

This handbook contains useful information about:

Why Your Mind Matters The Stress Test **How to Build Resilience**

How Physical Health Leads to Mental Health

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Introduction

Sometimes stress can get in the way and stop you from doing your best. Your brain can be like a broken record, playing the same negative thoughts on a loop. There's a way to take charge and be in the driver's seat. Everyone has the power to become a Mind Master!

If you feel like your brain is going haywire and changing all the time - there's a good reason for that! The average brain is around 95% developed by the time someone is 6 years old, but it still needs a lot of remodelling before it can function as an adult brain. That final development happens during adolescence, so a huge amount of growth and change is going on inside the teenage brain!

It's important to learn the tools that can support you through this huge growth. Forging healthy pathways now can put you on a positive track for the rest of your life.

About the Program

The Mind Masters is a mental health and wellbeing program for high school students of all years delivered through live and livestream performances. It's accompanied by classroom quizzes, online activities, posters, teacher and counsellor resources, and this handbook!

About the in-school Livestream Event

The in-school livestream event is a 35 minute session delivered via an interactive online platform. Presented in real time, the session includes pre-filmed sketches from our live theatrical productions. Our NTC host guides you through the session whether you're watching in a classroom, or from home!

Welcome to your Wellness Toolkit

This handbook is your go-to toolkit that can help you:

- Know the difference between a Fixed versus GROWTH Mindset
- Understand stress, and easy steps so that Every LITTLE Bit Helps
- Build your resilience with *The Power of YET*
- Understand how Physical Health SUPPORTS Mental Health

As well as teaching you some simple mindfulness practices!

How to use this Handbook

- Read this handbook after you've watched *The Mind Masters*Livestream Event and get a deeper understanding of the ideas
 mentioned in the show.
- Complete the exercises by filling out the blank sections, and make notes throughout this book is meant to be drawn in!
- Follow the Workout For Your Wellbeing exercises regularly to de-stress and strengthen your resilience.
- See examples of real people who have put these practices into use in their own lives, and the positive results they've achieved.
- Return to this handbook whenever you want to refresh your Mind Mastering skills, or to reflect on your progress.



DID YOU KNOW?

Your brain has as many neurons as the Milky Way Galaxy has stars!

WHY YOUR MIND MATTERS

BOX BO

Thinks intelligence and ability are fixed

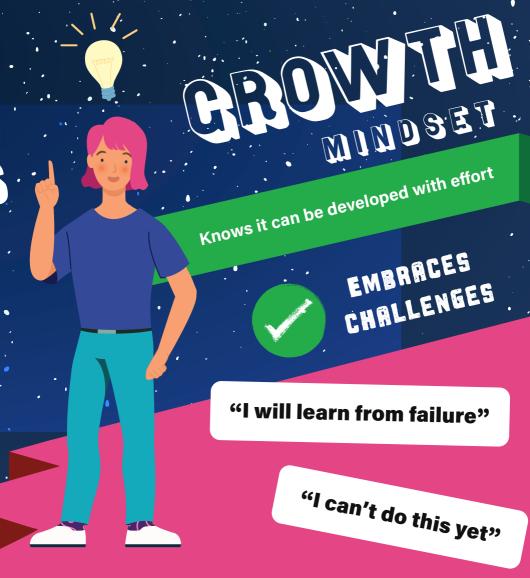
AVOIDS CHALLENGES



al can't do this?

MYTHBUSTER

Some people think our brains stop growing when we become adults, but that's not true! Our brains keep growing and changing throughout our whole lives. It's never too late to start training your brain!



FACT!

Neurons are the parts of your brain that build pathways. Like an explorer walking through a dense forest, the more times a pathway is travelled, the easier it becomes. Which pathway *you* choose to reinforce is up to you.

You can choose to take a different pathway and train your thinking patterns.

PROFILE

KATY PERRY



Katy Perry is a world famous singer with heaps of successful albums, but she didn't start out like that. Early in her career she failed a lot: her first album was a flop, she couldn't get a record deal, and she was dropped from the first big label she signed with. It took FOUR years of trying to be a pop star until she had any success. If she had adopted a fixed mindset after her early failures, we wouldn't have all of her amazing music today. Instead, Katy maintained a growth mindset and knew that if she kept at it, eventually her hard work would pay off.

"I came from a different mindset growing up, and my mind has changed... I think we're all blessed with gifts and I was lucky I just found out what mine was early on and have planted that seed and tried to water it every day."



