



SELF-CARE RESOURCES

A N D I D E A S

WHAT IS SELF-CARE:

Self-care is about enhancing your wellbeing and overall quality of life. It's about listening intently to what your mind and body needs and adopting mindful habits, routines and rituals that nourish, nurture and energise you inside and out.

WHY WE CREATED THIS RESOURCE:

Self-care is any activity we do to deliberately improve our mental, emotional, spiritual or physical health. Although it sounds simple in theory, people often have trouble prioritising their needs.

This resource was created to make self-care more accessible, to spark thinking and expose you to the range of self-care ideas that allow you to prioritise yourself easily.

The aim of this document is to help you easily explore a range of self-care strategies. Some will be more beneficial for you personally than others and that's ok. As a result, we hope that those grand intentions to put yourself first can be further explored.

TIPS FOR SELF-CARE:

- Schedule it into your daily routine
- Do it regularly
- Give yourself permission to look after you
- A good self-care routine is not a weakness but a strength
- Don't wait until you NEED it
- Bin the judgement - be open-minded
- Try new things
- Do what works for you

AREAS OF SELF-CARE EXPLORED IN THIS RESOURCE:



MIND

Self-care practices to enhance your mental wellbeing



BODY

Self-care practices to enhance your physical wellbeing



SOUL

Self-care practices to enhance your spiritual wellbeing

MINDFULNESS:

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we're sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future.

Practise Mindfulness Meditation

Meditation isn't about becoming a different person, a new person, or even a better person. It's about training your awareness and getting a healthy sense of perspective. You're not trying to turn off your thoughts or feelings. You're learning to observe them without judgment. And eventually, you may start to better understand them as well.

Meditation Apps

- [Smiling Mind](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Calm](#)
- [10 Percent Happier](#)
- [Insight Timer](#)
- [Simple Habit](#)
- [1 Giant Mind](#)
- [MyLife - Stop.Breathe.Think](#)
- [Omvana](#)

Guided Meditation

- [The Haus of Health: A Mindful Moment](#)
- [Sam Harris: 9 Minute Guided Meditation](#)
- [Headspace - Guided Meditation](#)

Helpful Tips

Unlike exercising your body, you don't get sweaty exercising your mind. Consider what you want to achieve from your mindfulness practice. If it's relaxation, choose a relaxing track and try it as part of your pre-sleep routine. If it's to set the tone for the day, choose one that reflects that.

Meditation is not something you do once, or two twice and then you're "cured." It's a thing you continue to practice and improve throughout your whole life. Much like your batting/ bowling the more you practice and focus the easier key skills will become.

- [Headspace: 9 Simple Ways to Make Meditation a Daily Habit](#)
- [Benefits of Meditation](#)
- [Meditation for beginners](#)
- [Which type of Meditation is right for you](#)



"Mindfulness and yoga is a huge part of my life and a passion. Living in the present moment through thick and thin is something we can all get better at both in sport and life. Nobody does you like you Namaste,"

Cam Bancroft

YOGA

Yoga is a form of exercise that focuses on strength, flexibility and breathing to boost physical and mental wellbeing.

Yoga cultivates health and wellbeing (physical, emotional, mental and social) through the regular practice of a range of many different techniques, including postures and movement, breath awareness and breathing exercises, relaxation and concentration, self-inquiry and meditation.

Yoga has the power to calm the mind and strengthen the body. Don't be intimidated by yoga terminology, fancy yoga studios and complicated poses. Yoga is for everyone.

Practising Yoga

** Before practicing Yoga, please check with your designated SSSM staff.

Yoga classes vary, depending on the particular style or tradition of the teacher. Participants may often practice on yoga/exercise mats.

A common yoga class typically includes:

- An introduction, possibly including some breathing exercises and/or relaxation
- A physical warm up
- Yoga postures, movements and stretches
- Relaxation and/or meditation.

