Teacher Wellbeing

WORKSHOP #1

Name:
Discussion

Health and Wellbeing

‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’

World Health Organisation

What does wellbeing mean for you?
Positivity for Teachers

The Optimist’s Creed
I promise myself...
To be so strong that nothing can disturb my peace of mind.
To make all my friends feel that there is something worthwhile in them.
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as I am about my own.
To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
To wear a cheerful expression and give a smile to every living creature I meet.
To give so much time to improving myself that I have no time to criticize others.
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.
To think well of myself and to proclaim this fact to the world, not in loud words, but in great deeds.
To live in the faith that the whole world is on my side, so long as I am true to the best that is in me.

Strive to be first. First to nod, first to smile, first to compliment and first to forgive.

Criticism can be very subtle in the way it creeps into your thoughts.
The weather is awful today. The traffic is terrible. The service is really bad. Oh no, look at the line. How long do we have to wait for our order? That driver is a xxx! It’s so hot in here.
Continually monitor how you are feeling. You want to be feeling life flowing through you like a river, rather than tensely holding on to life. You have the ability to appreciate something in every single circumstance; there is always something to be grateful for.

Negative thoughts and negative emotions need your attention to stay alive.
If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

The law of attraction
If you find yourself in a negative situation with someone in your life, take a few minutes each day to feel love within your heart for that person, and then send it out to the universe. Just doing this one thing helps to remove resentment, anger or negativity toward that person. Remember that feeling resentment, anger, or any negative emotion attracts it back to you. Feeling love attracts love back to you. What you are feeling for another, you are bringing to you.

It’s not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters.
Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. The last of the human freedoms is to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.

Viktor Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning
Activity Nurturing a Positive Outlook

‘I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul’

William Ernest Henley

We use mood cards to increase our awareness of how we are feeling and to remind us that we have the power to change a negative mood into a positive one. This does not mean ignoring your emotions or feelings, but rather allowing yourself to experience grief, sadness, disappointment or anger whilst maintaining perspective and continuing on with life with a sense of hope and positivity. By becoming aware of how we are feeling and why we are feeling this way, we can change the way we respond to negative stimuli and let positivity flourish in its place. Viktor Frankl refers to this as the last of the human freedoms: when all else has been stripped away; health, wealth and dignity, the last remaining freedom we possess is to choose our attitude or response to any given circumstance.

5 ways to use mood cards

1. Put the mood cards in a box and pick one out at the start of the day. Can you keep this positive thought or mood for the day?
2. If you are feeling upset or in a negative mood, choose a mood card to help you to change your mood. Choose one at random, or choose one that you think would work best.
3. Choose a mood card at random and think about what that mood means to you, and when you have experienced that mood.
4. Make a list of all the negative moods you can think of and choose the most suitable mood card to help you to deal with each one.
5. Choose a mood card and write a story where the main character expresses that mood.

Reference: Mood Cards www.relaxkids.com

Write down the mood card you selected today. What does this mean for you?
Activity  Now, how are you really feeling?

G

R

A

N

D
Discussion  Gratitude

"In ordinary life we hardly realise that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Gratitude is as an affirmation of the goodness in our lives. When you practise gratitude, you notice the positives more, and that magnifies the pleasures you get from life. Grateful people are more stress resistant because gratitude generates a perspective from which they can interpret negative life events and which guards against post-traumatic stress and lasting anxiety. Gratitude also blocks toxic, negative emotions that can destroy our happiness, such as envy, resentment and regret.

Activity  Practising Gratitude

Emmons suggests ten evidence-based prescriptions for becoming more grateful:

1. Keep a gratitude journal, cataloguing gratitude-inspiring events each day.
2. Remember the bad as well as the good; remembering difficult experiences highlights how far we have come, setting a contrast in the mind which is fertile ground for gratefulness.
3. Ask yourself three questions
   - What have I received from...?
   - What have I given to...?
   - What troubles and difficulties have I caused...?
4. Learn prayers of gratitude.
5. Use your physical senses to appreciate what it is to be human.
6. Use visual reminders (such as photos, post-it notes, ornaments, articles, videos, people, etc.)
7. Vow to practise gratitude daily!
8. Use grateful language (gifts, givers, blessings, blessed, fortune, fortunate, abundance, etc.)
9. Use grateful motions (saying thank you, thank you notes, thank you visits, facial expressions, body language, etc.)
10. Look for new ways to feel grateful (being grateful to those to whom you do harm, or who have done harm to you, and being grateful to someone whom you benefit from).
Activity  Practising Gratitude

Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity... it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

Today I am grateful for

Today I am grateful to (__________) for

Today I show my gratitude by...

The world is your first blessing

There is a quiet light that shines in every heart. It draws no attention to itself, though it is always secretly there. It is what illuminates our minds to see beauty, our desire to seek possibility, and our hearts to love life. Without this gentle quickening, our days would become empty and wearisome, and no horizon would ever awaken our longing. This shy inner light is what enables us to recognise and receive our very presence here as a blessing. We enter the world as strangers who all at once become heirs to a harvest of memory, spirit and dream that long preceded us and will now enfold, nourish and sustain us. The gift of the world is our first blessing.

John O’Donohue

If you have nothing to be grateful for... check your pulse!
Activity - Nurturing your Physical Health: Movement

The Movement Pyramid

Cut Down on Sedentary Activity
Limit screen time to a total of 1 hour per day

Aerobic Activity
At least 20 minutes 2-3 times per week

Strength and Flexibility
At least 3 times per week

Be more active
Every Day!
Activity - Snapshot Diary

In an average week, how many hours do you spend doing each of the following?

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Do you need to make changes? How can you make these changes?

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Where can you make changes?

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Physical Wellbeing in the Classroom – tips for teachers

**BUMPS & BAGS**
If you bump into the same desk corner every day, move it!!! Keep bags, cables and other items tidied away.

- **SANITISE**
  To keep germs at bay, wash your hands throughout the day. Keep liquid sanitizer on your desk. Regularly wipe down shared items.

- **WATER**
  All day long! Keep a sports bottle on your desk and drink throughout the day. Add honey and lemon to protect your voice.

- **POSTURE PERFECT**
  Sit and stand with a tall posture. Sit at the child’s level. Keep a wheelie stool in the classroom to avoid bending down.

- **WARM AND DRY**
  Keep a ‘yard-duty’ coat in your classroom to avoid getting caught out in the cold, and an umbrella for after-school dashes to the car!

- **RE-THINK**
  Your lunch breaks. Do you sit inside every day eating biscuits? Grab a colleague and go for a walk!

- **WATCH YOUR BACK**
  Think about where you store heavy items. Avoid over-reaching and always lift with care. Accept offers of help when lifting!

- **MOVE**
  Model a physically active classroom. Go for a nature walk. Drop everything and dance!

- **NOURISH**
  Fuel your engine with a hearty breakfast and a healthy, satisfying lunch. Snack on nuts, fruit and veg. Consider taking a multi-vitamin supplement.
Nurturing your physical Health: Nutrition

“Optimum nutrition is the medicine of the future”
Dr Linus Pauling, twice winner of a Nobel Prize

Optimum nutrition is very simply giving yourself the best possible intake of nutrients to allow your body to be as healthy as possible and to work as well as it can. It is not a set of rules, as your needs are completely unique and depend on a whole host of factors from the strengths and weaknesses you were born with to the effects that your current environment has on you. Through optimum nutrition you can improve mental clarity, mood and concentration, increase IQ, increase physical performance, improve quality of sleep, improve resistance to infections, protect yourself from disease and extend your healthy lifespan.

Top Ten Daily Tips

Take one heaped tablespoon of ground seeds or one tablespoon of cold-pressed seed-oil

- Eat two servings of beans, lentils, quinoa, tofu (soya), or ‘seed’ vegetables
- Eat three pieces of fresh fruit such as apples, pears, bananas, berries, melon or citrus fruit
- Eat four servings of whole grains such as brown rice, millet, rye, oats, wholewheat, corn, quinoa as cereal, breads and pasta
- Eat five servings of dark green, leafy and root vegetables such as watercress, carrots, sweet potatoes, broccoli, spinach, green beans, peas and peppers
- Drink six glasses of water, diluted juices, herb or fruit teas
- Eat whole, organic, raw food as often as you can
- Supplement your diet with a high-strength multi-vitamin and mineral preparation and 1000mg of Vitamin C a day
- Avoid fried, burnt and browned food, hydrogenated fat and excess animal fat
- Avoid any form of sugar, also white, refined or processed food with chemical additives, and minimise your intake of alcohol, coffee or tea.

From The Optimum Nutrition Bible, Patrick Holford

Every time you eat is an opportunity to nourish your body!
Nurturing your physical health: Rest

**Doctor Sleep**

Sleep is essential nourishment for your body and mind. As you rest, growth hormone which promotes cell reproduction, repair and regeneration, is released into the bloodstream and the production of certain types of immune cells peaks. Although you might not be able to control all of the factors that interfere with your sleep, you can adopt habits that encourage better sleep. Start with these simple sleep tips.