Write a list of three things you used to not be able to do, but now can. Then write a list of three things you can't quite do yet, but would like to. Any time you get stuck thinking that you can't do something, help shift your brain onto a new path by looking back at this list. Remember that you just can't do it **YET**.



MINDFULNESS

Noticing our thoughts and patterns is the first step to being able to change them. The next time you make a journey that's familiar, maybe walking to school, or driving to work - try and take a different route than usual. Walk on the other side of the road, or take an earlier turn (if you can!). If you can't change your route, try and notice something you've never seen before. A tree. The colour of a house. The top of a building. By changing your path physically and becoming aware of your surroundings, you can train your brain to be open to new ways of thinking and acting.



MYTHBUSTER

Sometimes it might seem like everyone is breezing through life and you're the only one experiencing stress or struggling, but that's just not true! Everyone experiences stress even adults! Thankfully, there are loads of tools to help us get better at managing it.



How stressed are you?

When you feel stressed, your whole body responds - your heart rate goes up, and your body releases a hormone called cortisol. Cortisol helps give you energy which is useful in a fight or flight situation, but too much isn't helpful, and can get in the way of making good decisions.

So how stressed are you? Starting at the bottom, colour in a bar for each statement that you agree with.

I often...

- Find it hard to concentrate and stay focused.
- Feel sad, moody, or feel like 'nothing is going right'.
- Find it hard to relax or switch off, especially from social media.
- Feel sick headaches, shoulder pain, stomach aches or jaw pain.
- Sleep too little, or too much.
- Eat more 'comfort food' than usual, or eat less.
- Don't want to take part in activities I usually enjoy.
- Have trouble remembering things, organising, planning or making decisions.



GREEN ZONE

Things seem pretty chill! Now is a great time to practise some mindfulness techniques so you're ready next time something stressful happens.

ORANGE ZONE

You're probably feeling the pressure. Use some of the strategies on the next page to make sure your stress doesn't get out of hand.

RED ZONE

You're really stressed out! Use some of the strategies on the next page, and check out the resources at the end of this handbook to make sure you're getting the support you need.

SO... HOW DO I CHILL?

Everyone deals with stress differently. Here are some strategies you can have on hand to help cope.



Social media breaks



Connecting with positive relationships





Mindfulness techniques Those workouts for your wellbeing!

Going outside or changing your environment



Choosing supportive thoughts instead of negative ones

Remember fixed vs growth mindset?



Getting enough sleep



Healthy diet



Talking to people you trust





Writing down what's on your mind

PROFILE ADAM GOODES

When Adam Goodes accepted his Australian of the Year Award in 2014, he was in the middle of the toughest year of his life. Being bullied out of the sport he loved put him into a really stressed out state of mind, but by using a whole range of small techniques regularly, he was able to find balance and joy again.

"I played my best footy when I set aside time for myself and focused on other things I was passionate about. Getting that balance right was what kept me strong mentally... I feel amazing because, for what feels like the first time in my life, I can make my own choices."





WELLBEING

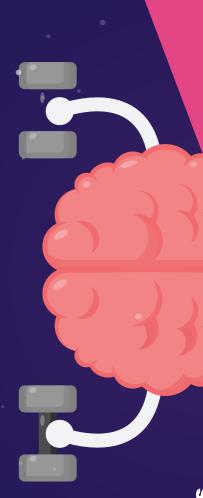
When you get stressed you feel it in your body. Being able to recognise the physical signs is the first step in being able to look after yourself and manage stress. Here is a great physical mindfulness exercise you can do to help raise awareness in your mind and body.

Jog on the spot for 30 seconds, or do some short but intense activity to raise your heart rate. When you're done take a moment to notice all the sensations that activity has created in your body. Focus on your heartbeat and feel how it has sped up. Feel the oxygen going into your lungs. Notice any change in temperature.

By becoming aware of our body we can block out unhelpful mind chatter and bring ourselves back to the present, helping us become more resilient in moments of stress.

We Are All

When we face challenges our brain learns and grows The Brain is like a muscle.



Growth Mindset

The Power of YET

Recognising your own mindset is the first step to changing it.

Ask yourself:

"Is there a way to grow from this?"

Physical Health Mental Health Supports

Momentum over motivation!

Ask yourself:

do now that will make me "What is something small I can feel good tomorrow?"