Meditation is usually an integral part of yoga and many yoga teachers may offer classes dedicated to the practice of meditation. Participants usually practise either on cushions on the floor, or seated on chairs. A dedicated meditation class typically includes:

- An introduction possibly including breathing exercises, relaxation and some inspirational readings
- A number of mental focusing and meditation practices
- Returning to an outward focus and brief discussion

Yoga Apps

- [Daily Yoga](#)
- [Yoga Studio](#)
- [Down Dog - Yoga](#)
- [Yoga for Beginners](#)

Helpful Resources

- [Yoga for everyone](#)
- [30 Benefits of daily yoga practice](#)
- [Yoga Australia](#)



START THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH:



Within the world of elite sport, there is still a lot of stigma around mental health, speaking up about it, and seeking help. Yet we know that professional assistance can make a huge difference for someone going through a difficult time.

Check in with others by asking R U OK?

Got a feeling that someone you know or care about isn't behaving as they normally would? Perhaps they seem out of sorts? More agitated or withdrawn? Or they're just not themselves. Trust that gut instinct and act on it.

By starting a conversation and commenting on the changes you've noticed, you could help that family member, friend or workmate open up. If they say they are not ok, you can follow our conversation steps to show them they're supported and help them find strategies to better manage the load. If they are ok, that person will know you're someone who cares enough to ask.

When asking RUOK follow the below steps



1. Ask



2. Listen



3. Encourage action



4. Check in

Learn what to say at ruok.org.au

Getting ready to ask R U OK?

Before you can look out for others, you need to look out for yourself. And that's ok. If you're not in the right headspace or you don't think you're the right person to have the conversation, try to think of someone else in their support network who could talk to them.

To help you decide whether you're ready to start a meaningful conversation, ask yourself:



Am I ready?

- Am I in a good headspace
- Am I willing to genuinely listen?
- Can I give as much time as needed?



Am I prepared?

- Have I chosen somewhere relatively private and comfy?
- Have I figured out a time that will be good for them to chat?
- Have I made sure I have enough time to chat properly?



Picked my moment

- Do I understand that if I ask how someone's going, the answer could be "No, I'm not"?
- Do I understand that you can't fix someone's problems?
- Do I accept that they might not be ready to talk? or they might not want to talk to me?

WRITING:

Writing things down creates a sense of distance between our thoughts and our real selves, reminding us that our thoughts do not define us, and we don't have to believe them if we don't want to. Exploring our thoughts and feelings in writing enables us to give greater depth to our experiences by labeling and analysing them.

When we write by hand we often find the need to pause and structure our thoughts. This helps us express ourselves, unjumble our thoughts and really get things off our chest.

Journaling:

Journaling generally involves the practice of keeping a diary or journal that explores thoughts and feelings surrounding the events of your life. There are several different ways to do this. Journaling, as a stress management and self-exploration tool, works best when done consistently, but even occasional, sporadic journaling can be stress relieving when the practice is focused on gratitude or emotional processing.

Helpful Resources

- [Mindfulness Journals: Use Writing to Live More Mindfully](#)
- [10 Tips for Mindful Writing and Meditative Journaling](#)

