

Trauma Informed Approaches: A Practitioner's Perspective

Jamie Emberson

Associate Consultant - Studio 3

Founder & Director - The Academy of Awareness and Wellbeing

Director of Wellbeing – Changing Lives Building Dreams (CLBD)

Associate Tutor – The Restraint Reduction Network (RRN)



Jamie Emberson



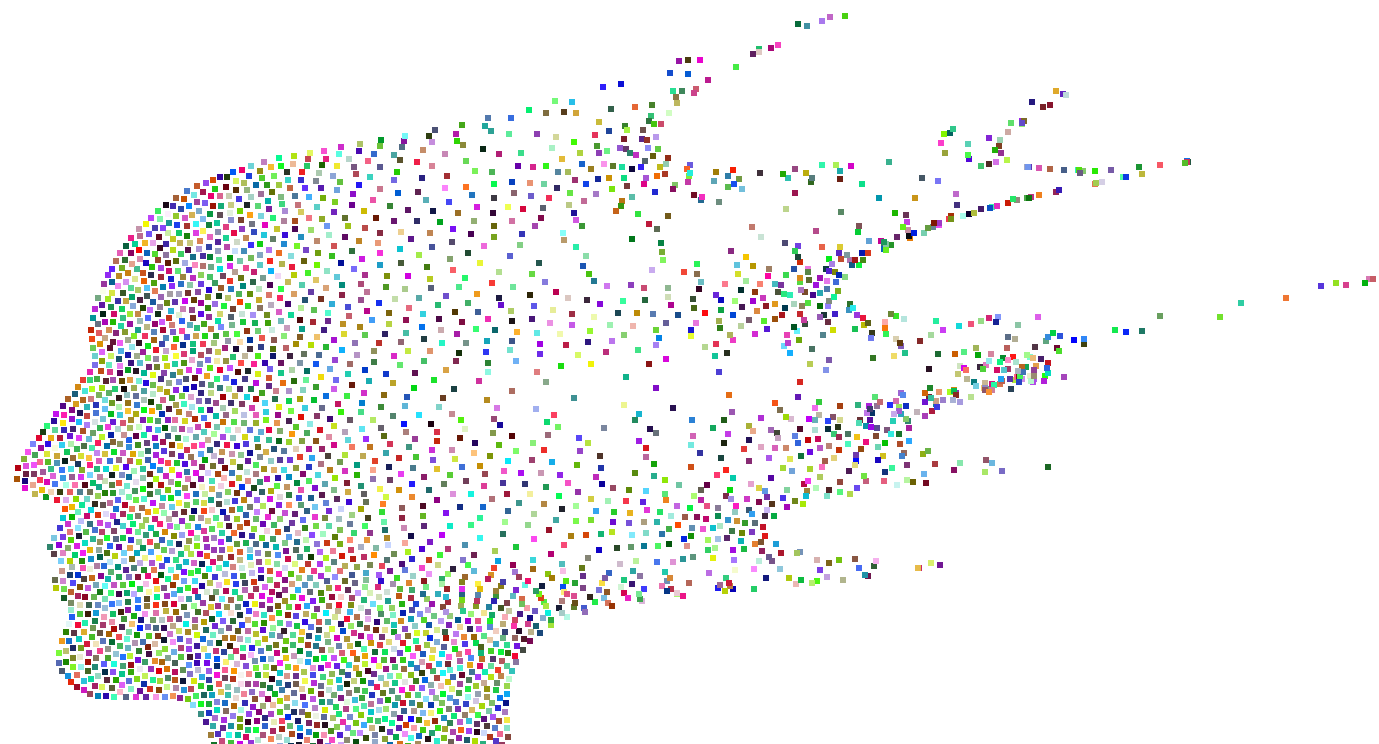
@JamieWellbeing1

A bit about myself...



"Trauma is perhaps the most avoided, ignored, belittled, denied, misunderstood and untreated cause of human suffering"

Dr. Peter Levine



What is Trauma?

