



# mind y your health



**WORKPLACE CHALLENGE 2022**

Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace

## Employee Challenge

Proudly supported by:



**Wellbeing SA**

### A challenge a day

The following challenges aim to encourage positive mental health and wellbeing.

The focus is about self-care and finding ways to make physical and mental health a bigger part of your at work and at home.

The daily challenge is designated to be one easy task per day, so you will never feel too overwhelmed.

These challenges are backed by science, adopted from the [5 ways to wellbeing](#) and [positive psychology \(PERMA+\)](#).

### Why is mental health important?

Mental health is an integral and essential component to living a healthy, balanced life. Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

When a person has good mental health, they are likely to have clearer thinking, a greater sense of calm or inner peace, positive working relationships and generally better productivity.



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

#### 1 Stay in the present

Stress in the workplace can really impact on your day. There are many reasons why we become stressed and while we cannot always control the things that cause stress, we can control how we respond to stress

Focusing on being grounded and present in the moment can mitigate the impact of stress. This can be as simple as taking a pause with a few deep breaths or by choosing to bring mindful awareness to one thing in your workspace and focusing on it for a moment. By looking at its colour, texture, how it feels, how it works and what you use it for brings you back to the present.

Enrol in This Way Up [free stress management program](#).

#### 2 Joke of the day

Laughter strengthens your immune system, lifts your mood and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. Get everyone to share a joke.

Make sure it is clean and respectful of the group but most importantly it has to be funny.

*I asked the corporate wellness officer, "Can you teach me yoga?" He said, "How flexible are you?" I said, "I can't make Tuesdays."*

*Working from home and told a joke on a zoom call. No one laughed. Turns out I'm not remotely funny.*

#### 3 Get more active

Get your workmates involved and join the [South Australian Billion Steps October Challenge](#) and aim for 10,000 steps per day.

#### 4 Tell someone you're grateful

When we become overwhelmed, we can easily fall in to negative thoughts and not be positive or grateful for what is around us. Research shows that by being grateful we not only feel better, but we become more creative, have healthier working relationships and deliver quality work.

Take the time today to tell a work colleague what you are grateful for about them, how they make your day easier or happier and help them take a moment to acknowledge it.

Or start a monthly gratitude wall in your workplace for all to share and see.

#### 5 Connect with others

Your workplace may be physically together or you may be working from home, either way its important to connect with others to provide a sense of belonging. Take time today to share your break with your team or someone from another team/workplace you cross over with.



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

**6 Listen to your favourite music**

Make a music playlist with everyone in the workplace's go-to "Feel Good" songs on it. Set up some speakers and let it play!

This will build social cohesion within your workplace as you learn more about your coworkers and enjoy the music.

The alternative is to play your own favorite songs and let the music take you to a happy place.

**7 Catch up with a colleague over lunch**

Log out, pack your picnic rug and head outside for lunch! Get out of the workplace and take in some fresh air and vitamin D. Take your colleagues and use this as a chance to chat about something other than work.

**8 One-minute breathing**

Close your eyes and count to five breathing in and count to five breathing out. Concentrate on your lungs expanding and contracting and try not to think about anything else.

If thoughts come into your head, acknowledge and dismiss them.

Then bring your focus back to your breathing. Set a timer and do this for one minute. It will not only de-stress you but will re-energise your mind.

**9 Go for a walk**

Just 20 minutes of increased activity will help your mind and body. Explore [Walking SA's Find a Place to Walk](#) to discover new places to explore and stay active. Be SunSmart and take some water on a hot day or have a 'walk and talk' meeting.

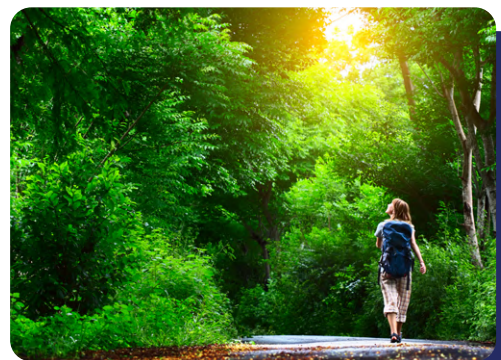
**10 Take a break in nature**

At one point in the day take some time in nature. Take a walk around the block, to a coffee shop, find a nearby park or do some gardening.

Taking a moment to reconnect with nature whether that be looking into the sky or in a park, helps us clear our mind and center ourselves again. But make sure you don't take your phones or anything that will distract you.

**11 Leave work at work**

It's important to set boundaries for work and life, which can be very difficult if you're working from home. Today set your boundaries, consciously 'leave the office' switch off the work phone, don't check emails after hours and do something for you or the ones you love.





## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

**12 Clean your work area**

Clutter can cause stress by bombarding our minds with excessive stimuli, causing our senses to work overtime on stimuli that aren't necessary or important, it distracts us by drawing our attention away from what our focus should be on.