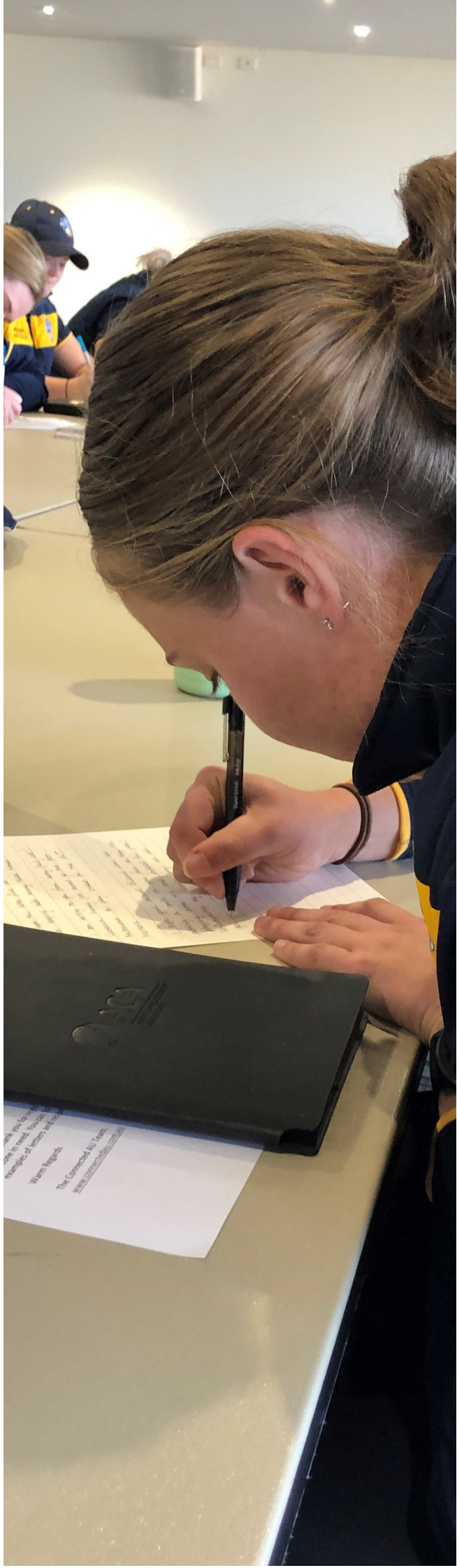
Write a letter to your future self:

There is nothing more precious than seeing oneself succeeding in goals set by our own selves. Not what the ones that society wants us to "succeed", but the ones we want to. By writing to your future self, you can measure the goals achieved with regards to what your past self thought you would in the future. Don't fancy yourself as a writer? Don't worry. You don't have to write an essay. It doesn't matter if you choose to elaborate or jot down bullet points. Of course, the more detailed your entry is, the more fun it'll be to read it in the future. What's important is that you do it.

Write a letter to a loved one or someone in need:

Take the time to sit down and write a letter to someone who means a lot to you. A letter is a very powerful way to let someone know how you are feeling about them and provides an opportunity to release the thoughts from your brain.

Can't think of anyone who would benefit from you writing a letter? [The Letterbox Project](#) is a really simple idea that is really impactful in action. You can write a letter to someone around the country who has been identified as isolated and lonely. You can be matched with someone of similar interests and no personal details need to be disclosed.



GRATITUDE:

Gratitude is being consciously thankful towards someone or something. Like the feeling of appreciation, gratitude is an emotion and taking the time to appreciate what you have is one of the keys to cultivating gratitude. Research suggests that gratitude is the single best predictor of individual well-being contributing to life satisfaction, happiness, optimism, hope and positive affect. Gratitude is different from other caring emotions such as empathy and compassion because it can be intentionally cultivated.

Practicing Gratitude:

The benefits of practicing gratitude are nearly endless. People who regularly practice gratitude by taking time to notice and reflect upon the things they're thankful for are likely to experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better and express more compassion and kindness.

Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis.

- Write a thank-you note. You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.
- Thank someone mentally. No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you, and mentally thank the individual.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the best parts of your day.
- Count your blessings. Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.
- Pray. People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude.
- Complete Random acts of kindness. Hold open a door, offer assistance, help someone trying to get a stroller down the steps or take any random acts of kindness. Every small interaction with someone is an opportunity to have a positive impact on both of your lives. When you look, you'll find opportunities to perform random acts of kindness

You can log your acts of kindness at the [Kindness Factory](#) website.



HEALTHY ROUTINES:

Routines can be incorporated seamlessly into your daily life in different levels or aspects: on a personal level, a relationship level, and/or a professional level.

