

**FIFTH  
EDITION**

**WHY NOT *YOU?* WHY NOT *NOW?***

# SPARK

CHANGEMAKER NETWORK MAGAZINE

**10** Physical  
**Health**

**15** Mental  
**Health**

mastrunder's  
**CHANGE  
MAKER**  
NETWORK



# Masifunde's Changemaker Network

With the Changemaker Network, Masifunde aims to capacitate learners with knowledge on relevant social topics such as leadership, prevention of gender-based-violence, community safety, bullying or holistic health.

Through the network, the participating learners are empowered to spark change in their schools and communities.

Firstly, Masifunde runs activation workshops in all Grade 9 classes. In these workshops, the learners nominate and select suitable changemakers within their class. The selected learners then join a one-week training.

In this training they learn tools and methods on how to run campaigns and share knowledge with their peers.

Afterwards, on a quarterly basis, the now trained changemakers share the knowledge they have learnt through advocacy school campaigns.

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EDUCATION

**More on Masifunde**

[www.masifunde.org](http://www.masifunde.org)

**More on the Changemaker Network**

[www.Changemaker-Network.org](http://www.Changemaker-Network.org)

 **CHANGE  
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# Foreword



**To build a strong nation we need youth that is physically and mentally on top of their game. That can make decisions and take initiative for the betterment of all.**

*"In my judgment, physical fitness is basic to all forms of excellence and to a strong, confident nation."*  
~ **Robert Kennedy**

Childhood and adolescence is a critical period in the development of long-term attitudes towards personal wellbeing and lifestyle choices.

There is no disputing the benefits of physical activity and active play for the physical health and mental wellbeing of children and adolescents. And there is increasing evidence of the adverse effects of sitting too much and spending too much time in front of screens. Technology is great, but it can take away from spending time with loved ones and can impact negatively on your emotional wellbeing

as a young person. The benefits of keeping active do not only rely on the physical body but also during exercise we release chemicals that can improve our mood and make us happier and better in our minds. Being physically active has significant positive effects in preventing or alleviating mental illness, including depressive symptoms and anxiety- or stress-related disease.

Globally, 81% of children and adolescents aged 11-17 years do not meet these physical activity recommendations, leading to a global concern due to the decreasing physical activity levels among children and adolescents, particularly in adolescent girls. Bringing it closer to home, the Healthy Active Kids South Africa (HAKSA) Report Card reports on the physical

activity and nutrition of South African children and adolescents, aged between 5-18 years. The HAKSA 2022 Report Card highlighted the urgency to promote physical activity for health in children and adolescents. It's important for the government, media, schools, families, and civil society to work together to make it easier for the youth to make healthy choices. This means making sure they have opportunities to be active at home, at school, in their communities, and even online. It is important for young people in South Africa to grow up healthy and strong so they can make a positive difference in our country.

