

# RETIREMENT AND **BEYOND**

HAVING YOUR BEST LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT



WELL  
MAN



select**ability**  
mental wellbeing and suicide prevention



## FOREWORD

For over 15 years Grant Westthorp has contributed to the health and wellbeing of men in Australia and specifically regional Queensland.

As the selectability Well Man Coordinator Grant has provided the content for the Men's Life Promotion Survival Handbook, the 26 Steps of Manhood and this publication.

Grant had a successful career as a golf professional for 33 years, before it all came tumbling down after a recreational accident.

In one moment, he

lost his livelihood, physical capabilities, and his mental and social worlds were in a tailspin.

Grant has lived and living experience. His change in profession and learnings are reflected in this hand book.

His passion and drive to create meaning resources were developed in response to the real life questions that men raised during 1250 workshops, 8000 wellness checks, 350 positive mentoring sessions and personally assisting 2798 men who presented to the office in distress.

The selectability Retirement and Beyond Handbook reflects information, strategies, inspiration, practical tips, and life skills gathered from Grant's personal journey and from men that Grant has worked with and beside.

Based on *Australian Bureau Statistics* figures, if you are a 65-year-old male, you could be looking forward to living another 20 years... the aim is to enjoy each year.

*Let the journey begin*  
**Grant Westthorp**  
selectability Well Man coordinator

*Note: Grant Westthorp is not a clinician; he is a motivator and passionate about changing men's health and wellbeing outcomes.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

### OF COUNTRY

selectability acknowledges the Traditional owners of the land on which we provide services and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded.

### OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

We acknowledge those with lived experience and those who support and partner with us to improve mental wellbeing and prevent suicide across regional Queensland

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# ABOUT THIS **HANDBOOK**

## *Retirement and Beyond*

This handbook aims to provide a clear path to a life of enjoyment post retirement. Ceasing work may require a new identity. Fear not, this handbook will guide you along the best possible routes and assist where needed to increase the fun factor as you travel towards the inevitable sunset of life.

No one gets out of here alive, enjoying each moment to the maximum is a key factor in getting the most out of your time left to live.

How long do most men live after retirement? The *Australian Bureau Statistics* in 2022 provided these interesting facts.

- A 65-year-old can expect to live another 19 to 21.5 years, on average, according to the Social Security Administration.
- A third of 65-year-olds will hit age 90, and 1-in-7 will live beyond age 95 years.

The message from this information is to **act!** Start putting in place positive physical, mental and social wellbeing habits from day one.

On retirement you can lose your identity, suddenly you are no longer employed or part of the system. If your job was your life, you are in for a rude awakening as you are no longer a player in the game. Many men at this stage get a little lost. If you feel that way this is your time to act and follow the Well Man plan to enjoy this part of your life.

The Well Man plan aims to provide beacons of light to follow, all you have to do is commit some time and energy to becoming the best version of yourself.

You will find in retirement, life's issues and mysteries make more sense as you have a better handle on what is important and what is of little consequence. Your life skills and knowledge should be at a premium at this stage, use them wisely. It is worth mentioning at this point that you should also consider mentoring in your chosen profession to keep your mind active and to leave a legacy.

Be aware in retirement, time races past so much faster, years feel like months and months like weeks. Use your time to the max and enjoy each moment.



Your health is no longer a given! You are now entering into the season of maintenance, if any symptoms appear get them looked at in a timely fashion. Annually visit your doctor and request a full check-up, this may be offered free from the government. Keep an eye on your weight as you now have many more opportunities to eat, put a physical regime in place early. Stay active, eat less and keep an eye on your plate sizes.

Enjoy and chew every morsel of food and take time to enjoy the flavours. Retirement also offers an opportunity to learn to cook or to upskill with some cooking lessons. Or maybe it's time to get a dog, cat or bird, they provide unconditional love and companionship and will bring a smile to your face.

The Well Man plan covers physical, mental and social wellbeing strategies, information, practical tips and life skills that have been tried and tested over many years.

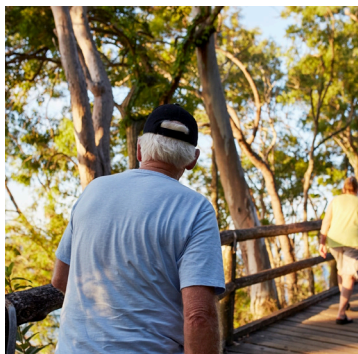
If you are seeking the best version of yourself, follow the guidelines and experience a rich life. The Retirement and Beyond handbook will provide you with many subjects to research, embed and embrace.