Developing Routines:

Creating a system that works for you and following it every day is an excellent way of becoming your best self. A successful routine gives you a laser-like focus from the second you get up to the time you go to sleep.

- On a personal level: Think about what activities you engage in on a daily basis. This could mean giving yourself 15-20 minutes a day to enjoy your cup of coffee while watching the news. Making yourself a green smoothie in the morning to kick off the day on the right note. Or giving yourself some time before bed to read your current book. Whatever you choose, make sure you take the time to nurture yourself (whether it's physically, mentally, or emotionally) on a daily basis.
- On a relationship level: Think about which activities or small things you can do to connect with others. It can be a romantic partner, family member, or with a friend on a social level. Make time to talk to someone and hear about their day. Or make a meal, have a games night once a week.
- On a career/work level: It doesn't necessarily have to be something to climb up the corporate ladder. It can be something to dig deeper into your professional [dreams](#) and [goals](#). Maybe read a book once a month about something you enjoy. Or check LinkedIn once a week and read an interesting article. Or simply network and connect with others every once in a while to discuss the challenges and opportunities.

Making your bed:

Making your bed when you wake up might seem too small to matter, but starting your day by making your bed gives you a sense of accomplishment. This gives you an instant feeling of success and the feeling that you are on top of things. You feel organized and ready to take on the day. These two minutes of work set the tone for the rest of the day. It may be small but it's mighty!

- [If You Want to Change the World, Start Off by Making Your Bed - William McRaven, US Navy Admiral Speech](#)



Sleep Routines:

Obtaining healthy sleep is important for both physical and mental health, improving productivity and overall quality of life. Everyone can benefit from better sleep, and sleep hygiene can play a key part in achieving that goal.

Tips on improving sleep:

Getting a good night's sleep is an important ingredient to getting the most out of both your mind and body. There are lots of things you can try, such as:

- Making your bedroom an environment that's a haven removed from the stresses of the day and as dark as possible
- Keeping regular times for going to bed and getting up
- Getting some sunlight during the day
- Trying a calming bedtime routine.
- Taking away all electronic gadgets like phones, TVs and computers when winding down in the evening.
- Meditating last thing at night or writing in a gratitude journal
- Reviewing your day over a couple of minutes like a show-reel and then letting it all go as you prepare for sleep

For more information on getting better sleep, go to the [Australian Sleep Health Foundation](#)

Social connection/Staying connected:

Reflecting on our daily encounters can help us examine whether the interactions we have with others constitute meaningful connections. Countless interactions occur with family, friends, co-workers, service providers, employees, baristas, teachers, and coaches. The list is endless. We may not make a meaningful connection at every encounter, yet enhancing our awareness and ability to improve connections can lead to many benefits.

Easy Ways to Enhance Your Connections

- Open Up Opportunity
- Ask Open-ended Questions
- Listen
- Greet Others
- Invite Variety

These simple strategies enhance connections at all levels including those with our spouses, our children, our coworkers, even the barista who makes our morning coffee. Enriched interactions with others increase overall health and happiness to deepen meaning in our lives.

For more information on Meaningful Interactions/ social connection [Check out the Therapy Changes blog](#)



“ I’M THE LEAST ARTISTIC PERSON, I CAN’T DRAW ... IT’S SOMETHING I’VE JUST PICKED UP PURELY OUT OF BOREDOM AND I’VE REALISED I REALLY LIKE IT.

“IT’S A THERAPEUTIC THING. IT’S SO DIFFERENT TO WHAT I DO (NORMALLY), I THINK THAT’S WHY I’VE ENJOYED IT.”

ASH GARDNER



CREATIVITY

Painting, gardening, writing, cooking, sewing, building things, colouring-in, playing an instrument... There are so many different ways to express creativity!

When we immerse ourselves in creative activities, we often naturally experience mindfulness. We’re not thinking about anything except the present moment because we’re too busy experiencing the creative activity. This is known as being in a state of Flow.

