Physical and Mental Health

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The Immune Deficiencies Foundation
Australia
Acknowledgement

• I acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, past and present - the Wiradjuri
Acknowledgement

• This presentation contains information from IDFA’s staff presentations.
• Chloe Appleton – Support Officer
• Emma Joseph – Health advocacy & communications
About IDFA

IDFA is the peak patient body providing support for people with Primary & Secondary Immunodeficiencies in Australia

www.idfa.org.au

Sid and Maggie.Pi

IDFA – I Don’t Feel Alone!

PI – is not always black and white!
WORLD PI WEEK

10 WARNING SIGNS

1. Eight or more ear infections within one year
2. Two or more serious sinus infections within one year
3. Two or more months on antibiotics with little effect
4. Two or more pneumonias within one year
5. Failure of an infant to gain weight or grow normally
6. Recurrent deep skin or organ abscesses
7. Persistent thrush in mouth or elsewhere on skin after age one
8. Need for intravenous antibiotics to clear infections
9. Two or more deep seated infections such as sepsis, meningitis or cellulitis
10. Family history of primary immunodeficiency

Early diagnosis

Better health outcomes!

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World PI Week
Test. Diagnosis. Trust.

1:1200
Suspected number of people with a genetic immunodeficiency that significantly impacts their health
300
different types of PI exist
70-90%
of PI patients remain undiagnosed

IDFA is the patient organisation raising awareness, advocating and supporting people affected by PI in Australia. Membership is free to patients, families & Healthcare professionals.

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Primary Immunodeficiency
Sid the Echidna shows the benefits of early diagnosis and access to treatment for those with secondary immune deficiency.

**Symptoms**

- Frequent, unusual, or unresponsive infections

**Early testing and diagnosis is essential**

**Access to optimal treatments for patients**

**Better health outcomes!**

q. is there a history of cancer, organ transplant, chemotherapy, certain medications, other disease (SECONDARY IMMUNE DEFICIENCY)
About Me

• Board member of IDFA.
• Sit on various committees in Australia for Immunoglobulin use, Leadership, Immunology, Autoimmunity and the not for profit sector.
• Board member and Treasurer of IPOPI (International Patient Organisation for Primary Immunodeficiencies).
• The only Fulltime staff member of IDFA.
• Have a background in business and education.

I am passionate about improving quality of life for patients and carers because it’s personal!
I am a wife, mother, daughter, grandma, friend, manager, carer, and a patient
I like:

1. **Albert Einstein’s Three Rules of Work.** They are great guidelines for Life.
   - Out of clutter, find simplicity
   - From discord, find harmony
   - In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity

2. **To learn a new thing every day**

   *My goal is for you to learn something new today!*
Carers

- Carers **provide unpaid care and support** to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or who are frail aged.

- Carers Australia webpage

- **As a carer, we often take second place to those we are caring for**
## Unpaid work

### People aged 15 years and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Wagga Wagga (C)</th>
<th>New South Wales</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did unpaid domestic work (last week)</td>
<td>35,258 71.0</td>
<td>4,127,723 67.7</td>
<td>13,143,914 69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cared for child/children (last two weeks)</td>
<td>14,393 29.0</td>
<td>1,659,250 27.2</td>
<td>5,259,400 27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability (last two weeks)</td>
<td>5,728 11.5</td>
<td>709,415 11.6</td>
<td>2,145,203 11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did voluntary work through an organisation or group (last 12 months)</td>
<td>10,861 21.9</td>
<td>1,103,790 18.1</td>
<td>3,620,726 19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Wagga Wagga (C) (Local Government Areas), of people aged 15 years and over, 71.0% did unpaid domestic work in the week before the Census. During the two weeks before the Census, 29.0% provided care for children and 11.5% assisted family members or others due to a disability, long term illness or problems related to old age ... 2016 CENSUS
The definition of “Fine”

How are you?

