

Looking after your #1 farming asset

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VISION

Shaping tomorrow's healthiest farming communities worldwide

MISSION

Guided by *evidence*, we *influence* positive change for health, wellbeing and safety in agriculture, fostering transformative *action* on farms.



Terminology

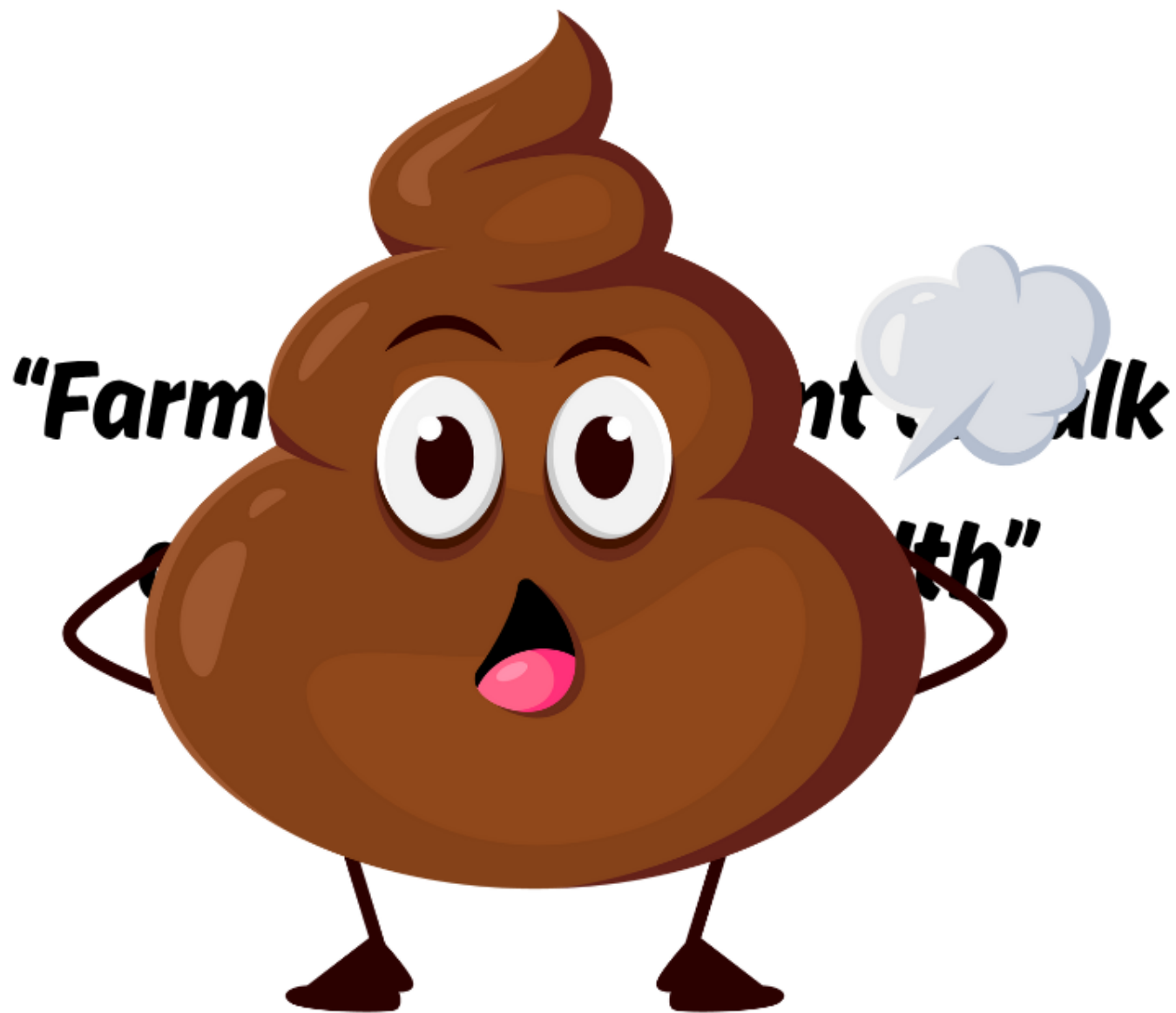
Wellbeing - a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors (Better Health Channel)

Mental Health - a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. (World Health Organisation)

Mental Illness - a general term for a group of illnesses that may include symptoms that can affect a person's thinking, perceptions, mood or behaviour. (Better Health Channel)

Stress - a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being. (World Health Organisation)

***“Farmers don’t want to talk
about mental health”***



What is wellbeing?



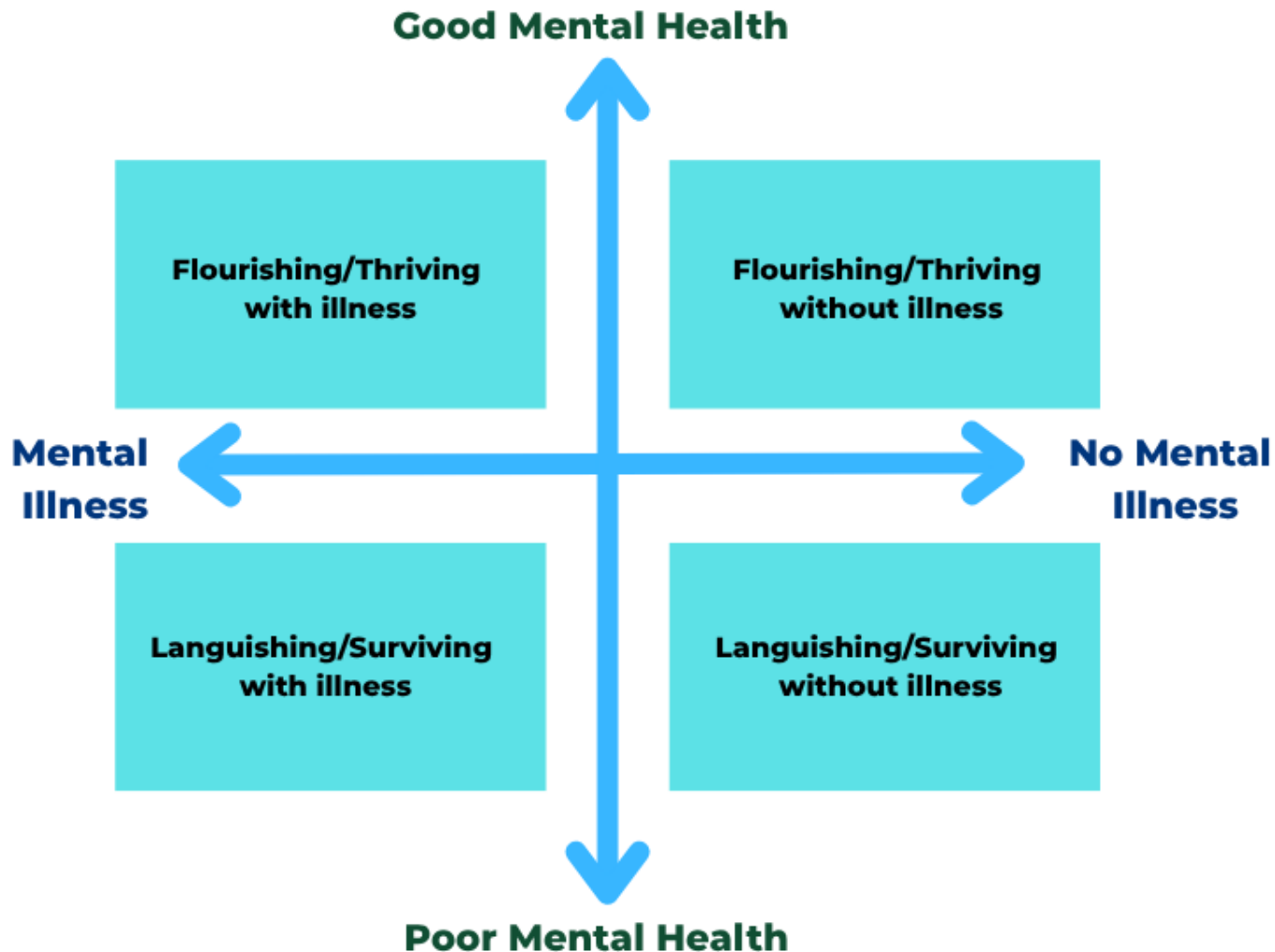
What is wellbeing?



Mental Health v Mental Illness:

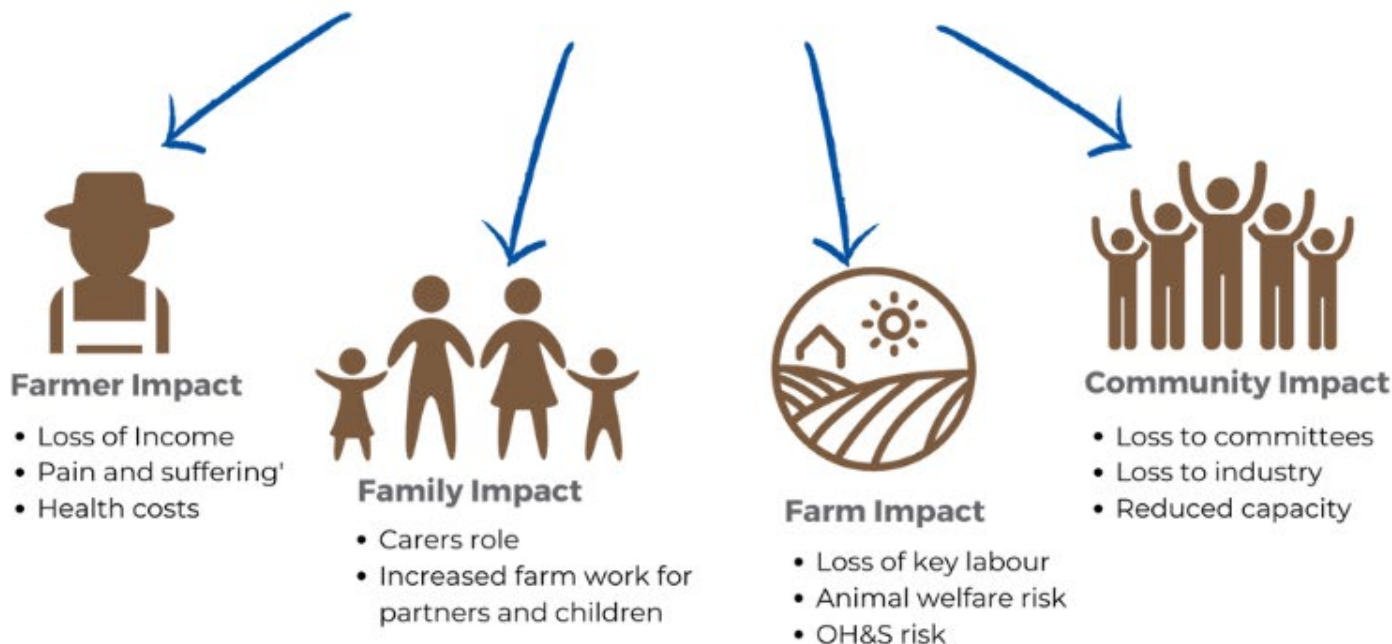


Mental Health v Mental Illness: The Dual Continuum



Flow on Effects of Farmer Health

Injury Illness Disability



Brumby S. The flow on effect of poor health on farmers, families, farms and communities. Policy launch presentation: Rural directions for a better state of health; November 2005. Echuca, VIC.

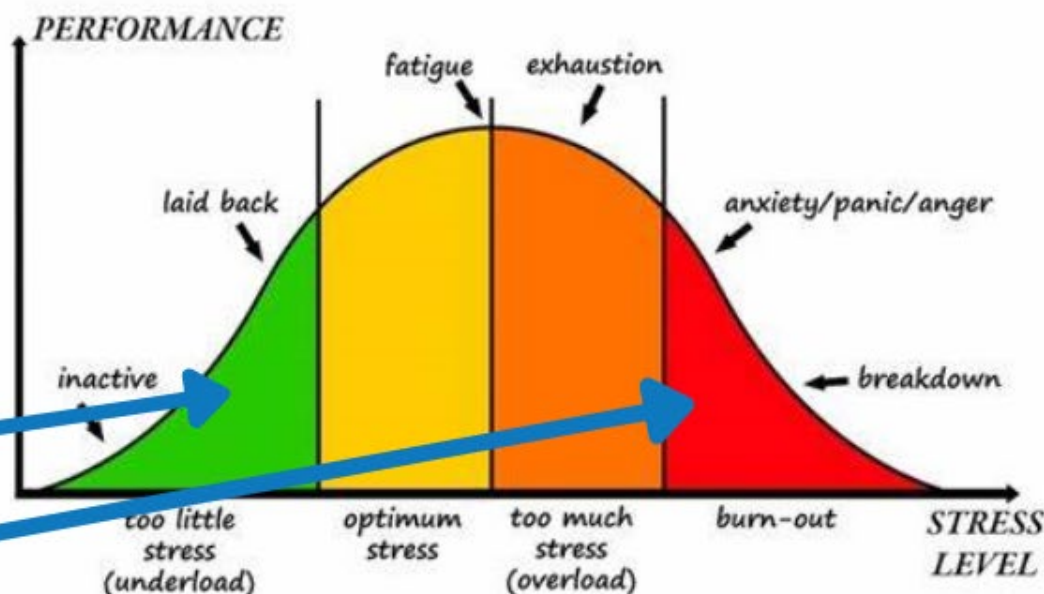
What is stress?

Increased activation of mind
and body in response to
demands

Can be helpful as well as
harmful

When stress is too high or
too low performance
declines

STRESS CURVE



(Ref 1, 2)

R

Recognise

R

Respond

R

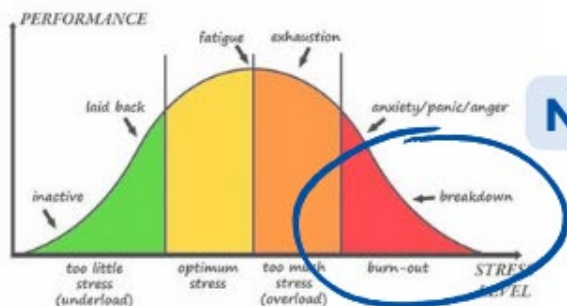
Refer

R

Reflect

Recognise - Heightened stress

STRESS CURVE



**CHANGE IN NORMAL
BEHAVIOUR**

**OFTEN NOT SINGLE
CHANGE BUT
COMBINATION**

Substance Abuse

Headaches

Neck/Shoulder tension

Rapid breathing

Quiet or withdrawn

Constipation

Diarrhoea

Fatigue

Emotional outbursts

Low energy

Irritable

Brain fog

**Feelings of guilt or
worthlessness**

**Shortness of
breath**

Excess sweating

Sleep problems

Weight changes

**Weakened
immune system**

Respond - Active listening



Source: <https://devosforteengirls.wordpress.com/2016/03/22/two-ears-one-mouth>

People in distress need to feel
heard and need to feel
