

Five Ways to Wellbeing

The Five Ways to Wellbeing were researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation. They are five evidenced-based actions designed to improve personal wellbeing.

1 Connect

There is strong evidence that suggests that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and important to functioning well in the world.

Why not try: Starting a 'car pool' club at work and inviting colleagues to donate the petrol money they save in one month to Mind?

2 Be active

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups.

Why not try: the Mind Mileage Challenge – charge teams an entry fee to see who can cover the most miles in a month. Use pedometers or smart phone apps to keep a track of each team's total at home and at work, with a prize for the winning side.

3 Take notice

Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your wellbeing and that savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities.

Why not try: Around the World in 80 Dishes – throw a random selection of countries into a hat. Invite each member of your team to pull out a name and then cook a dish originating from, or inspired by, that nation. Share the fruits of your labour at a team lunch with donations going to Mind. Encourage everyone to really savour and appreciate the different flavours on offer.

4 Learn

Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction. The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.

Why not try: Inviting a local Tai Chi or yoga instructor into the office to run a lunchtime 'taster' session with donations going to Mind? You could even ask a foreign language tutor to teach conversational Spanish, French, Greek or Italian (or any other language for that matter!).

5 Give

Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy; plus research has shown that performing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.

Why not try: Starting a 'Good Deeds Jar' – invite members of your team to put 50p into a communal jar each time they do something to brighten someone else's day; whether it be smiling and saying 'hi' to a colleague in the office kitchen, thanking someone who holds the door open or giving an unsolicited compliment. At the end of a month have a vote to see who has been the most prolific, or most inventive 'good deeder'. The winner gets half of the money deposited in the jar with the remainder going to Mind.