disappointed in life? 
feeling stressed out? 
not having any fun? 
feeling worn out?

if you answered YES, you are not alone

Your mental health can affect many areas of your life:
• Work, school, or home life
• Relationships with others
• Sleep
• Appetite
• Energy levels
• Ability to think clearly or make decisions
• Physical health
• Life satisfaction and more...

Mental health is just as important to our lives as our physical health

Mental health is not the same thing as the absence of a mental illness. Mental health includes:
• How you feel about yourself, the world and your life
• Your ability to solve problems and overcome challenges
• Your ability to build relationships with others and contribute to your communities
• Your ability to achieve your goals

Many people take care of their physical health before they feel sick. They may eat well, exercise and try to get enough sleep to help maintain wellness. You can take the same approach to mental health. Just as you may work to keep your body healthy, you can also work to keep your mind healthy.
### THOUGHTS

**Examples of positive thoughts**
- I know I can get through these tough times
- I feel excited about life!
- I know my friends really care about me
- I feel good about the way my life is going these days
- I have some really cool talents and interests
- I want to do something that makes a positive difference
- I'm a good person even though I have some flaws
- Good things are going to happen to me

**Examples of negative thoughts**
- It feels like something really bad is going to happen
- Nothing good ever seems to happen to me
- I'm never going to get through this
- My flaws are too big to overcome
- I feel like I'm losing my mind
- I'm ugly and stupid
- They think I'm a loser
- Life sucks!

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### BODY REACTIONS

**Examples of body reactions**
- Chest pain, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle tension, muscle aches or headaches
- Sexual problems, such as low sex drive
- Aggravation of an existing health problem (e.g., acne, digestive disorders, migraines, chronic pain)
- Upset stomach or nausea
- Lack of appetite or increased appetite
- Pounding, racing or abnormal heartbeat
- Feeling that you're separated from things around you
  - Urge to urinate or frequent urination
  - Sweating, hot flushes or cold chills
  - Feeling dizzy or light-headed
  - Upset bowel or diarrhea

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### BEHAVIOURS

**Examples of behaviours**
- Exercise
- Avoiding the things that upset you
- Engaging in hobbies or leisure activities
- Isolating yourself and pulling away from friends and family
- Doing things that distract you from your problems, like watching TV or working late
- Working on a solution to a problem one step at a time
- Crying often
- Overeating, not eating enough or purging food (such as vomiting, over-exercising)
- Lashing out at other people (verbally or physically)
- Excessive dependency or clinging to loved ones
- Reaching out to a friend or family member for support and understanding
- Practicing your spiritual activities
- Using alcohol or drugs to make the bad feelings go away
- Doing something relaxing, like taking a bath or practicing yoga

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### EMOTIONS

**Examples of pleasant emotions**
- Happiness or joy
- Contentment
- Sense of calm
- Excitement
- Feeling love or affection
- Feeling cheerful

**Examples of unpleasant emotions**
- Irritability or anger
- Frustration
- Anxiety or fear
- Sadness or feeling down
- Feeling empty or numb
- Hopelessness

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### 4 BASIC DIMENSIONS
of Mental Health and Well-Being

The way you think about something has a big impact on your mental health. Changes in your thoughts often go along with changes in your mental health. When you feel well, it's easier to see positive aspects. When you aren't well, it's easy to get stuck on negative things and ignore positive things.
mental health is determined by our overall patterns of thoughts, emotions, behaviours and body reactions

Each of the four mental health dimensions can influence all of the others. Here’s an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THOUGHTS</th>
<th>BODY REACTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I did a good job</td>
<td>My muscles feel relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hate being stuck in traffic</td>
<td>My heart is racing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOURS</th>
<th>EMOTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I rewarded myself with a movie</td>
<td>I feel happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I pound my fists</td>
<td>I feel angry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

why should mental health matter to you and your family?

When your mental health suffers, it can become hard to enjoy life. You may start to feel run down, both mentally and physically. Many of these changes can make it harder to enjoy a balanced and rewarding life. Everyone can benefit from learning how to enhance and protect their mental health—whether or not they’ve experienced mental illness or a substance use problem.

where do I start?

The BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information have a lot of information on how to improve your mental health and well-being. Check out our other Wellness Modules, fact sheets, personal stories and other useful resources for you and your family at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca). We’re here to help.

You might also be interested in:

- Visit [www.cmha.bc.ca](http://www.cmha.bc.ca) for the Canadian Mental Health Association’s BC Division
- Visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) or call 8-1-1 for HealthLink BC
- Visit [www.keltymentalhealth.ca](http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca) for Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre: BC’s information source for BC’s children, youth and families

Select sources and additional resources

What does my score mean?

Your score reflects the degree of balance you have across the different areas in your life, how well you are coping, and how good you feel about things. These are all important aspects of wellness and mental health. There is no magic score that guarantees perfect wellness, so we have not included any guidelines on “high” or “low” scores and what they mean. Instead, we recommend using this self-test to track your own wellness status over time.

If you are actively working on ways to improve your health, your score will probably go up over time. Increases usually mean that you are feeling better about things and feeling like you can cope with life’s challenges while still finding time for fun. If you are experiencing stress or changes in your overall health, your score may go down for a period of time. Decreases usually mean that it is harder to feel good about things and that you are struggling to find a sense of balance. Decreases in scores can be an important sign that you need to take action to make things better for yourself. Most people experience ups and downs in their wellness scores over time. To track your own wellness and general mental health over time, we recommend taking this test once a month.