# Transcript

**Improving Wellbeing   
with Physical and Environmental Strategies**

Duration: 1:03:15

KATE MORRIS: Thanks, Ben, and good afternoon, everyone. We're on our third and an absolutely fabulous session today ‘Improving Wellbeing with Physical and Environmental Strategies’ and delighted to have Ben Palmer with us. Thanks, Ben. I know you really enjoy designing these sessions and today you've designed the session with our colleagues at Bonbeach Primary School. So a big shoutout to Ken and his team – Ken - Ken Jones, the Principal at Bonbeach Primary, Joel and Lisa. Martin is also joining us from Bonbeach. It's great to have you with us. And also a big shoutout to Maria Oddo and Jane Greig-Hancock, our in-house Principal team from Bastow. And if you could drop in the chat what school you're joining us from and who you're joining us with, that would be fantastic. Over to you, Ben.

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks very much, Kate. It's great to be here again with you tonight and it would be awesome to hear where you're joining us from and I hope you enjoy our session tonight on Improving Wellbeing with Physical and Environmental Strategies. This program, of course, is designed to be led by you, and as you can see with Ken and his team from Bonbeach, they've joined us as a team tonight to share with us what they've been doing around this initiative and how they're going to lead wellbeing at their school with some of these materials and with their particular take on it. So it's great to have you joining. It's good to see Lisa from Eltham East. I indeed grew up in Eltham, Lisa, and I do a shoutout to everybody from Yallambie Primary, where I went to school, and also to St Helena Secondary College, where I did my secondary education. I'm going to welcome David Howes now, the Deputy Secretary of Schools and Regional Services, to acknowledge Country and to say a few words. Thank you, David.

DAVID HOWES: Great. Thanks, Ben. Thanks, Kate. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for making the time to be part of this session. Can I indeed acknowledge that right across Victoria - and there are people from all kinds of locations this afternoon - we are on the lands of traditional owners, on land that was never ceded, and I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging and to Aboriginal colleagues who are part of this this afternoon.

So thank you, Ben for these sessions. They are incredibly popular, and it is interesting hearing the stories of schools who are taking the experience of these sessions and the practices and the processes and then exploring them back with whole staff. You can sense the good practice spreading out from these sessions. So thank you to Bastow - Kate, you and your team - for organising these.

Ben, I'm not sure about the damage that this session does to mental health, but when I reflected on my own physical health and the kilos that did accumulate over the last 12 months, I think that was a bit damaging to my mental health and sense of wellbeing. So I've taken - determined to address that, extending the - what had become the run with the dogs in the morning had slowed to a walk, so I'm determined to get that back up to a run and see if we can address that. But it is - one of the really good things about your sessions is that they are so practical, that they are grounded in our shared day-to-day experiences of reality and I think that's why they're resonating with people. So to all the colleagues who are part of it, thank you for giving up an hour of what is always a busy time, but I'm sure this will be a really good investment in time. So thanks, Ben, and over to you.

DR BEN PALMER: Thank you, David. It's a very big pleasure to be here. As always, there are three sources of learning that we'd really like you to draw from in our webinar today. There's, of course, the content. There's the great discussion that we're going to have with Ken and his team from Bonbeach, but there's also you and we'd love to hear from you and it's great to see some of you have been popping in what school you've been joining us from. We can see from all over the State people are joining us today. So it's great to have you with us.

When you are commenting in the chat box and helping us get that third source of learning, peer-led learning, please make sure that you select "All Panellists and Attendees", just so that I'm not the only person, along with Jane and Kate and everyone, who's seeing what you've got to say; so that all our colleagues who've joined us today can see everyone's contribution. So please be mindful of that.

This webinar series is one of four, and if you want to go and see the other two, if you missed them, you can see the URLs to the recordings of them. Get your camera out, if you like, on your phone. Take a photo of this slide. We'll show it again at the end. But the recordings are being made available and the recording of this session, of course, will be made available in the next few days using the same URL. If you can, join us for our final session on ‘Improving Wellbeing with Social Strategies’ coming up on the 27th of May, the same time, next week.

So these sessions, as you may know, if you've been joining the series, have been designed to be led by you at your school and they come with a facilitation guide, they come with a participant workbook, and what we'd really like to do is encourage you to spend a little bit of time either at the end or tomorrow or the next opportunity that you have to get together as a team, like Ken and his team from Bonbeach have been doing, just to go through the material and think about what you could do with it. There are indeed on page number 27 of the facilitator guide a number of reflective questions that will really help, if you like, with that process. These questions invite you to think about who you might run this session for at your school, what you might do, how you will do it and, of course, when - and I know that if you follow that sort of reflective guide, you'll be much more likely to run a session like this for some people at your school.

What could you do with it? We're going to ask Ken and his group to come in and share a little bit at the moment. I know Ken's team have been joining a couple of these and have been spending that time at the end of the sessions. You can implement it as is. You can add/edit to it. You can have these slide decks. You can have the materials in Word, if you like, if you want to alter them. If you're really experienced and want to take it up to the next level with your wellbeing officer and other staff, by all means we'd encourage that. Ken, would you like to come in and just give us a few words on how you've found that reflective time with your team at the end and some of the things you're intending to do?