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A Workout For Your Wellbeing "I can't do it yet", "I don't know it yet", "What can I change if I add the word 'yet' to something It's all about changing your language. "If I practise and work hard, **I can!**" I think I can't do?" Ask yourself: Mindfulness -

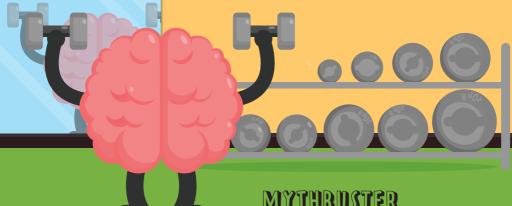
Your brain is working hard all of the time, so it's important to take small, regular steps to de-stress.

Ask yourself:

«When was the last time I went outside?" "Have I drunk water recently?" "Have I had enough sleep?"

"Could I reach out to somebody I trust?"





THE POWER OF 'YET'

Challenge is how we grow. Failure is like a testing ground where we learn what works and what doesn't. If we stopped every time things got hard, we'd never discover the success that's just on the other side. The only way to get there is through perseverance and persistence.

MYTHBUSTER

Some might say that resilience is about being strong all the time and bouncing back to exactly how you were before. But does a bungee jumper go back to where they started after a big leap? No, they end up somewhere new. It's the same with resilience. By going through challenges we end up somewhere different - and grow in the process. Things may get tough, but we have the tools to build ourselves up, even stronger than before.



CHANGE YOUR LANGUAGE!

Language is everything - with a simple shift you can turn a fixed mindset on its head.

Fill in the blanks in these sentences and see how a simple word like **YET** can create a more resilient attitude.

l can't	yet,
but with practice and persistence I will one day.	
I struggle with	
but I know I can get better if I keep working at it.	
Failing at	
helped me learn	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
One day I want to be able to	
	doesn't come naturally,
so it's something I work on.	
Return to this list whenever you want, or make a new one of your own.	
Remember: the more you reinforce a pathway, the easier it becomes!	

FACT!

There's no such thing as failure, only opportunities to grow and learn!

NAOMI OSAKA

PROFILE

Currently ranked one of the top female tennis players in the world, Naomi Osaka has been repeatedly described as resilient by onlookers. But what exactly does that look like? During the Australian Open in 2019 Osaka was on a losing streak to competitor Petra Kvitová, and it looked like the win might be out of reach. During a break between sets, Osaka used the time to shift her attitude - coming back calmer, more focused, and was able to take home the win.



Resilience As A Superpower.

When you're in a moment of struggle your body can send panic signals, overwhelming your ability to calm yourself and see solutions. You can get frustrated and not rise to the challenge. Here are some tips on how to bring yourself into the present and channel your resilience in the moment.

- Count to four as you breathe in, hold your breath for four counts, then count to four as you breathe out. Controlled breathing like this sends a calming message to our brain and can help us think more clearly.
- Practice the 5,4,3,2,1 exercise. Notice 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste. This can help your brain to stop worrying and re-focus on the present moment.
- Give yourself a pep talk! Imagine you are a coach, cheering and giving tips from the sidelines. Imagine what you would say to build someone up, and say that to yourself!

MINDFUL EATING

When we get overwhelmed it's hard to feel like we can be resilient in the moment. If we focus on the small things we can control, we can bring ourselves back to the present and manage it with more ease. Try this exercise next time you eat something. It might be as simple as having an apple or a glass of water!

Allow yourself a moment to simply eat or drink without any distractions - no phone or TV show! Take a small bite or sip. Just like a judge on Masterchef, notice every small detail. How does it taste? What about smell and texture? Think about all the different flavours that linger on your tongue. How would you describe what you're experiencing in detail?

By practising this when you're calm, the next time you get overwhelmed you can use a sip of water or a quick snack as a focus to bring yourself back to the present moment.



MYTHBUSTER

You don't need to be doing super intense workouts all the time to get the positive benefits from good physical health. There's loads of little things you can do to make yourself feel good, without feeling the pressure to be a full time athlete.



Physical Health supports Mental Health

Regular physical activity lowers cortisol and increases endorphins, making you feel good and helping you cope with stress. It also improves your mood and creativity, cool!

FACT!

You won't always have the motivation to make good physical choices, but sometimes all you need is momentum! Start small and do one good thing for your body. Eventually those small choices start snowballing, making it easier to do bigger things like go for a swim or play a game of basketball.

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

- Drink enough water throughout the day (1-2 litres).
- Avoid drinks high in sugar or caffeine.
- Get enough sleep (for teenagers that's between 8-10 hours!).
- Break up long periods of sitting with a walk or some stretches.
- Stand up while doing tasks like playing an instrument or doing art.
- Dance to your favourite song.
- Kick a ball against a wall.
- Go for a ride on your bike, scooter, or skateboard.



It's All About Balance!