Colouring:

Mindful colouring asks us to focus on how we choose and apply colour in a design to bring our awareness to the present moment. This process is similar to meditation, we let go of any thoughts about tomorrow or yesterday, or what we are going to do when we finish.

Printable Templates:

- [Sea Turtle](#)
- [Flower](#)
- [Dream Catcher](#)
- [French Bulldog](#)
- [Best things in life](#)
- [Owl](#)

Drawing:

Drawing mindfully is done by focusing your attention on what you are doing. While drawing you slow down and pay attention to the activity in front of you. If you can’t draw, that’s OK, it can be an opportunity to let go of unhelpful perfectionistic thoughts and unrelenting standards.

Drawing resources:

- [Where to start](#)
- [How to draw a face](#)
- [Draw a Lions Head](#)
- [Draw Bart Simpson](#)

**Create Something
in the kitchen**

Plan a DIY project



MUSIC:

We respond to music on a deep and fundamental level – even below our level of consciousness. It can affect our bodies and brains in profound ways without us needing to do much more than sit and listen.

Create playlists for different moods

Listening to music is a good way to regulate your emotions. You can make different playlists (or a mixed tape if you are feeling old school) for different purposes. Think about the music you find helpful when you are in certain moods. Put these songs into a 'mood playlist', and play it when you need support. Playlists can include:

- Relaxation: Music you find calming. Play when you feel anxious, agitated, having trouble sleeping, or if you need a break from ruminating thoughts.
- Put a smile on your dial: Your favourite songs that put you in a good mood, or remind you of fun times. Put this on when you need to lift your mood.
- Confidence boosters: Songs with a great message and good beat. These will help remind you of your own abilities and strengths.
- Movers and shakers: Energising and motivational songs, such as upbeat tunes or karaoke favourites. This music will help you soldier on, even when you feel indifferent or fatigued. Great to play when doing household chores, or attempting a difficult workout at the gym.

Play or learn an Instrument:

Learning an instrument or a new song adds to our sense of achievement, which has been shown to be linked to overall happiness. By focusing on the melody and the notes you're playing, you will bring attention to the task at hand. Immense focus on rhythmic and/or melodic patterns can often be relaxing and soothing.

Listen to an Inspiring TED Talk or Podcast:

Podcasts and TED Talks aren't only good entertainment, but also a great source of education. The time you'd normally spend doing those mindless chores or exercising can be used to help you prepare for the next phase of your career. Whether you're in your home, on a walk, in your car, in your hotel room, on your way to training or at any number of other places, it's easy as can be to put in your headphones and listen to the latest episodes of your favorite podcast.