KEN: Yeah, we spend about 10, 15 minutes after each session going over basically what each one has taken from each of the sessions and who we felt it was most relevant for and how we could present it to the rest of the staff. We really feel that all of the staff - ES staff as well as teachers - could really benefit from this. We feel that particularly coming back from the COVID year, that people are ready to re-engage and ready to go on it, but the demands of the work and trying to catch kids up or - as everyone knows, teachers take their work very seriously and really want to give the kids the best opportunity, so a lot of our staff are feeling under the pump and a bit stressed. So we're really looking forward to doing this as a group to the whole of our staff probably next term, early next term, in basically the same way that you've been presenting it. So we'll be showing the sessions and giving time for them to reflect and then hopefully we should develop some sort of staff wellbeing ideas and maybe even a staff wellbeing day towards the end of the year. So it's all in the pipeline yet. We've still got two to go, so we look forward to them.

DR BEN PALMER: Excellent. We look forward to hearing your contributions as we go through. So, everybody, this is the slide where the program really starts, and today I'm going to facilitate a little bit to you as if you were my participants, and today I'm also going to step out and I'm going to talk with you about the design and some of the learning and the thinking behind the slides, just to give you that sort of context, if you like, so that when you're on your feet delivering it at your school, you know some of the ideas behind it.

So this is where you'll start and I'd encourage you to say to your audience, "Does anyone recognise where this photo was taken?". Now, if you do, let me know in the chat box. Does anyone recognise where this photo was taken? I've chosen it very deliberately for this session because our session today, of course, is about physical and environmental strategies and I think this photo really beautifully captures both of those things powerfully coming together. Of course, this is a photo of the famous Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory in the West MacDonnell Ranges. It's one of the 100 best walks in the world to do, and indeed it's a very popular walk here in Australia. Anyone who's done it will know that it's not only the beautiful scenery but the rich Indigenous history that you experience on this walk that makes it so special. But I've chosen it today just to get people engaged and starting to think about the combination of physical and environmental strategies and how we can bring them together.

Today's session, of course, is going to focus on physical strategies and, in particular, we're going to look at how we can improve our sleep, our diet and our exercise and we're also going to look at our environmental strategies, looking at things like how we might improve the environments we spend a lot of time in. We're going to look at structuring a wellbeing day, and you've heard Kim mention that that might be something they do at his school, and we're going to finish on looking at moving ourselves emotionally. Our emotional system sits at the heart of wellbeing and, indeed, like other functions in our body, we can exercise it, we can stretch it, we can engage it intentionally, and doing so helps us contemplate life itself and also learn how to more effectively regulate and manage our emotions. And on that, a little treat for those of you who can stay right until the end. I've got a great little video of a school demonstrating that stuff, all of these things. really, really well. So I hope you can stay with us right to the end for the fun little video that will be at the end.

So we're going to start by looking at the science of forming habits. Anyone who's tried to improve their sleep, improve their diet or exercise more will know that a lot of this stuff is great in theory and difficult in practice. I think I'm still getting direct-debited from a gym membership that I had a couple of years ago on my credit card. So we're going to look at how we actually make these things stick. How do we lose the kilos we really wanted to lose? How do we stop those habits that we really want to stop? How can we draw on the science of habit formation to help us make our desires stick? We're then going to look at something new we might be able to do around our sleep, diet or exercise and then we'll finish off with the physical and environmental improvements.

Okay. So, without any further ado, I'd like to invite you to in the participant workbook turn to page number 4, and if you're following along with me in the facilitator guide, I'm in page 6 on the facilitator guide. Let's look at the science of forming new habits. There are indeed a lot of them and I've decided to narrow these down to six what I think are very practical, accessible steps that we can use to help us make our exercise, diet, sleep, environmental strategies stick, and I'd like to go through each of these with you in turn. So the first one at the top of page 4 is attaching a new habit to an existing one. It's called ‘habit stacking’ and it's very, very effective at helping us get in the habit of new things. For example, if you wanted to engage a new mindfulness meditation practice, one of the things you could do is attach it to your morning habit of having a cup of coffee, if that's something you do. If you don't drink coffee, you can do a minute of mindfulness while you brush your teeth. It's just one example of many. But attaching habits to an existing one is a great way of forming new habits. Now, if you've done this before, share an example with us in the chat box. I'm going to ask Ken and someone in his team whether they've tried this before and how they've found it to work for them. Ken, over to you.

KEN: Yeah, my mind is not awake enough first thing in the morning to do mindfulness, so I actually do squats while I'm waiting for the kettle to boil for the cup of tea first off, or any sort of exercise while I'm standing around waiting for something to happen.

DR BEN PALMER: A few squats while you're waiting for the kettle to boil - love it. Great example. And, of course, if you were on your feet delivering this to an audience in front of you, as opposed to live, like I'm doing now, you would ask your audience, just like I asked Ken, for a couple of examples and you'd take them. This particular program is really designed to uncover the knowledge that exists within the group, uncover unknown knowns, if you like, and make them known. It's really designed to draw a lot on participant-led learning. So, of course, when you're on your feet, if you've got a group in front of you, you won't be asking for examples in the chat box. You'll be saying, "Has anyone got an example of something like this that they do?".

Our second one - and I'm going to ask Jane to come in and give us an example here in a moment - is to start small. Okay. This great book ‘Tiny Habits: Why starting small makes lasting change easy’ by BJ Fogg is a great whole book on this, but doing small things - you know, like rather than deciding you're going to go and start running and doing a 20 - or 30-minute run two or three nights of the week, maybe going for a short walk once or twice a week is a better way to start. If you want to improve your diet, just popping an apple into your lunch box on the way in can be a great start, rather than jumping cold turkey into one of the diet fads that are out there. Jane, have you got an example of starting small on something that's worked for you?

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: I have. Instead of embarking on a full-blown yoga course, I just get up 15 minutes early and I just do a bit of stretching and yoga in the morning. I just set my alarm 15 minutes earlier and I really like that. It's a really nice way to start the day. Rather than thinking about doing this whole 10-week course, I can just manage it at home.

DR BEN PALMER: Excellent. Fantastic. Yes. So starting small and building up from that can be a really effective habit strategy. Okay. Our next one in the book is something that we can do every day. If you look at how natural habits form, they're usually things we do every day. If you do something every day, let us know in the chat box perhaps what you do and how long you thought it took you to create a habit. I love this photo of kids brushing their teeth. Ken, I'm going to ask you to come in again, or someone from your team, for an example in a moment. But if we can do it daily, we're much more likely to make it a habit and there's a lot of people out there who talk about 30 days; you've got to do something for 30 days straight. If you look into the science of this, it's a little bit longer. Studies that have actually looked at it say that new habit formation, the average number of days it typically takes is 66. Ken, over to you for an example around this one.

JOEL: My name’s Joel. So each morning I have a cup of lemon tea, a hot cup of lemon tea, sitting outside in my backyard with no technology at all for the duration of my tea - for at least 10 to 15 minutes - and it gives me a time to just reflect and enjoy the sounds of nature without too much interrupting me and I find that a really nice way to warm towards the day ahead.

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks very much. That's beautiful, Joel. What I like about that is that reflection with the physics, so we hear the combination of a physical strategy with a nice mental strategy there, that reflection and thinking about the day ahead. So thank you, Joel, for that great example.

Okay. The next habit in the book: make it easy. I love this one. This is one I've personally found very useful. The more we can make things easy for our habit, the more likely we are to engage in it. So, for example, if you decide you're going to go for a run in the morning, one of the things that you could do is get into your running clothes and sleep in them the night before. For me, I decided to lose a bit of weight, and the way I decided I wanted to do that was to ride my bike to work every morning and to reduce my calories, and I found that it was too easy, particularly on these cold mornings, to go out and get in the car and not jump on the bike. So I ended up selling the car. Talk about make it easy. I was left with two choices: ride the bike or get the train, and the bike takes about a third of the time as the train. So it's become a habit for me.

Okay. The fifth one in the book, turning to page number 5 in the participant guide, page number 11 if you're following along in the facilitator guide, is to reward yourself, and I love this photo here. Like rewarding students and teachers for their great efforts, rewards are an important part of habit formation. With habits it's important to model the way they naturally form. Now, you think about that habit of having a coffee. It forms so easily because we get the reward pretty much straightaway, don't we? We feel more alert after a cup of coffee. With healthy habits, like losing weight or sleeping or exercising, often those sorts of rewards aren't so immediate, so it's really important to try and wind them in, and I'm going to ask Jane in a moment to come in and share a habit reward that she has. But doing little things like listening to your favourite audiobook on the bike on the way to work or listening to your favourite music while you're working out is one little way of bringing in a reward around a habit that makes the habit easier. Jane, would you like to share an example with us now?

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Yeah, I try to go for a couple of long walks at the weekend and it's really my only time to listen to those long crime podcasts, so it's a bit of a treat to listen to a whole hour of Australian crime while I'm walking. So it's great.

DR BEN PALMER: Awesome. So the walk with the audiobook and things like that can be great, yes. Thank you for sharing. And don't forget to share in the chat box if you've got ideas and if you'd be on your feet again, just as I'm showing and demonstrating to you here, you'd be pausing and asking your audience for some examples, and if you think your audience is a bit lost, of course providing some of your own examples will be really important. So as you're going through with me today, see if you can take down some of your own examples in the workbook so that you've got them for when you're on your feet, like I am today, delivering this to your audience.

The sixth and final habit is to engage a friend, and I love this photo of the little dog doing the yoga with her owner. So, you know, a lot of the big corporate steps programs, the 10,000 steps and the corporate running programs and things, involve a lot of people and deliberately try to get people involved, and that's because when we get others involved with us, that can really help us to make these habits stick. So I know a lot of people who get into the step programs with friends.

So they're our six steps. Which of these has resonated with you the most? Let us know in the chat box. I'm going to ask Ken again to come in and ask one of his team to share which of these perhaps six steps has resonated most in terms of habit formation. Thank you.

LISA: I think out of all of the habits the second one, start small, sticks with me because I know I always have great big plans and probably set a goal that's way too large and then get frustrated when I can't achieve it. So I'm going to take this one away and have some little steps along the way to help me get there.

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks for sharing, Lisa. Lisa is the AP at Bonbeach. It's great to have you with us. A great example, so starting small. What about you? What's resonated most with you in the chat box? As you can see, in the workbook on page number 5, you'd be stopping here and giving your participants just a little bit of a chance to stop and think about which of these are resonating with them most and perhaps even getting them to share with each other.

So now let's think about how we might be able to apply these six steps to improving a physical wellbeing area. So the first step that I'd like to engage you in is turning to page number 6 in the participant workbook. You will see there that I invite you to pick an area that you'd like to work on - either your sleep, your diet or your exercise. Jane, I'm going to be personally working on my sleep. Which of these three have you decided you're going to try something new around, Jane?

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Probably sleep as well, actually, yep.

DR BEN PALMER: I haven't been getting enough sleep and I happened to watch a TEDx presentation last night. Talk about reward; it was more like the scare.

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Sleep is an ongoing issue.

DR BEN PALMER: Absolutely. So decide on an area like that and then what you'd encourage your audience to do is to read through the suggested activities that are on pages 7 and 8 for sleep, on page 9 for diet, on page number 10 for exercise. Now, you'll see in the facilitator guide, if you're following along page number 14, that when you're running this in a real play, I recommend that you allow about 10 minutes for this individual work to occur. So you'd normally pause here for about 10 minutes and let people do this individual work and then you'll stop and get people sharing with each other. Now, we don't have the luxury of that much time today, but we've got a bit of time. So I'm going to play a song. This song goes for about three minutes. If you like the music and you find it stimulating, leave the sound up. If you find music distracting, turn it down because I know you're going to be doing a bit of reading as we go through this. But if you'd like to keep the music up, do so. At the end of the song, I'm going to bring Ken's team in again and ask them for an area that they've decided to work on and the activities that they've chosen. And you'll see that the last step is to try to conceptualise a plan for that area using the habit-building template on page 6 in the participant workbook.

Now, what I'm not expecting to see is someone conceptualise something around all six of the habits. That would be great if you did, but maybe only one or two of them are really relevant, like that one that resonates with you most. But, nonetheless, that's where I'd like you to create the plan on page number 6. So here comes the music. We'll be back on live in about three minutes' time for an example from Ken and his music. Thanks, everyone.

(Music plays).

DR BEN PALMER: Alright. I hope you had a little bit of fun. Jane and I certainly did there. Thanks, Jane, for bopping along with me. So normally you'd be in front of an audience. You would have given them 10 minutes to go through that exercise. I hope that Ken and his team might have had a little bit of a chance to do a bit of pre work around this. But this is a slide that you'd use for a bit of share and care, and again the design of this, if you're following along in the workbook, page number 15 of the facilitator guide, again is to draw on participant-led learning and to get people thinking about sharing their plans and refining them a little bit if they can. There's nothing like hearing somebody else's ideas to help improve your own. So over to your group, Ken, for an example. Thank you.

KEN: Back to Lisa.

DR BEN PALMER: Back to you, Lisa.

LISA: So I'd like to improve my exercise and taking away those small steps. I'm going to just start with a short exercise in the morning because I know when I get home in the afternoon, it's not going to happen. And to help me make it easier, I'm going to leave all my workout gear ready to go in the morning and then do it at home so I don't need to go anywhere in the cold and dark and hopefully work on it as we go along.

DR BEN PALMER: Awesome. Thank you for sharing. And that's really great. So we hear not only the activities but how she's wound them into the habits and how Lisa is planning perhaps to make some of them stick. So thank you for sharing, Lisa, and of course you would be facilitating here, going around - if you've got a large group, let's say you had all your staff, you could be putting people into small groups of three and four in hubs, giving them 10 minutes each or 10 minutes for a bit of sharing and caring, and you could be debriefing it by coming back to each group and taking some themes from the group.

Okay. So we're going to switch gears a little bit now and move to our environmental strategies. The other thing I'd say is, of course, that some people might have some questions around the sleep and around the exercise and around the diet there. So while people are doing that individual work, if you're facilitating in person, you could go around your group and just check in with people, see that they're getting some of those things and that it's resonating with them and you could be adding extra material in there. I know with sleep, Jane, by way of example, that the number one thing is to make it very habitual, so to go to bed very time at the same time. Number 2 biggest thing is to try and get the temperature of your room right, down to about 18 degrees. We need to feel just that little bit cool to get into deep sleep. And there's many things like that by way of example.

But I want to bring Jane in here and ask her about environmental strategies. Different environments have a subtle but demonstrable impact on the way we feel and on our wellbeing. Do you recognise where this picture has been taken? It's a famous department store, Galeries Lafayette in Paris, the number one in the world in terms of its look and feel. Jane, have you got an environment a little bit like this that you like to get into?

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Well, not quite but as a kid we always went into the city to the arcades and my mum used to take me there all the time and my children have been into the city many times - Myer and David Jones and all those beautiful arcades. And whenever we go in there, it's just such a great place and it stirs great emotions and it's just - we've just got such a lovely vibrant city and that's a great space for me to go.

DR BEN PALMER: Fantastic. Thanks for sharing. One of the places I love going are all of the prep and kindy rooms all around the country. Schoolteachers really get this stuff, don't they? There's nothing like some of the learning environments that you're creating out there for your students and what I'd like to encourage us to think about today is perhaps a little bit more of ourselves. So we can improve the physical environments in which we work or spend significant amounts of time in with things like burning oils or scented candles. You can use things like peppermint to get a little bit more concentration and attention. You can use something like lavender to try and create that more massage, you know, relaxation kind of room, if you like, because there's a big connection between our olfactory system and our emotional system and scents can be really one great way to work.

Another is playing music. I think one of our former Prime Ministers, Paul Keating, was very famous for putting on certain music to help him get into the mode and the mindset that he wanted to be in for Question Time, where he was quite ruthless with the Opposition in how he handled them in Question Time, and there is a lot of great research on music and how we can intentionally use music to help us concentrate, to help us contemplate, to help us think and to indeed help us get into different mood states. And, of course, we can use a variety of different furnishings to help make a space feel more relaxed, more formal, to perhaps make it more contemplative and so on, as this picture here suggests.

And, finally, plants. In designing this webinar, I was fascinated by the research on indoor plants. Did you know that indoor plants have been shown to make us feel more comfortable and smooth – ah, soothed, I should say, and that students who study with real live plants in the classroom are found to be more attentive and better able to concentrate than students in classrooms with fake plants or no plants at all. So think about getting a nice plant like this up on the table sometime, if you can, to help create a different environment.

So think about the areas where you spend most time and at work and at home. What are they like? Do you have certain things that help create a certain mood or feel for you? This is a question that you'll see on page number 11 of the participant workbook and here again I'd encourage you to draw on participant-led learning and see what people, various people, are doing around their physical environments. Ken, let's go to you and your team for a couple of examples, if you can, around some of the things that you're doing to help create certain feels and environments there.

KEN: One of the things that we've noticed that teachers have been adding to their rooms has been the reed sticks, the…  
  
PARTICIPANT: Diffusers.   
  
KEN: Diffusers, thank you, the diffusers. So that they do have those scents in the room to either - to, what's the word, strengthen the learning or to just make that environment far more pleasant.

DR BEN PALMER: Excellent. So the use of scents. Thanks for sharing. The next question in the workbook is thinking about these same areas that you spend some time in. Is there anything new you could add to these areas to help improve the atmosphere they create? Jane, can I ask you: have you been getting any thoughts from everyone here about something you might be able to do?

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Well, funny you should say that. I have asked the people at Bastow if they'll bring some plants in, and I think that will create a bit more - you know, a bit of an environment in here. Apparently they did have some plants before COVID but we definitely need to get some plants because they have a great effect on your working environment.

DR BEN PALMER: The research so interesting about plants of course is what do we need to do with plants? We've got to care for them. We've got to water them, we've got to love them if we want them to survive. And it's very consistent with other psychological research on caring, that caring for others, whether it's an animal or a plant or another human being, is as good for our wellbeing as it is for the other person. There's something about caring for others that's so good for our own wellbeing, and that perhaps extends to plants. So having living things around like that - thank you, Jane for sharing - can be really useful.

The next activity that we're going to do on environmental strategies is we're going to look at structuring a wellbeing day. A wellbeing day by definition is a day that makes us feel mentally, physically, socially and environmentally well and it's often a day that mixes in, if you like, activities from each of these areas. The process of defining a wellbeing day is very simple. You simply sit down with a set of reflective questions like the ones we're about to share with you and use those to help you start conceptualising and thinking about what an ideal wellbeing day might actually look for you. There's a couple of things that we can do to help us prep and sort of get us in the right mindset for this as well, and these are the three questions that are in the workbook on page number 12 in the middle of it. Firstly, a great question to think about is: how can we set up the day to be easy and relaxing? So we heard from Lisa before, for example, wanting to get into the exercise. She's going to put her gym stuff at the front door to make it a little bit easy. That's fantastic. But thinking also about your wellbeing day, what are some of the things that we might be able to do to make it easy and relaxing?

The next question that can be good to ponder when you're defining your ideal day is: how can you set it up so that there are a mixture of activities planned? Some stand-up, sit down, some social interaction, some thinking time, some of that reflection that Joel was talking around a cup of tea, for example, that can be a really good thing to conceptualise and think about. And, finally, how can you set up the day to ensure there's an activity or an interaction that helps you switch off and engage from your social or family life? Now, I've titled this ‘A real wellbeing day’ and it really relates to that third dot point there. What we shouldn't be defining here, if we're doing this, is a day that we can only have on the weekends. What we should be thinking about is a day that you could have tomorrow if you really wanted to. You might not do it tomorrow, but it should be a day that you can really have any day of the week and it could be as simple as saying to yourself: I'm not going to work back so many nights of the week, by way of example, or it could be a more detailed example like mine here that's in the workbook. If you want to follow along with me, on page number 12 at the bottom, you'll see this example, and let me go through it with you.

So you can also see that what I've put in is the key, if you like, around the activities that I think are mental wellbeing activities, physical wellbeing activities, social wellbeing activities, and environmental wellbeing activities, and if you've missed some of our other webinars, we went deep on mental strategies in our last webinar and in our very first one we overviewed all four of them, and if you go back to the recordings, there's heaps of ideas that go deeper than what I'm about to share right here just now. But I start with an environmental strategy the night before. I select my outfit. I don't know about you but I'm one of these people that can take 30 minutes in the morning just to decide what I'm going to put on for the day, so I select it the night before and I often do the kids' lunches the night before so that this day starts easy. I do feel bright enough in the morning, Ken, so I get up and I start with three minutes of mindfulness with the Smiling Mind app and I like to add to it. At the end of the meditation, I like to set an intention for the day, and my intention is usually around a social wellbeing strategy: how am I going to connect with someone at my office or that I'm going to come across today? So I think about one of the few or many people that I might be interacting with and I think to myself: okay, for that person, how am I going to be more empathetic and connect with them for the day? And I set that simple intention. I then like to try to get in and have a balanced breakfast and I like to read or listen to my favourite audiobook on the bike on the way to work. At the moment I'm reading Lisa Feldman Barrett's work on how emotions are formed.

Then the day itself, as you can see in the workbook, involves a mixture of activities. So I'm standing up as I'm talking to you right now. I've sat down for a lot of the time today, but I like to have a mixture of stand-up, sit-down activities and interactions. I've done a lot of thinking time today. I'm now delivering this workshop with you by way of example. On a wellbeing day I also like to make sure I've got structured breaks - and I mean a good 20 minutes in the morning and a good 20 minutes in the afternoon. I like to have lunch away from my desk and combine it with a bit of a walk or a change of environment, and here's sometimes where I add a social strategy in: go out for lunch with someone as well. No caffeine after 2pm to help me sleep well at night. I like to go from the very beginning of the day right through to the very end and I like to do a gratitude reflection before I finish work for the day, reflect on something that's gone really well and think about the next day ahead.

As I mentioned before, a switch-off exercise. What I like to do to switch off is my 7-minute workout. Lisa, like you, I found trying to go to the gym three days a week too much. So I get home and spend seven minutes doing a workout with YouTube and I find that that's something that's really been - started small, but I've been able to stick with. A balanced dinner, finished before 7pm, time with friends and family, and a cool-down time before I get to bed. What stands out about this wellbeing day for you? Has it got you thinking? Ken, I'd like to go to your group and see whether there's a comment or a thought that you'd like to make around these wellbeing days, knowing that you're thinking about having a wellbeing day at your school coming up.

MARTIN: Well, I've had a bit of a think about how I might be able to include some more wellbeing in my week and I probably wasn't quite as game as trying to make a work day as wellbeing-oriented at this stage of my wellness journey, so I was thinking more around Saturday, where I'm in complete control of how I could look after my wellbeing, and a lot of the things I identified were sort of mindfulness or environmental or physical things that I try to do throughout the week and I try to combine them all in on one sort of day. So I had, you know, making sure that the night before I get enough rest. Something for me is I like to feel like I am making the most of the day, and that really supports, if you like, in my mental health. So I'd like to go for a walk early, get a coffee, because it's something I enjoy, and also, similar to Jane, listening to a podcast just to take my mind away from any work-related things. And then catching up with friends at a nice cafe as a different sort environment with a nice meal, making sure they're not teachers, that I'm discussing topics that aren't work related, and then finishing the day, you know, by visiting my partner, doing something like playing board games or watching a nice show, and then also having that quiet time before bed to relax and unwind and just reflect on the day.

DR BEN PALMER: Excellent. Thank you, Martin. That's been a good example as well. And so again, if you're on your feet, what you would be doing is you would be sharing this example and then giving people some time to actually do a wellbeing day for themselves and then, just like we heard from Martin, you'd be stopping and putting people into small groups to share with each other - or, indeed, share with a large group - a couple of examples.

Now, again, I'd be allowing - I've said in the facilitated guide on page 22 - about five minutes for this. We don't have that luxury of time today, but I am going to play a second piece of music and give you three or four minutes just to think about this for yourself. So during the next little while, as the music plays, take this opportunity to think about the structure of a wellbeing day for you, a real wellbeing day, something you can do any day of the week, if you like. And if you find the music stimulating, leave it up. Again, if you find it a little bit distracting, turn it down. But enjoy these next few moments for yourself, everyone, and do a little bit of a wellbeing day. Thank you.

(Music plays).

