



# Resilience Toolkit

# Facilitators

# Guide

for helping members take  
stress in their stride.

## 16-18+ Youth

SURF LIFE SAVING  
**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



the  
power of  
humanity





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*This content is drawn from a variety of Australian Red Cross resources, including psychosocial literature. Some of the wording and language has been adapted for the target audience.*







# About the SLSSA ARC Partnership

Surf Life Saving SA is an inclusive organisation that offers something for everyone. We want all Australians to live an active life, to get involved in life, to participate, and to help save lives.

Australian Red Cross is building a better society based on people helping people. We aim to improve people's lives and build their resilience - no matter who they are or where they live.

Being a surf life saver means that you undertake a number of roles including providing safety information to the public, administering first aid and emergency care, and performing aquatic rescues. Being a surf lifesaver is satisfying, fun and rewarding, but you are also putting your own wellbeing on the line. This is why Red Cross and Surf Life Saving have teamed up in order to co-design an emergency resilience resource with young members.

Red Cross and Surf Life Saving believe that building resilience to emergencies is crucial to our health and wellbeing, as it enables us to develop techniques and habits for protection against experiences which could overwhelm us. These then help us to maintain balance in our busy lives, as well as protect us against potential mental health difficulties.

Both Red Cross and Surf Life Saving want you to lead a fit and healthy lifestyle, being connected with others and your community, and be mentally, physically and emotionally strong.

As young people, you are in a unique position to prepare and invest in yourselves, so that you are able to lead a fulfilling life, doing what you love. We hope this resource is able to help you learn something new to help you achieve that.



# About This Toolkit

## Tools to help you help Nippers on their wellbeing journey

Surf Life Saving has teamed up with Red Cross to work with young people in producing a resilience toolkit for members. This toolkit includes a number of activities, information, research and suggestions for supporting young members to develop physically, emotionally and mentally to become more resilient individuals.

The aim for this toolkit is that they might learn new ways to help respond during, and recover from, emergencies at the beach and throughout life. We hope that you find this guide valuable, and that it will help you connect with, and teach young people valuable life skills. Plus, you might even learn a thing or two along the way.

When it comes to supporting others, reducing your stress, and building resilience, often people ask “*but what can we actually do?*”

We have collected some resources from an array of experts and included them here.

The content within this resource will hopefully help your group learn about:

- Stress
- Stress Responses
- Wellbeing
- Recovery
- Supporting Themselves & Others

For more information about the content within this booklet, please contact the Surf Life Saving SA headquarters by visiting:

**[www.surflifesavingsa.com.au](http://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au)**





# A Note to Facilitators

This guide is provided as a means for facilitating resilience building in your young members. As you will be facilitating these workshops, there are a number of suggestions on how to run group activities, and methods which believe are effective and useful. However, you know your group better than we do. Therefore, you are welcome to adapt the way which you deliver this content. Do it in a way that works best for your group!

## Remember to:

- Consider your age group - this will have an impact on the language you should use
- Consider splitting your group up; boys and girls, or different age groups - there is some discussion throughout this module and you want to promote the best conversation possible

- Provide some safeguarding statements at the start of your sessions - you could say something like *“we are going to chat about some topics that might be difficult. We would like you to use general examples, not use names, and if at any point you do not want to be involved in the conversation, you will not be forced to do so.”*

This is not a mental health module. Throughout this booklet there may be references to stress, and anxiety. Here, stress means ongoing (chronic) pressure or worry. Anxiety means in the moment physiological (body and mind) reactions to an emergency or intense event.

Anxiety is a perfectly normal response to stressful situations, especially during an emergency. This module is not intended to equip you to address mental health topics with young people - we do not expect you to be counsellors.



# During Stress: Fight, Flight or Freeze?

This video explains 'fight, flight or freeze' really clearly. The intention is to get the group thinking about the physiological response to stressful incidents.

## Fight Flight Freeze – Anxiety Explained For Teens



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O\\_5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O_5M)

You are welcome to skip this and have a discussion around the concepts, if this would better suit your group.

Please watch this video and decide, prior to your workshop, whether this video is appropriate for your group. Remember that this is not intended to be a mental health module.

Make sure to explain before showing the video: in this context, anxiety is the body's reaction to 'in the moment' stress - not ongoing anxiety.

