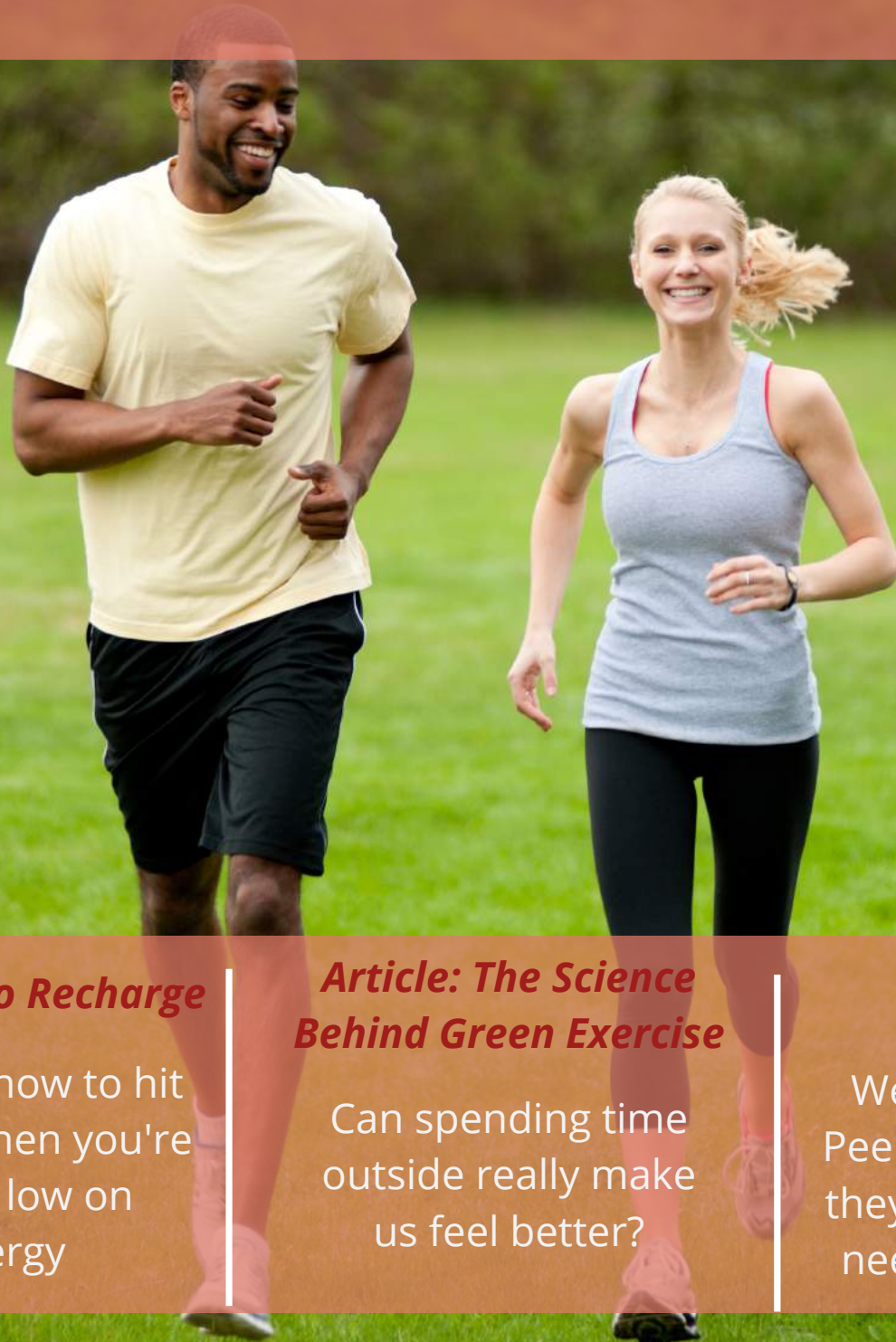


Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

LETSS Get Energised Together



13 Ways to Recharge

Ideas on how to hit refresh when you're feeling low on energy

Article: The Science Behind Green Exercise

Can spending time outside really make us feel better?

Hit Refresh with LETSS

We asked LETSS Peer Workers what they do when they need to recharge

Links to Wellbeing

With so much constantly happening in the world it is often easy to feel depleted and it can be tricky to know where to start when it comes to recharging our batteries. While in theory it seems simple to eat the right things, exercise the right amount and do the things that make us feel good and energetic, this is often much harder in practice!

We thought we'd put our heads together and come up with some tips on how we can all re-energise (even amongst all the business of day-to-day life). From simple ways to recharge at any time, and easy and nutritious recipes, to tips and tricks on squeezing in some exercise even amongst a busy schedule - we've tried to cover all the bases!

While the process of re-energising is undoubtedly different for everyone - we hope there is something in this booklet that is helpful for you.