I’m fine...

Frustrated...

Isolated...

Neglected...

Emotional...
Physical and Mental Health

- Definition of “health”
- Fatigue & management strategies
  - Physical wellness
  - Stress
- Mental health & strategies for coping
- How can health be a more positive concept?
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
Definition of Health

The WHO (World Health Organisation) definition of health:

Health is a **state of complete physical, mental and social well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
Being unhealthy is the opposite of being well

- not having good health; showing a lack of good health
  - He looked poor and unhealthy.
  - unhealthy skin
  - His eyeballs were an unhealthy yellow.

- harmful to your health; likely to make you ill/sick
  - unhealthy living conditions
  - An unhealthy diet/lifestyle

- not normal and likely to be harmful
  - synonym: unwholesome
  - Having trouble with everyday life.
  - Disturbing thoughts or actions
Contributors to being unhealthy

What are the contributors to being “unhealthy”?
Contributors to being unhealthy

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Social isolation
- Lifestyle
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Financial
- Anger
Back to “I’m Fine”

How are you?

I’m Fine...

Frustrated..
Isolated..
Neglected..
Emotional..
You say you are fine, but are you really???

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer defined health as ‘the strength to be’.

- Bonhoeffer says that health is the ability to pursue our life story without insurmountable obstruction to illness or disability (or circumstance). Unless I am an Olympic skier I can be healthy even after the loss of a leg. I can regain health — I can still flourish — by seeking the courage to rewrite my life script.

- Thus health can be seen as the ability to flourish without being unduly impeded by illness, disability (or circumstances), AND, by overcoming illness, disability (or circumstances).

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, (1906–45) German theologian. A Lutheran pastor, he opposed the rise of fascism in Germany. Arrested by the Nazis in 1943, he was executed for treason after documents linked him with a failed conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1944.
How is your “health”?

• Are you in a state of “complete physical, mental and social well-being”?
• Do you have “the strength to be”?
• Do you have “the ability to pursue your life story without insurmountable obstruction from your circumstances…”?
• Are you able “to flourish without being unduly impeded by your circumstances ...”?
How many can truly answer YES to these questions?
**Exercise**: Think of or write down 3 aspects of your wellbeing you consider unhealthy (can be physical, mental, emotional, lifestyle related)

1. Fatigued
2. Do very little exercise
3. Stressed
Let's talk about fatigue
What is Fatigue?

• Fatigue is a feeling of constant tiredness and weakness which can be physical, mental, or a combination of both.
• Fatigue can be very debilitating and frustrating.
Fatigue

• Patients experience fatigue
• IPOPI's PID Patient Needs & Outlooks Survey 2014
  34% of respondents wished for "more energy...not be tired all the time".
• Carers experience fatigue
  • Physical, emotional, mental
  • Stress, anxiety and depression can also cause fatigue

How many of you feel fatigued?
Management of Fatigue

- Pacing
- Resting
- Sleeping
- Exercise
- Lifestyle
- Emotional
- Stigma
- Preserving Energy
**PACING**

**Pacing** is a key skill to learn in energy management. It involves pacing your exercise and daily activities to avoid “crashing” or “burnout”. It is also a great way to increase strength and general physical function.

- Pacing reduces the risk of burnout
- Can be frustrating, especially when you just want to “get things done”
- Pacing can help reduce the roller coaster ride of fatigue
Resting

Resting, together with pacing, is crucial to fatigue management. When you take a break and rest you help recharge your batteries so you can keep going. Resting includes; having a tea break, laying down or sitting in a comfortable position for a time, trying not to think of anything for a few minutes or being too stimulated.

- Plan rest and recovery times
- Remind yourself it's OK to rest!