For some groups, this video may feel like it is trivialising anxiety. Having an older/experienced volunteer, such as a patrol or vice captain, take this section would be valuable. Try to organise this for your session!





# I Feel...

The ability to recognise how you feel in different situations, or how others may feel, can be a great asset in building resilience.

## How would I feel?

To the right are three scenarios that you might be likely to encounter during your volunteering at Surf Life Saving.

In small groups, have two discussions about each scenario.

### Discussion 1:

How might you feel during this situation?  
What role are you likely to be playing, and how do you think you would respond?

### Discussion 2:

How might someone else feel? You might begin this discussion by brainstorming all of the people who might be involved - in the moment, or after the fact (e.g. bystanders, Surf Life Saving staff, the people involved in the incident).

Be sure to focus on emotions! Try to be as honest as you can. Try to use what you have learnt about the *Fight, Flight or Freeze* response to predict how your body might react, regardless of how you think you should handle the situation.

### Scenario 1:

You have been involved in a mass rescue. There were four patients in the water, struggling to swim. You and a friend were alone with your rescue boards and had to quickly decide which order you would rescue the patients in. You and your friend managed to bring all of the patients to shore. One patient was a middle aged person who was crying hysterically. You spent 15 minutes trying to calm them down.





### **Scenario 2: Successful Rescue**

The Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) on your patrol has pulled an unconscious non-breathing patient from the water and brought them back to shore. You helped the IRB driver carry the patient up the beach and you performed CPR on the patient. After 2 minutes of CPR, the patient recovered and began breathing again. Other patrolling members successfully carried the patient to the ambulance. You do not know what happened to the patient after that.

### **Scenario 3: Unsuccessful Search**

Your patrol has been asked to assist in searching for a missing patient who was last seen in the water. You are selected to be IRB Crew in the search. It is a calm day and there are only 10 people in the water. You have approached all 10 people and none of them are the person you are looking for. You spend hours searching the water for the patient, along with the rest of your patrol. At the end of the day, the patient has still not been found - you are exhausted. The patient's family member is distraught.



# Values

This is intended as a basic exercise for values exploration. It is not a definitive process for consolidating values. Instead, it merely acts as a suggestion of what their values *could* be.

## What do you value?

**Explain:** This activity will hopefully result in building a list of words which might represent some of your values. Hopefully you will gain some understanding of yourself, and maybe discover something you had not previously considered. In a moment, I will be giving you five different prompts, and tying these words together in the last step.

*This is where you would hand out four slips of paper from each of the coloured piles (purple, blue, pink, yellow, green).*

**Purple Prompt:** On each of your purple slips of paper, write down a physical object, product or item you feel your need in order to function on a daily basis.

Once you have finished, spend a short time sharing time, in pairs or small groups, where you share 1-2 objects that you wrote down.

This activity is originally done with coloured paper - but the colours are just for ease of explaining, and this can be done any way that works for your group. For example, you could do this as labelled columns on a page, or in your phone's notes section.

You can offer these examples to help with brainstorming: cellphone, car, food, medication, water, shelter, etc.

Some may ask how “concrete” or “real” the items they write on their cards need to be. Try to encourage them to play with the purposeful vagueness of the prompts and engage with the activity in whatever way seems to make sense to them.





**Blue Prompt:** On each of your blue slips, write down a geographical (physical) location that is especially important to you.

It could be your grandparents house, the beach, a place you have always wanted to travel, or somewhere you worked and/or volunteered.

Like last time, share 1-2 locations that you wrote down and a brief explanation as to why that place means so much to you.

**Pink Prompt:** On each of your pink slips, write down a person who has made you who you are today.

*You do not need to ask people to share here.*

**Yellow Prompt:** On each of your yellow slips, write down a personal or professional goal that you have for yourselves (short or long term).

Share 1 goal that you selected.

**Green Prompt:** On your green slips, write one significant memory you want to remember.

This could be memories where you learnt a valuable lesson. If you are comfortable, share one or two memories you wrote down.

The *pink prompt* may be associated with positive, negative, or mixed feelings. You may want to name that reality out loud beforehand.

Each slip should have one name on it, however writing 'parents' or 'siblings' is okay too. Pets can also be included here.