**You are the captain of your ship, you oversee navigation of life choices and have the opportunity to choose a life of fun and enjoyment at every stage, it only requires the first step by you.**



# PHYSICAL SOLUTIONS

## Retirement and Beyond



### Keep moving and stay active

Your body is a machine and thrives on moving. Take time out during the day to exercise your muscles — walk, run, swim, cycle or visit a gym.

It is too easy to become sedentary and stay fixed in one spot for too much time, especially if your eyes are fixed to a game screen or phone screen.

Get outside, breathe the air, and catch some vitamin D from the sun.

Remember your childhood, going shoeless over the summer holidays? Return to your youth, get your feet bare, connect to the earth and reconnect to nature.

If you are a cyclist, consider purchasing an electric bike which will be an investment in your future physical longevity.



Electric bikes are great fun to ride and if the going gets tough you can always increase the electrical charge and decrease your physical exertion. The e-bikes also come with wider tyres which makes it easier to transverse uneven ground and safer to stay upright.

Men who stay active report that they have better mental health outcomes, better sleep and find socialising much easier. The body just works better if it's active, make the effort, less sitting more moving.

Check local papers for the opportunity to join a cycling, walking or Tai Chi club, it will give you a purpose to get up and move.

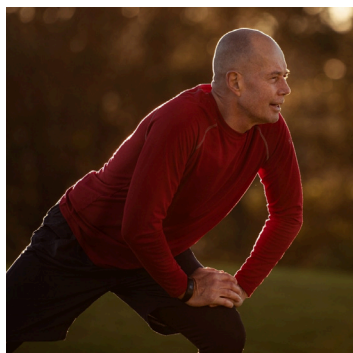
## Flexibility key to longevity

Put simply, muscles work better when they are flexible. Suppleness improves posture and assists you to become more proficient in daily activities which leads to longevity and overall health.

Stretching is a gentle art form. Do not bounce the muscles. Always perform within your range, avoid overdoing movement and breathe while you stretch.

Investigate Tai Chi, it improves strength, flexibility and balance. Also worth a look is Qigong a traditional Chinese exercise to optimise energy within the body, mind, and spirit.

Joining classes is also beneficial for your social wellbeing. Be bold and make a positive change in your wellbeing.



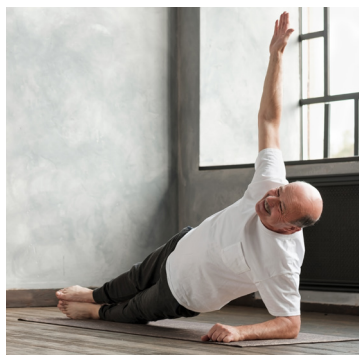
### Two stretches that will contribute to your physical wellbeing:

#### **Stretch 1 — Reach for the Stars.**

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, hands resting on your hips. Slowly raise your hands and arms in front of you out wide reaching for the stars. Inhale in as you raise your arms and hands and exhale as you slowly lower them. *This stretch is about building balance and flexibility, be gentle with yourself.*

#### **Stretch 2 — The Rack.**

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart against a wall. Feel your feet, legs, buttocks, back, shoulders and neck contacting the wall. To start with have the back of your hands resting against the wall. Slowly lift your arms maintaining contact with the wall until they finish parallel with the floor. Gently inhaling as your arms travel upwards, pause, allow the arms to return to the start position while exhaling.



## Staying upright is vital to maintain balance

Maintaining your balance throughout life's journey will improve your performance, sporting prowess, posture and general wellbeing.

Most people take staying upright as a given until they have a bout of vertigo or trip due to lack of attention.

Balance exercises can be as simple as lifting one leg off the ground while holding a chair. Include aerobic and resistance exercises to improve your mortality and length of life. Consider Tai Chi which includes elements of stretching, aerobic exercise and balancing which will build your core body strength and reduce body sway.

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## Muscle strength diminishes as you age

During retirement, your muscle strength will require continued maintenance, at this stage in your life you are not seeking to bulk up muscle size instead it is more retaining the strength of key core muscles.

Maintaining strong muscles does not require hours in the gym, light weights lifted on a regular basis will serve the purpose. Having easy access is the key, position 2 x 3kg dumbbells in an area that you walk past regularly and pick them up and lift them.



If you prefer the gym, attend on a regular basis. It is that easy, check out the internet for lifting routines that suit your goals. Maintaining strength is important and reduces frustration post retirement. Opening plastic bags or cans is easier if you maintain your muscle strength.

## Being overweight can affect your mental state

If you are carrying a few extra kilograms make your intention to lose them post haste.