Warmly,
The LETSS Team





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Links to Wellbeing is a consortium commissioned by the Adelaide PHN and run in partnership between Neami National, Mind Australia, Skylight Mental Health and Uniting Care Wesley Bowden.

Hit Refresh with LETSS

We asked LETSS Peer Workers what they do when they feel they need to refresh and recharge, here's what they said...

Every day I try my best to do a small exercise routine that consists mainly of stretches that help to keep my back 'healthy'. I put out my yoga mat so I have a dedicated space and put on something that I enjoy watching on YouTube, (usually the Great British Bakeoff!!!) to help keep me motivated. Afterwards, I take my dog for a 30 - 45 min walk. This depends on how my day is set out and if I have appointments or work in the morning, I try to adjust my day so that I fit in my exercise and usually I get it done. However, on the days that I just can't seem to find the time, I've worked hard practising not to be hard on myself, to remind myself that tomorrow is a new day and that I'll aim to get back into my routine then. I've also found that I feel so much better both physically and mentally when I have done my exercise routine and that the memory of feeling good the day before can help motivate me to find time to fit in a modified exercise routine into a busy day.

Tip:

I keep a TheraBand in my bag for times that I'm sitting for long periods. It helps create light resistance when stretching as it is made out of stretchy material. You can find them at physiotherapists, sports stores and shops like Kmart, Target and Big W.

I like to go for a run and then make myself a smoothie! Always feel great after, and it helped me get motivated to study last year when everything was closed & boring!



To re-energise, I like to spend a morning alone, I have a favourite routine. I like to get up around 7 and go for a walk while I listen to an audiobook, then I do some resistance training or yoga afterwards. I enjoy breakfast followed by a nice long warm shower - then settle with a cup of rose and vanilla tea and a gingerbread scented candle while I half-watch Netflix and half-scroll the news on my phone. After that, I'm happy to interact with the world - lunch out or an adventure somewhere sounds good.



I like to recharge by going to yoga classes, or if I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed I will sit with a coffee and my diary and make a plan for the week ahead which includes things I need to do, as well as making time for things I want to do. I also like listening to podcasts or my favourite playlist.

There's a bunch of things that I kind of 'cycle' through when I need to recharge. These include going for a run, doing some journaling, having a stretch or doing some yoga, walking out in nature or sometimes even just sitting outside mindfully for a little bit. If I have the time for it I sometimes do all these things! But more typically I usually try to squeeze in one or two in the moments where I'm feeling really depleted.



Food For Thought

Although the positive impact that fresh and nutritious food has on our physical body is well-known, the influence that healthy food has upon our mind is much less acknowledged. Let's discuss some foods that can help to improve your mental well-being and health, and how you can incorporate them into your lifestyle.

1. Leafy greens

According to research, nutrients such as folate, lutein, and vitamin K that are found in leafy greens such as broccoli, kale, and spinach, help to slow down cognitive decline. Although leafy greens are often viewed as bland, they can be prepared in fun ways and be subtly incorporated into your lifestyle such as adding a few spinach leaves to a smoothie. Preparing kale chips can also be a crunchy and healthy alternative to potato chips.

2. Walnuts

Considering they look like brains, it doesn't come as much of a surprise that walnuts have been shown to be beneficial for the brain. Walnuts are packed with omega-3 fatty acids which research has shown to improve mood. In addition, walnuts contain polyunsaturated fat and Vitamin E which can help to reduce inflammation in the brain. Walnuts can be a fun and simple ingredient to add to both sweet and savoury dishes such as tarts and salads.

3. Berries

Berries, such as strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries, are packed full of antioxidants. Antioxidants have many benefits for the brain including boosting brain cells, concentration, and memory. Berries have even been shown to increase levels of serotonin, which can be helpful for people who suffer from depression and PTSD. Researchers have suggested that the antioxidants found in berries help to stimulate the blood and oxygen that flows to the brain, thus keeping the brain active and well. Berry smoothies can be an easy and sweet way to get your daily dose of antioxidants.