This values activity precedes a goal development activity. If the group are unable to come up with goals here, that is okay. Some may not have had any interest or success with goals in the past.

The *green prompt* often takes the longest. If this activity is likely to take too long for your allocated time, you may want to ask that the brainstorming to be done prior to the session.



## Value Identification

This happens in two steps:

**Step 1:** Find words that connect, that are either similar, or relate in some way. Rearrange your slips of paper to put the connecting slips next to each other. For example, on a pink slip might say 'parents,' and a blue slip might say 'home.'

**Step 2:** Find a word which accurately represents the connection that you saw between the slips. A possible connecting word for the example could be 'family.'

Have them repeat the steps five times, with the most significant connections they can see. These could represent five values that the members have.

You may want to break off and have some discussion around whether the members feel these words are accurate to their values. Providing context at the start of the activity is important in helping guide them to accurate values, rather than it being guesswork.

**Before the value identification step, you may want to give members a chance to reflect on what they have written down. It would also be a good time to introduce a mindfulness breathing exercise.**

**A long list of values can be found on the next page. This can be a guide for selecting connecting words.**





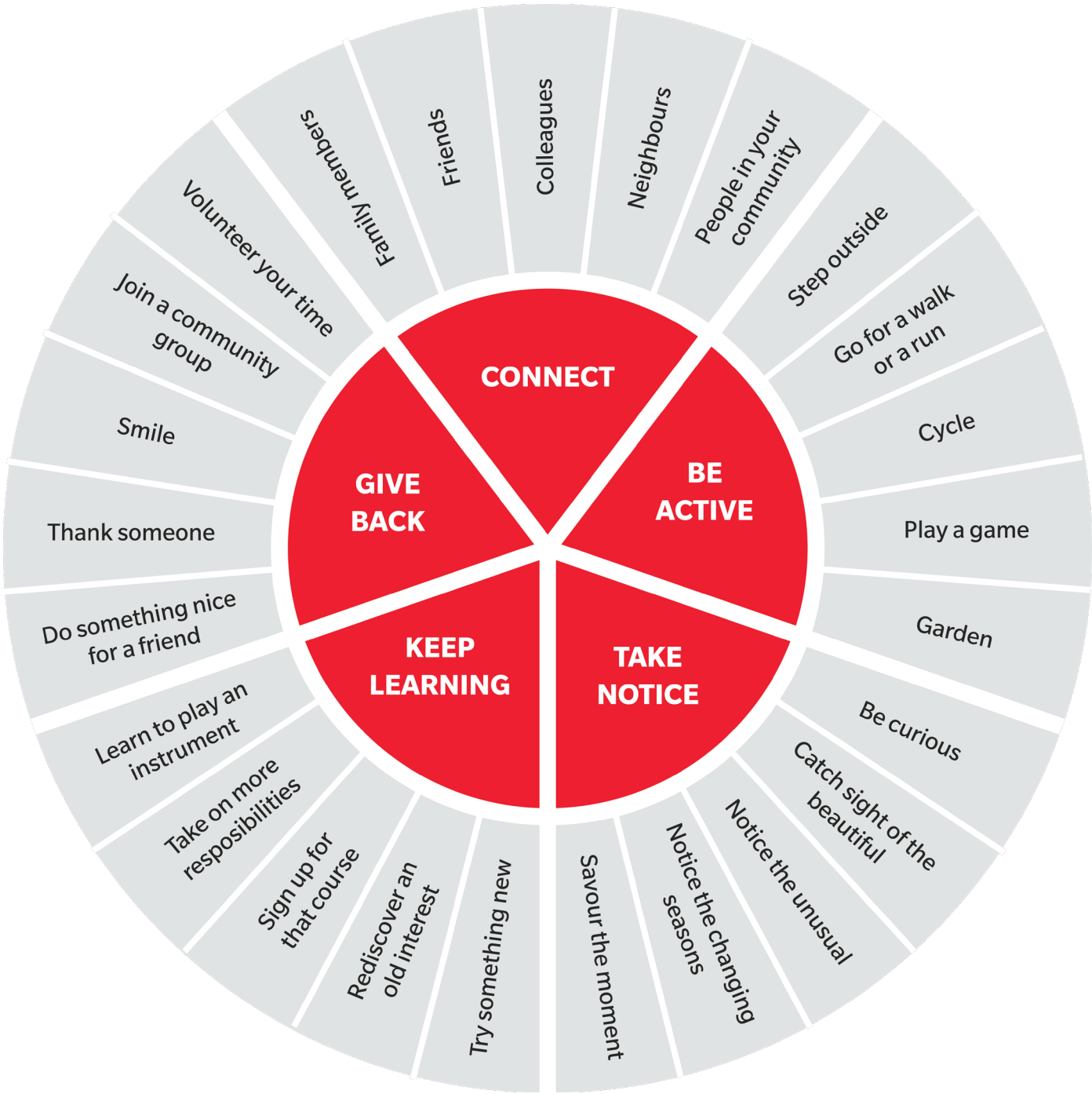
## List of values:

Accountability	Efficiency	Job security	Safety
Achievement	Equality	Joy	Security
Adaptability	Ethics	Justice	Self-discipline
Adventure	Excellence	Kindness	Self-expression
Altruism	Fairness	Knowledge	Self-respect
Ambition	Faith	Leadership	Serenity
Authenticity	Family	Legacy	Service
Balance	Financial stability	Leisure	Simplicity
Beauty	Forgiveness	Love	Spirituality
Being the best	Freedom	Loyalty	Sportsmanship
Belonging	Friendship	Making a difference	Stewardship
Career	Fun	Nature	Success
Caring	Future generations	Openness	Teamwork
Collaboration	Generosity	Optimism	Thrift
Commitment	Giving back	Order	Time
Community	Grace	Parenting	Tradition
Compassion	Gratitude	Patience	Travel
Competence	Growth	Patriotism	Trust
Confidence	Harmony	Peace	Truth
Connection	Health	Perseverance	Understanding
Contentment	Home	Personal Fulfillment	Uniqueness
Contribution	Honesty	Power	Usefulness
Cooperation	Hope	Pride	Vision
Courage	Humility	Recognition	Vulnerability
Creativity	Humor	Reliability	Wealth
Curiosity	Inclusion	Resourcefulness	Well-being
Dignity	Independence	Respect	Wholeheartedness
Diversity	Initiative	Responsibility	Wisdom
Environment	Intuition	Risk taking	

# 5 Actions for Wellbeing

This is our foundation for wellbeing - these next activities, and even into the next level of content, will use these!

These five actions are intended to help you feel good, and function well: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give. Invest in your wellbeing by incorporating these actions in your day to day life:







# Goal Setting Challenge

Goals are an important step in helping us to flourish. Not only do they give us focus but they also help us to track progress, and make us feel even better when we smash those milestones.

## Let's go!

Goal setting can be hard - especially because often we just don't know where to start. This process will walk you through developing some goals around resilience and wellbeing.

**Step 1:** Ideally, we would set a goal for each of the *Five Actions for Wellbeing* - but if you need to limit time, have them pick one value for one of the five actions.

### Examples:

- I have a value of *Family* - Connect/Give
- I have a value of *Health* - Active
- I have a value of *Sport* - Keep Learning
- I have a value of *Nature* - Take Notice

**Step 2:** Have each member create a specific goal which develops the value they have chosen.

### Examples:

- *Family* - spend quality time with family
- *Health* - run 10km in under an hour
- *Sport* - get into the state team
- *Nature* - appreciate nature more often

**Step 3:** Have the group determine how they are going to reach that goal. Assign a specific activity, and make it measurable.

### Examples:

- *Family* - spend 1 hour a week with family
- *Health* - go for a run 3 times a week
- *Sport* - spend 1 extra night a week training
- *Nature* - walk in a new park once a week

**SMART goals:** Specific (use action words), Measurable (success can be evaluated), Achievable (can be reached within the time limit) , Relevant (to your interests, needs and aspirations), Time bound (has a time limit).



**Step 4:** Decide how long you think you need in order to achieve your goal. Incorporate a time frame within your goal, so that it is clear.

**Examples:**

- *Family* - spend quality time with a family member every week for a month
- *Health* - be able to run 10km in under an hour, in 3 months from today
- *Sport* - get into the state team before the start of this season
- *Nature* - spend more time appreciating nature every week for a year

**Step 5:** Check your goal! Do a final check to make sure that you are not setting yourself up for failure, and that your goal aligns with your values and Wellbeing Actions.