<table>
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<th>Stick to a sleep schedule</th>
<th>Create a sleep-friendly bedroom</th>
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<td>Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends, holidays and days off. Being consistent reinforces your body’s sleep-wake cycle and helps promote better sleep at night. There’s a caveat, though: If you don’t fall asleep within about 15 minutes, get up and do something relaxing. Go back to bed when you’re tired.</td>
<td>Often, this means cool, dark and quiet. Consider using blackout curtains to keep street light or early-morning light out and try earplugs if you are easily disturbed by noise. Keep your décor simple and calm—avoid clutter as this can trigger your stress response. Since the features of good bedding are subjective, choose what feels most comfortable to you. If you share your bed, make sure there’s enough room for two.</td>
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<th>Pay attention to what you eat and drink</th>
<th>Limit daytime naps</th>
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<td>Don’t go to bed either hungry or stuffed. Your discomfort might keep you up. Also limit how much you drink before bed, to prevent disruptive middle-of-the-night trips to the toilet. Nicotine, caffeine and alcohol deserve caution, too. The stimulating effects of nicotine and caffeine take hours to wear off and can wreak havoc on quality sleep. And even though alcohol might make you feel sleepy at first, it can disrupt sleep later in the night.</td>
<td>Long daytime naps can interfere with night-time sleep—especially if you’re struggling with insomnia or poor sleep quality at night. If you choose to nap during the day, limit yourself to about 10 to 30 minutes and make it during the mid-afternoon. If you work nights, make an exception to the rules about daytime sleeping. In this case, keep your window coverings closed so that sunlight, which adjusts your internal clock, doesn’t interrupt your daytime sleep.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Create a bedtime ritual</th>
<th>Include activity in your daily routine</th>
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<td>Do the same things each night to tell your body it’s time to wind down. This might include taking a warm bath or shower, reading a book, or listening to soothing music—preferably with the lights dimmed. Relaxing activities can promote better sleep by easing the transition between wakefulness and drowsiness.</td>
<td>Regular physical activity can promote better sleep, helping you to fall asleep faster and to enjoy deeper sleep. Timing is important, though. If you exercise too close to bedtime, you might be too energized to fall asleep. If this seems to be an issue for you, exercise earlier in the day.</td>
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<th>Implement a tech curfew</th>
<th>Manage stress</th>
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<td>The light radiating from television, smartphone and computer screens has been found to interfere with the body’s circadian rhythm. A study by researchers at Harvard Medical School found that particular frequencies of light disrupted production of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin. Turn off devices and TVs at least an hour before you plan to go to sleep!</td>
<td>When you have too much to do and too much to think about, your sleep is likely to suffer. To help restore peace, consider healthy ways to manage stress. Start with the basics, such as getting organized, setting priorities and delegating tasks. Give yourself permission to take a break when you need one. Share a good laugh with an old friend. Before bed, jot down what’s on your mind and then set it aside for tomorrow.</td>
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**Know when to contact your doctor**

Nearly everyone has an occasional sleepless night—but if you often have trouble sleeping, contact your doctor. Identifying and treating any underlying causes can help you get the better sleep you deserve.

*(Adapted from www.mayoclinic.org)*
## Activity – The 7 Day Challenge
Set three simple, realistic, achievable goals each day for one week.

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<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Rest</th>
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**Q.** How did you feel after the week? 

**Q.** Could you make this a habit? Try it for 21 days!

*Remember, take it one day at a time, and if it doesn’t work out, start again!*

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[PDST Logo]

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Building Self-esteem - Visiting the Wells

Cognitive Well
Reading books, watching plays/films, Debating ideas, Submitting ideas to others, Planning/structuring ideas and thinking things through.

Emotional Well
Time for fun and enjoying unconditional time with others. Friendships, stable loving relationships with partner/family. Opportunities to express feelings. Opportunities to talk through dilemmas in a supportive relationship.

Physical Well
It is very difficult to enjoy mental health if you are physically tense and heavy with lethargy. To dissolve knots of tension, exercise weekly, learn relaxation techniques, go for a massage, eat and sleep well.

Creative Well
Enjoy hobbies. Appreciate art. Write. Draw. Sing. Dance etc.

Spiritual Well
This is about renewing your sense of wonderment and awe. You may get this from your religious beliefs, from meditation or taking time truly to enter the moments of contemplating the beauty of nature.

GIVES YOU ENERGY

Personal care plan – based on the Wells Model (Jenny Mosley, Quality Circle Time)

Work out a weekly care plan to try to ensure that your needs are met. It is all too easy to get so caught up in the pressures of work and home that you neglect your own needs and live life constantly on the edge of exhaustion. Your weekly care plan must make sufficient provision for you to visit the wells, replenish your energy levels, and enjoy yourself. In addition, here are some other techniques which can help you to survive the day-to-day pressure of work:

★ Set yourself tiny, achievable, tick-able targets (TATs)
★ Develop calming rituals.
★ Enter into and enjoy golden moments.
★ Utilise calming breathing techniques or mindful movements.
Activity  Visit the wells

Cognitive Well

Spiritual Well

Emotional Well

Physical Well

Creative Well

GIVES ME ENERGY

My personal care plan

I am a precious resource!
Listen

When I ask you to listen to me
And you start giving me advice,
You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me
And you begin to tell me ‘why’ I shouldn’t
feel that way,
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me
And you feel you have to do something to
solve my problems,
You have failed me, strange as that may
seem.