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Sleep

• Practicing good sleeping habits is known as **SLEEP HYGIENE**
• Not as easy as counting sheep
• Poor sleep means more fatigue
• Avoid daytime naps if possible (I know! also easier said than done)
• Erratic sleep patterns can have negative effects on the immune system **IDFA Patient and Family Handbook, 2013**

**IDFA Member tips**

- Warm milk (*with honey!*)
- Meditation
- Rain App on phone
- Soft music
- No caffeine after lunch
- Humidifiers
- Bedroom is clean and comfortable
- Breathing exercises
- Heat/cold pack
- Calming tea (*like chamomile or lavender*)
- A relaxing bath
Exercise

• Important to know your limits when exercising
• A little is better than none, but running a marathon is only for some!
• Discuss with your GP what exercises are appropriate for you

Healthy Eating

• Too tired to shop for food let alone eat!
• No energy to prepare healthy meals!
STIGMA = A mark of **disgrace** associated with a **particular circumstance**, quality, or person. When a person is labelled, they are seen as part of a stereotyped group. Negative attitudes create prejudice which leads to negative actions and discrimination.

"I’m tired of being ignored"

**How to overcome stigma**

**Strangers**: be assertive and don’t waste energy getting angry

**Social Circle & community**: Educate, explain what you’re going through, provide resources
Preserving your Energy

• Don’t use it all at once!
• Know your limits, how much can you spend today, what is most important?
• Don’t waste energy on rude peoples comments (instead use that energy for something you enjoy)
• Priorities
• Be smart with your energy
• Learn to say “NO”
• If you burnout, rest and recover
Take care of yourself

- Consider for a moment the advice you are given when you fly on a plane. The flight attendant instructs you to “put on your own oxygen mask first, before helping others”. *Self-care is you putting on your oxygen mask first.*
In summary..

• Fatigue is a feeling of **constant tiredness and weakness** which can be **physical, mental, or a combination of both**.

• **FATIGUE MANAGEMENT** includes:
  
  • Pacing
  • Resting
  • Sleep hygiene
  • Exercise
  • Healthy eating
  • Stigma management
  • Preserving Energy
  • Self care
Let’s talk about physical wellness

- Best definition:
- “Physical wellness promotes proper care of our bodies for optimal health and functioning. There are many elements of physical wellness that all must be cared for together. Overall physical wellness encourages the balance of physical activity, nutrition and mental well-being to keep your body in top condition.”
- https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/wellness/physical
Exercise

- Exercise is a vital aspect of self-care and the healing process. Always check with your doctor or specialist.
- The benefits of exercising on a regular basis have positive long term effects compared to exercising ‘on a good day’. Tiredness or overwhelming feelings may exist, but the movement of the body is a good tip to get through the day.
- Yes, there can be limitations on exercising when you are a carer, however that depends on each individual’s circumstance.
What counts as Exercise?

• Stretching
• Walking
• Yoga/Tai Chi
• Pilates
• Swimming
• Dancing
• Cycling
• Running
• Gym workout
• Resistance bands

What do you do for exercise?
What counts as Exercise?

- Stretching
- Walking
- Yoga/Tai Chi
- Pilates
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Cycling
- Running
- Gym workout
- Resistance bands
BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

What are the benefits of exercise?

- Improves sleep patterns
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Promotes lung function
- Improves mood
- Allows for teamwork, communication and a feeling of being normal if an individual is struggling with isolation.
SIGNS TO MONITOR WHILE EXERCISING

➢ Difficulty recovering post workout

➢ Feeling faint during or after exercising

➢ Feeling “wired up” and weak at the same time
TIPS WHILE EXERCISING

- Go at your own pace
- Listen to your own body
- Choose low impact exercises
- Include a warm up & cool down
- Limit the frequency
- **Keep hydrated**
- Get adequate rest
- Ensure you are eating healthy to assist with recover and energy
30 minutes of exercise a day

10 + 10 + 10
Break up your daily 30 minutes of physical activity into 10 minute bouts!