A larger waist contributes to the metabolic syndrome which is a cluster of conditions together increasing your risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.



These conditions include increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat and abnormal cholesterol or triglyceride levels. Being overweight can affect your mental state and emotions, this can also include body image, self-worth and self-respect.



## Preventative measures

Immunisations are important and provide some protection from conditions and diseases. As you transition into retirement it is well worth the visit to your GP to check what is available and recommended.

The Australian Government gives some immunisations for older people at no charge under the National Immunisation Program.

The following immunisations are free:

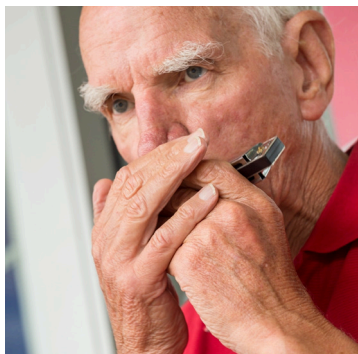
- **Herpes zoster (shingles)** – for people aged 70 years.
- **Influenza (flu)** – is an annual vaccine for people aged 65 years and over and for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Pneumococcal** – for healthy people aged 70 years and over, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 years.

You can also visit: [www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/when-to-get-vaccinated/national-immunisation-program-schedule](http://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/when-to-get-vaccinated/national-immunisation-program-schedule)



# MENTAL SOLUTIONS

## Retirement and Beyond



### Music

Retirement offers the opportunity to listen to your favourite music when you want and where you want.

Music is good for the soul, it can be upbeat, calming, and inspiring. It is great to have music playing softly in the background when you prepare meals or loudly while you stretch and exercise.

Investigate music therapy, there has been a lot of research done on listening to certain decibel ranges and the affect it has on brains.

*Check it out on YouTube for more information.*

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### Meditate

Our mind can be our best friend or worst enemy, everyone has over 6,000\* thoughts each day. It is no wonder you feel tired at the end of the day!

Therefore, it is wise to have a break in transmission and silence the mind. Invest the minimum of 10 minutes each day meditating, there are plenty of low-cost meditating apps on the internet. You will find simply by cutting the transmission of thought quiets down the mind and gives it breathing space to regenerate. Break the chain and give your mind a little down time each day for clarity of thought.



\*Source: Queen's University Canada

## Tapping

Mental stress, anxiety and depression are signs that your mind is continually switched on. To intervene early, start **tapping**.

Tapping is a natural process for relieving stress and anxiety by gently tapping on various acupressure points on your body with your fingers. As you tap verbalise a positive mantra to let go of tension and anxiety. The acupressure points are shown on diagrams on the Well Man app.



Tapping is scientifically proven and is used by many therapists worldwide. As you now have some free time, schedule in three sessions per week, invest 10 minutes in each session.

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## Choose your friends wisely

Through your journey of life, friends will come and go. You will make friends at school, further education and then through your working life.

You may make friends with people who live in the same neighbourhood or who attend a shared sporting activity.

It is important to consider if your friends possess the same values, interests, and a cheerful outlook. Choose friends wisely, friends who are positive will uplift you, the rest will pull you down.

At this stage in your life it is a great time to cull friends who swim in the sea of negativity, who blame everyone else and who have to be always right! You know the ones that need to go, retirement is a great time to jettison the anchors to make room for new, positive and uplifting connections.



## Upgrade and engage your senses

Connect to nature, what do you see, smell, hear and feel? This simple action improves your awareness.

Humans are born with incredible senses, which over time are lost due to lack of use. It is very calming for the mind if you engage them on a regular basis.

Quietly sit with your shoes off in a garden, on the beach or park. What do you see? what can you smell? what can you hear? and what does the ground feel like underfoot?

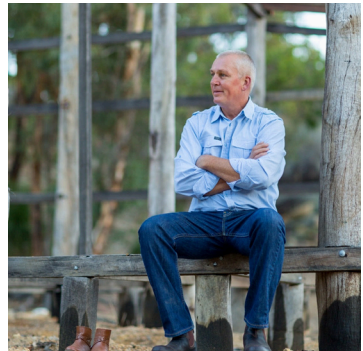
This process is a wonderful way to ground your soul.

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## Enjoy being present and maximise the now

For men this is vital. By staying in the moment your safety is improved especially if you are working around machinery or in a dangerous environment.

Being present means you are not thinking about the past or the future, but rather the here and now.



Have you ever driven down a road and realise that your mind has wandered and that a fair distance has disappeared and that you were not entirely present?