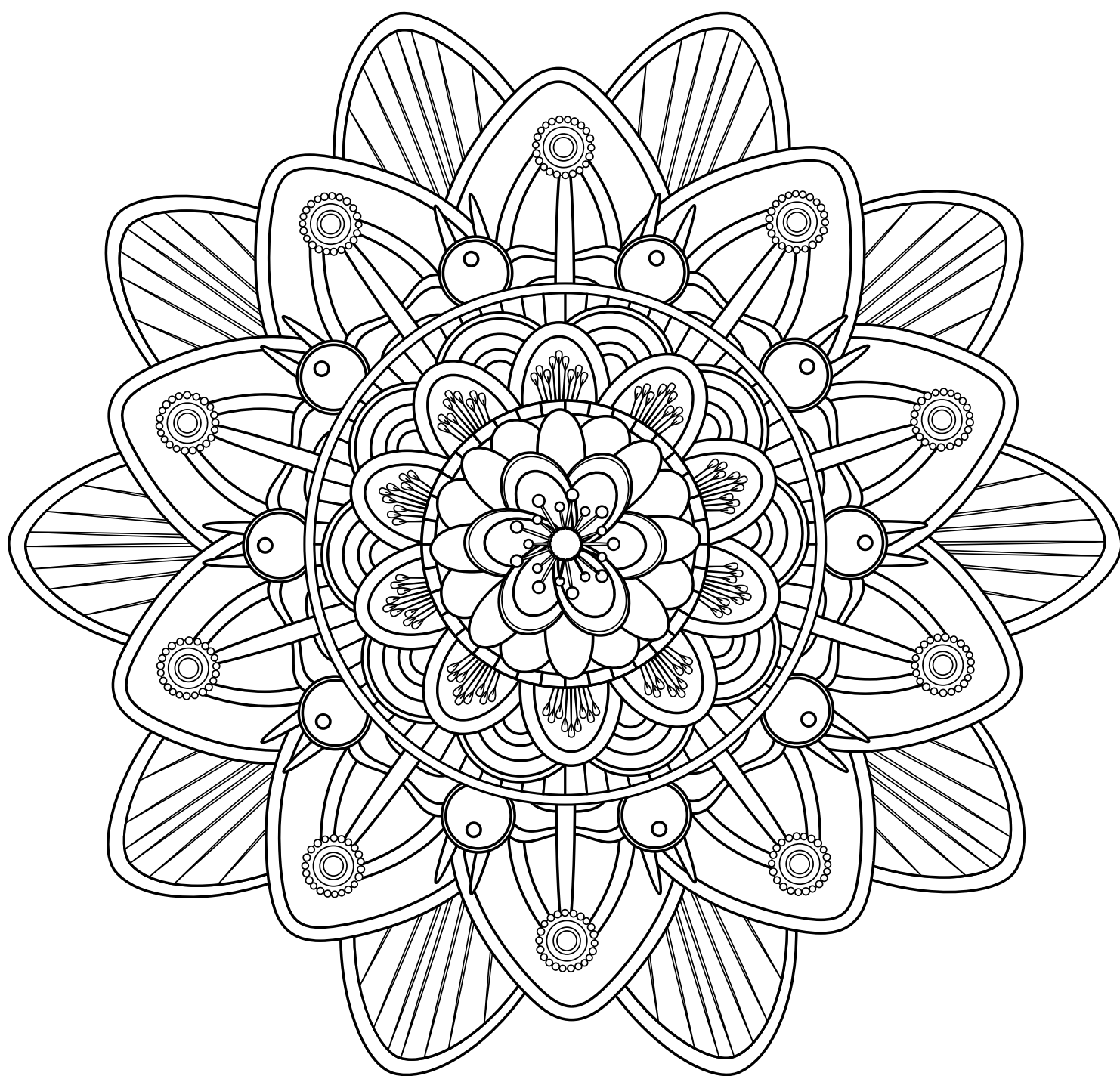
4. Yoghurt

According to research, the bacteria in yoghurt can help people combat their mood, anxiety, and levels of stress. Researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, found that compared to women who did not consume probiotic yoghurt, women who ate probiotic yoghurt demonstrated increased brain function. Granola and Yoghurt bowls can be fun and vibrant way to get your daily intake of yoghurt (see link below for recipe)

5. Fish

Fatty acids such as omega-3 that are found in mackerel, trout, and salmon, can be beneficial for the brain. These fatty acids help the brain cells to produce neurotransmitters, work effectively, and decrease the risk of neurological disease. Once or twice a week, a serving of fish such as salmon can be used as an alternative for chicken or red meat.





Olga's Easy Hummus

I'm a huge hummus fan – and frequently find myself consuming large amounts of it. I decided to start making my own to avoid buying tubs and tubs, not only is it healthier and cheaper but it's also (in my opinion) tastier (and you can easily adjust the ingredients to your own liking)!

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
 - 4 tablespoons tahini
 - 1/4 cup water
 - 1 – 2 garlic cloves
 - juice of 1 or 2 lemons
 - 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon roasted pine nuts, optional
- generous pinch of Himalayan salt, or to taste

Method

- Place all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until it's the desired consistency
- Taste for flavour and add extra of anything you desire (e.g. lemon, garlic, salt)
- Serve plain or add a little bit of olive oil, paprika or even pumpkin seeds!



13 Ways to Recharge

When You're Feeling Low on Energy

1

Try something new

This could be anything... from cooking a new recipe to giving knitting a shot for the first time!

