

The Stress Bucket

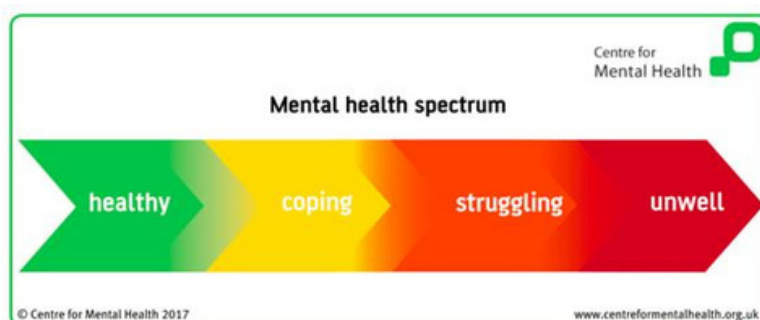
Over six months in 2021, the young people who attended Become's Link Up met with a clinical psychologist to share some of the ways they were managing their wellbeing. They began the wellbeing sessions thinking about what 'wellbeing' and 'mental health' meant to the participants in the group. They discussed how wellbeing and mental health exist on a spectrum.

We all have wellbeing and mental health and may be at different points on the spectrum at different times. Although our wellbeing feels personal, it fluctuates and often changes based on what is happening in the world around us.

The group also spent some time talking and thinking about stigma and shame, discussing how often the stigma which surrounds mental health can create feelings of shame which impact wellbeing. The group aimed to spark conversations to normalise and contextualise mental health, and start to break down some of the stigma surrounding mental health.

Thinking points

Did you know mental health exists on a spectrum? What factors in the world might cause you to move up or down the spectrum? Have you come across mental health stigma in your life? What could help to reduce mental health stigma among people you know?



The Stress Bucket

The group found the analogy of the 'stress bucket' to be helpful. The analogy states that we all have a personal stress bucket. The size of everyone's bucket may be different, depending on their lived experiences. Stress flows into the bucket, filling it up. If there is more stress than can fit into the bucket, it overflows. It might be one small thing that causes an already full bucket to overflow. When the stress bucket overflows, we may notice we struggle with our wellbeing. For example, we may feel anxious or low. However, there is a tap at the bottom of the bucket to let stress out and stop it from overflowing, keeping the stress at a manageable level. The tap represents coping skills.

The Link Up group spent some time discussing the stress bucket analogy. Everyone shared their ideas for what fills up and what helps to empty their stress bucket. The group realised that the things that fill up the stress bucket are common parts of life. They spoke about how having a bucket that is getting full doesn't show that the person has a 'problem' or a 'weakness', but just shows they are a person going through the ups and downs of life.

They noticed that sometimes some of the things that empty the stress bucket might also fill it back up. For example, ordering takeout empties the bucket because it feels good. However, sometimes it also makes people feel guilty about spending money which then feeds back into the bucket. The group thought this meant that it was really important to get a balance between what goes in and out of the bucket.

The Stress Bucket

THE STRESS BUTT!

STRESS FLOWS IN:

TRAUMA, WORRY, ANXIETY ABOUT WORK, FINANCES, FAMILY, RELATIONSHIPS HEALTH, SLEEP, STUDIES etc.

STRESS OVERFLOWS:

MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH SUFFERS

SIZE OF BUTT = VULNERABILITY

(THE BIGGER IT IS THE LESS VULNERABLE TO STRESS & OVERFLOW, THE SMALLER IT IS THE MORE VULNERABLE TO STRESS & OVERFLOW YOU ARE)

TAP OFF: BAD COPING, STRESS BUILDS UP AND OVERFLOWS

TAP ON: GOOD COPING, LETS STRESS OUT

OOH LOOK GROWTH!

TAP = YOUR MH TOOLS AND COPING SKILLS:

THERAPY, MEDICATION, MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION, SLEEP HEALTHY EATING, EXERCISE, YOGA, FRIENDS, LAUGHTER, JOY etc.

AND EVEN MORE UNDER HERE OUT OF SIGHT!