Sometimes when we try and go all or nothing and cut a bad habit out altogether, it can cause a whole bunch of stress and we just go right back to where we were. Instead of completely stopping a habit you want to change, try and focus on just doing it less. Or replace it with doing something *more* instead. For example: instead of making a rule to never drink soft drinks, try to focus on drinking more water!



PROFILE

MYCHAL JEFFERSON

Some might think that it's only professional athletes that need to focus on physical health to do well in their game, but now online gamers are getting fit in order to perform at their best virtually.

Pro gamer Mychal Jefferson specialises in speed running Nintendo games on livestream, where reaction time is key. He needs to be at his best physically and mentally to be able to succeed. When he first started gaming his diet consisted mostly of cookies and fast food, so he had to make some big changes in order to see his gameplay improve. "I wanted my gaming career to succeed, and I had to work out to do that," says Jefferson. "I'm the coach and the player, I'm always trying to redefine my optimal strategy." Part of that strategy was getting fit. In 2017, Jefferson started hitting the gym four days a week which he says gave him "better sleep, better mood and more confidence."

"I wanted my gaming career to succeed and I had to work out to do that."



Hot Tips To Cool Your Social Media

It's amazing to be able to stay in contact with everyone and everything all the time - but sometimes it can get us down, so it's important to take breaks. Here are some tips to help create a healthy balance:





- Set aside dedicated time off social media, especially before bed.
- If a certain platform is bumming you out, take a week long break just to see what it feels like.



Turn your notifications off for certain apps.









- Most phones can be set to black and white which takes away the primal 'reward' feeling we get when we see a bright red notification pop up.
- Curate your content to only reflect things that make you feel good, and unfollow accounts that bring you down.





If you're feeling stuck sitting at your desk for too long and your brain is starting to get foggy, take a break and change your environment. Even something as simple as bouncing a ball can help reset your energy.

Grab a ball that you can bounce, it can be any size - basketball, tennis ball, or even a bouncy ball. Find a clear space where you can bounce it, outside is best but inside is fine too. Put all of your attention onto the ball as you bounce it. Feel the sensation of it hitting your hand. Hear where it hits the ground or a wall. Watch how the ball reacts to each bounce.

By taking a moment to do something entirely different, you can go back into your activity completely refocused and recharged.

Key Terms/Words:

Cortisol

An important hormone that helps the body respond to stress.

Endorphins

The chemicals your body releases when you exercise that create a positive feeling in the body.

Fixed/Growth Mindset

The idea that traits like intelligence or talent are either fixed or can be changed.

Mental Health

A person's state of psychological, emotional and social wellbeing.

Mindfulness

Paying attention to the present moment non-judgmentally.

Neurons

Nerve cells that send and receive signals from your brain.

Persistence

Choosing to continue on even when faced with challenges.

Resilience

The ability to cope with and grow from challenges.

Stress

A feeling of imbalance between the demands being made on us and our resources to cope with those demands.

Wellbeing

Refers to a person's quality of life, health and happiness.



Additional Resources

Sometimes your stress just won't go away and it's a good idea to see a professional. Your can start by:

- Talking to your GP.
- Seeing the school counsellor School counsellors have specialist training in adolescent mental health.
- Speaking to an adult you trust.
- Talking to a spiritual leader or elder you trust.
- Talking to a youth worker if you go to a local youth centre.

- Calling Kids Helpline for teens on 1800 551 800.
- **Visiting eHeadspace online chat** on headspace.org.au

Where to find out more?

There's loads of amazing free resources to help you learn more about mindfulness and other techniques to support your mental and physical wellbeing. Check these out if you want to know more:

reachout.com

headspace.com

connectedspace.com.au

kidshelpline.com.au

beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/ young-people

sane.org

For more online games, videos and

- Student Activities.





At Landcom, our aim is to create innovative and productive places that demonstrate global standards of liveability, resilience, inclusion, affordability and environmental quality.

A key part of this vision is a commitment to fostering Healthy and Inclusive places, including focussing on the mental health and wellbeing of the people in and around the communities we create.

In recognising that children's mental health is a critical priority for resilient communities. Landcom

has partnered with The National Theatre for Children to educate students about mental health, wellbeing and resilience building. The Mind Masters program aims to educate both primary and secondary school students about resilience and positive thinking to provide the key tools to support their mental health in a COVID impacted world.

Healthy and Inclusive Places is one of the four pillars that make up our Sustainable Places Strategy. To learn more about this or other information about Landcom initiatives, please visit our website landcom.com.au/sustainability

