- Aylesbury Vale District Council — [5 ways to wellbeing toolkit](#)
- Fitforwork.org — [How to incorporate the five ways to wellbeing into your working life](#)
- Mind — [5 ways to wellbeing](#)

Activity — Connect

Look at the concepts below and tick the things you are already doing, rate yourself on each one, then commit to taking some action.

What do I already do?

- Eat lunch with others
- Attend afternoon teas, social drinks or staff interest groups
- De-brief with colleagues when feeling stressed
- Check in with others during times of increased stress or change
- Take time each day to be with family or friends
- Arrange outings with friends you haven't seen for a while
- Switch off the TV and play a game with the children/friends, or just talk
- Make the effort to phone people
- Take time to speak to new people
- Skype or FaceTime to stay in touch with friends and family
- Other

How would I rate myself?

Rate yourself from 1 to 5, with 1 being poor to 5 being excellent: 1 2 3 4 5

My plan to connect more

Write down some simple actions you can take to stay connected to the people around you: