

Coordinator's Note

We have created a new email address to capture any concerns you might have regarding any wellbeing issues.

This email address will be monitored by a few key members of the team to ensure that someone is across whatever concerns you have.

STUDENT WELLBEING

wellbeing.pa@tcc.sa.edu.au

I've been reflecting this week on what the word 'wellbeing' means?

My title is 'Coordinator of Student Wellbeing' but that is a vague term. Some people suggest that it's happiness, but that seems too full short. Happiness is a wonderful commodity, but not something which sustains us. Happiness is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master. The world has so often sought happiness above all else, and it does not sustain. I'm generally pretty happy eating KFC, but it will not sustain me.

Is it a healthy mental state? I believe that's certainly an aspect of it, but is it a definition of 'wellbeing' or does it help define it?

I read an article this week from the international journal of wellbeing (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, Sanders), which I believe defined it best.

Wellbeing, or 'being well', if you like, is the state where your resources are in balance with your challenges. It is a state where the things that we are facing in life; psychologically, socially, physically, are matched by the resources, or capacities we have or have developed in our lives in the same areas.

When our resources outweigh our challenges, we become stagnant and unfulfilled. I was chatting to a student recently who was complaining that the basketball team he's playing for dominate too much. He's scoring 30 points a game and winning easily, but ultimately, it's unfulfilling. His resources greatly outweigh his challenges. We go through this in life... we don't challenge ourselves, we become complaisant and sometimes apathetic.



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The more common problem is though that our challenges outweigh the resources we have. Do we have enough social capital or strong enough social skills to deal with the social challenges that exist every day (friends, family, relationships, colleagues). Do we invest enough time and discipline into our physical and mental health (as Lisa McPhee reminds me are not at all separate) to deal with the challenges of life? It also needs to be remembered that sometimes the challenges we face we simply cannot cope with ourselves (in fact I'd suggest this is the case most of the time) and we need people, community, to help us balance the wellbeing pendulum.

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