

STAFF WELLBEING

Live Life Well @ School



Schools are busy, unpredictable and complex environments, which can impact on the energy levels of teachers and school staff as they manage competing demands and constant change. This can impact on the mental health and wellbeing of staff, with a focus on self-care identified as an important priority in school settings.^{1,2,3}



We need to remember the importance of prioritising our own wellness, before helping others. Managing our energy levels will help us avoid burnout, exhaustion and depletion of our health. We are then able to support our students more effectively.

References

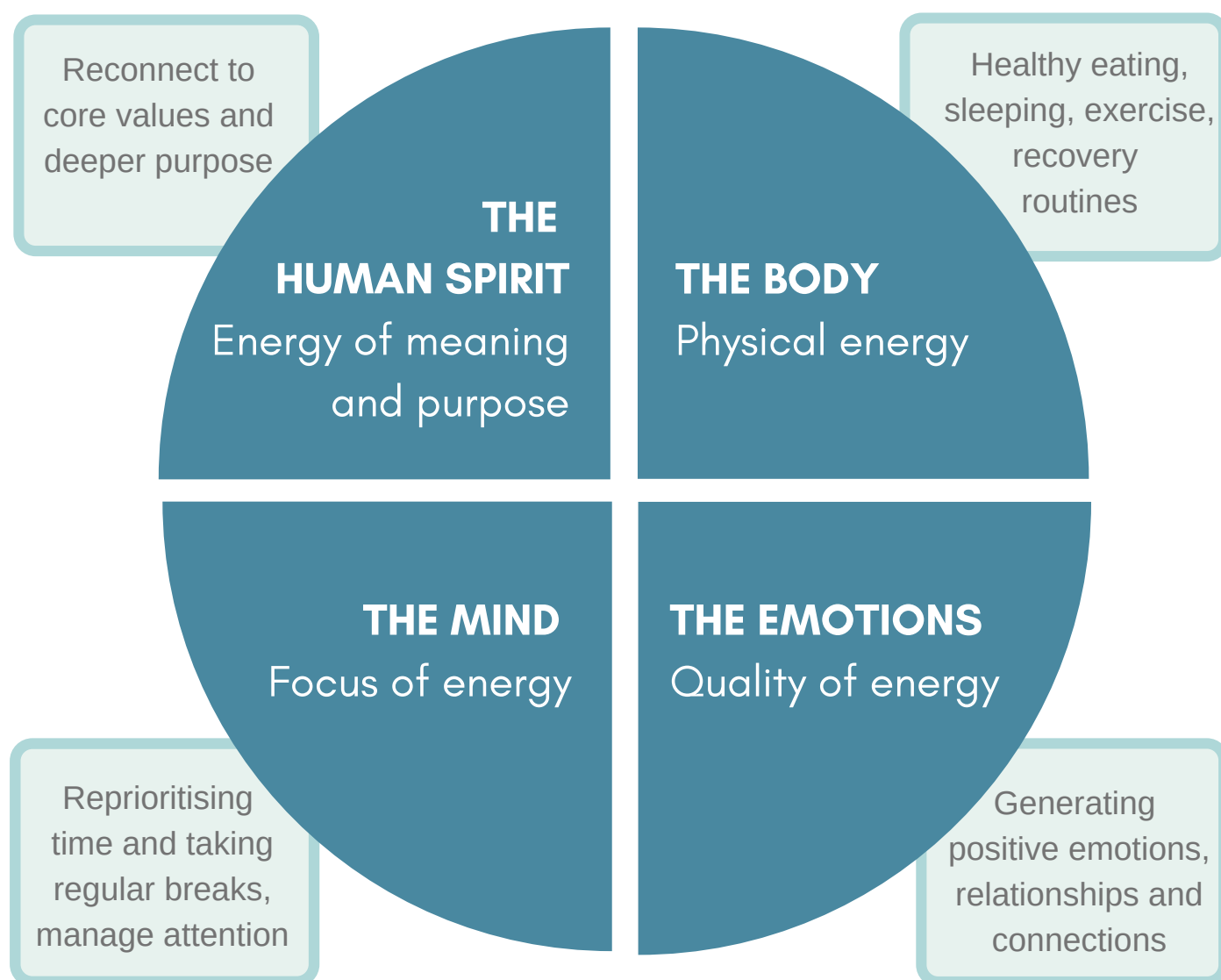
- (1) Curry, J. R. P., & O'Brien, E. R. P. (2012). Shifting to a Wellness Paradigm in Teacher Education: A Promising Practice for Fostering Teacher Stress Reduction, Burnout Resilience, and Promoting Retention. *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry*, 14(3), 178-191.
- (2) Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing - teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29(4), 8.
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THE SET UP



Energy comes from four main wellsprings in our bodies: the body, emotions, mind, and spirit. Developing regular routines to renew and maintain each of these wellsprings has been shown to improve our mental health and strengthen our immune system.