Write down 3 things that make you happy

These can be super simple, for example "when my houseplant grows a new leaf".

3

2

Plan a trip or an outing

Check your schedule for your next free day and make plans to go somewhere you really enjoy.

4

Get creative

In whatever medium you like, draw a picture, play some music, write a poem!

5

Declutter your room

If you don't have time to declutter your whole room, just focus on one section (e.g. your bedside table/one shelf in your cupboard).

6

Have a stretch

Focus on the areas of your body that feel tense and take a moment to give them a good stretch.

7

Create a bucket list

You can write down anything you like on this bucket list, big or small!

8

Write down your strengths

We generally don't spend much time thinking about our own strengths, so take a moment to reflect on and recognize yours. *

*If you're a bit stuck on this one there's a handy resource on VIA institute that may help! You can find it at: www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register

Make a playlist

Put together a playlist of songs and podcasts that inspire and energize you! (Check out LETSS Spotify playlists if you're feeling stuck).

9

10

Take a break from your screen

Make a conscious effort to step away from your screen (whether it is a phone or laptop) even if it's only for a little while.

11

Meditate for 5-10 minutes

If you're not sure how or where to start, the 'Headspace' app has some really handy guided meditations.

Have a quick shower

You could even try having a cold shower (this can be especially refreshing in the summer).

12

13

Spend some time outside

This could mean taking a moment to sit out in your front/back yard, or taking a walk at your local park.

2021: The Game Changer

Recently a volleyball fan I know told me they were using their favourite sport to examine their life. I was intrigued. What does that look like?

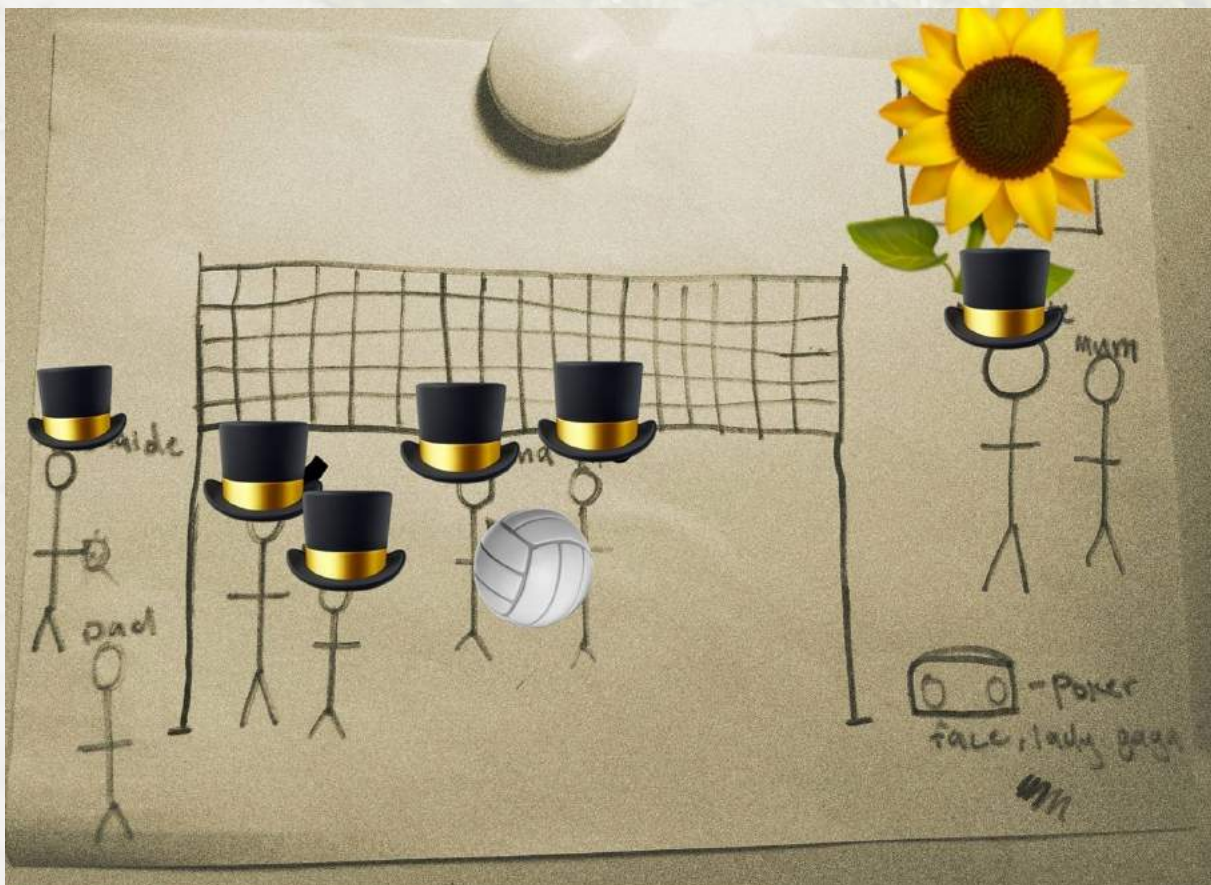
Pointing to a picture they had drawn of players in the midst of a volleyball match, they showed me the way team members had particular roles and positions - just like their friends had unique quirks and different areas of strength. The coach looked on from the side, ready to provide just the right feedback – similar to their trusty psychologist. Over in the corner, the team's first aid person reminded them of their mum. A large stereo sitting on the sand was blasting Lady Gaga's Poker Face – their chosen theme song.

