

LIVING WELL



Wellness
by Blair

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Self-Love and acceptance

As a naturopath, I look at health in an holistic way. Sometimes the questions I ask might not seem relevant to you at the time, but I am building a picture of your health in mind, body and spirit.

In order to 'live well', you need to make sure everything in your life is in order, not just that you are physically healthy. I think the most important part of living well is to have a good relationship with yourself, good relationships with other people in your life, and good relationships with food, your body and exercise. Healthy eating and exercise are important, of course, but they are only a part of the whole picture. It's a mixture of these elements that make up a healthy life. The good news is you can work on them every day. Small changes can lead to big results!

The philosophies underpinning naturopathic medicine revolve around the six principles. They are worth repeating:

- The healing power of nature — trust in the body's inherent wisdom to heal itself.
- Identify and treat the causes — look beyond the symptoms to the underlying cause.
- First do no harm — utilise the most natural, least invasive and least toxic therapies.
- Doctor as teacher — educate patients in the steps to achieving and maintaining health.
- Treat the whole person — view the body as an integrated whole in all its physical and spiritual dimensions.
- Prevention — focus on overall health, wellness and disease prevention.



Treating the whole person means paying attention to their mental and spiritual health as well as their physical health.

How you speak to yourself is just as important as how you treat others. Your health can be positively or negatively affected by the healthiness of your relationships with family, friends, and work colleagues.

I think the following quote sums up my approach. I always share it with my clients and work to help them really understand how it might affect them too on their journey to wellness:

“Your eating regime is not only what you eat, it’s what you watch, what you listen to, what you read, the people you hang around. Be mindful of things you put into your body emotionally, spiritually and physically.”

Don’t worry, you don’t have to fix everything all at once. Every small step you make in the right direction will bring you closer to wellness – it doesn’t all have to come at once.

It’s hard to define what living well means to me. I do know, however, that it involves good emotional health and being connected to people. Feeling part of the world. I get a lot of satisfaction from behaving in a kind and generous way. I don’t believe that tearing a person down will benefit anyone.

I think the following factors play a big part in creating strong emotional health in order to live well.

- Gratitude
- Mindfulness
- Giving
- Happiness
- Letting go of expectations

Gratitude

Gratitude is something you can practise every single day. It takes some thought to begin a gratitude routine, but when you try to work on it every single day, it will become second nature. You can write down what you’re grateful for, consciously think about it, or share it with a friend. You can create a daily gratitude journal, either in a notebook or online – there are some great apps designed exactly for this purpose.

Before I go to sleep, I always think about what I am grateful for. I am grateful for my children. I am grateful for my marriage. I am grateful for my health. I am grateful to be free in a beautiful country. I am grateful to be able to do what I love on a daily basis. Ending my day with these positive thoughts has a big impact on my attitude.



“

*Talk about your blessings more than
your problems.*

”

This may seem mundane or boring, but this practice can truly change your life. When someone asks ‘How are you?’, do you answer positively or negatively? Your thoughts and words can really impact your day. Adding gratitude into your life has a big effect on how you react to difficult situations. It teaches you to not sweat the small stuff!

When I worked at Stylerunner in Sydney, they really instilled the art of gratitude into their philosophies. I loved that we used to share what we did on the weekend and what we were grateful for during the work day. When I first started to do this, I used to feel so nervous saying what I was grateful for out loud! After a time, I really came to love it.

It was such a great practice that I have carried it into my everyday life.

Practising Gratitude

Try these ideas to get you started with your daily practice of gratitude:

- Write down three things you are grateful for every day.
- Start and end the day with a grateful heart.
- Challenge your negative thoughts.
- Try to be present.
- Talk about gratitude with your partner and children. Helping your children to practise gratitude must surely be one of the best gifts you can give them



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is about being completely present in the moment, being fully aware of where we are and what we are doing right now. Mindfulness happens when you're fully present in your mind and body.

The practice of mindfulness involves simply observing what is happening, while acknowledging your thoughts and feelings about it. It is a good technique to still a 'busy mind' and is helpful in reducing stress. Tuning in to what is happening in the present prevents us from going over the past or fretting about the future.

Personally, I find mindfulness doesn't come easily to me. I'm a busy person and it's difficult to remember to pause and be present. It takes practice, and I will be there practising alongside you!

There are many online resources, including apps and podcasts, about mindfulness. I highly recommend spending some time listening to a mindfulness meditation.



HOW CAN WE BE MORE MINDFUL?

- Being fully present with your friends and family.
- Sitting and enjoying your meal with your family and appreciating the meal in front of you.
- Putting your phone away at dinner and with your friends.
- Writing down your list of priorities for the day.

Giving

I grew up in a family that showed enormous generosity and care to everyone. I remember having Christmas lunches with people I'd never met that Dad had invited to join us. Perhaps they didn't have any family support or anyone to celebrate Christmas with. Dad spent so much of his free time helping people where he could, and still does to this day.

One of our favourite times of the year was 'Adopting a family at Christmas'. We were so excited to buy gifts for another family. Giving was instilled in me from a young age, and I try to do the same with my family now. I love that quality in people and I love that my family are naturally so generous. Helping other people is something that genuinely brings me joy.

Setting an example of giving can inspire others to follow your lead. You never know the influence you may have. Dad has always been a volunteer rugby coach, taking people in when he can to help them. My mum knitted clothes for premature babies and my sister is a foster mum. My brothers are both loving, generous people as well.

Remember giving doesn't need to be about things. You can also give your time, effort and presence.

SOME WAYS TO BE MORE GIVING

- Really listen to your friends. This sounds so simple, but really listening means not comparing, and not answering with your own story. Just listen.
- Volunteer for a cause that interests you
- Give your clothes to those in need
- Give your full attention and time to your friends and family



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