If we do these routines enough, they start to become an unconscious and automatic part of our day.



Adapted from Loehr, J & Schwartz (2001)

- References**
- (4) Loehr, J. & Schwartz (2001). The making of a corporate athlete. *Harvard Business Review* (January 2001), 120-128.
 - (5) Fredrickson, B. (2009). *Positivity: Groundbreaking research reveals how to embrace the hidden strength of positive emotions, overcome negativity, and thrive.* Crown Publishers/Random House.
 - (6) Healthdirect (July 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/healthy-sleep-habits>
 - (7) Healthdirect (May 2019) Retrieved from <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/drinking-water-and-your-health>.
 - (8) Germer, C. & Neff, K. D. (2019). Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC). In I. Itvzan (Ed.) *The handbook of mindfulness-based programs: Every established intervention, from medicine to education* (pp. 357-367). London: Routledge.

SIMPLE IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR ENERGY LEVELS

It might become clear to you that you have a strength in one area and a weakness in another. You can pick and choose the ideas you feel will best support your balance of energy across the four domains.

Share these ideas with your colleagues and your school community, including parents—as a simple and effective way to support a whole school approach to wellbeing!

Mental energy

Using your strengths

One of the most effective ways to manage our energy levels, generate positive emotions and maintain attention at work is by knowing and using our character strengths.⁵

Search: 'Learn how to apply character strengths to boost resilience and support others' to learn your greatest strengths.

Physical energy

Are you getting enough sleep?

Getting enough sleep helps support the functioning of our brains and bodies by improving our mood and concentration, increasing our resilience and supporting growth and repair of our bodies. Most adults require 8 hours sleep a night.⁶

Check out 10 tips for getting a healthy sleep:

www.healthdirect.gov.au/10-tips-for-healthy-sleep.

Emotional energy

Power of gratitude

Gratitude is a practical and simple way to generate positive emotions, which enhances our wellbeing.⁵

Three ways to promote gratitude:

- Keep a gratitude journal - write down 3 things you are grateful for today.
- Take pictures - take photos of 3 things that make you smile.
- Write down 3 things you appreciate about yourself.

Spiritual energy

Visualise your future

Taking the time to plan and visualise our future is one of the most effective ways to generate positive emotions and top up our energy stores.⁵

- Write down one goal you would like to achieve in the future e.g. study, run 5km, stop drinking alcohol for a month.
- Explain 3 action steps you will use to achieve this goal.
- Connect with people or networks that will support you in achieving this goal.



I'M CHOOSING TO:

SIMPLE IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR ENERGY LEVELS

Mental energy

Spending time in nature

One of the most effective ways to revitalise our energy and focus is by spending time in nature.⁵

Consider simple ways this can be done as part of your everyday:

- Run a classroom lesson in the outdoors.
- Take a 5-minute walk around the school grounds before school, at morning tea, lunch or after school.
- Eat your morning tea or lunch in the outdoors.

Physical energy

Tips for drinking more water

Water is an essential part of a balanced diet. When our body becomes dehydrated it doesn't function as effectively as it should. It is important we drink water regularly, with adults requiring 8-10 cups of water per day.⁷

For tips on drinking more water:

www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au/food/tips-for-drinking-more-water

Emotional energy

The importance of self-compassion

Self-compassion involves treating yourself the way we would treat a friend, especially during tough times.

Take the time to offer yourself self-kindness, rather than criticism if a mistake is made. Recognising that all humans make mistakes, fail and experience challenge is a great step in building a common humanity.⁸

Search 'self-compassion' for great talks and videos or check out this [link](#) for free practical ideas and exercises to build self-compassion.

Spiritual energy

Connecting to your values

Connecting to our personal values regularly can help in renewing and maintaining our energy sources.⁵

A simple way this can be done is by reflecting on the things you value in your life and why you value these things e.g. work, family, friends.

- Write down 3 things you value in your life and explain why you chose these.
- Write down 3 things you value about working in a school.



I'M CHOOSING TO: