

Health and Well-Being

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as ‘a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’ (WHO, 1948).
- This is perhaps a naïve and out of date definition that has been criticised as unrealistic - leaving most of us feeling like we are failing.
- In reality few people have complete physical, mental and social well-being all the time, and to expect this to be so places us at risk of exploitation by those seeking to sell us ‘health’.

A new definition

- A new definition of health has been proposed as ‘the ability to adapt and to self-manage’, (Huber et al. 2011).
- This gives the power of ‘health’ to the person themselves.
- It also acknowledges the subjective element of health; what health and wellbeing mean will differ from one person to the next, depending on the context and their needs.

The following information explores more realistic health goals, and reminds you to take care of all the different aspects of your life to support your wellbeing. It uses the Māori holistic model of health, te whare tapa whā, (the house with four sides) as an example of opportunities to reset your health goals.

Balance: Te Whare Tapa Wha

Often we focus on just one area of health. But thinking about our health as a house with four equal sides helps us to understand the importance of looking after ourselves in all areas - if one of the sides is missing, the whole house could fall down.

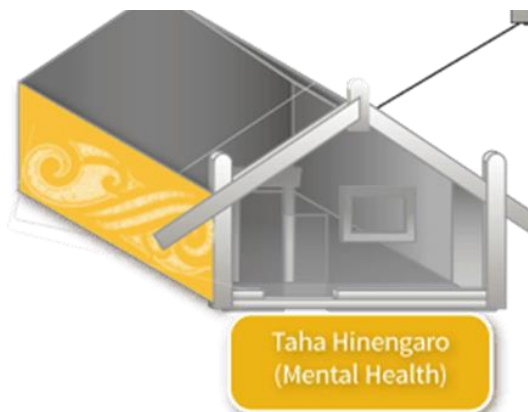
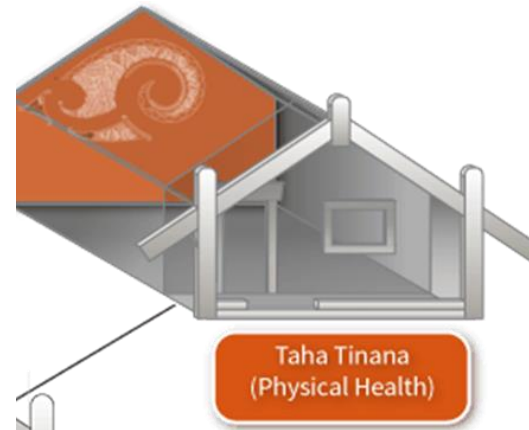


Te Whare Tapa Wha (The house with four sides)

Taha Tinana, Physical Health

- Bloods
- Muscle mass/strength
- Not getting sick
- Physical growth and development
- Movement

Our physical 'being' supports our essence and shelters us from the external environment.

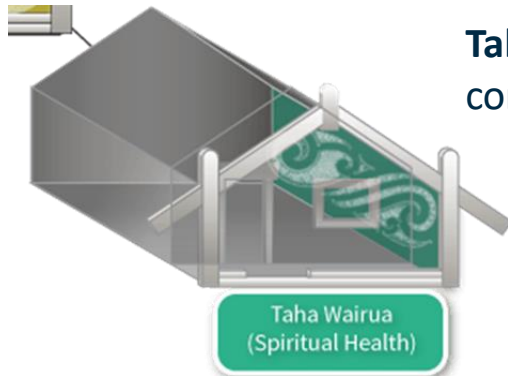


Taha Hinengaro, Mental & Emotional Health

- Sleeping well
- Seeking help – friends, GP, counsellor
- Taking medications
- Movement to feel good
- Bubble bath, relaxation

Thoughts, feelings and emotions are integral components of the body and soul.

Te Whare Tapa Wha (The house with four sides)



Taha Wairua, Spirituality (not just religion but our sense of belonging and connection to something bigger than ourselves)

- Prayer
- Meditation/yoga
- Connecting with nature
- Mindfulness

Our spirit is who and what we are, where we have come from and where we are going.

Taha Whanau , Family / Social Relationships

- Maintaining friendships, connecting with others
- Support both ways
- Nurturing
- The capacity to belong, to care and to share where individuals are part of a wider social system.

Family/Whanau can provide us with the strength to be who we are, they are the link to our ancestors, our ties with the past, present and future.



Think about your balance

Is there a wall that is missing or causing you stress – how can you strengthen this wall?



Realistic Health Goals

- ❖ Foster a nurturing attitude towards yourself which includes kind self-talk, positive encouragement, forgiveness, acceptance and self-care. This concept is known as self-compassion – showing the same care for yourself that you would for someone else.
- ❖ Find a GP you are comfortable with and have medical check-ups and health screenings regularly to catch any signs of disease early enough for you to have the best possible outcome.
- ❖ Work on achieving work-life balance with enough time to look after yourself and loved ones as well as to do (or discover) things you really enjoy
- ❖ Be physically active whenever possible, including activities you enjoy that involve movement e.g. gardening, dancing, walking in the park.
- ❖ Enjoy a wide variety of tasty, healthful foods most of the time, with the amount depending on how hungry you are at the time.

Movement



Why?

