

AUGUST 2021

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### Happy Wednesday!

In today's newsletter we have great information and articles including:

- staff experience survey – closes 31 August
- celebrate diversity and wear purple this Friday
- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- going vegan – what you need to know
- get active with UniSports group fitness sessions
- when the road gets rocky, what do you do?
- practical strategies for improving sleep

We encourage you to continue accessing the [Health and wellbeing web page](#) for resources and the [Mental health and wellbeing information guide](#) for supportive strategies to allow you to thrive.

### Stay well and have a great Wednesday.

p.s. If you haven't already, [register for the Living Values staff forum on Thursday, 26 August at 2:30pm](#) where our Living Values Charter will be launched by the VC, Professor Duncan Bentley and the Living Values project team.

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## Staff experience survey - closes 31 August

As a valued staff member of Federation University, you are invited to have your say by participating in our staff experience survey. This confidential and anonymous survey closes on 31 August 2021.

Your voice will help us to shape the future of diversity, inclusion and gender equity at Federation University as we align to the new Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic). Your responses will enable us to develop strategies for achieving workplace equality and inclusion as well as forming a new Gender Equality Action Plan.

Take a few minutes to complete the [staff experience survey](#) and participate in shaping the future of our University.



## Celebrate diversity and wear purple this Friday

Wear it Purple is a day of awareness for everyone to advocate and challenge harmful social cultures in our daily lives, raise awareness of the diversities of gender, sex and sexualities and celebrate diversity and inclusion within our University community.

So, get your purple-themed outfit ready for this Friday, 27 August and show your support! Other ways to support this initiative include:

- [add a purple Teams background](#) for your on-screen promotion of Wear it Purple Day
- FedStore will soon introduce Federation-branded rainbow lanyards. Wearing a rainbow lanyard shows your inclusivity and support for people of diverse genders and sexualities. Keep an eye out at your FedStore or [order your lanyard online](#).

Learn more by checking out these great resources to support Wear it Purple Day:

- [Minus18's video on use of pronouns](#)
- [ABC iView's Pride collection of movies, shows and documentaries](#)
- [The Victorian Government's guide to LGBTIQ inclusive language](#)
- [Minus18's resources on being a better ally, research reports and guides to inclusion in classrooms, sport and social media](#)
- [ACON's language guide to trans and gender diverse inclusion](#)



## Lunch and learn sessions

The 'lunch and learn' sessions are designed to provide staff with information and assistance in a range of areas that support their personal and professional needs and interests.

We encourage you to check out and register for the upcoming session below.

[Register here for any 'lunch and learn' session](#). A Microsoft Teams link will be sent following registration.

### Upcoming sessions include:

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**6 September 2021**   **Managing the psychosocial symptoms of menopause at work**  
12:30pm – 1:15pm   *Professor Catherine Hungerford, School of Health*

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Remember, if you miss a 'lunch and learn' session you can access recordings and resources from the [Health and wellbeing web page](#). These are generally made available within a few days of the session.

### VicSuper health and wellbeing webinars

Throughout August, you are invited to attend VicSuper's 'Workplace Wellbeing Series' which provides daily 45-minute webinar sessions that cover personal and professional wellbeing, resilience, finance, saving, investment and superannuation.

[Check out the daily session details and register via VicSuper's Workplace Wellbeing Series web page.](#)



## Going vegan – what you need to know

If you are thinking of going vegan, that is great news, as there are many health benefits for switching to a more plant-based diet – whether it be full-time or part-time. In fact, studies have linked plant-based diets with longer life expectancy and a lower body weight and body mass index (BMI) compared to other diets.

In addition, plant-based diets are health promoting, in that they encourage an increased intake of fruits, vegetables, legumes, wholegrains, nuts and seeds. These foods are high in fibre and prebiotics, which support gut-health, and have been linked with reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

However, before you take the plunge, you need to learn more about nutrient requirements. Careful planning is required to ensure appropriate intake of key nutrients found in animal products, including protein, vitamin B12, iron, zinc, omega 3 fatty acids, and calcium. Specific to weight management, it is especially important to consume adequate protein and fibre for appetite control.

To help aspiring vegans meet their nutritional targets, make sure you [check out these must-try vegan recipes](#) for each of these 6 key nutrients – to make sure you are covered.

- **Protein** – spicy thai green curry with tofu, vegetables and edamame
- **Zinc** – green quinoa salad with pepitas
- **Iron** – lentil bolognese with wholemeal spaghetti
- **Vitamin B12** – minestrone with nutritional yeast
- **Calcium** – choc tahini cookies
- **Omega 3** – chia raspberry jam with soy linseed toast

Check out the full article [‘Going vegan – what you need to know’ in the August edition of Flourish](#).



## Get active with UniSports group fitness sessions

**Looking for daily movement ideas?** The UniSports team are pleased to offer FREE virtual group fitness sessions for staff, students and community members whilst we work and study from home. Each session runs between 30-45 minutes and provides a great way to get moving.

Check out the weekly schedule below:

- **Monday** | 12:00pm - Balance and Stretch
- **Wednesday** | 12:00pm - HIIT
- **Thursday** | 12:00pm - Pilates
- **Friday** | 12:00pm - HIIT

You can [connect to the sessions via Zoom](#) using the details below.

- **Meeting ID:** 81320355316
- **Passcode:** Federation

If you have any pre-existing conditions or new to exercising, please follow the advice of your health professional. It is vital that we prioritise the health and safety of ourselves, family, friends and the community.