- 2 minutes’ walk/jog/dance
- 1 minute jumping jacks
- 2 minutes’ walk/jog/dance
- 1 minute each:
  - Squats
  - Push-Ups
  - Scissor Kicks
  - Plank
  - Sit-Ups

Substitute: High Knees, Lunges, resistance band
STRETCHING

- Relieves stress
- Increases flexibility
- Increases range of motion
- Prevents Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness (DOMS)
- Prevents injury
- Improves energy levels

Don’t worry – I am not going to make you do these!!

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Resistance bands

- **Benefits of Using Resistance Bands** for a strength-training routine will:
  - Enhance posture
  - Increase physical strength and lean muscle mass
  - Increase circulation
  - Improve balance
  - Increase bone strength and health
  - Improve your mental health and mood
  - Improve your ability to do activities
  - Increase your chance of living longer
  - Decrease risk of diseases
  - Decrease chance of injury
  - Talk to your physio for excercises
Neck stretches
Arm stretches
Back and Glutes stretch
Walking is a low impact exercise, requires no equipment, can be done wherever and whenever and be done at each individual's own pace. Walking is a good type of exercise for all levels. Benefits of walking:

- Reduced risk of heart disease and stroke
- Improvement of management of disease
- Stronger bones
- Increase in muscle strength
- Increase in fitness levels
- Normalise breathing

IDEAS: walk the dog, walk the shopping centre, walk around the block
SWIMMING

Recreational swimming is a low-impact activity and is a good tool to use for relaxation. It benefits physical and mental health. Benefits of swimming:

- Relaxing for some
- Alleviates stress
- Provides good low-impact therapy for other injuries or conditions
- Improves flexibility, coordination, balance and posture
- Improves breathing
Riding a bicycle regularly is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle. Cycling is a low-impact exercise that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Benefits of cycling:

- Decreases stress levels
- Reduces anxiety and depression
- Increase cardiovascular fitness
- Increase muscle strength and flexibility
Changing your routine

- Firstly consult your GP and/or Specialist’s before changing your usual routine
- Discuss with other individuals and research experiences.
In conclusion

• Fitness, in some way, should be a part of your normal routine, and is important for many reasons.
• Low impact sports and activities are ideal.
• Listen to and know your own body.
• Consult your Specialists.
• Pace yourself.
Let’s talk about nutrition
Basics

• Choose a balanced and varied diet
• Reduce fats, salts and sugar
• Read the labels on foods
• Drink plenty of water
• Snack wisely!
5 Food groups

• A well balanced diet includes all the nutrients our bodies need to function properly. It will include foods from each of the five major food groups:

• **Cereals** such as bread, cereals, rice, pasta and noodles, preferably wholegrain
• **Vegetables and legumes**
• **Fruit**
• **Dairy products** such as milk, yoghurt and cheese
• **Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts**
Tips for healthy eating

• Keep easy snacks in pantry – like rice crackers and tuna, healthy frozen meals
• Cook meals on ‘good days’ and store in freezer (like soup!) for the ‘not so good’ days
• See if it’s possible to get the groceries delivered
• Ask partner or kids to help out
• Pre-boiled eggs as an easy snack in fridge
• Lite ‘n easy or pre-made, healthier, store bought meals

Your tips??
Let’s talk about Stress

- Stress is primarily a physical response. When stressed, the body thinks it is under attack and switches to ‘fight or flight’ mode, releasing a complex mix of hormones and chemicals such as adrenaline, cortisol and norepinephrine to prepare the body for physical action.
Effect of stress on the body

What physically happens to you when you feel stressed?
Effect of stress on the body

What physically happens to you when you feel stressed?