validated

Engage in
conversation

Ask about their needs

Ask about their
concerns

Validate their stress
responses

Respond - Reducing stress



**Perceived level
of control**

**Reduce stress reaction
through support and being
calm**



Stress level

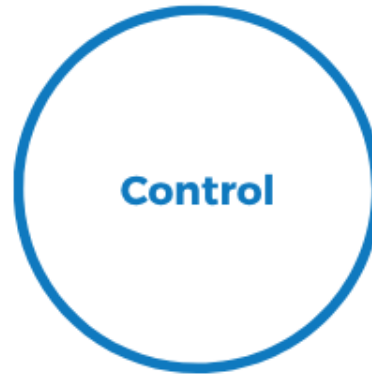
Improve sense of control

Reduce demands

Respond - Circle of control

Things we have **direct** control over

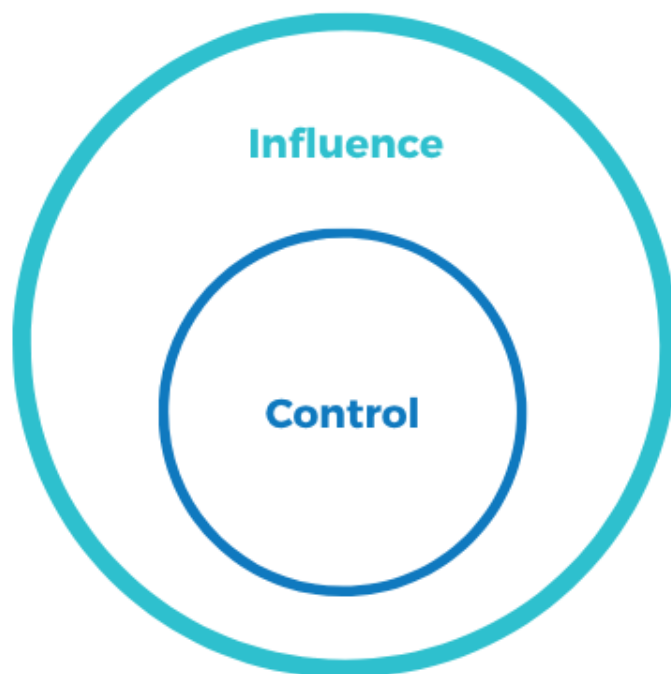
e.g. our own behaviour, actions, decisions



Respond - Circle of control

Things we have don't have direct control over but can **influence**

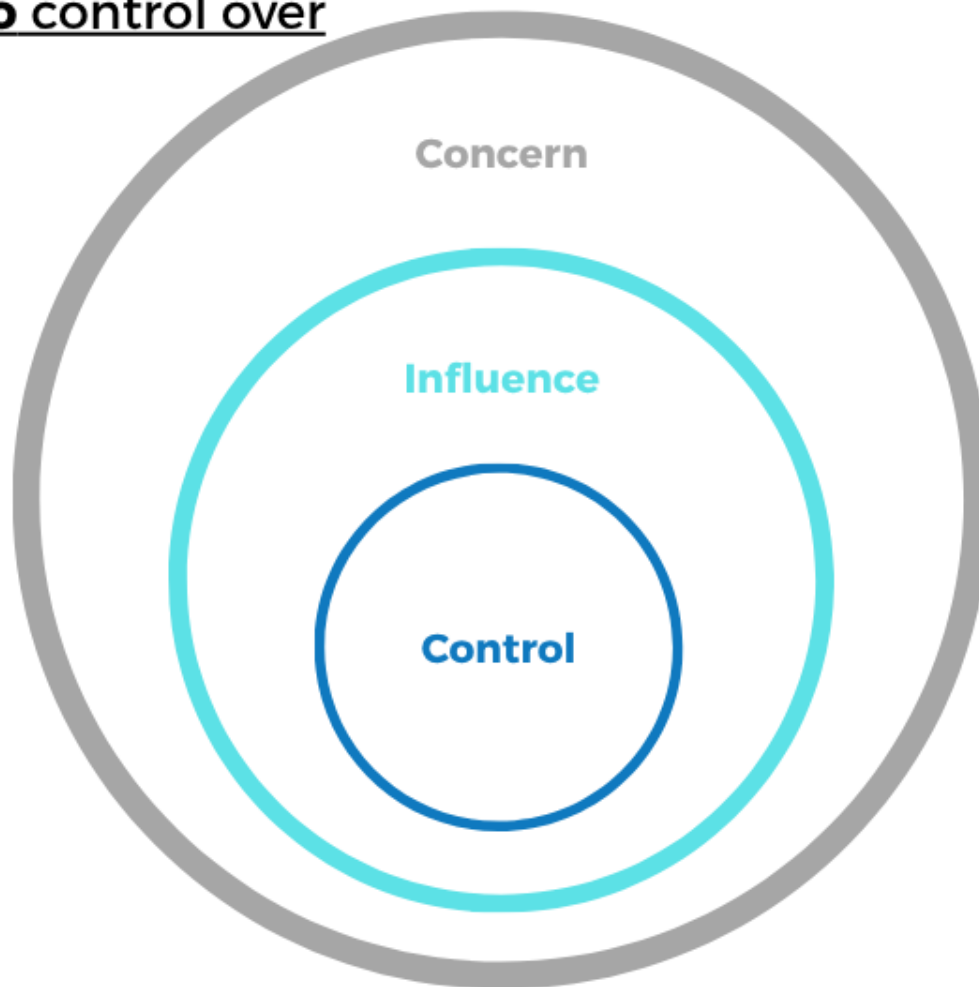
e.g. other people's behaviour, actions, decisions