Clutter constantly signals to our brains that our work is never done and clutter frustrates us by preventing us from locating what we need quickly. (e.g. files and paperwork lost in the "pile" or keys swallowed up by the clutter). Clean your workspace today.

Put a reminder in your diary to do this ever month!

**13 Hydrate today**

Water is so essential to our bodies. Drinking water helps to increase energy, lessens the burden on the kidneys and liver by flushing out waste products and helps regulate body temperature.

Drinking enough water during the day will reduce the risks of headaches at work, getting sore dry eyes and feeling fatigued. Aim for 2 litres per day!

**14 Celebrate you**

Take a moment to celebrate all of your achievements. Not sure what they are?

Get together with a work friend, your team or your partner and list five personal and professional achievements you have done. It is not often that we take the time to reflect on ourselves, so this may be challenging, but well worth the time for you to celebrate you.

**15 Practice mindful listening**

When our colleagues are talking to us our minds wander and we're often thinking of an answer before they have finished what they are saying.

Mindful listening is about stopping that and clearing your mind to only listen to what they are saying – it sends the message "I hear you, I see you and what you say matters to me."

Don't get distracted by what you need to do next or when your next meeting is, just stay present. This will help you absorb more information but also improve your relationships.

**16 Practice good sleep hygiene**

Getting enough sleep, and the right type of sleep, is vital for our overall health and wellbeing. While you sleep, your body works to support healthy brain function and maintain your physical health.

Not getting enough sleep affects the way you feel, think, work, learn and get along with other people, so practice some good sleep hygiene tonight.

'Sleep hygiene' means habits that help you to have a good night's sleep. Go to bed when you are tired, avoid drinking coffee and alcohol too close to bedtime, finish eating at least two hours before your head hits the pillow, keep TVs and iPads out of your bedroom, make your bedroom a haven, turn the lights down as you get into bed, read using a bedside light, try some simple meditation, like closing your eyes for 5–10 minutes and focusing on taking deep, slow breaths or enjoy a warm bath.

To find out more visit [Sleep Health Foundation](#) or complete the [this way up insomnia program](#).



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

**17 Visit a mental wellbeing website**

Often when we are faced with mental health challenges we don't know where to turn or go to a reputable source.

Check out these reputable websites:

- [Beyond Blue](#) to get the facts about mental wellbeing
- [Head to Health](#) to find some great digital mental health resources

**18 Do a full body scan**

Take a moment to settle your body into a comfortable seated or reclined position.

Begin by taking a full deep breath in and exhale through your nose. Bring your awareness to the top of your head, face, neck, shoulders.

Notice any sensations, movements or places where you are physically holding on to stress. Next move down your arms to your hands, then down your legs from your thighs to your shins and feet.

After completing your full body scan, take a few deep breaths. If you need some help download one of the many free apps such as: [Smiling Mind](#), [Headspace](#), [Buddhify](#).



**19 Write down 3 things you're grateful for**

Gratitude is the emotion you get when you're thankful for someone or something. When you're feeling down, you may find it difficult to think of something, but there's always something you can be grateful for.

It may be a good friend, the sunshine, or even just a good book that you're reading.

Today write down three things that made you feel happy or grateful – they can vary from the very simple to the deeply profound. This can be on your phone, in a journal or in a gratitude journaling app.

**20 Help someone else**

Give. It can be as simple as asking a work colleague what they need today and if you can help in any way or opening a door for someone. You can also give on a bigger scale by volunteering your time to support an important cause. The FREE [WeDo App](#) connects volunteers to organisations and makes finding volunteer positions easy.

**21 Reflect on your values**

Make a list of the values that are most important to you.

Mindfully reflecting on your values is the first stage in activating your values at work and at home and living a more meaningful, authentic life. Check out the free [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#).



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

**22** Unplug for a few hours

Turn off the phone, computer and TV for a few hours before bed.

Your mind will start to wind down and you can focus on activities such as reading, stretching or meditating to prepare for a night of deep sleep.

During work, try turning your phone on silent, turning off notifications or placing it in a drawer - this will help you focus more on the task at hand, and keep you in the moment.

**23** Keep learning

Learning new things and challenging your mind will give you a sense of achievement. Make a commitment to yourself to try something new in the next month. Explore a new hobby that interests you, learn how to play an instrument, try a new recipe to cook, or do a free course at [Massive Open Online Courses](#).

**24** Connection of food and mental health

Your mood can affect your food choices and your food choices can affect your mood. If you are experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety like low mood, irritability, lack of motivation and low energy levels, it may be difficult to find the energy and motivation to make healthy food choices.

You may reach out for convenience and comfort foods, or you may find it difficult to eat anything at all. Your challenge today is to aim for a healthy diet to keep your mental health in check.

Choose healthy snack options and over the weekend cook in bulk and freeze left over portions to just heat and eat.

