



Sustaining Women's leadership

Our Wellness Our Priority!



**"A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINING WELL BEING AND SELFCARE
FOR THE MENTORING AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM
FOR YOUNG WOMEN (MEMPRO)"**



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*A Publication of
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(MEMPROW)*



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With hearty thanks, we appreciate the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa (OSIEA) whose support facilitated the reflection processes that led to the final development of this strategy. Thank you for believing in our vision. We know you share our passion to mentor and empower young women to lead better lives.

We acknowledge and thank the leadership at MEMPROW; the Board of Directors, Ms Immaculate Mukasa the Executive Director and Senior Management Team. Your commitment to the work made it possible and easy to embark on this journey and its completion.

Special thanks to Ms Sarah Nakame the MEMPROW Programme Director for coordinating and supporting all the dots.

Finally, we appreciate Ms Penelope Sanyu, who resourcefully led the discussions with the different stakeholders featured in this document. We appreciate her ability to draw out unique, said and unsaid words and putting those to paper in a creative and deeply meaningful way.

We hope that the strategy will light up many enjoyable self-care rituals for you and your teams.

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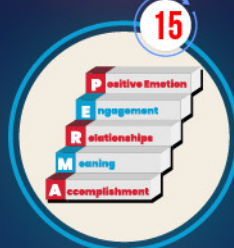
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About MEMPROW

The Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) is a national feminist organization that was set up in 2008. We power adolescent girls and young women, aged 14-29 years to expand their aspirations, strengthen their voice, and exercise more choice. We seek to build a bold young-centric feminist movement that redefines the dominant narrative, provides thought leadership on women's consciousness, fosters multigenerational activism and catalyzes societal transformation through dismantling patriarchy.

Our goal is to power adolescent girls' and young women's agency to claim their rights and achieve their aspirations, free from the threat of violence. This will be delivered through the following objectives:

- i* Building girls' and young women's leadership and collective organizing
- ii* Shifting patriarchal mindsets
- iii* Strengthening our capacity to sustainably deliver a feminist agenda.

Our strategic plan reaffirms our roots in feminist analysis and concurrently positions us as thought leaders on adolescent girls' and young women's empowerment. Our work involves challenging dominant narratives and changing mindsets, all of which are long-term processes. Short-term and one-off interventions are less likely to achieve the desired outcomes. Our strategic plan is thus aimed at deepening the impact of our work and providing a sharper focus to our methodology. It seeks to bring about change at two key levels:

Individual Change



This will be achieved through strengthening girls' and young women's capacity to speak up and be heard and to ensure that they have the freedom to make informed choices to realize their potential. In addition, change at the individual level will be achieved through the empowerment platforms for girls and young women, by girls and young women that create a multiplier effect with the aim of connecting, emboldening voices and promoting collective organizing for institutional change.

Institutional Change



This will be achieved through transforming institutional structures, including the family, community, the media, schools and institutions of higher education to ensure that girls' and young women's rights are recognized, realized and safeguarded.

We work towards a generation of women who are informed, self assured and with agency to speak against social injustices and inequalities and to accomplish this great task, we must fill our cups so that we are poring from catered for well/ source. It is our strong belief that to achieve our strtaegic goals, we the vessels that carry the work must embody wellbeing that supports our roots, anchors us in love and facillitates our growth through deliberate and intentional measures that can not be overlooked. It is against this very belief that our wellness strategy is founded.



WE DID THIS FOR YOU

People with higher wellbeing levels have 41% lower sickness absence as a result of poor health.



Dear sibling,

Here is to hoping that the universe has been kind and continues to smile upon you with favor. If she has not, we pray that by the time you are done reading this, you will have reason to smile.

According to a Gallup¹ study in 2019, if employees had higher wellbeing in one year, they would tend to have higher engagement at work in year two as well as increased positive change in wellbeing. It was also noted in the study that people with higher wellbeing levels have 41% lower sickness absence as a result of poor health.

When people are in a positive state, they easily find solutions to problems and are better connected to deliver on their responsibilities. It is our duty and priority therefore to consider creating cultures for both immediate support to treat symptoms of negative wellbeing as well as longer term more positive and more preventive approaches to support our teams and people to thrive at work.