Listen! All I ask is that you listen;
Not talk, nor do – just hear me.

Then I have the chance to do for myself – I’m
not helpless. I may be discouraged and
faltering, but not helpless.
When you do something for me, that I can
and need to do for myself,
You contribute to my fear and weakness.
But when you accept as a simple fact that I
do feel what I feel,
No matter how irrational,
Then I can stop trying to convince you,
And can get about the business of
understanding what’s behind this irrational
feeling.
And when that is clear,
The answers might become obvious and I
might not need advice.

So please listen,
and just hear me, and if you want to talk,
Wait a minute for your turn,
And I’ll listen to you.

Anonymous

Autobiography
in Five Short Chapters

Chapter I
I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost... I am hopeless.
It isn’t my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter II
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don’t see it.
I fall in again.
I can’t believe I am in this same place.
But it isn’t my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter III
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it there.
I still fall in... it’s a habit... but,
my eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter IV
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter V
I walk down another street.

Portia Nelson
Think about something in your life you are very grateful for, think about where you can feel that in your body. Bring your awareness to things in your life that you are thankful for. Give gratitude the chance to come up naturally. And when it comes up just let yourself sink into the feeling, surrender to it. Notice how it feels in your body, how your energy feels. And if it doesn’t come up that’s ok, you don’t need to try to make yourself feel it. Just surrender to your heart not your head.

So let us flash through all aspects of your life that you might be grateful for. Firstly bring your awareness to your breath, as you inhale and as you exhale and think of the fact that each of these breaths gives you life. Then, be aware of your heart beating, pulsing, filling with love and compassion and peace, and flowing that back out. Bring your awareness to your eyes that let you see colour, faces, smiles, nature, the sunrise, the sunset, the rainbow, the moon and the stars, yourself in the mirror. Bring your awareness to your ears, that beam in sound, music, laughter, the voices of those you love, the silence; the beautiful sounds of life. Bring your awareness to your nose, that smells the ocean breeze, the aroma of sweet perfume, the flowers, the trees, newly cut grass, wafting smells that come from the kitchen, cupcakes in the oven. Bring your awareness to your lips and mouth that tastes and savours and nourishes, kisses and speaks, that whispers, and sings. Bring your awareness to your hands that hold and touch, and caress, and open and close, and applaud, and squeeze, the arms and shoulders that carry and hug and lift and stretch.

Our feet, our toes, the gift to wiggle them, transport you, walk, run, dangle, dance, kick, fold, leap and point. What about your tears, your sorrows, in the strength that you seem to be able to muster, to make it through each day. Bring your awareness to your abundance, your expansion, your evolution, your perspective shifts, the affluence and flow and empathy and love and light, and your ability to see growth, and potential in every moment.

Now just breathe and feel more grace, and ease. And experience the warmth, love and compassion that gratitude brings into your heart. Drift your awareness to nurturing relationships in your life, the new ones and the older ones. Material things that came to you unexpectedly, things that flow to you with great effort and commitment, hard work.

Think of love in your life, and your connection to those things that are sweet, and loving and honourable, and just feel right. When we no longer take life for granted, we become grateful for everything that we have. Just breathe and feel this flow.

http://debbieguidinglight.blogspot.ie/2014/01/gratitude-meditation.html
Think about…

We would like to invite you to commit to an activity that you would like to undertake between this workshop and the next one. Feel free to jot your thoughts down here:
Further Supports

Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS)
CareCall Wellbeing
✆ 1800 411 057 ✉ carecallwellbeing.ie
The purpose of the EAS is to provide teachers and their family members with easy access to confidential counselling and to assist in coping with the effect of personal and work related issues. The service is available to teachers whose positions are funded by the Department of Education and Skills, their spouses or partners, their dependents above the age of 16 and mother/father where appropriate.

National Counselling Service
✆ 1850 241 850
✉ http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/Mental_Health_Services/National_Counselling_Service/

Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
✆ 01 2303536
✉ www.irish-counselling.ie

Remember, support, guidance, resources and information are also available from a variety of organisations such as Aware, The Samaritans, Pieta House, A Lust for Life, Marie Keating, the Irish Cancer society, the Rape Crisis Centre and many more.