- **headaches**: Stress can trigger and intensify tension headaches.
- **heartburn**: Stress increases the production of stomach acid, which could lead to heartburn or make it worse.
- **rapid breathing**: When you're stressed, the muscles that help you breathe tense up, which can leave you short of breath.
- **risk of heart attack**: Over time, an increased heart rate and high blood pressure damage your arteries, which could lead to a heart attack.
- **pounding heart**: Stress hormones make your heart pump faster so that blood can quickly reach your vital organs and limbs.
- **fertility problems**: Stress interferes with the reproductive system in both men and women, and may make it harder to conceive.
- **erectile dysfunction**: Your brain plays an important part in the process of getting an erection. Stress can interfere with this process.
- **missed periods**: Recurring hormones can throw your menstrual cycle off, or in severe cases stop it altogether.
- **increased depression**: Chronic stress can wear you down emotionally and lead to depression.
- **insomnia**: Stress makes it harder to fall asleep and stay asleep, which can lead to insomnia.
- **weakened immune system**: Long-term stress weakens your immune system's defenses, leaving you more vulnerable to infections.
- **high blood sugar**: Stress causes your body to release extra stress hormones into your bloodstream, which over time puts you at risk for type 2 diabetes.
- **high blood pressure**: Stress hormones heighten blood vessels, which can raise your blood pressure.
- **stomachache**: Stress affects your body's digestive system, which can lead to stomachaches, nausea, and other tummy troubles.
- **low sex drive**: Stress—and the fatigue that often comes with it—can take a toll on your libido.
- **tense muscles**: Stress makes muscles tense up, and chronic stress can lead to tension-related headaches and backaches.
Let’s talk about Mental Health Strategies
What is mental health?

• Mental Health = “a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stressors of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to the community” (WHO, 2017)

• Mental Health Issues are referred to as:
  – Mental Health Conditions
  – Mental Illness
  – Mental Disorders
Can you name some mental health disorders?
Mental health disorders

- Anxiety disorder
- Depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Borderline personality disorder
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Traumatic events
- Eating disorders
What are the signs of mental health issues?
Signs of Mental Health Issues

- Less involved/interested in things they normally enjoy
- Trouble sleeping and oversleeping
- Easily irritated, quick to anger
- Aches, pains, cramps, digestive issues without clear physical cause
- Loss in motivation
- Loss of libido
- Difficulties in memory, concentrating and making decisions
- Weight or appetite changes
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Inability to cope with daily problems or stress
- Low energy and fatigue
- Excessive fears, worries, or extreme feelings of guilt
- Feeling empty and worthless
- Thoughts of death and suicide, self harm
Mental Health and Chronic Physical Illness

Carers, elderly, rural, ethnic minority groups, financially disadvantaged, adolescents and young people have a higher risk of depression and anxiety\textsuperscript{5,6,7}

People with a chronic medical condition have a higher risk of depression and anxiety\textsuperscript{1,2,3,4}

- Anxiety, fear and grief (normal)
- Ongoing anxiety, fear and grief that is impacting on your wellbeing and participation in life (mental health issues)
Poor mental health cycle

Trigger

- Mental health issues arise
  - (feeling hopeless, isolated, down, can’t enjoy anything)
- Emotional response
  - (sadness, grief, anxiety, worry, fear)
- Physiological response
  - (panic, shaking, sweating, dizziness, nausea)
- Withdrawal
  - (social, work, emotional, physical, feelings of guilt & being a burden)
- Lack of support
  - (unable to reach out or ask for help, lack of access to information & resources)

Mental health issues arise

Emotional response

Physiological response

Withdrawal

Lack of support
What helps – breaking the cycle

- **Trigger**

**Mental health issues arise**
(feeling hopeless, isolated, down, can’t enjoy anything)

**Physiological response**
(panic, shaking, sweating, dizziness, nausea)

**Emotional response**
(sadness, grief, anxiety, worry, fear)

**Withdrawal**
(social, work, emotional, physical, feelings of guilt & being a burden)

**Lack of support**
(unable to reach out or ask for help, lack of access to information & resources)

- **Self-educate, seek resources**
- **Start wellness – physical, sleep,**
- **Start coping & self-care strategies**
- **Have a cry**
- **Talk to a friend**
- **Reach out to support networks**
- **Coping & self-care strategies** (breathing exercises, meditation)
- **Find a safe space**