If yes, keep the mind switched to the now, avoid thinking about yesterday or tomorrow. Staying focused on the now may save your life, concentrate on what you are seeing, hearing, and feeling, this will keep you alert to any possible dangers. As we age our sensory perception may decrease, staying in the moment will keep you safe.

## Gratitude rather than grumpy

Be grateful if you have made it this far, you may have lost some friends along the way.

You are living in a wonderful time, experiences are easy to access and many are free to explore.

Treat people kindly as you step into the final chapter of your life. Being grumpy is an option, being grateful makes more friends. Embrace each new day with wonder and curiosity and seek to get out of your comfort zone on a regular basis.



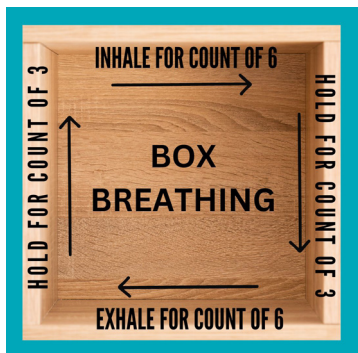
## Masculinity

For too many years men have been tagged with needing to be strong, silent, fearless, emotionless, stoic and in some cases dominating.

These characteristics have led many men to a point of crisis, creating unrealistic demands and pressures to be the strong silent type.

Times are a changing and so should you, be the man you want to be, show emotions, speak your mind, seek help early if needed and be the positive father/grandfather figure.

One of the fundamental differences between men and women is that women talk and men act. You can be that man that actively adopts positive habits and behaviours, it is in your hands.



## Breathing an underrated skill set

We all take breathing as a given, when young, air naturally flows deep into the body. As we age tension sets in and breathing becomes shallow.

Daily engaging in breathing routines gives the mind a break from continuous thought allowing the mind to be present and in the moment.

### Here are three breathing routines to activate calm:

**Routine 1** — Inhale through the nose and smell the flowers (*imagine a vase of flowers in front of you*), hold for the count of three and blow out the candles (*imagine three candles in front of you to the right*), hold for the count of three and repeat.

**Routine 2** — Imagine a box, write the number six across the top and bottom and the number three down the sides. Inhale through the nose across the top of the box to the count of six, hold the breath for the count of three down the side of the box, exhale for the count of six across the bottom of the box, hold the breath for a count of three up the side of the box.

Complete the flow six times. Closing the eyes can assist seeing the box shape in the mind's eye.

**Routine 3** — Find a spot where you can comfortably sit for ten minutes on a beach with a view of the waves coming in and out (*it can be shaded or not, it is up to you*).

If you are unable to get to the beach, simply watch a video from YouTube featuring waves breaking on a beach.

Tune into the wave pattern, simply observe the incoming and outgoing momentum. Imagine all of your cares and worries being taken out to sea on the outgoing movement.

Place one hand on the heart and one on your belly button. Softly squeeze the muscles on your face for a few seconds, your chest and



back, your arms and hands and now your legs and feet.

Do a body scan, are you holding tension anywhere? Squeeze and release.

The key to breathing efficiently is to get the air down into your belly, to strengthen the procedure imagine you are breathing air in through your heart.



Create a slow rhythm, four in through your nose pause and then six out through your mouth and then pause and resume.

This is a great tool to have if you are feeling anxious or stressed during the day.

- **Breathe in** through your nose to the count of four filling your belly cavity.
- **Time the breath in**, with the wave coming up to the shoreline. Pause for a few seconds.
- **Breathe all air out** through your mouth to a count of six as the wave retracts back out to sea. Let all your troubles and cares go out to sea with the outward breath.
- **Pause for a few seconds** and then recommence the routine.

Create a slow rhythm, four in through your nose pause and then six out through your mouth and then pause and resume.

This is a great tool to have if you are feeling anxious or stressed during the day.

Focusing the breath through the heart adds to the clarity of motion. Simply close your eyes and imagine the sea, activate the breathing routine and the mind will settle.



### Situational distress

Australia is a home for bushfires, floods, high temperatures and vermin plagues, to name a few.

These events can cause anxiety, uncertainty, stress and any number of mental health issues. A sense of depression can affect individual and communities during these difficult times.

One very important thought to keep front of mind is that these times will pass, and that mental stability will return over time. It is natural to feel sad and threatened during these external and internal events. Once time has elapsed, if trauma remains, do yourself a favour and seek assistance from a therapist.

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### Volunteer

Retirement provides an opportunity to give back to family, friends, and community.