Okay. So your audience would have finished their wellbeing days and, as I said before, you'd be putting them into small groups and taking a few examples, the purpose again of which is just drawing on that participant-led learning. And, Ken, I was going to bring your team in again. Were there any further comments that you'd make around this activity at all or are we right to move on?

KEN: We've discussed that really from this session, you can really make an impact by small things, taking small steps. You know, Lisa has mentioned that already, and just ways to improve the working environment to help everyone enjoy that working day. Another thing was ensuring that the groups were - the small groups were mixed, so they weren't the people they worked with every day all day. So we'd have one from the senior school, one from the junior school, one from the specialist area, so that they had a different perspective rather than the people they see regularly and talk to regularly every day. But also one of the big takeaways I think is how - Joel sort of hit upon it slightly, but there's the little things that you can do that will make a huge difference to your whole wellbeing.   
  
DR BEN PALMER: Yeah. No, I would agree. In fact, having one of these days, you have flow-on effects for the next day, the research shows, and indeed can have flow-on effects for the rest of the week. And I like to think of the ‘start small’ habit. If this is feeling like a real stretch, for example, even if you were just to get one of these days a month and then a couple a month and then a couple a fortnight and then one a week and then two a week, build up on it like that, that second habit-forming strategy can be a really useful one. Starting small can be really useful in terms of building this out. But thank you, Joel, for that reflection and thank you, Ken, for also giving us some ideas of how we could set up our participants to make this quite a cathartic experience, but also perhaps setting it up so that we're drawing on different perspectives and different people in the room. I do like that idea of not letting people naturally sit next to the three people that they'd normally sit with. I think mixing it up is a great idea. So thank you, guys. That's a really great reflection.

Okay. So the last thing in this workshop is engaging in things that move you emotionally - page number 14 in the participant workbook, page number 23 in the facilitator guide if you're following along. As I said at the outset, our emotional system, like any other system in the body, we can intentionally engage with and do activities, if you like, that help us stretch it and exercise it and, indeed, among many other things, emotions are one of those things that help us contemplate life itself. They're one of those things that are a great stimulus for making other plans. Personally - and I'm going to bring Jane in in a moment to give us one of her favourites - I love watching the talent shows. I don't know why. They get me crying every time. It's not just the performances but the stories behind some of these people who get up and have a go on ‘America's Got Talent’, ‘Australian Idol’, all those sorts of things. I really love watching those shows and often jump into YouTube when I want to get in that more contemplative mode and when I want to just have that practise, if you like, with my emotional system. But what is it for you? I'd love to hear from some of you in the chat box here around some of the things you might do to move yourself emotionally. Is it listening to particular pieces of music or a song? Is it engaging with someone special over photos? Is there a particular scent or a particular friend that you like talking with? Take a moment to think about it for yourself. Write down your own examples on page number 14 in the workbook and while you're doing that, let me bring Jane in here and ask her for some examples of herself. Thanks, Jane.

JANE GREIG-HANCOCK: Thanks, Ben. At the moment, and I think it changes - you know, sometimes you might watch a Netflix series or something - but I've just got a record player and I've got my records out from the ‘70s when I was a teenager and the emotions that that has brought out in terms of where you were at that time or the people and the places has been amazing. So I've had like a little record thing every Sunday morning where I put on a record and the music has certainly brought back a lot of emotions for me.

DR BEN PALMER: Awesome. Excellent. A record player. Yes, I've got a few old records myself. Good. Ken, is there anyone from your team who'd like to share something that they do there to move themselves emotionally - Joel or Lisa or Martin, anything come to mind?

JOEL: Well, the famous one is when you want to get jeered up, you listen to ‘Eye of the Tiger’.  
  
DR BEN PALMER: Like it. Absolutely. And on that note, I'm going to show at the end of this a little video, if you like. I love the talent shows, as I was saying, and in trawling around for something a little bit inspirational at the end, I actually stumbled across this on YouTube, the teachers at Somerville Primary doing a little shuffle for their kids as a bit of a surprise at their talent day. So we'll watch that together. It got me moving. I love the authenticity of it and the spirit that's in it, if you like. So stick with us until the end. Thank you, Judy, for giving us a comment in the chat box: going iceskating. Yes, that sounds like a great one as well.   
  
So to summarise the session, page number 15 in the workbook, none of what we've looked at, of course, is rocket science and it's not meant to be. This is a webinar that's really meant to be drawing on participant-led learning. Nonetheless, we've explored the science of forming new habits in a very practical and accessible way, and thank you to those of you who shared with me around some of those habits. And then we've stopped and we've created a plan for improving either our sleep, diet or exercise. We might not quite have had the time today, but certainly when you're on your feet doing this, your audience will have had time perhaps to do that. And we would have done a little bit of definitional work around our environment. We certainly heard from Martin and the work that he put in to creating a definitional day - a wellbeing day for himself - and thank you for sharing that with us, Martin.

What's been a key takeaway for you personally? Let us know in the chat box. Of course, if you were on your feet, you would bring in some of your audience, and I'm going to ask Ken's team to come in and just give us a little bit of a takeaway each from today and from the session personally and then we'll go over and watch our little video to finish off with. Thanks very much. Key takeaways?