**Mental health care plan**

- **Medication (if recommended)**
- **Psychology & counselling services**
- **Mental health care plan**

**Connect with others like you**

**Use all available resources**

**Ask for help, seek medical advice**

**These emotions are normal responses**
Others not helping - Unhelpful advice

- “Pray about it.” Although I’m Christian and love my God, people don’t seem to realize it’s a real thing. I need medicine to keep my head from spinning.” — Skylar L.

- “being told to think of the positive and be thankful for everything you have. Most of the time that only makes me feel more guilty for feeling this way because I do have a lot of wonderful things in my life.” — Ashley S.

- “‘Just use your logic. What you’re feeling is ridiculous, you should know that. If you tell yourself that, the anxiety will go away.’ As if I don’t already understand that what I’m feeling is illogical, it doesn’t stop me from feeling anxious, it just makes me feel worse about myself and my situation. — Liss W.

- “Yeah, I’ve been stressed out too. Just remember there are others who have it worse than you. Be happy for what you have.” — Adriana R.

- “Get over it”
- “Take a chill pill”
YOU not helping YOU!

- Exertion (pushing yourself too hard)
- Avoidance
- Making too many commitments
- Comparison to others
- Self-criticism and self-blame
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Withdrawing
- Inappropriate medication and treatments
- Not engaging in any self-care or coping strategies
- Poor diet, poor sleep hygiene
- Exercising too much, or too little
Things that can help!

**Coping Strategies**
(May need some outside help)

- Coping strategies are methods you use to deal with stressful situations or a crisis
- Recognise what types of situations are difficult to manage (write them down)
- List strategies on what you can do to manage the situation better, then evaluate what works and what doesn’t (everyone’s strategies will be different)
- Take ownership and be proactive
- Examples?

(Asking a friend or family member for support, writing down how you’re feeling, positive self talk, reducing your load, considering the big picture “how important is this? Will it matter in the long run?”, learning to forgive and let go of anger and negative feelings, practicing gratitude, seeking out support services, having an “action plan” for when you’re in a crisis.)
Things that can help!

Self Care
(things you can do yourself)

• Self care is anything you do that helps maintain your physical, mental and emotional health. Things like exercise, relaxation, hanging out with pets, doing the things you love
• Make time for it, learn how to ‘switch off’, have a prepared Self Care list ready to go for when you are feeling frazzled
• Examples?

(cooking, RELAXATION, reading, music, gardening, meditation, hanging out with pets, journaling, art therapy, gaming, breathing exercises, walking, organizing your medications, participating in sport, yoga, 5 minutes of YOU time)
Asking for help

Why people don’t ask for help

• Fear and shame (stigma, labeling, impact on career)
• Lack of insight and awareness (there’s nothing wrong with me, I don’t need help, my problems aren’t that bad)
• Distrust (confidentiality, talking to a stranger)
• Hopelessness and guilt (nothing will help me, nothing will change, I don’t deserve help)
• Unavailability (not knowing where to find professional care, complex issues)
• Practical Barriers (TIME, financial, transportation, can’t get time off work or school)

Why don’t people ask for help?
Asking for help

Overcoming these issues

- **Its OK to ask for help**
- Getting help is a sign of strength, not weakness, you are taking control
- Talk to a friend or family member that you trust
- Talk to a healthcare professional
- Talking helps problem-solving
- Talking it out helps let go of guilt and anger
- Remembering that people like to help (when someone asks you for help, what is your default response?)
- If you see someone struggling, listen, empathize, discuss goals together, check in regularly
- Access a mental health care plan, online resources, eligibility for financial support, or any support that is available to you already
- Make the time for your mental health as it will benefit you and those around you in the long run
- Take ownership and be proactive
Could health be a more positive concept?

