



## Wellbeing Toolkit

By way of a reminder of all the Wellbeing resources on offer to colleagues, we have created an easy reference 'Wellbeing Toolkit' overview which will be circulated with the weekly comms, is saved on [SP here](#) and hard copies will be available to slip into your I am Unique folders. Start 2021 as you mean to go on by looking out for your own, your colleagues' and your family's wellbeing.



## HOW TO BE HAPPIER FOR 2021

Goodness knows 2020 threw all sorts at everyone – a coronacoaster of highs and lows. As a new year dawns, try these six simple tips to help you be happier, more in control and able to cope better with life's ups and downs and whatever 2021 may throw at us...

**Manage your stress levels** If you have a lot of stress in your life, find ways to reduce it, such as learning a few time-management techniques. Introduce regular exercise and time to yourself. These are positive changes. Taking control of your time in this way can effectively reduce stress. If you have feelings of anxiety along with your stress, breathing techniques can help.

**Enjoy yourself** Doing things that you enjoy is good for your emotional wellbeing. Simple activities like watching sports with family or friends (in your bubble!), having a luxurious soak in the bath or meeting up with friends for walk can all improve your day. Doing something you're good at, such as cooking or dancing, is a good way to enjoy yourself and have a sense of achievement. Try to avoid things that seem enjoyable at the time but make you feel worse afterwards, such as drinking too much alcohol or eating junk food!

**Boost your self-esteem** Self-esteem is all about the way you feel about yourself. The best way to improve it is to treat yourself as you'd treat a valued friend,

in a positive but honest way. Notice when you're putting yourself down, pick yourself up and tell yourself something positive instead.

### Work towards a healthier lifestyle

Limit your alcohol intake, especially post-Christmas indulgence! When times are hard, it's tempting to drink alcohol because it 'numbs' painful feelings, but it can exaggerate some feelings and make you feel angry or aggressive. It can also make you feel more depressed.

### Choose a well-balanced diet

Following Elaine's advice, making healthy choices about your diet can make you feel emotionally stronger. You're doing something positive for yourself, which lifts your self-esteem. A good diet helps your brain and body work efficiently, too.

**Do some exercise** We talked about this a lot this year and the positive benefits it has; even moderate exercise such as a brisk walk releases chemicals in your brain that lift your mood, and can help you sleep better, have more energy and keep your heart healthy. Choose an exercise that you enjoy. If it helps, do it with a friend or listen to music. Adults should aim for 150 minutes a week.

**Get enough sleep** Around 7 to 8 hours is the average amount of sleep an adult needs for their body and mind to fully rest. Writing a to do list for the next day before

bed can organise your thoughts and clear your mind of any distractions.

**Talk and share** Communication is important, whether it's with a friend, family member or colleague. Talking things through helps you to release tension, rather than keeping it inside. It helps strengthen your relationships and connect with people. Don't forget we have the confidential colleague helpline available too..

**Build your resilience** Resilience is what allows you to cope with life's ups and downs. Making something worthwhile out of painful times helps your resilience grow. Starting a support group to help others, or making something creative out of bad experiences by, for example, writing, painting or singing, can help you express pain and get through hard times. You also have your journals to help with this too.





## New Year Wellbeing tips with Elaine

### Good hangover cures!

We lose a lot of potassium when we drink too much alcohol. One of the best juices you can have after a heavy night contains bananas and kiwis which are high in potassium and vitamin C. Peel two kiwis, and one banana and whizz up with a small handful of almonds which are high in vitamin E which are good mood enhancers and can alleviate anxiety which can occur with hangovers. Add some coconut water for extra hydration.

Eggs are also good for helping with low blood sugar and contain lots of protein to help us feel back to normal again.

### Curb the sugar cravings

A tip for stopping sugar cravings and also cleansing the liver after weeks of indulgence: mix all these ingredients into a jug and drink this whenever you feel like you fancy anything sweet throughout the day. It's also great for weight loss and improves mood.

- 1/2 pint of apple juice (please use products that state 'not from concentrate' as other juices just contain lots of sugar).
- 4 cups of chamomile tea
- 1 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 4 grapefruits

You can also try fennel or dandelion teas which are known to help with sugar cravings.

### Listen to your gut

When we eat too many sugary foods or fizzy drinks our bodies shout out for help. This may be due to a candida overgrowth. Candida is a yeast we need, but too much can thrive in our bodies and acts like a parasite which goes into overdrive causing these symptoms.

- Increase in fungal infections
- Puffy, irritated skin – more breakouts than usual
- Digestive disorders such as acid reflux
- Thinning hair
- Weak nails
- Depression
- Tiredness
- Lack of motivation and concentration

Try the above tips to help you reduce your intake of sugar. Remember that nuts are good alternatives to snacking on chocolate. The ones I prefer that are naturally sweet and lower in calories are cashews and almonds.