Using a sports team metaphor can be an interesting way to reframe mental health. Using sports terminology, problems can turn into "goals"; counselling sessions can be likened to "matches" (or even "seasons"!), and support networks turn into all the other people needed to make the game go on. Team members can be either the people in our lives - or the different roles we need to play ourselves at various times. For example, if football is your game, while the striker's looking to be pretty confident, the midfielder's try to hold everything together. The goalie – they've got the defence you need.

Using metaphors can be a way to explore things from another perspective. It can be amusing at times too. One time my family played mini golf together, and all got stuck on one particular hole. Sometimes when something tricky comes up, we joke to one another "is this a ninth hole situation?"

You may notice that sports metaphors for life are more common than you realised. We often say things such as “you win some, you lose some” to acknowledge something that didn’t turn out the way we wanted it to while also acknowledging that sometimes things go right as well. We might say “let’s get the ball rolling!” when we want to motivate some action; or “keep your eye on the ball” when you have something important you want to keep in focus.

On that note, let’s hope 2021 is a “game-changer” – bringing with it a real shift in the way we think and do things for our wellbeing as individuals, families and communities.



The picture described by the volleyball fan in Paragraph 1. With different players and positions representing the different role each person plays in their life

Liz's Cauliflower Fritters

I confess, this is my mum's recipe! It's so tasty and a great way to get another serve of veggies into your meals. Makes about 16-18 small fritters.

Ingredients

1/2 cauliflower
2 cups self-raising flour
1 & 1/4 cups of grated parmesan cheese
1 garlic clove, crushed
3 tbsp parsley, chopped
2 tbsp chives, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste
3 eggs, lightly beaten,
2 tbsp water
Olive oil

Method

- Bring a saucepan of salted water to boil, cut up the cauliflower into small pieces and add to boiling water. Cook until tender, should take a few minutes.
- Drain and cool cauliflower.
- Combine flour, cheese, garlic, parsley, chives, salt and pepper together in a bowl.
- Mix cauliflower through seasoning mix.
- Add beaten eggs to cauliflower and seasoning mix and combine. (Add a bit of water to help combine if needed)
- Medium heat, add oil to a pan and add a tablespoon of fixture for each fritter. Flatten fritter with a fork and turn once golden brown.

How To: Fit 30 Minutes of Exercise into Your Day

Did you know? Exercise is not only extremely beneficial for our physical health but for our mental health too. Research suggests that just 30 minutes a day holds a whole bunch of benefits such as reduced stress, better sleep and increased self-esteem - just to name a few! However, here at LETSS, we understand that sometimes finding these 30 minutes in a day can be tricky. It can also be hard to work up the motivation to exercise for a whole 30-minute block - particularly when we're not feeling great.

But that's okay because it turns out that it can be just as beneficial to exercise for multiple shorter periods in a day. For example, rather than doing a 1x30 minute workout, you can do 3x10 minute workouts. That means you can fit in a quick workout while on your lunch break, or when you're cooking dinner in the evening or you could even squeeze one in, in the morning (even *after* you snooze your alarm a couple of times). Have a look at the next page for some ideas on how you could incorporate 30 minutes of exercise into your day.

Morning

Do some squats and lunges while having your morning shower and brushing your teeth.

Afternoon

If stuck in over lunch, try doing some simple stretches. You can even do this at your desk!

Evening

Ordering take out for dinner? Do a quick core workout while you wait for it to arrive.

Roll from bed to a yoga mat for a couple of poses and stretches to start of your day.

Hanging up your washing during the day? Do 5 jumping jacks for every item you hang.

Put on your favourite tunes while cooking dinner and dance like no ones watching!

Allow the time to walk to a slightly further bus stop when travelling on your morning commute.

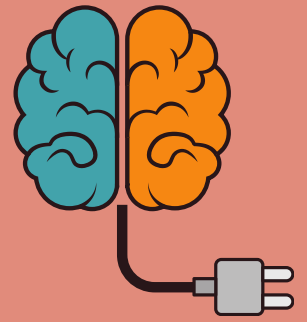
Take a quick 10 minute power walk around the block to beat that post-lunch slump.