Feminist organisations care about their people and are more than happy to invest in wellbeing programs and initiatives that build cultures and processes that look after people. Rather than have this as a stagnant or static strategy, we have made it a working journey that evolves and is continuously filled with many helpful resources, language and templates to help us grow together in prioritizing our wellbeing and selfcare.

¹www.gallup.com

This strategy document includes key areas MEMPROW seeks to focus on and offers applicable questions to help plan and build better strategies going forward and to help us improve the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health at the work place. We are taking an integrated approach to reflect on the organisation's values as well as provide a conducive environment to thrive at work.

The wellbeing strategy will cover support across the areas of:

- ✔ **Psychological wellbeing**
- ✔ **Physical wellbeing**
- ✔ **Financial wellbeing**

It is no secret that the pandemic increased anxieties amongst people due to so many concerns both for themselves/families and their work mates. Safety became a critical conversation and the importance of wellbeing initiatives can no longer be understated.

Our commitment is to esteem good people management on service delivery and have responsibility for our general wellbeing and selfcare

This strategy is for you!



Sustaining Women's leadership

WHY WELL-BEING NOW?

MEMPROW seeks to incorporate well-being as one of her overarching goal, adopting multi-dimensional measures of well-being to supplement other growth indicators to more accurately represent how as an institution, she is performing, and to better inform her policies. Institutional policy follows only from what we measure. We often make great effort to measure different outputs, and are likely to focus more attention on tangible output, sometimes to the detriment of other values. The MEMPROW wellness strategy will help us assess well-being, we will focus more of our attention on well-being. We will measure what we value, and we value what we measure, our well-being is our priority.

Well-being is not only valuable because it feels good, but also because it has beneficial real-outputs like:²

- ✓ Better Performance at work and in life generally.
- ✓ Better and more satisfying relationships
- ✓ More cooperation and coordination with others
- ✓ Stronger immune systems
- ✓ Better physical, emotional, financial and mental health
- ✓ Live longer
- ✓ Reduced cardiovascular mortality
- ✓ Reduced sleep problems
- ✓ Lower levels of burnout
- ✓ Greater self-control
- ✓ Better self-regulation and coping abilities
- ✓ More pro-social encounters



*We will measure what we value,
and we value what we measure,
our well-being is our priority.*

Research has identified optimism as one of the key contributors to well-being. Studies show that optimism brings many benefits including:

- ✓ Less depression and anxiety
- ✓ Better performance at life, sports, and work
- ✓ Increased resilience and better life coping mechanisms
- ✓ Better physical health outcomes, including fewer reported illnesses, less coronary heart disease, lower mortality risk, and faster recovery from surgery.

²Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being

Our Wellness Charter / Mantra

Rooted in our feminist agenda to shift negative patriarchal mindsets, empower and give young women voice and agency, we understand that for us to thrive, live well, and meet our vision of a transformed, violence free society where young women and girls can claim their rights and achieve their aspirations, we must uphold wellbeing by taking good care of ourselves first.

At MEMPROW , when we say wellbeing , we mean:

Rest:

The most productive thing we do for our bodies and souls is to rest. We take time away, we do something unproductive but fun, we connect with music and nature , we create a safe space , we take time to laugh and play together.

Care:

We look out for one another, investing in more than our presence at the workspace but also setting healthy boundaries, meditating, practicing mindfulness and gratitude and we keep our environment clean and safe.

Self Consciousness:

We are aware that our bodies are the vehicles to wellness. We therefore take care of our bodies by feeding them right and investing in exercises that stretch the body. We nourish our minds with information that helps us grow and we create a happy environment that is welcoming and that we are proud to work in everyday. We do the things that make us feel more like ourselves.

Commitment:

We make small and big choices everyday that lead us to the big results we are thriving for. Our mission and vision are important to us and we shall not stop until we are proud.

Accountability:

We acknowledge our mistakes , take responsibility for them, examine and determine what we shall do and take action to redeem different situations.