### Tips for the immune system

For a little extra help during the first few weeks of the year and more so during Covid, try the following which I have used to help combat common colds and flu (available from Holland & Barratt or Amazon):

Vitamin D3 supplements – I have mentioned this before but this vitamin really does prevent colds and flu and is also good to take this time of year due to the lack of sunlight around.

Echinacea – this is a great herb for supporting the immune system. You can take it in tablet or liquid form but read the labels as you are not supposed to take it all year round.

Floradix – great for low energy. This is herbal liquid drink with vitamins, iron and minerals and can be found in Holland & Barratt. I used this many years ago when I wasn't sleeping well and picking up colds and infections regularly. It's suitable for vegetarians and vegans and is non-medicinal. Give it a try!

Zinc – is an infection fighter and is so beneficial in our diets for healing wounds and keeping our immune system strong. Take it as a supplement or in fizzy tablet form with water or tablets.

## Active Equilibrium for 2021

As we head into 2021, it's the time to look ahead to what we all hope will be a much better year than the one we're leaving behind! Is taking more exercise on your resolution list or maybe it's just taking time for yourself? We all feel better if we give ourselves a chance for a 'breather'! Whether it's a short walk, half an hour with a good book or a short session of simple exercises. Taking a time out moment gives you the

chance to relax, clear your head and get ready for the rest of the day.

Why not have a look at the [Active Equilibrium](#) website? Take your pick from aerobic exercise, stretching and relaxation. All sessions are six minutes long, so very easy to fit into your day. Even if you don't exercise regularly, give these sessions a try. I'm sure you'll feel better for it!

'New Year. New Me. Same Dreams. Fresh start.'



## New Year, New You... or not? with Emma Symons

Starting a new year is like starting a new chapter in the book that is your life. There will be many of us setting resolutions and planning to achieve big goals but only 12% of us will ever complete them and taste success. Why do so many of us fail on our New Year resolutions? We start out excited to get healthier, lose weight, quit smoking, get more work/life balance or one of the many other goals we set ourselves, so why do so many fall by the wayside or even fail to get off the starting blocks? Read on for some reasons why and some tips to succeed.

### 1. You are treating a marathon like a sprint

Most people make the mistake of expecting to get instant results and then give up when those results don't show within the first week or two. Changing any habit takes time, so slow and steady is a lot more effective. Small changes stick better because they aren't intimidating (don't try to remodel your entire life overnight). Just make one small change at a time. For example, aim to drink more water one week, add in an extra piece of fruit the next week and before you know it you will have achieved your goal to eat healthier.

### 2. You don't believe in yourself

Doubt can be an incredibly powerful force that can prevent you getting off the starting blocks. If you've tried (and failed) to set a New Year's resolution in the past, it might be hard to believe you can do it this time. The only way to defeat doubt is to believe in yourself. Who cares if you've failed a time or two? This year, you can try again.

### 3. It's not the will, it's the why

I hear many people say they give up on their goals as they don't have any willpower, but there is something far more powerful than will power and that's 'why power'. The biggest reason most New Year's resolutions fail is that you know what you want but not why you want it. It is this why power that will carry you through when the going gets tough.

If you want to get fit, lose weight, or be healthy, ask yourself why your goal is important to you. Don't do something because you think you should or because your husband/wife/partner/friends etc say you should, look deep inside yourself and find the real motivation for those goals.

If you really want to achieve those New Year's resolutions and create a new you for 2021 then find the 'why that makes you cry'. The more specific you can be about your goal and why you want it, the more vivid it will be in your imagination. The more vivid it is, the more emotion you will attach to it and the more encouraged you'll be. It is this strong 'why' that will be a driving force to keep you going when things get bumpy and will make you more likely to succeed, because YES you can do it!



"Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one."  
Brad Paisley

## Beef stew recipe from Elaine

One thing I always do in January is get the slow cooker out. I love stews and they are so easy to prepare and they are brimming with vitamins and minerals. Here is one of my favourites:

Braising steak chopped in chunks – brown this off briefly beforehand  
1-1.5 cups of Pearl barley – no need to soak as will cook in juices in the slow cooker

3 carrots peeled and chopped  
1 white onion  
2-3 cloves of garlic  
Fresh rosemary and thyme  
Vegetable or beef stock  
1 large sweet potato chopped

Cook for as long as you need and you can alter the quantity of ingredients according to how much you want to cook.

Pearl barley is so good for you and is rich in fibre, magnesium and iron and can help lower cholesterol. You can also add this in soups for a thicker consistency and also for added vitamins.