Trauma is ‘an event that involves actual or threatened death, injury, or other threat to physical integrity, commonly resulting in great emotional distress’”
(American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Veteran trauma specialist Pat Ogden wrote,

“Any experience that is stressful enough to leave us feeling helpless, frightened, overwhelmed, or profoundly unsafe is considered a trauma”.

Trauma - What is it?

Originates from an ancient Greek word meaning "wound"


A wound is either raw and painful
or
develops scar tissue and doesn't
feel or grow

Metaphor by Gabor Maté (2020)




Causes of Trauma

- A single event
- Accumulative events
- Developmental
- Inherited & generational
- Collective/global
- Harmful family or relationship experience
- Systemic inequality
- Vicarious (observed)
- Transactional



**We will all
experience some
form of trauma at
some point during
our lives**



WE NEED TO
→ *live deeper*

A cartoon illustration on a light blue background. On the left, a large mound of dark brown soil sits atop a tan-colored rectangular block. The word 'PHARMA' is written in black, hand-drawn capital letters across the front of the tan block. Above the mound, the words 'MENTAL HEALTH' are written in a light blue, bubbly, outlined font. To the right of the mound, a shovel is depicted. The shovel's handle is orange and has the word 'INTERSECTIONAL' written vertically in black capital letters. The shovel's head is grey and has the words 'social justice' written on it in a black, lowercase, handwritten font. The shovel is angled downwards as if digging into the mound. In the upper right corner, there are some large, black, stylized letters, possibly 'W' and 'C', which are partially cut off.


DSM

INDIVIDUALISM
PATHOLOGIZATION

[illegible]

UNSAFE ENVIRONMENT

VOTER
SUPPRESS



GEISM

**Let's dig a bit
deeper**



It is not what's wrong with you, it's what happened to you



Distressed Behaviour & Trauma?

Distressed behaviour and trauma are associated.

People who show distressed behaviour are more likely than average to have been exposed to trauma.

Furthermore, there is evidence that distressed behaviour is a symptom of trauma.

We need to look at things differently and 'look out of the box'

We need to place our 'trauma-lens' on

We need to increase our **Awareness & Empathy** and put these into practice



Trauma Symptoms

Traumatic events may also increase the fight or flight component of the stress reactive cycle

In addition, this may result in shut-down, freeze, disassociation and withdrawal. This may well result in long-standing tension, anxiety, jumpiness, hypervigilance, sleeplessness, and irritability (Hopper, 2012., Yehuda, 1998).

Where these are sufficient in frequency and intensity (severity), these various symptoms are considered evidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Van Der Kolk., B. (2015) states *'The stress hormones of traumatised people, in contrast to non-traumatised, take much longer to return to baseline and spike quickly and disproportionately in response to mildly stressful stimuli'*.

Trauma - Prevalence

It is estimated that 90% of people will have experienced events exposing them to Stress & Trauma.

For some, they will recover and even develop (Trauma-Growth).

For others, they may go on to develop longer-term symptoms.

Huckshorn, 2004; Kilpatrick et al., 2013 view Trauma as an epidemic.

Trauma may be more prevalent in certain populations.

Trauma - Informed Approaches (TIA)

Felitti et al., 1998 published their groundbreaking Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) study.

This found staggering correlations between childhood trauma and ill-health (Physical & Mental).

Trauma - Informed Approaches (TIA)

Recognises the pervasiveness of trauma and a commitment to identify and address it early. TIA involves seeking to understand the connection between presenting symptoms and behaviours and the individual's past trauma history.

As a practice, TIA involves professional relationships and support that take into account this history as part of efforts to prevent re-traumatisation, promote healing and growth

Adapted from Hodas (2006)

Trauma - Informed Approaches (TIA)

The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2014) suggest a 6-Step Approach.

- 1.Safety
- 2.Trustworthiness & Transparency
- 3.Peer Support
- 4.Collaboration & mutuality
- 5.Empowerment & choice
- 6.Cultural, historical, and gender issues

Rather than a checklist, or model per se, TIA requires an embodiment that requires, constant awareness & attention, caring attention, sensitivity, and possibly cultural & systemic change

The Low Arousal Approach

'Lowering our own arousal levels means that we are better equipped to deal with critical situations and can logically and rationally approach the problem without panicking.'