**Dr Siphesihle Nqweniso**

**Lecturer / Biokineticist**

**Department of Human  
Movement Science,  
Nelson Mandela University**

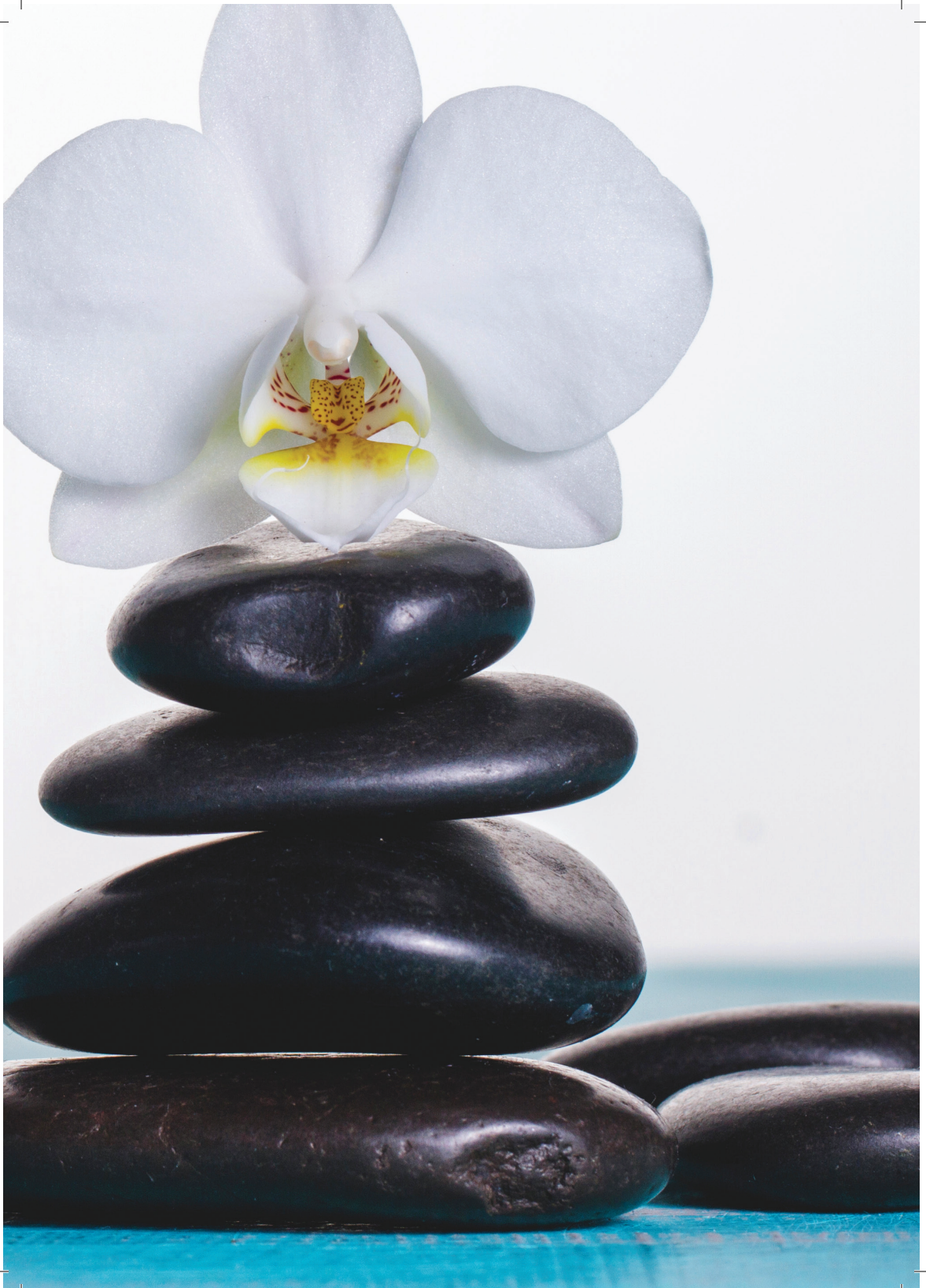
# Health



When someone asks you “Are you good?” or “Are you well?”, on normal basis, you usually respond and say “ I am good” or “I am well” only when you are not sick. Which means you are only responding from the physical state of being well. Wellness & health is more than being free from physical illnesses.

Wellness is the optimal state of health and an evolving process of achieving your full potential physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, spiritually, environmentally, and financially.

Everything we do and every emotion we feel relates to our well-being. In turn, our well-being directly affects our actions and emotions. It’s an ongoing circle. Therefore, it is important to achieve optimal wellness in order to reduce stress, reduce the risk of illness and ensure positive interactions and attitudes. There are 7 dimensions of wellness and in this edition of Spark Magazine, we will be focusing on 2 dimensions, namely: physical and mental health.





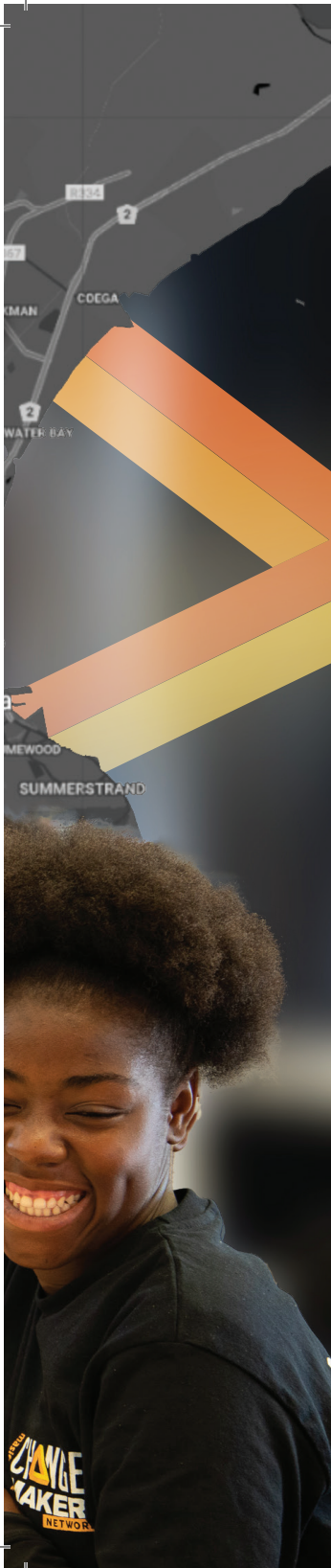
Nature Reserve  
UITENHAGE FARMS  
Kariega  
Despatch  
Kwa Nobuhle  
Bethelsdorp  
Motherwell  
MARKMAN  
ILHAYI  
NEW BRIGHTON  
NORTH END  
KABEGA PARK  
NEWTON PARK  
Gqeberha  
LORRAINE  
WALMER  
HUMEWOD  
LOVEMORE PARK  
SUM

# Participating Schools

## & progress made

**Status:** **43** participating schools in Nelson Mandela Bay

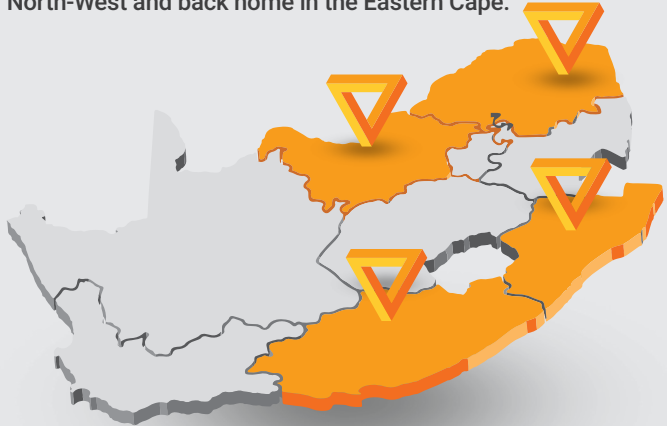




# BREAKING NEWS



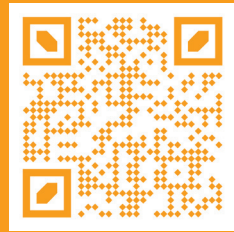
The Masifunde's Changemaker Network is now getting implemented all over South Africa. Currently, 20 organisations receive training to select and train Changemakers in 100 schools in Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal, North-West and back home in the Eastern Cape.



Visit our Changemaker's Facebook Group and Page to engage and virtually meet the new Changemakers from other provinces.

## AMAZING CHANGEMAKER VIDEO

from MCN Mandela Bay is now online: Find the clip about your project by visiting [www.changemaker-network.org](http://www.changemaker-network.org)



with us, your favourite motivational quote/ word

Public speaking activity: Inam Dlakiya from Woolhope Secondary School at the Changemaker Training in March 2023



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# MCN IN ACTION

Left to right: Unabantu Bikwa from Ithembelihle CHS, Amahle Khonzani from Douglas Mbopa SS and Akahlulwa Nazo from Motherwell HS at the Eastern Cape Departmental campaign against social-ills 2023 in St. Thomas High School.







Lungisa High School Changemakers addressing grade 9 learners about the importance of being change-makers



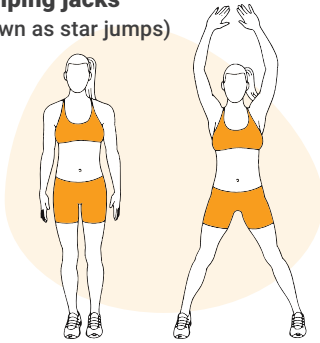
Changemakers from Kwanobuhle in Uitenhage collaborated in a school dialogue event about Conflict Management, focusing on strategies to resolve conflict and prevent violence.