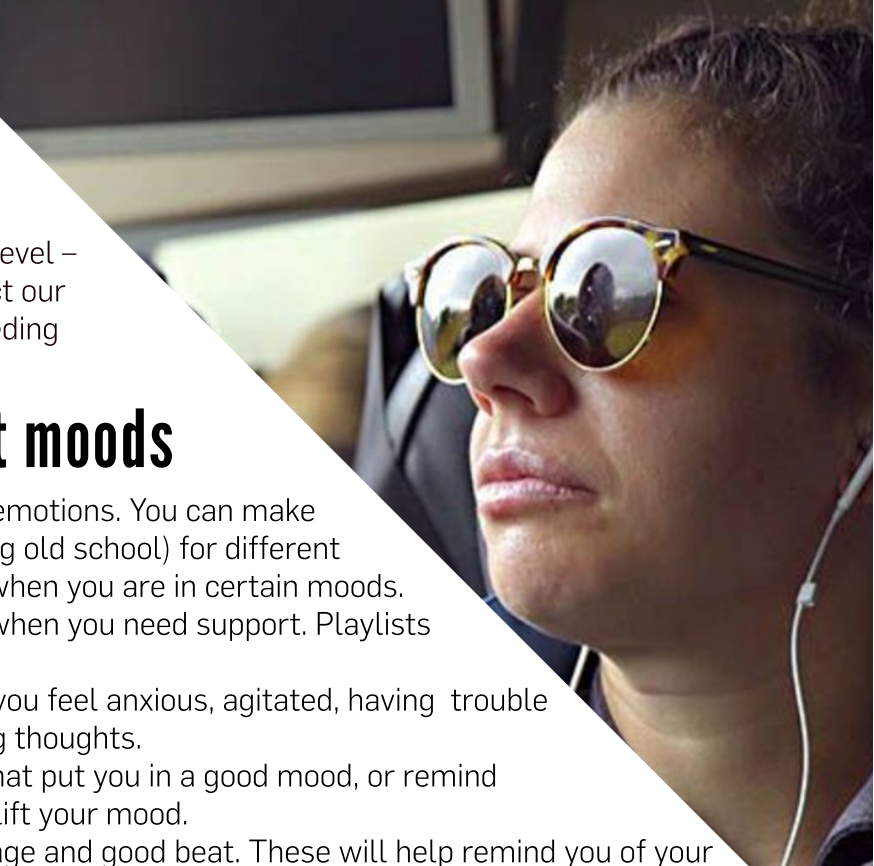
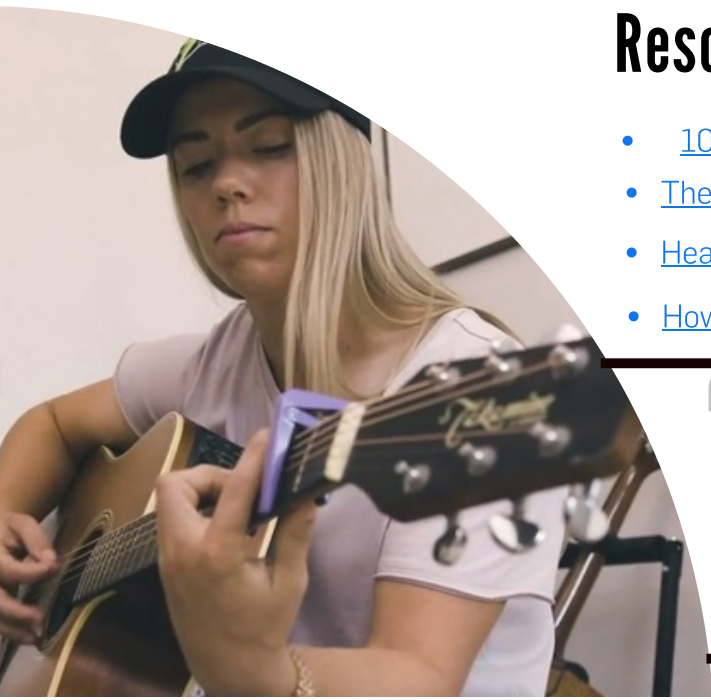
Resources:

- [101 Songs to Lift Your Spirits and Improve Your Mood](#)
- [The Mindful Kind Podcast: #12 Music and Mindfulness](#)
- [Headspace - Power to the playlist](#)
- [How to use Music for Mental Health](#)

“

” IT (PLAYING THE GUITAR) HELPS ME SOOTHE AFTER A BIG DAY OF TRAINING AND HELPS ME GET ALL MY EMOTIONS OUT. MUSIC IS A BIG PART OF MY LIFE AND A GREAT THING TO HAVE OUTSIDE OF CRICKET AND LET ME EXPRESS WHO I AM.”