Can we go beyond facts and admit values into our concept of health and wellbeing?
• Dietrich Bonhoeffer defined health as the strength to be.
• Bonhoeffer says that health is the ability to pursue our life story without insurmountable obstruction from our circumstances.
• Thus health can be seen as the ability to flourish without being unduly impeded by our circumstances AND overcoming our circumstances

• Dietrich Bonhoeffer, (1906–45) German theologian. A Lutheran pastor, he opposed the rise of fascism in Germany. Arrested by the Nazis in 1943, he was executed for treason after documents linked him with a failed conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1944.
Re-writing your life-script

• What are your core values?
• Core values are your fundamental beliefs. They are guiding principles that dictate your behaviour and usually help you understand the difference between right and wrong.
• Dietrich Bonhoeffer believed it is our highest values that create and become relative to how we interpret our reality.
What are your core values?
Beliefs

- Core values - examples:
  - Honesty
  - Integrity
  - Perseverance
  - Honour
  - Respect
  - Accountability
  - Discipline
  - Diligence
  - Dependability
  - Reliability
  - Loyalty
  - Commitment
  - Open-mindedness
  - Consistency
  - Efficiency
  - Inclusion
  - Responsibility

- A belief, or lack thereof, in God or an affiliation with a religious/spiritual institution
- A belief that family is of fundamental importance
- A belief that honesty is always the best policy and that trust has to be earned
- A belief in being a good steward of resources and in exercising frugality
- A belief in maintaining a healthy work/life balance
Core Values

• Can your core values be a tool to help you with your overall health and wellbeing? (thoughts, physical and mental health)

• Can we change our thoughts to help with our overall health and wellbeing?
The wellbeing cycle: +ve or –ve flow

If you change your thinking, you will experience a change in your emotions, which will influence your choice of behaviour. Consequences will follow which will reinforce your core values or belief system. These act as a driver of our.

Thoughts

Core values / beliefs

Are the source of our...

Feelings

Emotions

Reinforces our core values or belief system

Consequences

Behaviours (choice, free will)

Which sooner or later will generate ...
## Exercise – opinion or fact?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>OPINION</th>
<th>FACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m a bad person</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam told me she didn’t like what I said</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I failed the test</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m ugly</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He shouted at me</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing ever goes right</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td>No-one loves me</td>
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How do we change our thoughts and behaviours?

**Cognitive distortions** are inaccurate thoughts that reinforce negative thought patterns or emotions. They are faulty ways of thinking that convince us of a reality that is simply not true.
Many of the most popular and effective Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques are applied to what psychologists call “cognitive distortions” (Grohol, 2016). Cognitive distortions are faulty ways of thinking that convince us of a reality that is simply not true.

Cognitive distortions

- This is all my fault
- Everybody hates me
- I’m sure he thinks I’m ugly
Cognitive distortions (faulty thinking)

- **Filtering**
  - Focusing solely on the negative and ignoring all the positive.

- **Polarized thinking**
  - Black and white thinking, not seeing the grey.

- **Overgeneralization**
  - Assuming all experiences and people are the same, based on one negative experience.
- **Catastrophizing**
  - Assuming the worst case scenario, magnifying the negative and minimizing the positive.

- **Control fallacies**
  - Thinking everything that happens to you is either all your fault or not at all your fault.

- **Blaming**
  - Pointing to others when looking for a cause of any negative event, instead of looking at yourself.

- **Jumping to conclusions**
  - Being convinced of something with little to no evidence to support it.
• **Personalization**
  • Believing that you are at least partially responsible for everything bad that happens around you.

• **Fallacy of fairness**
  • Being too concerned over whether everything is fair.

• **Shoulds**
  • Holding tight to your personal rules on how people ought to behave.

• **Emotional reasoning**
  • Believing “If I feel it, it must be true!”
• **Fallacy of change**
  • Expecting others to change to suit your needs or desires.