'When you prioritise self-care, the impact on your physical and emotional well-being and of course your stress will make you more resilient in the face of adversity.'

How Trauma Can Affect Your Window Of Tolerance



HYPERAROUSAL

Anxious, Angry, Out of Control,
Overwhelmed

Your body wants to fight or run away.
It's not something you choose - these
reactions just take over.

When stress and trauma shrink your
window of tolerance, it doesn't take
much to throw you off balance.

HYPER

HYPO

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

When you are in your Window of
Tolerance, you feel like you can deal
with whatever's happening in your
life. You might feel stress or pressure,
but it doesn't bother you too much.
This is the ideal place to be.



HYPOAROUSAL

Spacy, Zoned Out, Numb, Frozen
Your body wants to shut down.
It's not something you choose - these
reactions just take over.

To help expand your window of tolerance so that you are
more able to cope with stressors the following are to be
included under Trauma Informed Care: -

- Adhering to Human Rights Act Legislation
- Self-Awareness, self and co-regulation
- Awareness of vulnerability to trauma by having a learning disability and/or autistic spectrum diagnosis
- History/trauma profiles
- PERMAH
- Being and feeling safe and secure
- Having positive relationships
- Feeling loved
- Kindness
- Being well
- Reduced/no restrictive practices
- Low arousal approaches
- Having a voice and being listened to
- Being involved
- Listening and partnership working
- Language used
- Capable environments
- Having positive opportunities
- Having positive activities

HYPER

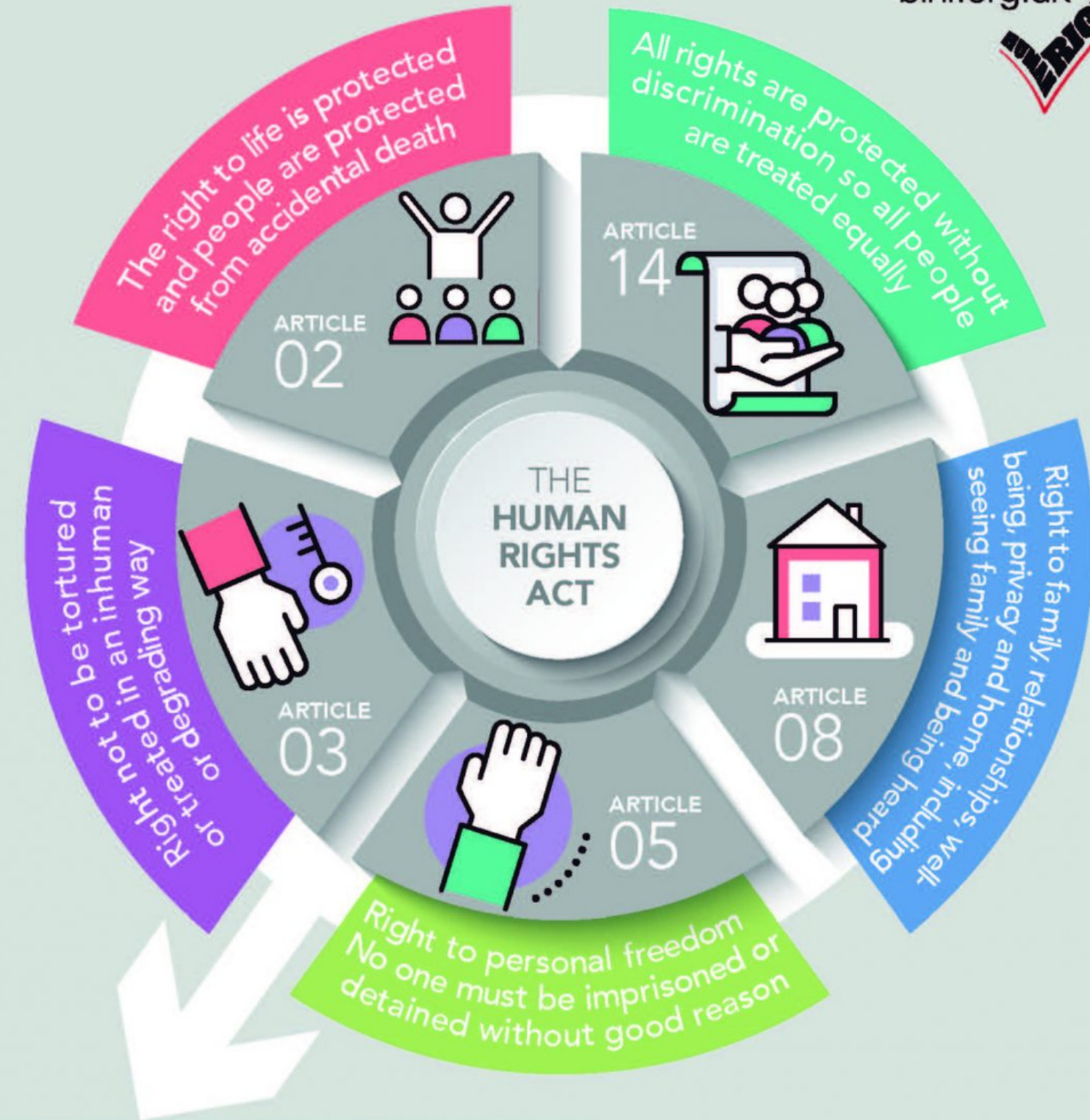