**Have a discussion as a group after Step 5 to make sure that everyone knows what their first step is - maybe set a time to do the measurable action they decided on.**

**Completed Goals:**

- *Family* - spend quality time with a family member every week, for one hour, for a month
- *Health* - be able to run 10km in under an hour, in 3 months from today, by running three times per week
- *Sport* - get into the state team before the start of this season, by spending 1 extra night per week training skills
- *Nature* - spend more time appreciating nature every week for a year, go for a walk in a different park at least once per week

Once you've completed your goals, go out and get started! Maybe you can invite a friend to set the same goal so you can work together.

Remember, wellbeing is a lifelong process – what you do today will probably look different in a few years – so enjoy it! If you start getting bogged down in the process, mix it up! Try something new.

Your wellbeing is about you. Keep reflecting and growing, and you'll be able to tackle any challenge that comes your way.





## Reflection

This happens after you have started working towards your goal.

Reflection is an important part of building resilience in yourself. Understanding yourself, and particularly your strengths, helps you stay positive and focussed. Even during the toughest of times.

- *What went well?*
- *What did not go the way it was intended?*
- *What did I learn?*
- *What will I do differently next time?*

These are some suggested questions, aimed at helping you stay focussed on consistent improvement, especially when you might slip up and fail occasionally.

**Make sure they have these questions to take with them - and so they know that improvement is gradual, and failure is a positive part of the process!**

**You could do this as a group later after the initial goal setting activity. See how people are going, and either celebrate progress or get members back on track.**



# Leadership in Emergencies

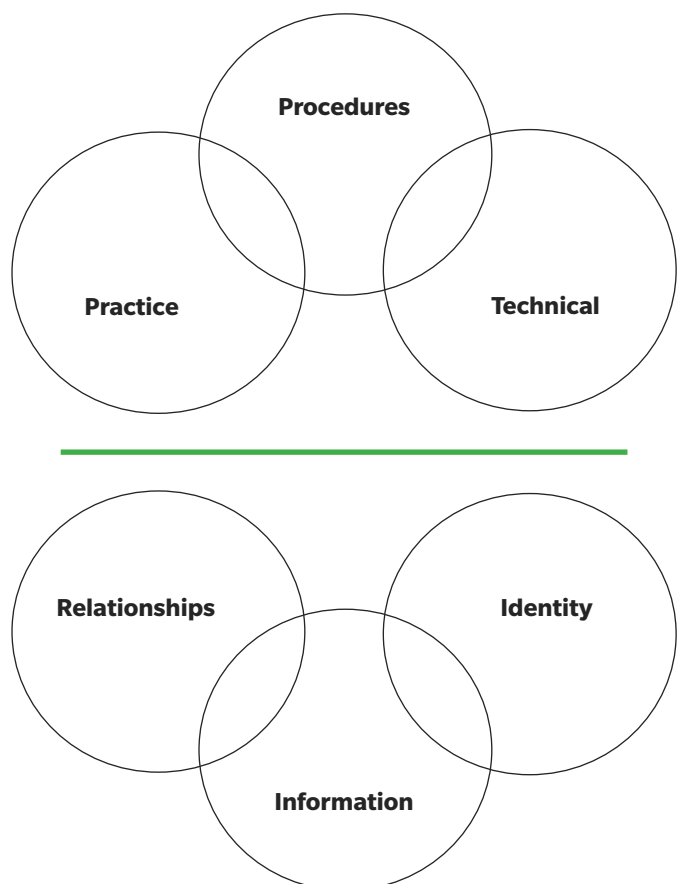
Leadership in emergencies can be difficult! The main take away from this activity is that to be an effective leader, you must be able to use both relational and technical leadership skills.

**Step 1:** Provide context; during a rescue they will need to be able to use a variety of leadership skills, to ensure that the rescue happens successfully and your team members are kept safe. But what leadership skills are important?

**Step 2:** Get the group to call out what makes a 'good leader.'

**Step 3:** As they brainstorm, separate the attributes into practice, procedure and technical-based skills above the line (e.g. good delegation, follow command structure, knowing rescue skills and procedures, organised), and relational, information and identity-based attributes below the line (e.g. empathic, patient, trustworthy) .