Watching TV in the evening? Get up and do some stretches during the ad breaks.



What Helps YOU Recharge? A Reflective Exercise

Sometimes it can be tricky to know what helps us recharge. Take a moment to consider the questions/statements below as a way to reflect on what is helpful and what isn't when it comes to recharging your batteries.



After a long and stressful day I would most prefer to:

I typically feel most energetic when:

When I'm going through a stressful time I manage my energy levels by:

Situations that make me feel drained are:

Have You Tried Going for a Walk?

The Science Behind Green Exercise

A few years ago, when I was really unmotivated and depressed. I reached out to a friend for support and got a reply everyone hates "Have you tried going for a walk?". I replied, "No...I'm trying to feel better, reminding myself how unfit I am probably won't do that".

Wouldn't it be nice though? If it were that easy? Just get up, go for a walk and feel better? Turns out there is something to it.

Recent research investigated the results of 10 different studies examining the benefits of exercise on mood and self-esteem. The

researchers were particularly interested in how the effects of exercise varied between different environments (urban vs nature), gender and mental health variance. The results will surprise you!

"The optimal amount of time spent exercising for maximum improvements in self-esteem and mood is just five minutes!"

Here are the most important/interesting results

1. The optimal amount of time spent exercising for maximum improvement in self-esteem and mood is just five minutes!
2. Light intensity exercise (such as walking) improved self-esteem and mood more than both moderate and high-intensity exercise.
3. The participants with worse mental health showed an even greater improvement in self-esteem and mood than those with good mental health (although there were significant improvements for both groups).
4. Exercise completed near natural bodies of water and in nature further increased improvements.

Light exercise - chores, sport and fitness, two birds, one stone?

Light exercise differs between individuals depending on age and level of fitness. There are more ways to get 'light exercise' than just going for a walk. Some of them can even tick things off your to-do list!

- Gardening
- Planting, pruning, weeding etc.
- You can grow produce all year round in Adelaide but spring is a particularly exciting/productive time.
- Housework
- Chores like vacuuming, mopping, washing clothes etc.
- Cleaning the car

So, what if chores aren't your thing and you hate structured exercise like lifting weights, going for walks or even worse, Crossfit. There are a bunch of activities you can do which are really fun and incidentally, increase your fitness and mental health.

Dance (there are so many different styles for different energy levels)

Sports (again, different sports for different energy and fitness levels)

Lawn bowls, ten pin bowling, golf, Frisbee golf, footy

Gymnastics (There are a number of gymnastics classes in Adelaide that take people of all ages, it's a fun way to get fit and learn some skills)

Visit a national park or the botanical garden (This is especially fun in spring and autumn, the weather is nice and everything is flowering or changing colours)

Have a look at the next page for some of our favourite green spaces in Adelaide!

LETSS Get Out!

Here in Adelaide, we're pretty lucky to be surrounded by nature. Have a look below at some of our favourite central green spaces!

Himeji Japanese Gardens

Located right in the Adelaide CBD, the gardens are peaceful, quiet and a great space to get grounded and immerse yourself in nature.



Morialta Conservation Park

Features a range of scenic walking trails which vary in difficulty, as well as plenty of BBQ spaces and picnic areas.



Mount Lofty Botanical Gardens

Boasting a huge variety of plants, the gardens offer plenty to explore during every season of the year!



Brownhill Creek Recreation Park

A perfect getaway into nature just 20 minutes from the city. Go for a day trip or spend the weekend at the campsite or cabin facilities.



Household items you can use to help you work out at home

You won't find a home without at least a few of these! Walls can be great for working the glutes by doing some wall-sits.

They can also add stability when practicing stretches.



Want to practice some yoga but don't have a mat? Just lay down a towel! If possible lay down the towel on carpet as opposed to a slippery surface.



Couch cushions can be used similarly to a BOSU Ball (an exercise ball cut in half) to help complete exercises which test your balance.



Water bottles double up as light weights! Just fill up a couple of 1-2L water bottles and you're ready to go.



Steps are perfect for workouts that incorporate step ups or for adding an extra challenge when doing a range of exercises, from lunges to planks!





Finding meaning in challenging situations

Challenging situations can be, well just that, challenging - but they can also bring new meaning and value to our lives. That's not to say that in encountering a tough situation you have to immediately search for this meaning. Not at all. But if you feel you are in a space where you 're wanting to explore a new perspective on a challenging situation the prompts below may be helpful

What have I noticed in myself?

**What have I learnt from this experience?
How have I grown?**



Have any new/old values surfaced?

Have any values been solidified through this experience?

Has my connection with others deepened through this experience? And if so, with who?