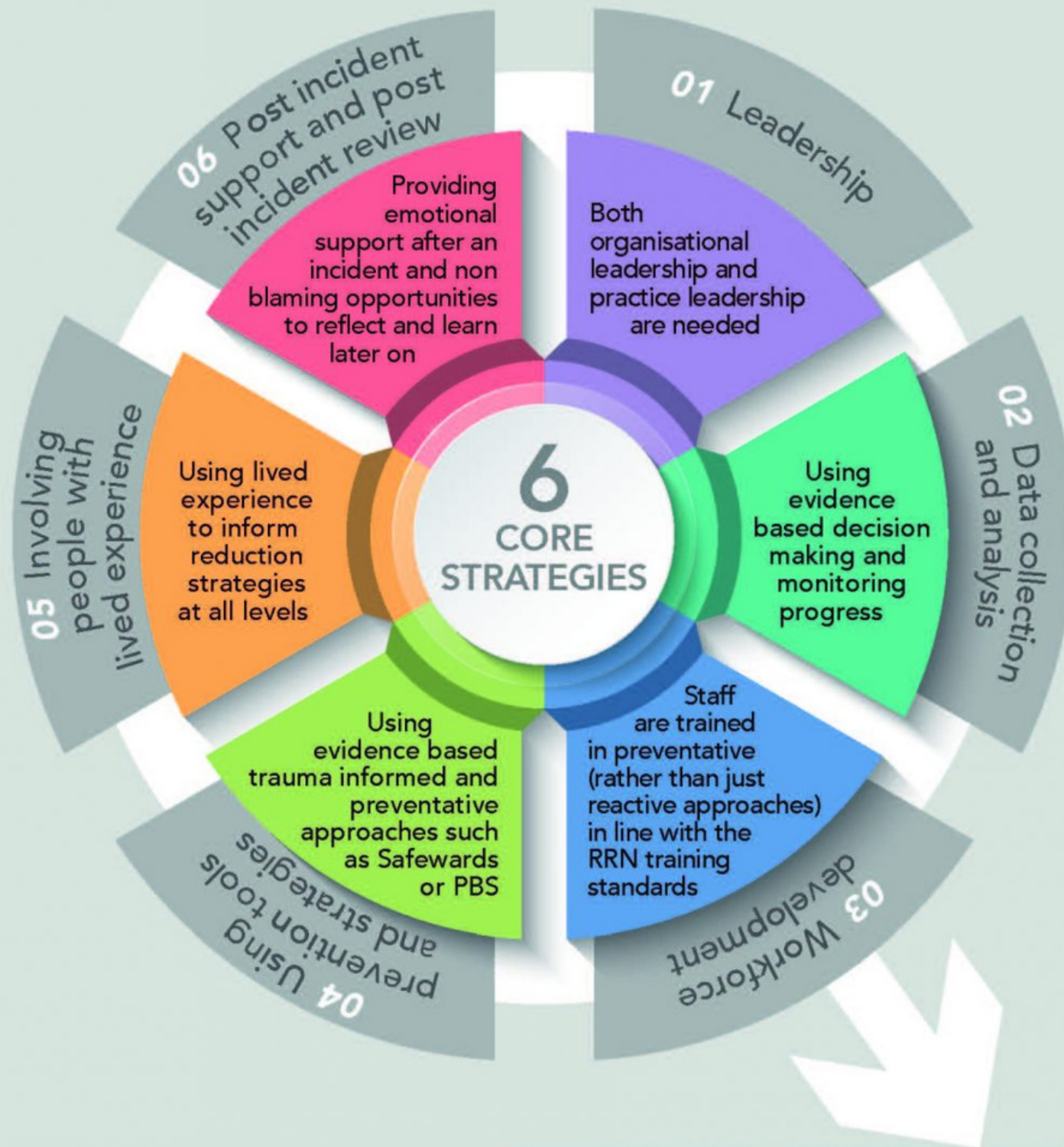
HYPO

