

Why wellbeing is your enabler for performance

People that are well, do well. But we are doing a lot of doing, and not a lot of well.

We know this because we see increasing numbers of people experiencing chronic stress, burn-out and mental health problems. People are under pressure. Exhaustion from the stress of the pandemic, trauma from natural disasters like the cyclone, and stress from financial and economic uncertainty is putting pressure on our mental health and wellbeing.

We need to flip our wellbeing to work equation

Many of us still operate with the industrial age model of work which focuses on (and measures) success by effort, productivity, and revenue, where people prioritise work first, and fit health, wellbeing, rest, and recovery into whatever time is left. The story we tell ourselves sounds something like this, 'if I work hard and achieve my targets, I then deserve happiness and wellbeing.'

But this equation is broken and backwards. Shawn Achor's work over the last decade from Harvard University shows that with this mindset we never get to wellbeing. Every time we hit our targets; we increase our targets. We get a nice car; we want a bigger one. We get a good job; we want a better one.

In our race for more, we are reducing ourselves to less. Our busy lifestyles keep us in a constant fight-or-flight state. Our body continuously pumps out adrenalin and cortisol designed to keep us safe from threats in short bursts, but not as our regular operating system.

When we are stressed and in survival mode, we can't perform well. Our brain prioritises the resources needed to keep us safe from risks and threats, but in

order to do this, it deprioritises resources less essential to survival like perspective-taking, problem-solving and innovation.

Think of wellbeing as your enabler of performance, rather than your reward for results

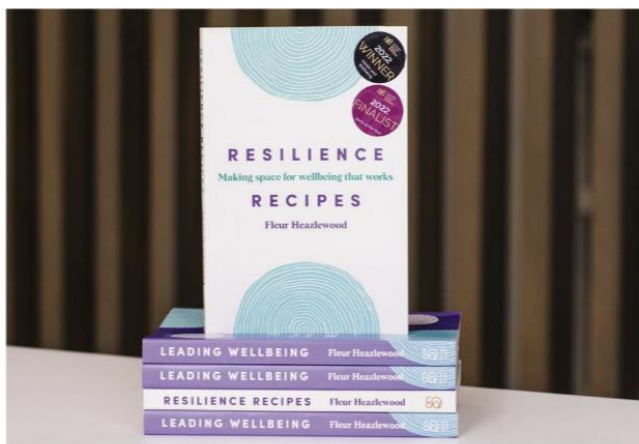
The best way to set ourselves up for wellbeing success is to consider it as an investment. Start small and start the day well when your energy and willpower is at its highest. Consider refining the way you approach your morning to include:

- 1. Grounding:** Focus the first 30-minutes of your day making progress on something that is important to you, connecting with your family, your fitness, education, or a hobby. Resist opening your device when the alarm goes off and let the content from the rest of the world set the tone for your day.
- 2. Moving:** Just ten-minutes walking boosts your energy, fitness, emotional state, mental health and when combined with nature and your pet or a friend provides an oxytocin boost as well.
- 3. Mindfulness practice:** Ten minutes of journalling, a mindfulness practice, meditation, or immersing yourself in music or an activity that brings flow, boosts focus, clarity, and concentration.
- 4. Boundary setting:** Treat yourself like the precious finite resource that you are.
Put your own oxygen mask on first.
Not only is it ok, but it is important to take care of your own mental wellbeing. There is a reason why airline safety emergency instructions always say to "put your own oxygen mask on before helping others." **[FMCG]**



Fleur Heazlewood is a leadership expert, speaker, and founder of the Blueberry Institute. She works with leaders to create healthy, high performing teams and organisations. Her first book *Resilience Recipes, a practical guide to better personal wellbeing* won best Health and Wellbeing Book for 2022. Her follow up book, *Leading Wellbeing – A leaders guide to mental health conversations at work* has just been released.

For information on how her books and programs can help visit www.blueberryinstitute.com



For more strategies and tips, check out *Resilience Recipes – Making Space for Wellbeing that Works*. This short, practical, easy to read wellbeing guidebook cuts through the sea of wellness information with a curated selection of evidence-based resilience and wellbeing strategies that are proven to work. This step-by-step guide covers where to start, what to do, and what works for boosting your wellbeing with resilience.

"Resilience Recipes is more like a VERB than a book. It has information and insights, like all good books, the difference is, "Resilience Recipes" inspires ACTION makes you DO something to improve resilience and wellbeing. If you are sick of talking about resilience and want to DO something, this book is for you." Luke Mathers