**25** Try a herbal tea

When people fall sick they often drink herbal tea to heal. The benefits of consuming herbal tea include:

- Relaxing the body
- Cooling body temperature
- Easing a bad stomach
- Reducing fluid retention
- Relieves stress and anxiety

**26** Start making your own happiness a priority

Your needs matter. If you don't value yourself, look out for yourself, and stick up for yourself, you're sabotaging yourself.

Remember, it IS possible to take care of your own needs while simultaneously caring for those around you. And once your needs are met, you will likely be far more capable of helping those who need you most.

Schedule in some 'me time' today. Walk, listen to music, gym, or read a book.



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

**27 Alcohol free day**

Many Australians enjoy a drink.

In fact, alcohol is Australia's most widely used social drug. If you're going through a tough time, it can be tempting to use drugs and alcohol as a coping strategy.

However, these are addictive substances that can cause symptoms of depression and/or anxiety or make an existing problem worse.

To reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day.

Challenge yourself to be real about your alcohol intake and have an alcohol-free day today. Why not schedule in some alcohol-free days for next month too?

**28 Apply the 4 D's of Time Management**

Feeling overwhelmed with everything that needs to be done?

The Four D's strategy is a famous technique for managing time.

Delete – filter through your task list and delete what is unimportant.

Delegate – if there are tasks that could be taken charge of by someone else, then delegate it.

Defer it – if your tasks need doing, but are too big to tackle in the moment, defer it, but add in a time block to complete later.

Do it – if the job is urgent, do it immediately.

Keep a copy of this somewhere safe and return to it if you are feeling overwhelmed.

**29 Listen to mental health podcasts**

Fuel your mind today by listening to mental health podcasts that are relatable to what you're going through.

Podcasts have become really popular lately and there are a lot of valuable series to listen to or save for later.

Here a few to search for:

- BeyondBlue
- Not Alone
- Imperfectly Perfect
- Mr Feels – a mental health podcast,
- The anxiety shut in hour
- The Savvy Psychologist
- Blackdog Institute
- Lets Talk Rural Mental Health
- Hooked on Sport

**30 Call a close friend you haven't talked to in a while**

Losing touch with people is an unfortunate part of life. Especially as you get older and meet more people, it's hard to maintain all of your relationships and when life is so busy you don't feel like you have time.

Connection is crucial for mental well-being. The more we can connect with other humans, the better we're going to feel.

Your challenge today is to get in touch with someone, whether it be an old friend, a former colleague, a family member and reach out to them and see how they are.



## Daily Challenges

### Tick when complete

#### **31** Keep it going!

Your last challenge is to plan for how you can continue to incorporate self-care and prioritise your health and wellbeing. Here are some well researched programs and services to help keep you on your wellbeing journey.

- **Mindspot**

MindSpot is a free digital mental health service for Australian adults who are experiencing difficulties with anxiety, stress, depression and low mood. We provide assessment and treatment courses, or we can help you find local services that can help.

- **my Compass**

Black Dog Institute have developed my Compass, a free online self-help program for people with mild to moderate depression, anxiety and stress.

- **HeadGear**

Also through Black Dog Institute, a free, easy-to-use smartphone app that guides you through a 30-day mental fitness challenge designed to build resilience and wellbeing and prevent things like depression and anxiety.

- **This way up**

Multiple free online courses that are designed to help you identify, understand, and improve psychological difficulties like stress, insomnia, worry, anxiety and depression.

- **5 ways to wellbeing**

Prioritising our wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around us can help us live happier, healthier lives. The Five Ways to Wellbeing are simple ways to improve the mental and social wellbeing and includes the 5 actions of: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, give. Incorporating the Five Ways into your daily routine is easy, free, and can be done anywhere and in a way that suits you.

- **Get Healthy**

A free, confidential information and telephone based coaching service for South Australians offering expert advice and plenty of motivation to help you eat healthy, get active and manage weight.

- **Head to Health**

Head to Health brings together apps, online programs, online forums, and phone services, as well as a range of digital information resources.

Whether you are trying to improve your own sense of wellbeing, looking for help with something that is bothering you, or helping someone you care about — Head to Health is a good place to start

## Congratulations

You have finished the 31 Day Mental Health Challenge!

Remember, you can do this 31 day challenge any time.

Why not set a reminder to do it again soon!

Keep up to date by subscribing to the [Business SA Today weekly newsletter](#).



# Workplace Daily Challenges

## 31 Day Mental Health Challenge

**1**

Stay in the present

**2**

Get more active

**3**

Tell someone you're grateful

**4**

Joke of the day

**5**

Connect with others

**6**

Listen to your favourite music

**7**

Catch up with a colleague over lunch

**8**

One-minute breathing

**9**

Go for a walk

**10**

Take a break in nature

**11**

Leave work at work

**12**

Clean your work area

**13**

Just drink water today

**14**

Celebrate you

**15**

Practice mindful listening

**16**

Practice good sleep hygiene

**17**

Visit a mental wellbeing website

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Do a full body scan

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Keep it going!

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