



YOUR WELLBEING - YOUR PLAN

Notes from Bob Ziegler's discussion with L I F E in April.

Last year Bob updated us on developments in aged care under the new consumer directed care (CDC) model being implemented across Australia, and more recently in WA. Under CDC it is consumers who say what kinds of services will help them in their senior years, not care providers telling them what they offer, as a take-it-or-leave-it model.

This time Bob wanted to raise the issue of how we work out what kinds of services we need.

He suggested we each develop a **Wellbeing Action Plan**, using the following headings:

Where am I now? How well am I?

Body

Mind

Social

Where do I want to be?

Body

Mind

Social

Dreams

Goals

Lifestyle

Emotional wellness

How am I going to get there?

My choices

My controls

Step Forward

What *could* I do?

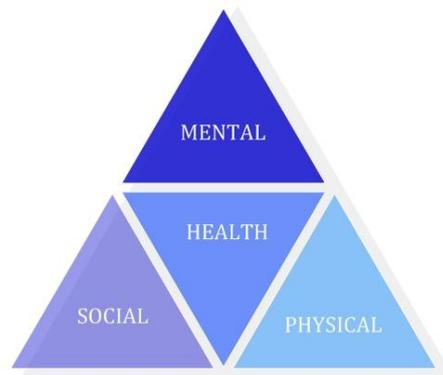
What *can* I do?

What *will* I do?

So, once you work out the gaps in your well-being, and imagine how they could be filled, then you think about how particular assistance that could enable you to meet that need. These gaps could be temporary, while you recover from surgery or an infection, or might be part of a managing longer term deterioration in health and capacity.

For example, you think you are getting on pretty well physically and mentally but miss the spiritual and social side of going to church. Your eyesight is deteriorating and you cannot drive any more. It's too far to walk with your lung condition. You decide you need help to get to church at least once a fortnight. You decide to swallow your pride and ring a friend from church to see if anyone could pick you up and drop you home.

Bob showed us a chart divided into three equal pieces – social, mental and physical. To keep well as we age, we need to address each sector of our lives. While living with a chronic health condition, we can sometimes neglect the other sectors of our lives.



The more mentally stimulating activities we take part in, the longer our telomeres at the end of our chromosomes. The longer the telomeres, the better our mental function. So far so good.

Many of us feel we keep our brain stimulated doing cross word puzzles or Sudoku. But did you realise you still need to learn new things to maintain optimal mental function? It's not just about doing things we already know how to do. It's also about learning new things. For example, a language, a type of puzzle you never do, a skill like painting or drawing, a craft skill you used to be good at. Try doing something with the opposite hand from the one you usually do.

What new skill are you going to learn this year?

By attending L I F E activities we certainly address the social part of our wellbeing. Other groups do too. Did you know that Men's Sheds is now the largest men's club in Australia?

We all know that when we don't use muscles over a period, they don't just sit there waiting for the next time we might need them. The muscle will actually

reduce in size, making a physical task so much harder next time. This point will be taken up by Nola Cecins in her presentation about pulmonary rehabilitation at the L I F E meeting on 2 August. Find out what exercises are not only **suitable** for people with lung conditions, they are **vitaly important**.

Regular exercise helps your heart, increases muscle mass, increases your immunity and reduces recovery time. If you have arthritis, exercise stimulates the body's natural anti-inflammatories, reducing pain. You don't have to go to a gym or buy equipment. Use what you have at home.

Try lifting a 400g can of tomatoes or beans or 1kg pack of sugar. Do ten repetitions of each of the two exercises shown in the pictures, shoulder raises, and curls. A third exercise, punches, involves holding your weights at shoulder height and stretching your arms forward in front of you. If 10 is easy, try 15 or 20 each day.



What will you write down for your Wellbeing Action Plan?

Even if you do not need outside help right now it can be helpful to make a plan to help guide your future decision-making