Volunteering is good for the soul and all parties benefit from the transaction. It is also good for your social wellbeing as volunteering usually involves talking to other people.



Drop into your local council and see whether there is a volunteer service that you can join.

Assist family and friends out with odd jobs around the house or in the garden. Make sure to still leave time for your own hobbies and activities.

## Seek professional help early

If your mind is carrying trauma your chance of a positive life is impossible.

Be courageous and seek assistance early, this single action will mean a better life for you and your family.

Men have a tendency to compartmentalise trauma as a defense mechanism, suppressing thoughts and emotions is a recipe for disaster.

Retirement provides an opportunity to think about life and your journey. Suppressed thoughts and emotions are let out of the box and can cause great harm.

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## Intentions

Retirement provides a wonderful opportunity to put positive intentions in place.

You now have time to make choices that can determine a positive outcome regarding your overall mental wellbeing and longevity.

A few important ingredients are fun and keeping life fresh, factor in

laughter into your daily routine, most situations in life have a light side if you keep your eyes open. Make it your intention to commit some time to seeing the funny side of life and trying new experiences.

There is plenty of funny material on YouTube, seek it out. Design a bucket list of new experiences and start ticking them off. You are now time rich, make a dream list, set goals if required, more importantly take action and make those dreams come true. What will your dream list look like?



## Sentinel buddy

Having a sentinel buddy is worth exploring at this stage in your life.

It simply means having one person that you can contact and who will listen when you need them.

When your life is touched by raging storms of fear, anxiety or anger, your sentinel buddy will listen and check in on you each, day, week, or fortnight or when needed. It is a great system for both parties and maintains good mental wellbeing if you know that someone has your back.

Keeping in contact can be as easy as sending a text message, phoning or even an email, it is the connection and support that adds security to your mental wellbeing.

Staying mentally healthy provides security, comfort, and happiness. Sometimes it is the small things that can make a major difference in how you perceive life and what is of the most value.



# SOCIAL SOLUTIONS

## Retirement and Beyond



### Stay connected to family and friends

Staying social connected to family and friends is a wonderful way of staying socially healthy, you do not have to live out of each other's pockets, it is simply a matter of sending a text, email, phoning or catching up.

Social wellbeing makes up a third of your health, have coffee catchups,

bike rides, walks in nature or a night out with your family and friends.

Getting out past your front door is important, socially interacting is vital, just make the effort!

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### Join community groups

Retirement offers plenty of free time which can be a blessing or a curse. The solution lies in joining community groups like selectability's BikeShed.

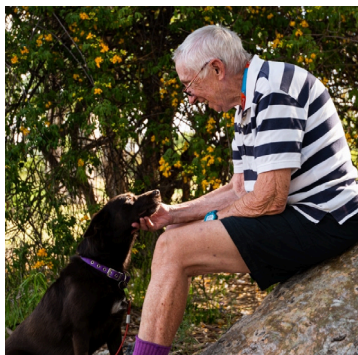
The other option is to participate in Rotary, Men's Sheds, Lions or a similar group in your region.

Joining a service club is rewarding, and it also gives you an opportunity to meet new people and contribute to your local community.



Both options are easy to do and will make you feel better about yourself and contribute to the betterment of mankind.





## Have an animal in your life

Animals are great company and can ward off loneliness. Cats are ideal therapists and do not mind listening until they fall asleep, dogs will hang on to your every word and reward you with a tail wag.

Dogs can broaden your social network. Daily walks provide opportunities to interact with like-minded souls.

If you regularly walk fido on a beach, dog park or around the suburbs at a set time it is amazing how many times you will bump into the same people, conversation is easy because you share the same interest. Treat your animals kindly they are doing their best to provide you with unconditional love.

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## Sport is a wonderful way to make lifetime friends

Sport is excellent for your mental, physical, and social health and wellbeing. It will get you out of the house and active and if the sport is outdoors will provide plenty of fresh air.

Many men after retirement get stuck indoors playing computer games or just watching continuous news. This habit can make you end up brain dead, hours of consuming fast food, drinking alcohol and watching a screen like a zombie will make you sedentary.



Choose a sport that is of interest, join a club and get training. By committing to sport, you will find like-minded souls that may end up lifetime friends which is a bonus for your mental and social wellbeing. By exercising you will also be releasing endorphins which increase your feel-good factor and positivity.

## Starting a conversation

Social wellbeing is a third of your health, having conversations with everyone you meet is healthy.

Retirement provides an opportunity to slow down and spend time making conversation with family, friends, and strangers.