How to Get the Most out of Short Term Counselling Sessions

Many organisations offer six to eight counselling sessions. When you have a lot going on, this can feel like throwing a teacup into the ocean. However, it can be enough to make changes that significantly improve your wellbeing.

To get the most out of these sessions, try to think about what you want to get out of your counselling. For instance, perhaps you want to find ways to deal with flashbacks or anxiety. Maybe you want to learn new healthy coping strategies or have a relationship concern you want to work through. To feel the most benefit out of your six to eight sessions, it helps to have a clearly defined issue to focus on.

Go to your first session with an open mind. The first session is really about you and the counsellor getting to know each other, what you would like to get out of counselling, and developing a plan.

It is important that you feel safe and comfortable with your counsellor. Research has shown that the most important factor contributing to the effectiveness of therapy is what is known as “the therapeutic relationship” – the quality of the connection you have with your counsellor. It helps to view counselling as a collaboration between yourself and your counsellor, where you are working together to improve your wellbeing.

Don't be surprised if raw emotions come up. Your counsellor will teach you ways to work through these strong feelings. Remember counselling is a non-judgmental space where you can express yourself and explore all the challenges, options and strategies to help you improve your quality of life.

You will need to think about things on your own as well as with your counsellor – you might even have “homework” assigned in-between sessions! Probably the most change occurs not in the therapy room, but in your life between visits to your counsellor. Trialling out and reflecting on changes is how your counselling translates to “the real world” and assists you in improving your mental health and wellbeing.

Some tips:

- Spend some time and think about what you want to achieve out of therapy before meeting with your counsellor. They will probably ask you "What would you like to get out of therapy?" Knowing clear outcomes makes it easier for the therapist to help you achieve your goals.
- Schedule a session at a time that works for you so that you are not rushing to or from other commitments. If possible block out a window of time before and after the session to allow time for reflection.
- Come to your session prepared. Some people find it helps to write down the things they wish to raise with their counsellor. This could include challenges that keep putting you off track or patterns you have noticed.
- Find things that help you stay on track between sessions. This could include self-care, reflection exercises, or expressive activities such as journaling. You might also consider linking in with support groups or services such as LETSS.
- Make what you've got work for you, and purposefully plan the way you use your sessions. For example, some organisations renew session entitlements each financial year, so you could space your sessions out so that they cover a year before starting again. Or, if closer sessions are more your preference, you could start fortnightly sessions in March and renew in the financial year. Speak to your counsellor or the organisation that provides your counselling to see what options might work best for you.

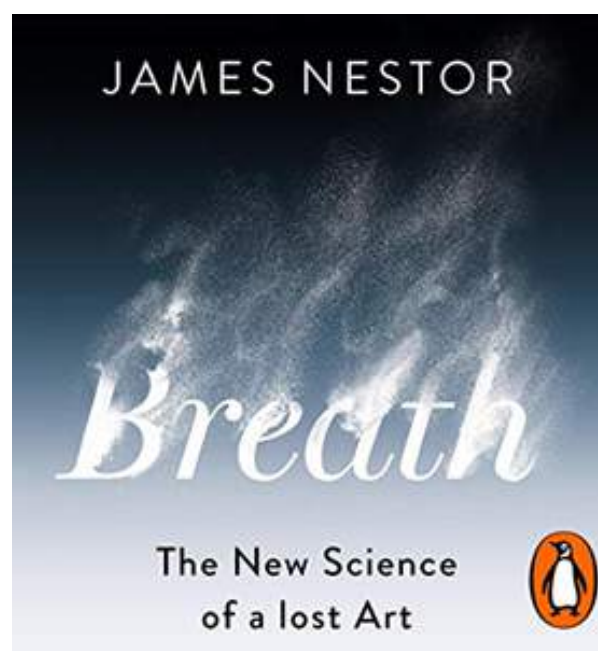
"Make what you've got work for you and purposefully plan the way you use your sessions"

LETSS REVIEW

There was a time in my life where I would have sworn that I would never listen to an audiobook, and I'd never enjoyed a book about how to breathe. In fact, I might have asked why anyone would want to think about breathing. I mean, we do it every day from the day we're born, right?