NAOMI STALENBERG



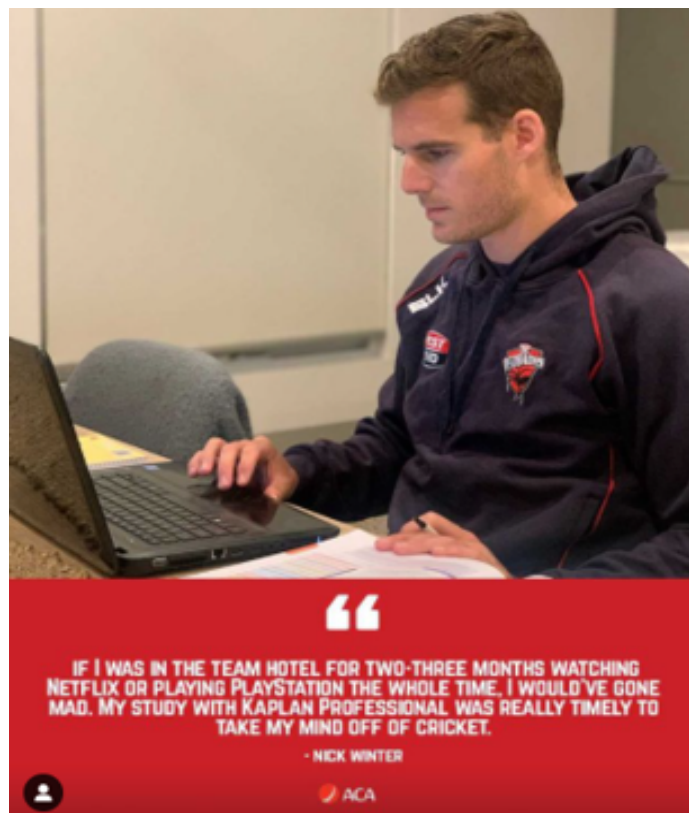
FIND YOUR FUN:

Incorporating more fun and play into your daily life can improve the quality of your relationships, as well as your mood and outlook. Even in the most difficult of times, taking time to play or laugh can go a long way toward making you feel better. It's true what they say: Laughter really is the best medicine. Laughter makes you feel good. And the positive feeling that comes from laughter and having fun remains with you even after the giggles subside. Play and laughter help you retain a positive, optimistic outlook.



When you are on the road you may consider packing:

- HDMI Cord or Chromecast
- A range of balls and outdoor activities such as a Frisbee, Basketball or Footy
- Favorite board or card games
- Putter/ Golf Clubs
- Crosswords, Sudoku etc
- Personal PlayStation, Xbox or other gaming console
- A range of books, coloring in, puzzles etc
- Art Canvas with paint



IF I WAS IN THE TEAM HOTEL FOR TWO-THREE MONTHS WATCHING NETFLIX OR PLAYING PLAYSTATION THE WHOLE TIME, I WOULD'VE GONE MAD. MY STUDY WITH KAPLAN PROFESSIONAL WAS REALLY TIMELY TO TAKE MY MIND OFF OF CRICKET.

- NICK WINTER



SELF-CARE PLAN

	WHAT	WHEN	WHO WITH	WHAT MIGHT GET IN THE WAY	WHAT ARE MY SOLUTIONS
FUN					
ACHIEVEMENT					
RELAXATION					
MEANINGFUL CONNECTION					
EXERCISE					
ROUTINE					
GRATITUDE					

NOTES

EVALUATE

Each week, revise your progress:



	STRATEGY	HOW WELL HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO IMPLEMENT THIS STRATEGY <small>On a scale of 0-5 (0=not at all, 5= very well)</small>	HOW HAS YOUR WELLBEING IMPROVED SINCE IMPLEMENTING THIS STRATEGY <small>On a scale of 0-5 (0=not at all, 5= very well)</small>	REFLECTING ON YOUR RESPONSES, DOES THE STRATEGY NEED TO BE REVISED? <small>If so, list your revised strategy</small>
FUN				
ACHIEVEMENT				
RELAXATION				
MEANINGFUL CONNECTION				
EXERCISE				
ROUTINE				
GRATITUDE				

NOTES



References for this document can be accessed [HERE](#)