# PHYSICAL Health

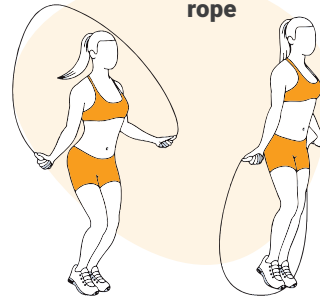
## Let us jump back to health

We have been jumping for most of our lives not realising the power that this activity has. Jumping is one of the best ways to get back to health as it is a full-body exercise, meaning that in one set of this exercise, all the muscles in the body are targeted. Jumping is also a great way to improve cardiorespiratory health. Good cardiorespiratory health helps to reduce the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol and helps in weight loss, thus increasing your quality and quantity of life. So, your heart and lungs get much needed action as well. Jumping is easy to do and it requires minimal equipment.

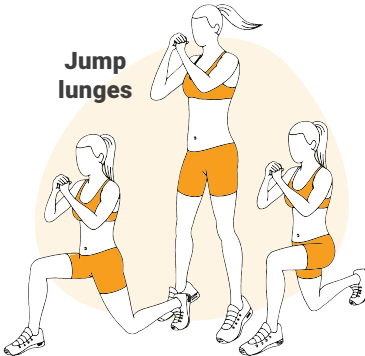
**Jumping jacks**  
(also known as star jumps)



**Skipping rope**



**Jump lunges**

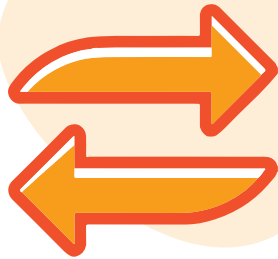


**Squat jumps**



**TRY JUMPING TO YOUR FAVOURITE SONG**

# HEALTH SWAPS



Health and wellness begin when we make small changes to our lifestyles that ultimately become healthy habits that we continue with to cultivate a healthy state of being. Drastic changes to one's lifestyle can be unrealistic, not long-lasting and overwhelming. They can also be overwhelming, so much so that they can cause stress and backtrack the progress that one is wanting to make. If you're trying to make healthier choices, here are some simple swaps that can help.

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
Fizzy Drinks



**HEALTHY OPTION**  
Water

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
Chips, biscuits, sweets or other snacks




**HEALTHY OPTION**  
Fruit, Nuts, pop corns, reduce sugar

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
Tinned fruit/vegetables




**HEALTHY OPTION**  
Fresh fruit/vegetables

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
Long exercise sessions




**HEALTHY OPTION**  
15 - 30 minutes maximum exercise

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
Driving unnecessarily or taking a taxi to short distances