Life is a tapestry of stories; it is well worth the effort of asking about how people are traveling, where they came from and where are they going. We are all on earth for a short time, so it is important to chat with a variety of people. Conversations can be short, ask questions and listen intently. Your life will be richer by having conversations with people you know and new acquaintances.



## Avoid sensational news channels

Retirement opens a window of opportunity to watch way too much television.

Sensational negative news stories and images can have a very detrimental effect on your wellbeing.

Believing in fake news also can lead you down this path. Finding a news

platform that delivers truth, facts and hope should be your goal.

Limiting your exposure to news is also worth a mention. Continually watching negative news will affect your view on life, your fear factor and even how you relate to people.

It is okay to check in on the news now and again, having continuous exposure is bad for your wellbeing. It can cause anxiety, depression and fear.



## Managing financial distress

As you transcend into retirement be aware of the cost of living and if possible, stay within a budget.

If you are relying on the pension this will mean counting the dollars and getting the most out of what you get.

With ever increasing costs it pays to get purchase savvy, visit stores on

Tuesday, there will generally be a *quick sale* sticker.

Leftovers from the weekend is perfectly okay to eat, just be aware of the *use by date* and cook accordingly. There are many seniors' discounts available, research these savings by visiting [qld.gov.au/seniors](http://qld.gov.au/seniors).

If possible treat yourself weekly to a lunch or dinner out, this action is good for your inner soul, seek out restaurants that have specials through the week for seniors. Remember you do have a time limit, enjoy each day, week, month and year, it would be sad ending up in the cemetery with hundreds of thousands of dollars.



## OTHER SOLUTIONS

### Retirement and Beyond



#### Mindfulness

Retirement provides a wonderful opportunity to pursue mindfulness. It is comforting to know that everyone has an internal voice playing mental ping pong in their mind.

The trick to a quiet mind is to keep it occupied, whether that is meditation, breathing exercises, focusing on a hobby, or completing

crosswords or sudoku. Music is a great tool to deflect overthinking, certain songs can take you back to when you first heard them.

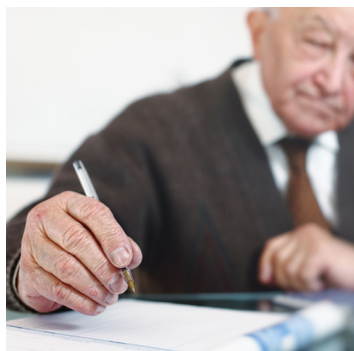
Another popular hobby is mindful colouring, there are many free templates on the internet that you can download, print, and colour in.

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#### Eulogy leaving wisdom behind

There is nothing worse than attending a funeral and hearing silence. Before the day comes to shuffle off this mortal coil, it is worth writing a eulogy and provide your life story for everyone to hear at your funeral.

This action of recording your life is also great for your memory and mind. If possible, include images of your journey, it does not need to be day by day but cornerstones that made your life worthwhile and meaningful.



Funerals should be a celebration of a life worth lived, try to leave a legacy. Have influence and leave your mark for the benefit of future generations.



## Senior invisibility

Life today is hectic and chaotic with most communications being instant leaving our brains overloaded as a result.

If you observe closely many people seem to have ways to juggle many balls in the air which leads to the topic of conversation.

You soon realise that once you reach 65 years of age there is a distinct possibility of you becoming invisible to the rest of the population.

You can either accept this or have some fun and wear loud clothes and act a little grumpy. As long as you get a seat on the plane it should not bother you, it is relevant to status though.

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## Finding every possible discount on the planet

Seniors' discounts are to be cherished, many seniors become discount crazy, no, you cannot have a half-priced cappuccino even on a Tuesday.

Accept the benefits and realise that most businesses are there to make a profit to pay wages and expenses. Allow them some profit to do this.

Going on to your state government website and searching senior's discounts will give you a good indication of where the value lies.

You have come this far; you deserve a discount.





## Patience is the key

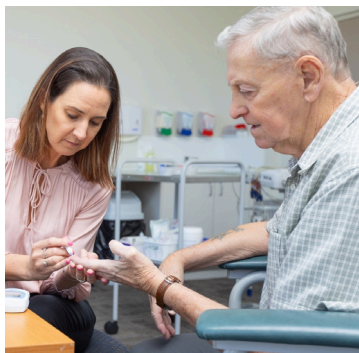
Go gracefully along during your life, time is short, enjoy all the moments whether this is waiting for a bus or sitting in the dentist's waiting room. Be patient.

It is much easier these days when you can carry a minicomputer around in your pocket, enjoy those snippets of time by catching up on a good podcast or listening to music.

