

# Healthy Heads Talk No 5.

## Taking action

This Healthy Heads talk is about the self-assessment exercise in the 'Take action' section of the Workforce Handbook.

You'll need to familiarise yourself with it, preferably by completing it for yourself.

You'll also need at least one copy of the handbook.

More would be better for handing out on the day.

Take the time to have a couple of rehearsals, using the following script as a guide.

Don't be afraid to find your own words.

Just remember, we want to clear, concise and approachable.

We want to encourage people to complete self-assessment exercise.

## Slide 1 – Taking action.

### Script

We all have a responsibility to look after the mental health and wellbeing of ourselves, our families, and our workmates.

This Healthy Heads Talk is about one practical way to help us do so.



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## Slide 2 – Identifying which areas of your life need focus.

### Script

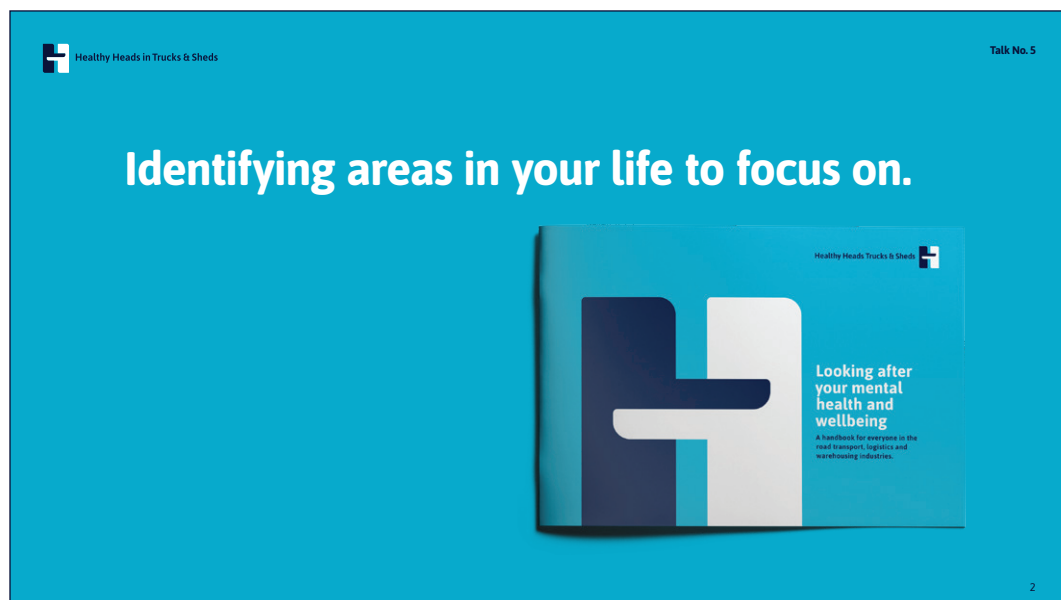
Identifying which areas of your life need focus.

Yeah, makes sense, figure out if there's stuff to fix. But how do you do that?

That's where this guy comes in.

**Action note:** *Hold up the Handbook*

There is a practical self-assessment exercise under 'Take action' which can help.



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## Slide 3 – 4 areas. 16 tick boxes.

### Script

4 areas, 16 boxes to tick, or not tick.

It's that simple and takes only a few minutes to do.

The four key areas are Body, Emotions, Mind and Connection.

This creates a holistic snapshot of how you are going right now.

While largely straight forward, the statements do make you pause and reflect.

Of course, the more honest you are with yourself, then the more meaningful it is.

**Action note:** Pick out a couple of statements that you can personally talk to. Perhaps one that is an easy one to give a positive answer, and one where you may have to be prepared to say you could do better. It's about being honest and open.

At the end you tally how many boxes you ticked

to get a guide of how you are going.

There is an overall tally rating out of sixteen.

And separate tallies for Body, Emotions, Mind and Connection to help identify areas to focus on.

If your tallies are low, great. You're doing fine.


It doesn't make the exercise any less useful.

Just completing the exercise, reading the statements,

helps us to stop and think about the many things

that impact our mental health and wellbeing.

And the more we all understand this stuff, the better we all become.



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## 4 areas. 16 questions.

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing

### Take action

#### Managing your energy

We all have the responsibility to look after the mental health and wellbeing of ourselves, our families, our workplaces and our communities.

The following exercise can help you identify which areas of your life need focus. You can then start creating safe and healthy habits and behaviours to help restore your energy where you need it most.

Please tick the statements that are true for you on the following pages to work out your overall energy and areas you need to focus on.

#### 1. Body

- ☐ I don't regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired
- ☐ I frequently skip breakfast, or I settle for something that isn't nutritious
- ☐ I don't exercise regularly enough to feel healthy and energised
- ☐ I don't take regular breaks during the day to truly relax and recharge, or I often eat lunch on the road if I can't sit at all.

#### 2. Emotions

- ☐ I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient or stressed at work, especially when work is demanding
- ☐ I don't have enough time with my family and loved ones, and when I'm with them, I'm not always really with them
- ☐ I have too little time for the activities that I most enjoy
- ☐ I don't stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to recognise my accomplishments and strengths

#### 3. Mind

- ☐ I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I am easily distracted during the day
- ☐ I spend much of the day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities that I enjoy and support my wellbeing
- ☐ I don't take enough time for personal reflection
- ☐ I work in the evenings or on weekends, and I almost never take a break

#### 4. Connection

- ☐ I don't spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most
- ☐ There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy
- ☐ My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by my personal values
- ☐ I don't invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world

#### How is your overall energy?

Total number of statements ticked: \_\_\_\_\_

Guide to scores

- 0 - 3 Excellent energy management skills
- 4 - 6 Reasonable energy management skills
- 7 - 10 Energy management deficits
- 11 - 16 Need support to develop better energy

#### What do you need to work on?

Number of ticks in each category

Body: \_\_\_\_\_

Emotions: \_\_\_\_\_

Mind: \_\_\_\_\_

Connection: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Slide 4 – 30 self-care strategies.

### Script

Having figured out any areas you need to focus on, the following pages give you 30 self-care strategies for the four key areas. Some may seem obvious. But we humans can never be reminded enough what we should do.

**Action note:** Give an example from Body such as ‘Move and stretch’

Others maybe more thought provoking.

**Action note:** Give an example from Mind such as ‘Focus on things you can control’.

Ask the audience for what things they feel they can control.

The strategies are a series of small things to try or think about. One by itself will only do so much.

But do a few, and they can add up to a change for the better. Has anyone here done this exercise?

**Action note:** Be ready for some who may have tried it and have a negative or ambivalent view. Acknowledge it’s not going to be for everyone. No big deal. That’s okay. What helps one person may be a shrug of the shoulders for another.


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## 30 self-care strategies.

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Reflecting on your results, consider the below self-care strategies to help you renew your energy where you need it the most.

**1 - Body**

- Manage sleep and diet.** Regular exercise, nutrition and relaxation can help improve sleep quality. Develop a targeted physical activity program. That is suitable for your work hours and helps you manage fatigue.
- Don't forget to breathe!** Control your breathing by inhaling slowly and deeply through your nose, and exhaling through your mouth. Do this for several minutes and you will start to feel better and more relaxed in your head, heart and body.
- Exercise regularly and work life balance.**
- Hydrate and stretch.** Change your water throughout the day.
- Control your media intake.** Schedule some time to 'switch off' and take a break from your phone and social media exposure.
- Take breaks.** Be aware of your commitments and take opportunities – even when for long weekends and holidays.
- Take breaks throughout the day.** e.g. going for walks to the kitchen to make a cup of tea/coffee or just sit.
- Develop healthy habits and routines.** Start simple, do what is realistic, water, sugar and drink 8. Many things, just start, make time for things you enjoy, reward yourself and don't beat yourself up if you miss a day.
- Stay hydrated.** Have water accessible and remember to keep drinking.

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**2 - Emotions**

- Be aware of your feelings, thoughts and behaviours.** Being aware of the how and what can help you feel calm and reduce stress. Pay attention to (1) what you are feeling e.g. 'I am feeling stressed?' (2) what thoughts you are having (e.g. 'I am worried that I won't meet the deadline?') (3) how you are behaving in response to your thoughts and feelings (e.g. 'I am nervous and agitated by stress, through the weekend normally I would relax').
- Identify your triggers and know when you are most vulnerable.** Pay attention to situations that give you a strong emotional response to identify patterns.
- Share your thoughts and feelings with people you trust to give perspective and support.**
- Be kind to yourself and others.** Learn the standard act can vary, whether it is a smile or a kind word.
- Laugh and smile.** Spend time on things that make you laugh or good for your mood and mental health.
- Manage personal boundaries.** Making self-care a priority will help you be the most aware of your needs. Give yourself permission to say no.

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**3 - Mind**

- Practice self-compassion.** Avoid negative self-talk and learn to be kind to yourself as though you were talking to a close friend – calmly and gently. Challenge and encourage yourself when you are struggling.
- Adopt a growth mindset.** People who believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through time and effort are more likely to learn and improve.
- Be flexible in your thinking.** As humans we naturally try to categorise things as black or white, but thinking this way can be unhelpful in most situations in life here shades of grey. Thinking about something in a different way and trying new ways of doing things can increase effective problem solving.
- Focus on the things you can control.** Focus on your own behaviours and accept limitations e.g. 'I can't control the weather'.
- Practice gratitude and positive thinking.** Reflect on the things that you are grateful for and less things that you are feeling 'downward' to each day.

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## Slide 5 – Support online & on hand.

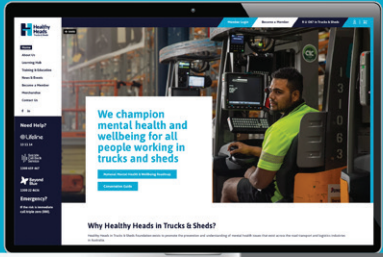
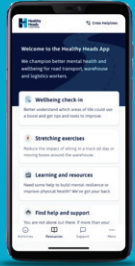
### Script

Members can download the Handbook from the Healthy Heads website.  
As ever there's heaps more on the website and on the Healthy Heads App.  
Stuff to read, learn and watch.  
Any questions?


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## Support online and on hand.

- healthyheads.org.au
- Learning Hub.
- Healthy Heads App.
- Workforce Handbook.

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