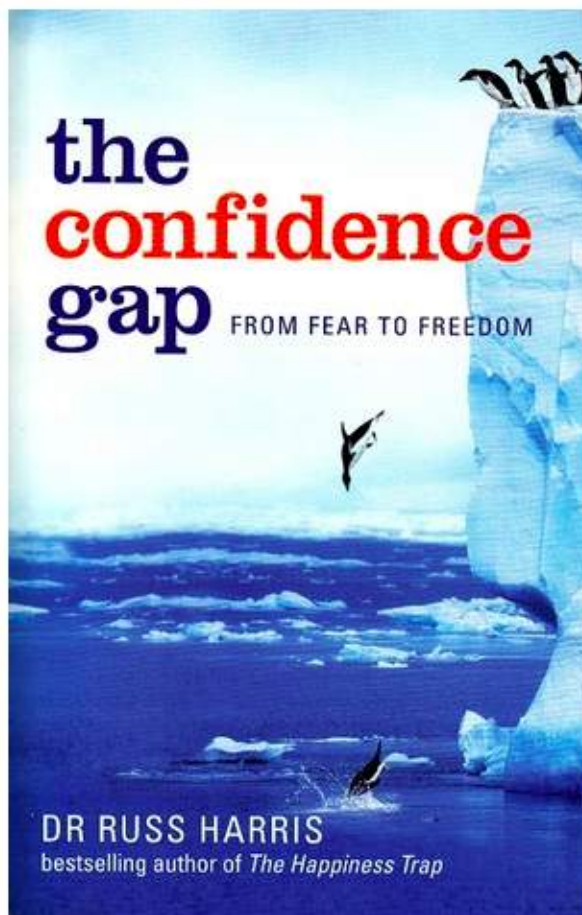
These days I love audiobooks, I recommend the audio version of James Nestor's *Breath* so much! I listen to a chapter each morning on my walk. Starting from his personal experience of respiratory illness, Nestor describes his journey into the truly amazing story of breathing. He thoroughly travels the past 1000 years of breathing history; exploring the role of breathing in religion, psychology, medicine, and biochemistry. From scientists to monks, opera singers, deep-sea divers and more, it seems there are 'Pulmonauts' (the name Nestor endearingly gives to those with breathing expertise) across the most diverse and unexpected range of settings.

I don't want to give away too much of the book in case you wish to read/listen to it - but essentially, everything we think we know about breathing is wrong! Fortunately, between astonishing new research discoveries and the re-discovery of ancient and sacred knowledge, it looks as though humans can learn to breathe properly again...



Welcome to LETSS Review!

Where our Peer Workers review books, apps, podcasts and more!



I was recommended this book after someone noticed that my confidence was low, actually, it was pretty much non-existent. This is my first go at reading a "self-help" book and I'm impressed! I've found it encouraging, simple to read and not overwhelming with suggestions on what to do.

"It is not fear that holds people back - it is their attitude towards it that keeps them stuck." pg. 47

Dr Harris uses Acceptance and Commitment Training to explain why people experience trouble with gaining and sustaining confidence.

Throughout the book, common myths around fear and confidence (that we've heard daily!) are dispelled and explained as to why they are not true.

"When you step out of your comfort zone, take a risk, or face a challenge you will feel fear. That's not weakness; it's the natural state of affairs for normal human beings."

I found this book easy to read at my own pace and found that I come back to it when I needed a reminder of how to look after myself and build my confidence. - Liz



Food Diary

Mon

Tues

Wed

Thurs

Fri

Sat

Sun

Breakfast

Snack

Lunch

Snack

Dinner

Wellbeing Plans

Did you know that here at LETSS we can also support you with creating a wellbeing plan? If you're not sure what this is exactly or how it might be helpful... read ahead!

What is a wellbeing plan?

A wellbeing plan is focused on identifying and finding ways to maintain our mental health. It is all about finding ways to build resilience, increase our general day-to-day wellbeing and identifying what we can do when we're not travelling well.

How can it help?

It can often be tricky to identify, remember or find the motivation to actively take care of ourselves - particularly when we're struggling.

Having a structured wellbeing plan can be useful as it gives us something to refer to when we're not feeling well. This can take a step out of the process and give us a better idea of how to cope when we're feeling distressed. In addition to this, a wellbeing plan can also be useful for helping us more generally maintain our mental health through daily life.

What does it involve?

A wellbeing plan can involve a range of different things. These things may include sections focused on identifying your own warning signs, identifying triggers/stressors, looking at strategies that keep you well and ways to cope when you're feeling distressed, as well as exploring current supports and places/people you can turn to if you're needing additional support.

If putting together a wellbeing plan is something of interest to you, please don't hesitate to give LETSS a call on 1800 013 755 or connect via webchat at www.letss.org.au

LETSS Keep Connected!

LETSS is a free non-crisis mental health support service for people in the Adelaide Metropolitan Region.

Call us or webchat

7 days a week from 5:00pm - 11.30pm

Information | Navigation | Support



1800 013 755



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letss.org.au

Links to Wellbeing is a consortium commissioned by the Adelaide PHN and run in partnership between Neami National, Mind Australia, Skylight Mental Health and Uniting Care Wesley Bowden.

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An Australian Government Initiative

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Improving Mental Health
and Wellbeing

mind
Help, hope and purpose

SKYLIGHT
SEE MENTAL HEALTH DIFFERENTLY

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