Relax the mind by staying in the moment, if waiting upsets you, weigh up the brevity of the situation.

The wise wait with a smile, rushing means that you will arrive at the cemetery sooner than you think.

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way too much information. Avoid becoming a bore unless you identify yourself as a health condition!

## Sharing medical conditions/ information

Avoid the trap of talking about all of your medical conditions, if asked *how you doing?*

It is a common problem as you age that your medical conditions and information can take over all conversations.

Other people are probably thinking,



## Last orders

Retirement is a wonderful time to tick off your bucket list. The things you have wanted to do throughout your life are now available.

Remember when the publican called *last orders*? Avoid procrastination, this is last orders spring into action and start planning and executing trips, experiences, and dreams.

Talking about doing is time wasting and full of regrets. Acting is in your hands, update your passport and start planning itineraries. Another consideration is your physical shape which inevitably decreases as the years slip past, utilise the now and get going before they do shout *last orders*!

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## Making a will

Many things come into focus when you step into retirement, one fact is that you are stepping into the end game of life, whether that means another 25 years or 5 years.

Your lifespan is determined by many factors, including; genetics, food choices and wellbeing choices.

Taking time out to make your will is important. It is worth employing a solicitor to get the facts correct and your money/assets going to the people you want to leave them too.

There is nothing worse than greedy relatives fighting over money that they do not deserve. Making a will will not dispatch you any earlier, more likely it will provide peace of mind for the rest of your life.



## Protective factors for retirees

In 2021, the highest suicide rate for males occurred in those aged 85 and over (*36.4 deaths per 100,000 people*) according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Protective factors include:

- Effective behavioural health care.
- Connectedness to individuals, family, community and social institutions.
- Life skills including problem solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change.
- Self-esteem and a sense of purpose or meaning in life.
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide.



## Mortality

We are all destined to die eventually, feeling calm about that fact allows us to embrace preventative options to increase longevity.

The time you have on the planet can be determined by genetics, self-accountability and even your view on self-worth can play a part.

Another factor can be plain dumb luck, wrong place wrong time however, being present can change that outcome. It is worth noting your father and older male relative's inflections in your lineage will play a part in your length of time above ground, so find out medically what has happened before.

Realising that you are not going to live forever should prompt you to fill your days with interesting hobbies, new learnings and staying active. It is a no brainer to fill up on nutritious food so that your body functions efficiently.



## Procrastination

Retirement can be counter-productive regarding coping with life by talking about doing a task but not actually starting or completing the job in hand.

Going to, does not equate with doing or done. It is worth checking in with your outward conversation and listen to whether they are activating forward movement or just

creating stagnation which will be counterproductive to coping.

Have a task pad? Note what you would like to complete this week and tick off jobs as you go, that way the build-up will be minimal, and you will also encourage a feeling of completion which builds resilience and self- confidence.

Avoid being a going to and become a doer!







# WELL MAN PLAN

## Retirement and Beyond

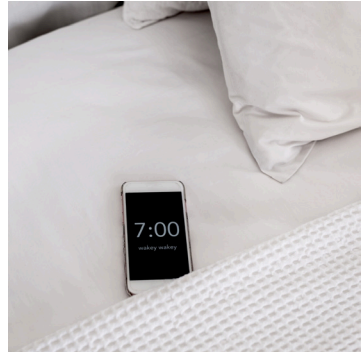
Starting the Well Man plan requires assuming good intent. There will be many questions that need attention during your first twelve months.

### 1. Situational distress is the first to address

Your normal routine of going into work each day is no longer.

Alarm clocks are superfluous to needs, your body clock will determine when you need to surface to face another day.

This simple change can cause your mind distress as the purpose of work is not relevant anymore. That can be easily fixed by setting up another purpose to get you out of bed.



Part of the situational distress can be from your partner being suddenly thrust more into your daily routine. You will be seeing more of each other so it is a good idea to set plans in place where you can do things by yourself or together depending on your relationship with the other person.

These feelings will pass, communication is the key.







## 2. Time to get physical

What will your new physical regime look like?

Start small and work to a routine that is varied. The physical workout should include building/maintaining strength, using light weights repeatedly is a good place to start.

Do some research on the internet and choose a routine that requires

the minimum of effort. If needed, you can always join a gym and attend classes.

Although most of the work can be done from home, set up a room with some gym equipment and visit it a minimum of twice a week. It is your choice both ways require your commitment to get physical, your body will thank you for this small investment.

Always exercise within your range of comfort, seek medical advice if you have any doubts of the amount of time you should be committing to physical exercise. Just get going and make physical activity a habit.