## When the road gets rocky, what do you do?

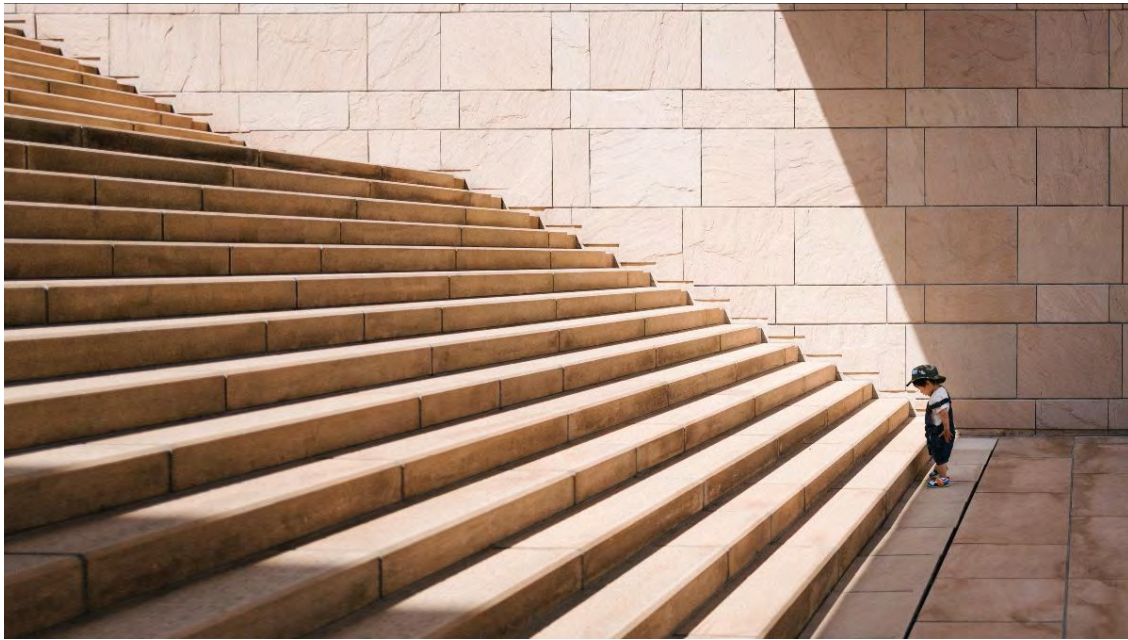
Even for the relatively self-aware and emotionally adept, challenges can take us by surprise. Learning healthy ways to move through adversity – **a collection of skills called resilience** – can help us cope better and recover more quickly.

Stress and challenges come in many forms in life: adversity and trauma, fear and shame, betrayals of trust. Berkeley University's 'Greater Good Science Centre' has collated resilience practices into the five key categories below. These strategies can help you cope with challenges when they arise, but also prepare you for the future.

With enough practice, you will have a toolbox of techniques that come naturally and will help when times get challenging. Just knowing that you've built up your skills of resilience can be a great comfort, and even a happiness booster.

- **Change the narrative.** When something adverse happens, we often relive the event over and over in our heads, rehashing the pain. The practice of *Expressive Writing* can move us forward by helping us gain new insights on the challenges in our lives.
- **Face your fears.** The *Overcoming a Fear* practice is designed to help with everyday fears that get in the way of life, such as the fear of public speaking, heights, or flying. We can't talk ourselves out of fears; instead, we have to tackle the emotions directly.
- **Practice self-compassion.** This involves offering compassion to ourselves: confronting our own suffering with an attitude of warmth and kindness, without judgment.
- **Meditate.** Practicing mindfulness brings us more and more into the present, and it offers techniques for dealing with negative emotions when they arise.
- **Cultivate forgiveness.** If holding a grudge is holding you back, research suggests that cultivating forgiveness could be beneficial to your mental and physical health. If you feel ready to begin, it can be a powerful practice.

[Read the original article 'Five science-backed strategies to build resilience'](#) to get more detail about each of these key resilience building categories.



## Practical strategies for improving sleep

When focusing on our wellbeing, sleep should be a priority. Since the pandemic started, people are reporting having more vivid dreams and disturbed sleeping patterns. [In this ABC Media podcast \(3:24 minutes\)](#), we learn that the key is to tell our dreaming mind, as we fall asleep, what type of dream we would like to have.

Even prior to the pandemic, two thirds of adults in developed countries were getting insufficient sleep and when we are sleep deprived, there is enormous personal cost in terms of physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Check out these simple tips to improve your sleep:

- **Stick to a sleep schedule** – aim to go to bed at the same time each night and sleep for no more than eight hours. Consistency will reinforce your body's sleep-wake cycle.
- **Watch what you eat and drink** – avoid heavy or large meals within a couple of hours before bedtime. Similarly, nicotine, alcohol, and caffeine can each impair your ability to fall asleep or reduce the quality of your sleep.
- **Be physically active** – regular physical activity, particularly outdoors and preferably in the morning or before the evening meal, can promote better sleep.
- **Things to avoid close to bedtime** – activities that are stimulating such as moderate exercise, computer games, television, movies, having important discussions, using social media and responding to emails and text messages should be avoided in the hour before bed.

**For more fascinating information about sleep:**

- [Watch 'a walk through stages of sleep'](#), an interesting TED Talk by Matt Walker, Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of California.
- [Watch the 'Sleep - how it supports our health and strategies for sleeping well'](#), 'lunch and learn' presented by Professor Gerard Kennedy, School of Science, Psychology and Sport.



## Quick Links

[Flourish - health and wellbeing e-magazine - August 2021](#)

[Mental health and wellbeing information guide](#)

[Health and wellbeing resources](#)

[COVID-19 support for staff](#)



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