**HEALTHY OPTION**  
Walk more

**UNHEALTHY OPTION**  
On the phone 24/7



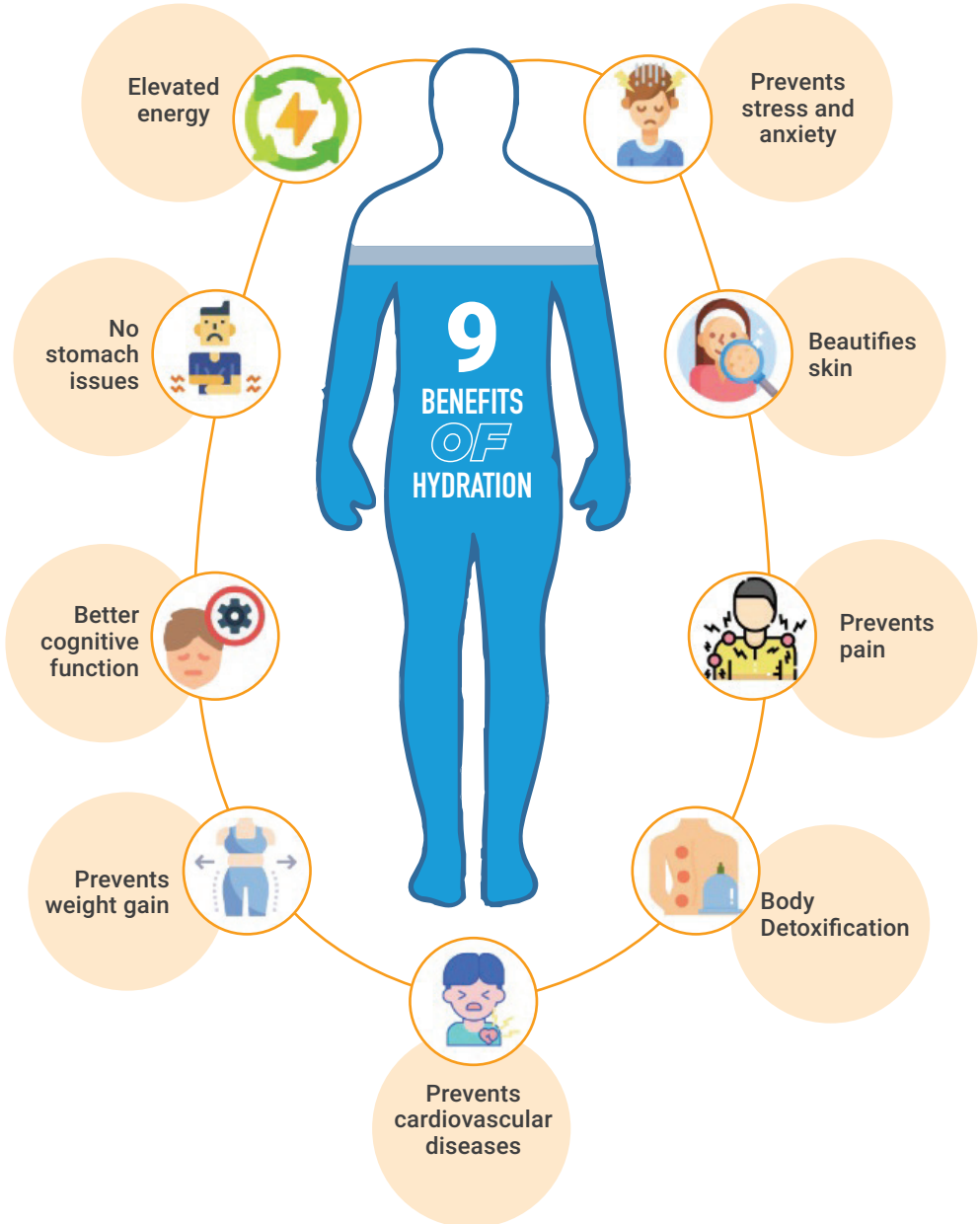
**HEALTHY OPTION**  
Limit screen time





## Staying hydrated

The ultimate benefit of staying hydrated is that it maintains regularity in the body, through flushing out of toxins and preventing infections. For those that do not like the taste of it, adding your favourite fruit to a jug or bottle of water can be a solution to 'fun'-tasting water with added benefits.





## Getting enough sleep

Getting adequate quality sleep has many health benefits, such as physical and mental regeneration. Sleeping regulates our immune system, increases our energy, improves mood and mental health. When you are sleep deprived, your body is unable to rest and relax which may easily cause stress and lack of concentration.





*Overall health is determined by being free of negative stress that may have negative effects on the body. One way in which we can target and get rid of stress in the body is by taking charge of what we allow into our minds.*

Here are simple 5-10 minutes exercises you can do to re-align the mind to be positive:

### **SIT IN SILENCE**

A lot of times, we function with loudness or sounds around us which be a negative stimulus to the mind. Switch off, and just listen to the sounds of life or just nature around you. Allow this process to reset your mind.

### **INTENTIONAL BREATHING**

take deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth at a pace most comfortable to you. This intentional breathing quiets the mind and also brings oxygen to the brain.

### **STRETCH**

- Sitting in one position for an extended period of time brings stress to the body, thus bringing stress to the mind. Get up, stretch, and feel the energy coming back.

### **LAUGH**

- Call a friend and reconnect through laughter, or watch a funny video. As laughter reduces some levels of stress hormones



**At times, the above-mentioned exercises can be a drag and not easily work when someone's mental health is compromised.**

# MENTAL Health

**Mental health is all about how we think, feel, behave and cope with normal stresses of life, relate to others, and make choices. It includes the emotional, psychological and social well-being of an individual.**

While illness confirms a diagnosis or challenges to cope. Therefore, mental illness, also called mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions – disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behaviour.

Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviours.

## **CAUSES of Mental illness**

There is no single cause for mental illness as mental health disorders are complex. A number of factors can contribute to risk for mental illness, such as:

- Biological and genetic factors.
- Chemical imbalances in the brain.
- Experiences related to other ongoing (chronic) medical conditions, such as cancer, or hormonal imbalances.
- Environmental factors such as abuse, neglect, trauma, drug & alcohol abuse, witnessing and experiencing violence and other environmental factors.



**It is very important not to diagnose yourself without a professional diagnosis from a doctor.**

A mental illness can make you miserable and can cause problems in your daily life, such as at school or home or in relationships. In most cases, symptoms can be managed and treated with a combination of medications, talk therapy (psychotherapy) or counselling. Also, support from family and friends can be helpful.

## When taking care of your mental health practice the following:

Set boundaries

Exercise regularly

Practice mindfulness

Challenge unhealthy thoughts

Ask for help

Get enough sleep

Eat balanced foods

Connect with others

Acknowledge your emotions

## How to support someone dealing with mental health challenges?

Reach out and check in on them

Celebrate their small wins and remind them about their victories

Try to learn more about what they are struggling with

Listen attentively and show compassion

Encourage seeking help

Don't forget to look after yourself too

### Where to find help around Nelson Mandela Bay?

**PE Mental Health** 041 365 0502 | [pemhs@global.co.za](mailto:pemhs@global.co.za)  
**REVIVE** 081 710 1742 | [info@revive.org.za](mailto:info@revive.org.za)

*You can also reach out to a local social worker for other referrals.*





## Activity

# Wellness check-up

Tick "YES" to the statements that you agree with and tick "NO" if you disagree.

PHYSICALLY	YES	NO
I engage in physical activities for at least 30 minutes daily.		
I maintain a regular sleep schedule and get between 7-8 hours of sleep each night.		
I eat a variety of healthy food /do not eat excessive junk food and I control my portions.		
EMOTIONALLY	YES	NO
I remind myself to stay positive and optimistic.		
I seek or accept help and support from others when needed.		
I talk when there is something that is bothering me or when there is something that is making me unhappy.		
ENVIRONMENTAL	YES	NO
I recycle and do not litter		
I spend at least one hour outside to get lots of fresh air		
SOCIALLY	YES	NO
I take time to communicate and I respect the people around me.		
I practice active listening.		
FINANCIALLY	YES	NO
I budget when I have money		
I practice saving up money when I have it.		
INTELLECTUAL	YES	NO
I read for at least 20 minutes daily.		
I am open-minded.		
I play stimulating and educational games.		
SPIRITUALLY	YES	NO
I practice acceptance, gratitude and keeping a positive attitude.		
I take time to meditate or practice mindful relaxation.		
I pray daily and/or be appreciative of the gift of being alive		
I seek to spend time in nature, e.g. beach, to enjoy planet earth's beauty		

If you have answered "YES" to most of the statements, you are likely to have a balanced well-being. Great job, keep it up.

If you have answered "NO" to many of the statements, do not stress about it, there is still time to achieve balanced wellness. You can try to use the statements as your guidelines for wellness. For example, if you have answered no to "I maintain a regular sleep schedule and get between 7-8 hours of sleep each night" then try to have a sleeping routine and get enough sleep during the night.

*I am a rugby player. Besides playing rugby and doing intense exercises. I take care of my health by taking walks and jogging for least 30 minutes regularly and drink water afterwards. I also try to avoid thinking a lot, I have a timetable that helps me stay focused, as lack of time management causes unnecessary stress.*



**Amahle Khozani**

Douglas Mbopha SSS

*I believe it is good to take care of both our physical and mental health. One way we can practise this is by keeping a positive attitude even in the midst of life's challenges and stresses. Positive thinking helps us cope and remain curious to finding solution, because harmful thoughts cause stress to our bodies. By being optimistic and keeping a positive mindset there are chances that we will also have healthy relationships and social lives, which ultimately result in a healthy lifestyle.*



**Likhanye Mbetsu**

Nkululeko High School





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