Feel good
hormones

Mental Health

Strength

Stamina

Feeling
exhilarated

Have fun

Fitness

Energy

Fit-feeling
legs

Flexibility

Good sleep

Quality time
with loved ones

Ministry Of Health Guidelines

1. Sit less, move more! Break up long periods of sitting.
2. Do at least $2 \frac{1}{2}$ hours of moderate or $1 \frac{1}{4}$ hours of vigorous physical activity spread throughout the week.
3. For extra health benefits, aim for 5 hours of moderate or $2 \frac{1}{2}$ hours of vigorous physical activity spread throughout the week.
4. Do muscle strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.
5. Doing some physical activity is better than doing none.

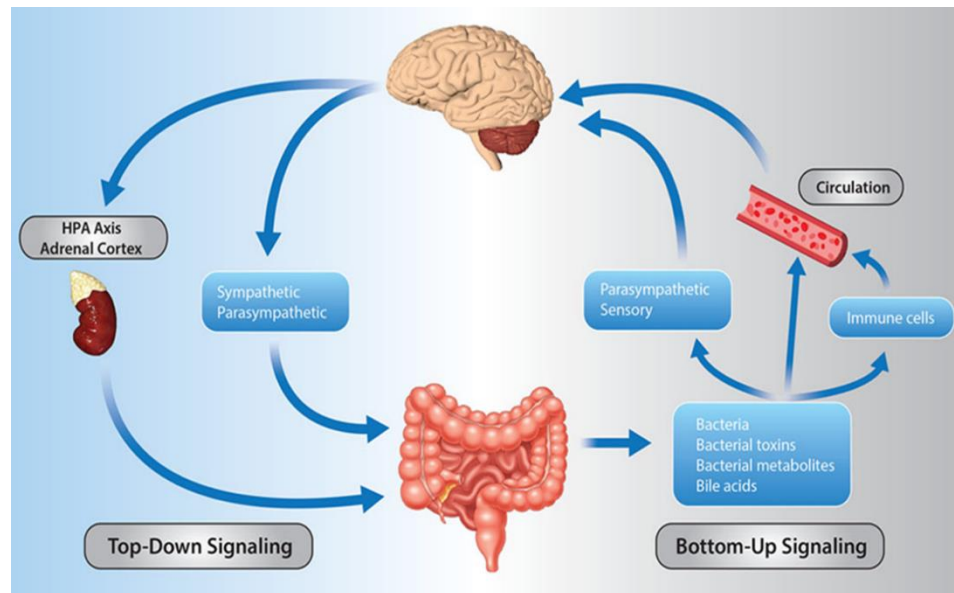
What counts?



Mental / Psychological Health

WHO predicts by 2030, depression will be the single biggest cause of ill health in the world (WHO, 2011).

- The relationship between our brain and our gut bacteria can affect our mood, and our mood can affect our gut.
- By trying some of the Five Ways to Wellbeing (next section) you can help change the messages between your brain and gut



The Five Ways to Wellbeing

Ētahi ara e rima ki te ngākau ora

1. Connect, me whakawhanaunga
2. Give, tukua
3. Take notice, me aro tonu
4. Keep learning, me ako tonu
5. Be active, me kori tonu

1. Connect, me whakawhanaunga

- Become involved in local groups (craft, sports, choir, hobby, book club).
- Have a street BBQ with neighbours or friends/family and bring kai from different cultures.
- Smile at a stranger – you may be surprised by the smile you get back!
- Connect with the whenua; grab some mates and go on a bush walk, go surfing or mountain bike riding.
- Find out what's going on in your local area, such as music or cultural performances, then organise a group outing.
- Have a family technology-free day and bring out the old board games you have.

2. Give, tukua

- Give a smile away!
- While driving, stop to let a car into the traffic.
- Offer to mow the grass verge of your neighbour.
- Give a compliment – acknowledge what someone in your life has done well.
- If you have fruit trees pop your excess fruit out on the street with a "help yourself" sign.
- Donate old toys, books, sports equipment, clothes etc. to a local charity.
- Help with school working bees and fundraisers.

3. Take notice, me aro tonu

- Stop for a while, take 10 mindful breaths in and out, calming the body and mind, then simply rest where you are, noticing everything that is going on around you.
- Learn yoga or meditation, or have a mirimiri (massage) to sooth and relax your body.
- Mindful eating – which you are all fantastic at now!
- Climb your maunga (mountain) or swim in your awa (river) / moana (ocean).
- Take notice of the night sky, the moon, the stars.
- At the end of the day ask friends, family or colleagues what the best thing was about their day.
- Practise gratitude; every day write down three things that went well for you today.
 - Apps: “The Resilience Project” and “Moodfit”

www.mindful.org

4. Keep learning, me ako tonu

- Learn something about the area where you live by checking out the local notice boards for interesting talks and events.
- Write your bucket list – then try something you have always wanted to do.
- Find and try out a new recipe for a meal, cake or dessert.
- Visit your local library to see what new books, mags and talks they have.
- Discover the name of the iwi, hapu, maunga and awa of the place you live.
- Memorise a new word every week. Practice using it among friends and family.
- Learn another language. E korero ki a koe Maori? Parlez-vous francais?

5. Be active, me kori tonu

- Take a family walk after dinner, or a longer one on the weekend. Let family members take turns choosing where to go.
- Hold a family dance-off with different members picking the music.
- Organise or participate in walking tours of local places of interest in your community or suburb.
- Participate in a fun run/walk to raise money for charity.
- Start or join a walking bus for school children.
- Join a sports club to be active and meet people at the same time - tennis, bowls, touch rugby, netball, there is so much to choose from!

Homework

- Incorporate some positive mental health strategies through the Five Ways to Wellbeing.
- Review the examples – highlight the examples you might want to try. Which will you do first?