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## What will your mental health look like after finishing work?

What will you need to put in place to stay mentally fit?

Waiting for retirement feels like waiting for that planned holiday to arrive, this feeling provides excitement, expectation, and something to look forward too.

Preparing yourself mentally for retirement is vitally important otherwise there is a possibility of falling into a void for the first few months of freedom.



Start searching for hobbies to do well before the last day of work arrives. There is plenty of choice, music, gardening, photography even knitting is an option. The transition then from work to play is easier to comprehend and the mind will adjust to the new regime.

Many men fall into the trap and talk about how good it will be not to roll up for work and then find when the day comes they are mentally threatened because they have lost purpose to get up and get going.

Preparation for retirement means providing the mind with distractions when time is not an issue. It is setting up a plan to fill in time so that the mind has routines to follow and not just a big void to fill.

Another consideration is that work may have been high pressured and filled with stress. Some men can expect some illness on retirement as the body has been living on adrenaline and once the pressure has released the body will be open to disease. This can be modified by exercise, diet and maintaining a quiet mind. Everyone is different, depending on genes and state of mind retirement may not cause any health issues.

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### **How will you maintain good social wellbeing?**

As you age it can be very easy to get into the habit of staying home and not getting out of the house for days on end. This a trap, social wellbeing makes up a third of your wellbeing and provides a feeling of connection. Making the effort to socialise is vitally important. Join community service, book, sporting or any Club that requires you to

connect to people. Information is available regarding Clubs on your local council website.

You now have free time, invest this time in volunteering, spread the kindness and your soul will thank you. Try to converse with all people that you meet on your daily journey, whether it is on the dog walk, picking up groceries or having a coffee at the local café.



## Having faith can be reassuring

On retirement you will have ample time to discover whether religion is for you. It is your choice if you want to believe in a God.

All religions can place you amongst other like-minded people which is a bonus for your social wellbeing.

Retirement gives you time to read about all faiths across the world.

Finding a religion to align with your core values is important. Living your life with honesty, kindness and gratitude should align to whatever religion you choose. Spirituality can be as simple as having a relationship to a superior being and using practices/rituals such as prayer or meditation to connect to your belief.

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## Opening a pathway to creativity

You now have time to find a passion and make into a purpose.

Try out different hobbies, join a choir, visit museums and art galleries, get out of your comfort zone.

One rule is do not stagnate at home, discover the world, learn a language, study different cultures, revisit ancient history, learn to paint or even just colour in mandala designs.

Search the internet for other creative ideas. Visit YouTube for small instructional videos, you will be amazed by the different topics you can investigate and pick up a new skill or interest.





## CHARITY OF **CHOICE**

**Consider making selectability your charity of choice.**

Suicide rates in regional Queensland are at least 1.5 times higher than the national average.

Your donation to selectability is likely to save a life!

### **We need your help!**

Every suicide is a tragedy with its impacts significant, far-reaching and long lasting. Research shows that every suicide impacts around 135 people.

While there is no single solution that will prevent it, there are many protective factors that can reduce the risk.

Through our range of programs and services, selectability aims to prevent suicide in our communities. You can help us continue our work by making selectability the charity of choice at your next fundraiser.

*Note: select Charity of Choice in the drop down menu. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*



You can support us by  
scanning the QR code  
and making a donation  
via our website.



# SUPPORTS

- 1   
In an emergency please call 000
- 2   
1800 133 123 | [selectability.com.au](https://selectability.com.au)
- 3   
13 11 14 | [lifelineqld.org.au](https://lifelineqld.org.au)
- 4   
1300 224 636 | [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)
- 5   
1300 789 978 | [mensline.org.au](https://mensline.org.au)
- 6   
1800 858 858 | [gamblinghelplineonline.com.au](https://gamblinghelplineonline.com.au)
- 7   
1300 659 467 | [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)
- 8   
[ruralhealthconnect.com.au](https://ruralhealthconnect.com.au)
- 9   
1300 642 255
- 10   
1800 177 833 | [counsellingonline.org.au](https://counsellingonline.org.au)
- 11   
[dss.gov.au/seniors/programs-services](https://dss.gov.au/seniors/programs-services)
- 12   
1300 222 222 | [aa.org.au](https://aa.org.au)

*Disclaimer: The information provided for the Retirement and Beyond Handbook is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the best advice of your qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read/seen/heard here. | Grant Westthorp selectability © Reproduction with consent only 2022*

# selectability

mental wellbeing and suicide prevention

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### **Mental Health Hub and Bike Shed**

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