LISA: I think the habits were a really good takeaway in planning, you know, an area where you want to improve, going back to those, and it makes it achievable when you think about the small steps and making it easy so that you'll hopefully be able to achieve some goals for physical and emotional wellbeing.

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks, Lisa. Joel?

JOEL: I guess it's been fascinating hearing the different areas of wellbeing that we've been focusing on. So the identification of the physical, the environmental, the emotional has really helped to sort of differentiate and work towards those different areas and how we can have that more holistic wellbeing moving forward.   
  
DR BEN PALMER: Thanks, Joel. It's a great reminder that wellbeing is really an interrelated set of variables that include our mental, our physical, our social and our environmental wellbeing and we can draw those things together. Thank you for that reflection, Joel. Martin?   
  
MARTIN: I think not just this session but the other sessions have helped me to be able to reflect on I'm actually putting in place quite a few strategies to help support my wellbeing, and maybe an area that I need to look at is actually recognising that I am putting those strategies in place and just making sure that I'm, you know, grateful for what I have and what I am doing.

DR BEN PALMER: Excellent. Thanks for sharing. Ken, a takeaway?

KEN: Yes, very similar to the others in that I've actually not only reflected with the team on this but also reflected by myself and I actually started incorporating some of the different strategies in my life, and the fact that I no longer feel silly doing squats while I'm waiting for the kettle to boil is a very important thing, but also just adding music, you know, changing the environment so that the physical side of things becomes more enjoyable and far easier to accomplish, the emotional part as well. It's just - it's tying it all together very nicely for me and given me something to think about for myself, which is I think great.

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks, Ken, and thanks to everyone. So again, this session has been designed to be led by you. You've got the materials. We can get them to you if you missed out on them. Make sure you take some time to really think about who you might run this session for, what you'll include, add or edit, how you might go about it and when. Thank you very much to Penny and to Nicole and to Fleur for some of the contributions you've been making in the chat box. It's been great. And we've heard around some of the things that are going to happen back in schools. Thanks, Kate. I'm going to hand back over to Kate Morris now, the CEO of Bastow, just to wrap up. And then after this slide please stick around for the fun little video that we've got from the Somerville Primary School. Thanks, Kate.

KATE MORRIS: Brilliant and thanks, Ben and Jane and Maria, but absolutely brilliant when we have our school colleagues in the house, and how fantastic to have Bonbeach with us today. Thanks, Ken, for bringing your team together. Not sure about Richo on the wall there, but you guys together - Ken, Joel, Lisa and Martin - absolutely brilliant contributions and so thoughtful. I particularly liked the ideas around the plants, Ben, and how you need to care for them. I really loved how you brought together how we can really provide support and nurture, but also create a better environment for ourselves through greening it up, which was fantastic. But the start small, do it every day, make it easy, reward yourself, do it with a friend, around the Holy Trinity of sleep, diet and exercise, is just a great place to start. But the way you wove the science into it, Ben, really assisted me to think about what I need to do differently and it will certainly guarantee that I sign up next week for Improving Wellbeing with Social Strategies. So really looking forward to working with you on the 27th, Ben. I know you put your heart and soul into these sessions with Maria and Jane and bring our school colleagues with us. So absolutely fantastic and really looking forward to getting onto that YouTube. Let's go.

DR BEN PALMER: Alright. Let's go, yes. So the social strategies of all four, that's a big predictor of our wellbeing. Love to see you at Social Strategies. And speaking of which - so this really made me cry this week, I have to say. It's so authentic and it's such a great demonstration of the effort and spirit that teachers bring to their work. And as a father of three young kids, I'm always just so grateful for the work that you do. Talk about a wellbeing day. Well, just listen to the positive energy the teachers at Somerville Primary bring to their students through this surprise Mobfest.

(Video played).

The principal, David Pratt.

(Video continues).

KATE MORRIS: Come on, Ken.

DR BEN PALMER: Come on, Ken. Get up and dance with us.

(Video continues).

DR BEN PALMER: What a good sport he is.

(Video continues).

DR BEN PALMER: Thanks for joining, everyone. Absolute gold, wasn't it? I love the splits at the end and the energy that that creates for all those students. Absolutely gorgeous. Have a good evening, everyone, and thanks for being with us tonight. Hopefully you can do something like that around wellbeing at your school. Thanks very much, Ken and to all the team at Bastow - Maria, who's been typing away in the chat box. It's been a pleasure to be here with you again this evening.

KATE MORRIS: That was awesome.

DR BEN PALMER: Very good.

KATE MORRIS: What was it, the splits?

DR BEN PALMER: Incredible stuff. Incredible.

KATE MORRIS: That was just madness.

DR BEN PALMER: Oh, the handstand as well. I love how the kids just get into it so much. You can hear their excitement. It's just electric.

KATE MORRIS: David Pratt. Thank you.

DR BEN PALMER: See you in the debrief link. I'll send a link out to everyone and see you in there just for 5 or 10 minutes for a debrief. Thanks, everyone.

KATE MORRIS: Oh, dear, that made me laugh.