

APRIL 2021

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Happy Wednesday!

In today's newsletter, you can check out these great articles and information:

- commemorating Anzac Day
- paying it forward
- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- professional development for personal growth
- exercise your brain to improve mental wellness
- flourish everyday

We encourage you to continue taking the time to identify ways you can support your ongoing self-care and wellbeing.

Stay well and have a great Wednesday.

Commemorating Anzac Day

Every year on 25 April, hundreds of thousands of Australians and New Zealanders around the world gather at dawn as a sign of respect to soldiers who have and still protect our way of life.

Anzac Day is a time for the community to come together to remember and recognise the service and sacrifice of members of the Australian Defence Force. Originally a commemoration of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli in modern-day Turkey in 1915, Anzac Day is a public expression of gratitude and reflection which resonates to the present day.

As noted by Sir William Deane, Governor-General of Australia on ANZAC Day in 1999, 'Anzac is not merely about loss. It is about courage, and endurance, and duty, and love of country, and mateship, and good humour and the survival of a sense of self-worth and decency in the face of dreadful odds.'

traditional recitation on Anzac Day is 'The Ode', which comes from the poem 'For the Fallen' by the English poet and writer Laurence Binyon. The most well-known lines are:

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

Whether you are standing in your driveway, from your living room or attending a public event, you can remember those who gave their all.

Find out more about Anzac Day events and ways you can commemorate in your local area:

- [Ballarat](#)
- [Berwick](#)
- [Brisbane](#)
- [Churchill](#)
- [Horsham](#)

You can also [watch the ANZAC Day live stream](#) or [register for a children's storytime reading of 'Remember: Lest We Forget'](#) being hosted by Monash Public Library.



Paying it forward

You may have seen the movie 'Pay it forward' or have read the novel of the same name, a story about a young boy who did three good deeds for others in need. In return, all that the child wanted was that they pass on the good deed to three other people and keep the cycle going.

One good deed might not seem like much, but if everyone did something good for someone else, then the cycle of generosity and kindness could spark us to become better people.

'Pay it Forward Day' is a global initiative that exists to make a difference by creating a ripple of kindness felt across the world. The aim is that people pay kindness forward every day and make each day that little bit brighter.

Simple acts might include:

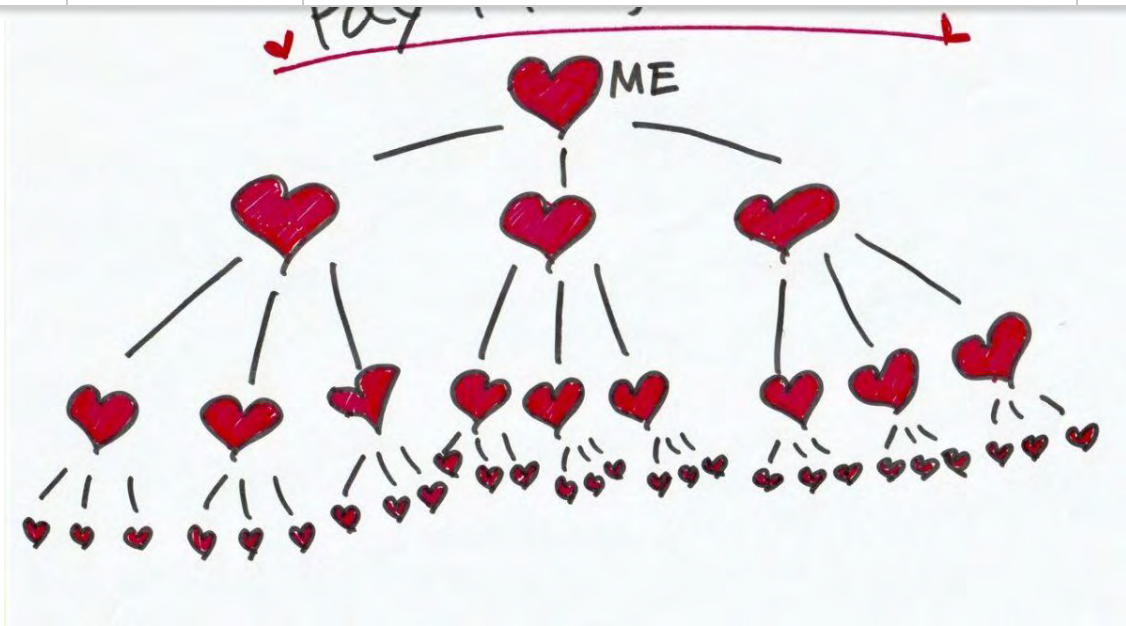
- pay for someone's cup of coffee
- help someone out in need
- get the next person's food, toll, petrol, etc.
- let others know about 'Pay it Forward Day' through social media
- donate blood or contribute to a worthwhile cause.

There are numerous health and wellbeing benefits attached to paying random acts of kindness forward and helping someone else in need, including:

- doing good for others can have a powerful, positive effect on the immune system
- by contributing towards the greater good, self-worth and self-esteem improves
- it can prevent people from becoming isolated, encouraging them to meet new people and step outside of their comfort zones
- chronic negativity can be dismantled in the mind as positive energy flows from giving to others
- studies have revealed that kindness helps relieve stress, which can be a problem in many workplaces.

So join in and 'pay it forward', helping to spread the word about this important day. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people can literally change the world for the better. Imagine the difference that would make.

You can also [read this great article from Psychology today about the benefits of paying it forward](#) and how random acts of kindness make you feel happier and in control.



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 sessions below.

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

Upcoming sessions include:

28 April 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm	The neuroscience of compassion and how it underpins our ability to thrive <i>Dr Mary Hollick, FedUni Associate, Federation Business School and Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i>
13 May 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm	The science behind mindfulness and wellbeing <i>Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i>

Missed one of the 'lunch and learn' sessions, or simply want to refresh your memory? You can access the recordings via the 'lunch and learn' section on the Human Resources [Health and wellbeing page.](#)



Professional development for personal growth

You are encouraged to continue embracing opportunities to build capability and to make learning a part of your everyday. Not only does this benefit your mental health and wellbeing, you develop your own capabilities to thrive in all areas of life.

Upcoming professional development sessions include:

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|---------------|--|
| 27 April | Unconscious bias (managers and supervisors) |
| 27 & 28 April | Having challenging conversations - essential skills for leaders (managers and supervisors) |
| 29 & 30 April | Optimal motivation (managers and supervisors) |
| 4, 5 & 6 May | Stepping into leadership (by invitation – discuss with your manager) |
| 5 May | Lean thinking – addressing the 8 wastes in higher education (all staff) |
| 6 May | Building Aboriginal cultural competency (all staff) |
| 6 May | Lean thinking – addressing the 8 wastes in higher education (managers and supervisors) |
| 11 May | Recruitment and Merit Selection Policy and Procedure training (all staff) |
| 11 May | Managing change to build adaptability (managers and supervisors) |

Places are limited, so we encourage you to review the upcoming programs and register your session by selecting the links above or via [ELMQ](#). Please ensure you click the 'Sessions' button on your course, then select the '+ Sign Up' option (please do not use the '+ Enrol' button, as you are required to select a preferred session).

You can also go to the Human Resources '[Training and development](#)' page to access the comprehensive list of 2021 professional development offerings.



Exercise your brain to improve mental wellness

Exercising your brain is just as important as exercising your body. If we don't get enough physical activity we may find ourselves slipping down a spiral of less motivation and less energy. The less we do, the more challenging it becomes to get back in shape, be healthy, and feel great again.

A sedentary mind will yield similar results: a sluggish brain, which means trouble concentrating, poor memory, and more difficulty with creative problem-solving. Not exactly a recipe for success at work and, by extension, in life.

People who commit to their mental wellness, on the other hand, are in a position to thrive mentally. Intellectual wellness opens us up to new ideas and experiences. This mental stretching can empower us to make wiser decisions, improve our skills, and feel motivated to take on new challenges.

Here are six easy brain exercises you can do on your own.

- **Perform mathematical gymnastics** - do simple math problems or puzzles in your head. Even basic addition and subtraction will warm up those cognitive 'muscles'. You'll notice over time the math gets easier, even enjoyable. Meanwhile, you're keeping those brain cells active.
- **Visualisation techniques** - visualising is excellent for boosting your creativity. It can also help promote a sense of calm. Research has also found that people who imagine themselves performing a task, improve their performance in that task without physically doing anything. Visualisation exercises your imagination, improving your ability to think outside-of-the-box when problem-solving.
- **Jot down your gratitude** - a positive mindset leads to better creativity, improved engagement, and a productivity boost. All you need to foster these benefits for yourself is a pen and paper and a couple of minutes a day. Write down the most meaningful thing of the past 24 hours each day, as well as three things you are grateful for. Try this daily for at least three weeks and see how much your mental wellbeing and outlook improves.

you like the traditional pen and paper brain teasers or prefer to expand your mind by swiping on your smartphone screen, there are countless brain-training games you can use. Doing so will help you be more alert and 'wake' your brain up faster if ever you're feeling mentally sluggish.

- **Jigsaw puzzles** - puzzles are great for improving your logic and problem-solving abilities. They are fun to do alone and even better with friends or family. Keep a space at home or even at work for your jigsaw puzzle. When you need a 10-minute break, work on your puzzle to help stimulate your mind.
- **Read thought-provoking books** - one would think reading would be a no-brainer as a top exercise for your mind, but most adults don't read as much as they should. Set time aside each day to read a book (not a few online articles or Facebook posts). The idea is to tackle a complex idea or even an imaginative story—a narrative that can't be condensed into a few pages.

Start building these exercises into your routine, boost your mental power and get more out of life.

You can also read the following articles:

- ['6 Easy Brain Exercises to Improve Mental Wellness'](#) by wellteq
- [Seeing Is Believing: The Power of Visualization](#) by Psychology Today



Flourish everyday

Every month, Converge International, our Employee Assistance Program partner, produces Flourish. This popular e-magazine draws on Converge's wellbeing resources to provide a broad range of interesting and informative articles that cover current topics, issues and trends. We recommend that you use Flourish as a go-to resource to support your health and wellbeing.

[Read the April edition of Flourish](#), which includes the following topics:

- things you didn't know about your kidney health
- how to beat food cravings
- facts about dreaming
- family trusts - where to store your money
- whether you are getting the right amount of healthcare.

[You can access all editions of Flourish via the Human Resources 'Health and Wellbeing' page under 'Mental health and mindfulness - Reading'.](#)



Quick Links

[Mental health and wellbeing - information guide](#)

[Health and wellbeing resources](#)

[COVID-19 support for staff](#)