Six Core Strategies[©] plus Human Rights Act 1998

Restraint
Reduction
Network

The British Institute of **Human Rights**

bihr.org.uk



Enable the **culture change** necessary in organisations to reduce the use of **restrictive practices**

Gabor Maté

Defining wellbeing

In its simplest form, wellbeing is **your ability to feel good and function effectively. It gives you the resources to navigate the highs and lows we all experience in our work and in our lives, whilst enabling you to intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically 'flourish'.**

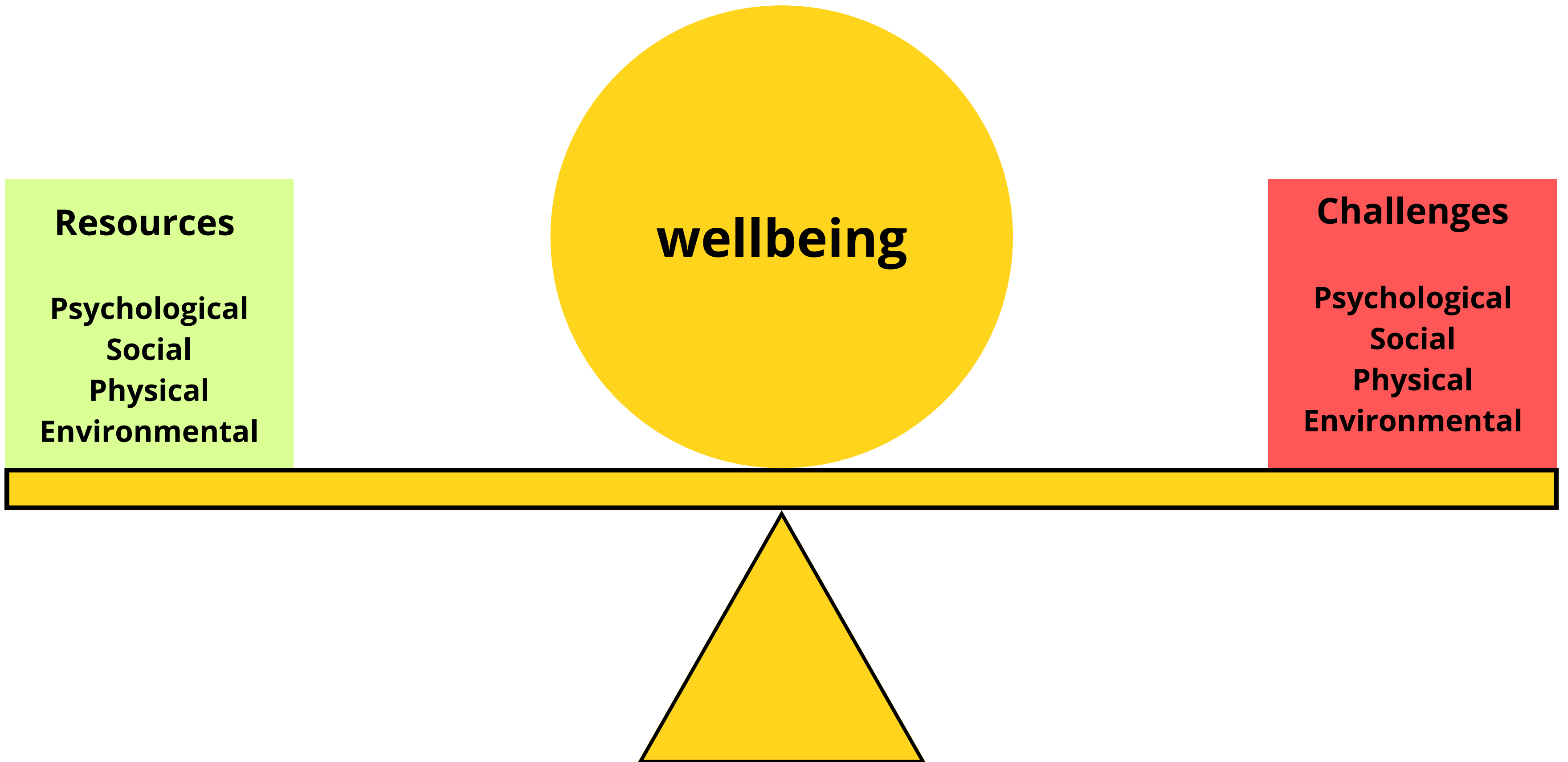
(Michelle McQuaid)

Defining wellbeing

A simple approach to understanding wellbeing might be that proposed by Dodge et al. who argue that:

‘Stable wellbeing is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing, and vice-versa.’

(Dodge et al., 2012)



PERMAH



Positive Emotions Engagement Relationships Meaning Accomplishment Health

P What makes you feel good?

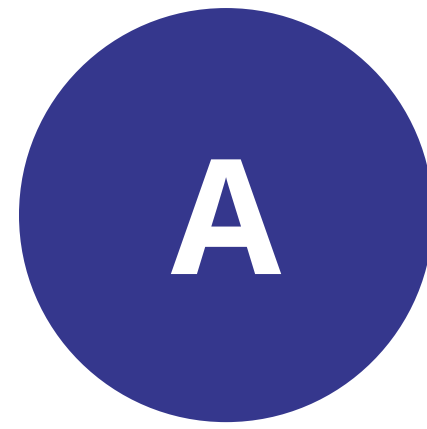
E What "flow" activities make you lose track of time?

R Who brings you joy, peace and support?

M What causes and pursuits do you find important and worthwhile?

A What are your goals? How can they be achieved?

H Primary health care, sleep, exercise, healthy eating



Positive Emotions

Engagement

Relationships

Meaning

Accomplishment

Health

What makes you feel good?

What "flow" activities make you lose track of time?

Who brings you joy, peace and support?

What pursuits do you find important and worthwhile?

What are your goals? How can they be achieved?

Health care, sleep, exercise, healthy eating

Favourite TV, movies and music

Puzzles or board games

Catch-ups and get-togethers in person or online

Engaging in spiritual activities

Making a "To Do" List and prioritising tasks.

Stress Management

Playing games with family and friends

Reading

Spending a few minutes chatting to a stranger

Donating to charity

Taking on new jobs and responsibilities - a different role at work,

GPs, Pharmacists, Opticians and Dentists

**Physical exercise and breathing techniques
Getting out in nature and paying attention to the sensations around you**

Musical instruments

Yoga or meditation

Using active listening and empathy when helping someone with a problem.