**Step 4:** Draw the green line between the above and below attributes.







**Step 5:** In times of high pressure, it is natural (because often it is easier) for people to revert to process – when there is much to do and so little time, the focus will usually be on the practical and procedural. In other words - let's get it done! However, to be an effective leader, the effort must also include a focus on the 'human' aspects of work - particularly relationships.

Getting the job done is important, but relationships are also a critical area of focus. People need to have strong relationships with the people they work with; trusted relationships lead to commitment and powerful results.

Our actions are completely driven by our own set of values, beliefs and sense of identity. Therefore, finding meaning and value in our work motivates people to work together. As leaders we have to remember that the people are essential to the work, and bringing them into the fold, developing trusted relationships, and ensuring that the team feels valued at an individual level will likely bring better results.

**The main point is, to be an effective leader, you must be able to use both relational and technical leadership skills.**

**But not every person does this! Have a discussion with your group. Which way do they think they would sway during a moment of high intensity? Would they neglect process to look after the people, or neglect people to make sure the job gets done?**

**People who are good at working 'above the green line' will often revert even further 'above the green line' during stress. The same goes for people who normally operate 'below the green line.' Discuss this! Knowing where your strengths are, and knowing which way you might sway during an intense moment, can help you remember to balance yourself.**



# Strength in Numbers

Knowing how to support your peers, and have meaningful conversations can be tough. It might be uncomfortable, or you simply might not know what to say. Hopefully this will help!

## What would you say?

Split the group into small groups of 3-4. They will be role playing the below scenario - practising having difficult conversations.

**Scenario:** Your group have just finished patrol for the day, and it was a particularly difficult day. Someone had an accident on the beach (injury), and your patrol had to respond to the incident. It was pretty traumatic. You're all sitting on the beach now, and one of you seems more heavily affected than the others. What would you say?

Role play each of the different roles - one of you being supported, and one of you supporting. The others should be observing or supporting.

Being able to effectively create a safe space, where someone feels comfortable to share their feelings freely, is a skill. It takes time to develop the skills to convey empathy, care and compassion without imposing your thoughts and opinions. The key is to respond, not to react.

When you have finished the exercise, exit the role play and have another discussion:

- *What went well?*
- *What did you learn from the activity?*
- *What was difficult or challenging?*
- *What do you want or feel you need to know more about today?*

**You could use the scenarios from the 'I feel' page. Provide some tips for starting tough conversations:**

- **Ask how they are feeling (or going)**
- **Listen to what they have to say**
- **Ask about what they have done in tough times in the past**





# 100 Point Recovery Plan

A simple recovery plan! Use this one as an example - there is a blank one on the next page!

## Wellbeing points

After a critical incident, our body likely needs to recover from going into overdrive. This recovery plan is something that is good to do generally - but it's particularly important to go back to after a critical incident. Knowing what you do to relax and recover is important. Not only will this motivate you to look after yourself, but it will also maximise the effectiveness, and minimise the duration, of the recovery time.

The aim is to accumulate 100 points per week, for at least 30 out of 52 weeks of the year. Each activity can be counted once per week.

All activities should be 30 minutes or more, and no points are awarded if you are checking your mobile phone - the intention is to focus on the activity, and be present.

## Example plan

Indoor Activities	Points	Outdoor Activities	Points
Massage	50	Relaxing swim	25
Meditation	50	Bush walk	25
Yoga	40	Surf or paddle	25
Breathing exercises	30	BBQ or picnic	25
Warm bath	30	Fishing	25
Social catch up	25	Gardening	25
Movie	25	Slow walk	20
Listening to music	15	Slow cycle	20
Reading fiction	15	Sightseeing/ festivals	15
TV	5	Shopping	15



Point scale

- 40+ points** - activities which relax both the mind and the body.
- 30-40 points** - activities which incorporate a specific mindfulness activity.
- 25-30 points** - activities which are enjoyable and invoke social connection.
- 15-25 points** - activities which you do for enjoyment or relaxation alone. These can include gentle athletic activity which are not part of a regular training regime.
- 0-15 points** - indoor activities during which the body is stationary and your mind is entertained.

100 Point Recovery Plan

Indoor Activities	Points	Outdoor Activities	Points





July 2020

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