Respond - Circle of control

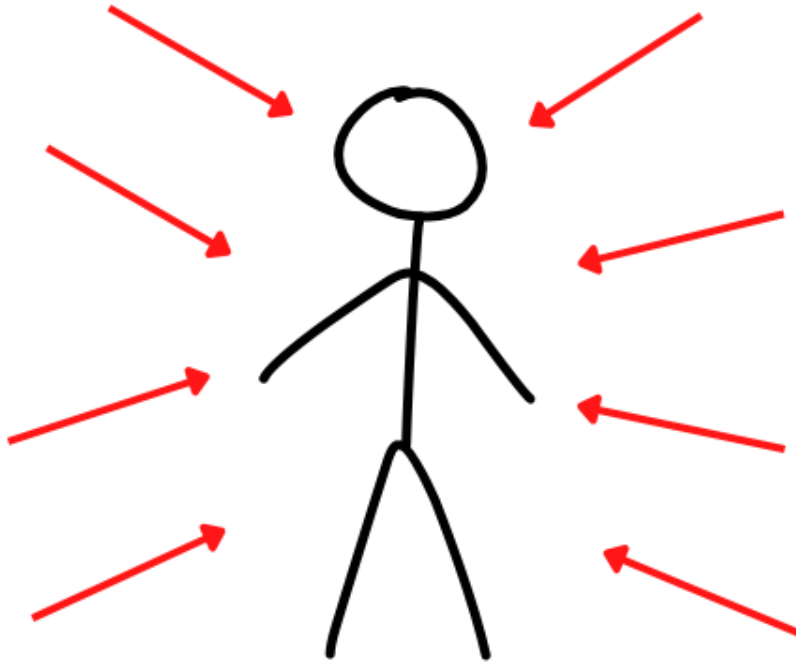
Things we have **no** control over

e.g. weather,
commodity
prices, past
decisions or
choices



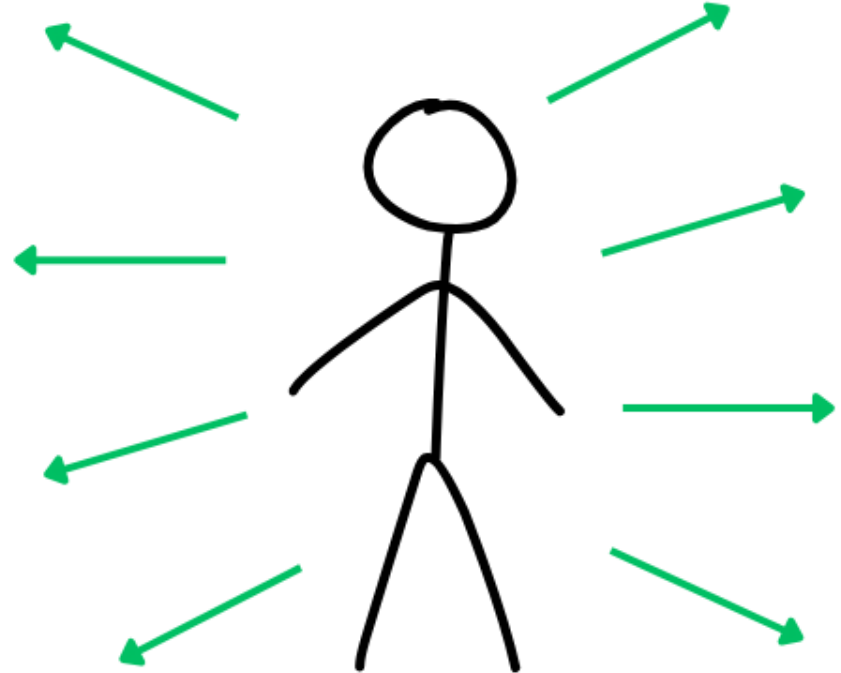
Respond - Locus of control

EXTERNAL



Things happen to you

INTERNAL



You make things happen

Refer - Sources of support

***Culturally and linguistically appropriate**

Personal Support



Family member
Partner
Friend

Social Support



Sporting club
Gardening group
CFA

Formal Support Networks



General Practitioner
Rural Aid Counsellors
Rural Financial Counselling Service

General Wellbeing Support

Lifeline
Beyond Blue
Mensline



Refer - Wellbeing Resources

Steering Straight: My Plan to Keep on Track



In today's busy world, it's hard to find time to take stock and plan for the challenges ahead. However, like a map, plans can help you stay on track. This includes making a plan for how you can support yourself. This is the best way to protect the things that matter most to you: your family, how well you do your job, your family and relationships, and your health. This plan will help you to:

- Know what activities are helpful and keep you feeling positive during tough times.
- Achieve future goals, and break them down into manageable steps.
- Know who you can call on for support when tackling a goal or a challenge.

You can take action, right now, by putting pen to paper. So make yourself a cuppa, find a quiet spot, and start *Steering Straight: My Plan to Keep on Track*. It takes most people about 15-30 minutes.

1. Taking stock: what signs show me that my stress levels are rising?

(a) When people find themselves in challenging situations, it is normal to feel some stress or worry. You may notice changes in your body, what you are feeling, and how you act. Everyone reacts a bit differently. In the circles below, tick the changes you have noticed in yourself during tough times for that someone else might have pointed out.



(b) Are there any other signs that you have noticed in challenging situations (e.g. actions, thoughts, feelings, in your body)?

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(c) Sometimes, we know we might feel stressed at a particular time or during a particular event. Are there any events in your life that increase stress?

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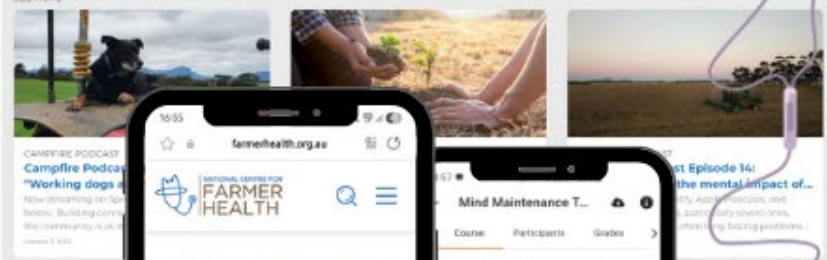
Examples:

- Getting paid
- Getting a new job
- Getting a new house
- Getting a new car
- Getting a new pet



LATEST CAMPFIRE PODCAST EPISODES

SEE MORE



Modules for farmer mental wellbeing

Do you work in a farming operation and want to learn more about mental health and wellbeing – tailored specifically to farmers?

Would you like to pick up some tools to help to keep on track with your mental wellbeing?

Or perhaps you know someone else that might find these tools helpful?

The Mind Maintenance Toolkit is here to help. This online, self-paced series of eight modules is designed to fit around your schedule, offering practical tools and strategies to maintain your mental wellbeing.



www.farmerhealth.org.au

Reflect - Impact on you

