

Dear colleagues – I trust that all is well with you.

Did you know that engaging in a **hobby** decreases your stress, improves and renews your brain function, improves your mood, and provides opportunities for connecting with different people? Do you remember filling in your hobbies as part of your CV?

Your hobby of choice falls within your circle of control. In our WEL groups, we facilitate understanding of the difference between what lies in your circle of control and what exists in your circle of influence (based on the model developed by Stephen Covey).



When practising your hobby, you take a break and regain self-control, express your creativity and have a sense of accomplishment and purpose – and in some instances, you may derive economic benefit. As an added bonus, shared hobbies can improve your relationship with your partner.

The seven types of hobby that are scientifically proven to bring relief from anxiety and depression are crafts, photography, gardening, music, hiking, writing, and yoga.

<https://www.learning-mind.com/great-hobbies-anxiety-depression/>.

I leave it to you to figure out the ‘how and why’, acknowledging that you may be engaged in a myriad of other hobbies.



I shared this link in October last year, and it warrants revisiting: www.who.int/depression/en. The reason for highlighting this is that whilst September's health calendar contains awareness around cervical and childhood cancer, eye health, heart health and muscular dystrophy, we sometimes forget to pay attention to the emotions experienced when dealing with a diagnosis, at both the individual and the caregiver level.



A recent article I read in *Neuroscience News* suggests that teenagers find it difficult to discern emotions like anger, happiness or disgust in one another's tone of voice, as they have not as yet reached the required level of maturity to identify or express vocal emotions

(<https://neurosciencenews.com/teen-voice-tone-9765/>).



[Continued from page 2]

Learning emotional communication skills can help teenagers who struggle socially, and I wonder if this may shed light on how to address bullying. 'Raise your voice, not your phone' is the title of the video link developed by the Western Cape Department of Education as part of its anti-bullying campaign. This is useful to share with the schoolgoing children in your circle: <https://youtu.be/TBOr46mWHQs>.

Paulo Coelo's insight is aptly put: **"The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion."**

As always, we end with no-cost employee health and welfare strategies from which to lead by example.

Choose your practice for this month:

- ◆ Compile a list of healthy eating options within a 5km radius of your workplace.
- ◆ Ask your colleagues what hobby they engage in, and share yours.
- ◆ Raise your voice when you experience an injustice.
- ◆ When you say "I am fine", what do you actually mean?

I welcome your feedback and input.

Sarah Davids

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WEL develops people so that they can strengthen systems in which they live and work.

Contact us for a seven-day WEL process over six months, or a two-day process, or life-coaching.