Sending a care package to a family or friend in need

Starting a long-term project - some DIY at home.

Quality sleep

Keeping a gratitude diary of the things you cherish

Indulging in creative tasks such as drawing or painting

Taking part in individual or team sports

Reminding someone that you love them

Fundraising

Volunteering your time in a community project

Learning something new - webinars and podcasts.

Following and meeting goals on an exercise plan

Physical Exercise

Eating healthy

Drinking fluids

PERMA-H Plan

This plan is designed to help support our individual to have a flourishing life. To complete this document, write down in each section the ways in which we can support an individual to meet each of the areas of PERMA-H

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

P - Positive Emotions	E - Engagement	R- Relationships	M - Meaning	A - Achievements	H - Health
					Exercise: Sleep: Healthy Eating: Primary Healthcare: Stress Management:

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____ **Review:** _____

Wellbeing Workshops

Activity 1

Jamie asked for some feedback from everyone on examples of optimism/hope

Activity 2

Listening to music, singing, movement and dancing

Activity 3

Self-awareness of body, thoughts and feelings (interoception)

Activity 4

Awareness of breath

Activity 5

Mindful breathing & slow controlled out-breath (self-regulation/self-control & co-regulation)

Activity 6

Mindful breathing & growl (audibly made by use of drum)

Activity 7

Mindful Pause

Activity 8

Trauma-informed yoga

Activity 9

Drums/instrument - self & co-regulation (self-control)

Activity 10

Show and tell

Activity 11

Wellbeing bingo (Friendly February)

Activity 12

Action for happiness calendar - "Friendly February"

Friendly February 2023

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

1 Send a message to let someone know you're thinking of them

2 Ask a friend how they have been feeling recently

3 Do an act of kindness to make life easier for someone

4 Invite a friend over for a 'tea break' (in person or virtual)

5 Make time to have a friendly chat with a neighbour

6 Get back in touch with an old friend you've not seen for a while

7 Show an active interest by asking questions when talking to others

8 Share what you're feeling with someone you really trust

9 Thank someone and tell them how they made a difference for you

10 Look for good in others, particularly when you feel frustrated with them

11 Send an encouraging note to someone who needs a boost

12 Focus on being kind rather than being right

13 Smile at the people you see and brighten their day

14 Tell a loved one or friend why they are special to you

15 Support a local business with a positive online review or friendly message

16 Check in on someone who may be struggling and offer to help

17 Appreciate the good qualities of someone in your life

18 Respond kindly to everyone you talk to today, including yourself

19 Share something you find inspiring, helpful or amusing

20 Make a plan to connect with others and do something fun

21 Really listen to what people say, without judging them

22 Give sincere compliments to people you talk to today

23 Be gentle with someone who you feel inclined to criticise

24 Tell a loved one about the strengths that you see in them

25 Thank three people you feel grateful to and tell them why

26 Make uninterrupted time for your loved ones

27 Call a friend to catch up and really listen to them

28 Give positive comments to as many people as possible today



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together

Perhaps, collectively we can engage, and form relationships that have the purpose of changing culture and practice from a deficit model to a strengths-based model that accepts, accommodates and welcomes our differences

Wellbeing Approaches is such a pathway

As a consequence, our Collective Wellbeing may well be enjoyed together rather than our Collective Trauma

(Jamie Emberson, 2022)



Jamie Emberson



@JamieWellbeing1

Nuwild

Join us this summer for a truly restorative 3-day/2-night wellbeing retreat at our picturesque woodland camp situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty in the heart of the Kent countryside. Sleep under the stars in our luxurious bell tents, eat delicious food by the campfire, enjoy meditation, and numerous workshops on how to enhance your wellbeing with renowned mindfulness practitioner Jamie Emberson.

Dates: June 2 – June 4, 2023

Location: Canterbury, Kent

Book now to secure your spot and be a part of this truly unique experience.

<https://www.eventcreate.com/e/nuwild-wellbeing-retreat>