• **Global labeling / mislabeling**
  • Generalizing one or two instances into an overall judgment, using exaggerated and emotionally loaded language.

• **Heavens’ reward fallacy**
  • Believing that any good act on your part will be repaid or rewarded.

• **Always being right**
  • Believing that it is absolutely unacceptable to be wrong.
Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)

• CBT aims to change our thought patterns, the values and beliefs we may or may not know we hold, our attitudes, and ultimately our behaviour, in order to help us face our difficulties and more effectively strive towards our goals.
CBT Techniques and tools

• Here are nine techniques and tools that are some of the most common and effective CBT practices.
CBT Techniques and tools

• **Journaling**
  • Gathering data about your moods and thoughts – their source, intensity and your responses to them

  SUGGESTION: Write it down – do an alternative action formula

• **Unravelling Cognitive Distortions**
  • Become aware of the distortions you are likely to be vulnerable of

• **Cognitive Restructuring**
  • Challenge your harmful or destructive beliefs and restructure them
CBT Techniques and tools

• **Exposure and Response Prevention**
  • Expose yourself to whatever it is that normally provokes a compulsive behaviour

• **Interoceptive Exposure**
  • Expose yourself to sensations you are afraid of and recognise they are not dangerous

• **Nightmare Exposure and Rescripting**
  • Identify the emotion caused by a nightmare and cultivate a new emotion to replace it

• **Play the Script Until the End**
  • Finish a worst case scenario in your head to see that everything will likely turn out OK

**QUESTION:** What’s the worst that could happen? What’s the best that could happen?
CBT Techniques and tools

- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**
  - Relax one muscle group at a time until your whole body is in a state of relaxation

- **Relaxed Breathing**
  - Bring regularity and calm to your breath and create a sense of balance
**Alternative action formula**

### Problems & difficulties
List your problem

### Vulnerabilities
What makes you more likely to experience this problem than someone else?

### Triggers
What made the problem so bad?

### Coping strategies
What do you do to cope with this problem? What makes you feel better, at least temporarily?

### Effects of coping strategies
How do these strategies make you feel in the short-term, and in the long-term? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

### Alternative actions
If your current solution is not completely effective, what else could you try?
Think back to your 3 aspects of wellbeing you considered unhealthy at the beginning of the session. Do you feel you have some strategies/tools/techniques to address these?

If so, you are on the path to **re-writing your life script! You are beginning to flourish!**
Summary

• We have discussed:
  – Definition of health
  – Fatigue and ideas to manage it
  – Physical wellness – exercise and ideas to get started
  – A little about nutrition
  – Signs of mental health issues
  – Poor mental health cycle and strategies to cope
  – The idea of health as a more positive concept
  – Cognitive behavioral distortions and techniques to address them
  – The use of our core values, beliefs and various strategies to address issues in our thoughts, health and general wellbeing can help us become more positive and give us:
    • The strength to be
    • The ability to pursue our life story without insurmountable obstruction
    • AND the chance to flourish without being unduly impeded by our circumstances
Do remember...
Accomplish what you can today and don’t stress over what you couldn’t or didn’t do. Tomorrow is another day.
Useful Groups and Resources

- IDFA
- Beyond Blue
- Headspace
- Reach out
- Lifeline
- Carersnsw.org (counselling)
- Mycompass.org (modules)
- Mental health line 1800 011 511 (24/7 response team)
- Sane.org
- Blackdoginstitute.org
- Petrea King (a Quest for Life)
- Mensshed.org

If you are in immediate crisis call Lifeline on 131114

APPs

- Habu Music (music to match your mood)
- Headspace (meditation app, unrelated to headspace.com)
- Calm (meditation, sleep stories)
- Smiling Mind (meditation and mindfulness)
- Thought Diary (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy App)
References

2. https://www.beyondblue.org.au
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https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/wellness/physical
Thank you!