Love:

Love is a word that is rarely adopted in formal spaces and yet being a verb, it is the core of all the work that we do. Our passions, dreams and existence is fuelled by love and with love we activate goodness in society. We have found a group of people with whom we will do life without giving up and we as MEMPROW , are LOVE.



Imagine a Woman

Imagine a woman who believes it is right and good she is a woman.
A woman who honors her experience and tells her stories.
Who refuses to carry the sins of others within her body and life.

“Imagine a woman who trusts and respects herself.
A woman who listens to her needs and desires.
Who meets them with tenderness and grace.

Imagine a woman who acknowledges the past’s influence on the present.
A woman who has walked through her past.
Who has healed into the present.

Imagine a woman who authors her own life.
A woman who exerts, initiates, and moves on her own behalf.
Who refuses to surrender except to her truest self and wisest voice.

Imagine a woman who names her own gods.
A woman who imagines the divine in her image
and likeness.
Who designs a personal spirituality to inform
her daily life.

Imagine a woman in love with her own body.
A woman who believes her body is enough,
just as it is.
Who celebrates its rhythms and cycles as an
exquisite resource.

Imagine a woman who honors the body of the
Goddess in her changing body.
A woman who celebrates the accumulation of her
years and her wisdom.
Who refuses to use her life-energy disguising the
changes in her body and life.

Imagine a woman who values the women in her life.
A woman who sits in circles of women.
Who is reminded of the truth about herself when
she forgets.

Imagine yourself as this woman”

³Book by Patricia Lynn Reilly





How We Ended Up at The Wellness Strategy!

Several conversations, debates, consultations, have been undertaken by several individuals, institutions and others in an attempt to define and clearly lay out a structure to follow in persuing wellness and self care.

In Uganda, the lack of recognition of recognition of the need to promote and protect workers well-being may give rise to workplace problems such as stress, bullying , conflict, alcohol/ drug abuse, mental health disorders among other coplications. Potential solutions such as good leadership, communication and a focus on learning and development are essential for any institution committed to making the workplace a more decent and satisfying place.

It is our understanding at MEMPROW that wellness is the complete state of good health. We are committed to paying attention to the all round physical , emotional, mental, financial, intellectual, scocial, spiritual, occupational and environmental aspects of wellbeing to ensure our people understand and are

working towards their highest standard of well being.

Well-being has been defined as the combination of feeling good and functioning well; the experience of positive emotions such as happiness, contentment as well as development of one's potential, having some control over one's life, having a sense of purpose and experiencing positive relationships with others.⁴

Wellbeing means different things to different people at different times but in theory is made up from two main categories: that of physical and mental health of an individual.

The nature of the work we do and the lifestyles we have adopted can be draining and extremely frustrating, which validates the need for a guiding document on how to be more mindful to avoid burnout and achieve our vision, mission and Goals. This strategy document is our compass as we emback on this journey.

Methodology

The MEMPROW wellness strategy emerged as a priority in the new strategic plan due to increasing recognition that the health and wellbeing of her employees directly impacts productivity of the entire organization. As employees are the lifeblood of the organisation, it is vital to help them produce at their optimum levels. Work at MEMPROW is central to people's wellbeing, in addition to providing income, it has paved way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individual team members , their families and their communities.

Qualitative and mixed research methods have been adopted to gather stories that composed the clinical practice of consultation to understand and support the improvement of staff wellbeing and development of this wellness strategy.

As a centerpiece of empirical inquiry, Consultations were undertaken at the relevant levels with MEMPROW staff, field operatives, friends and service providers. We understand that all employees and stakeholders have a responsibility for their own health and wellbeing as well as that of their colleagues and peers and therefore considered it of high importance to include them in the development process of the strategy.

This strategy is a living document and therefore is not meant to be static and cast in stone, it is a living and working document that can be leveraged daily by improving it, adding and removing some clauses, stories and knowledge to enable us all reach our wellness set destinations in excellent shape.

⁴<https://hqlo.biomedcentral.com>



Sustaining Women's leadership

Performance Goals for this Strategy

The intergration of the wellness strategy in our overall M&E framework will enable us to phase, standardize, interconnect, participate, report and recognize diversity. We shall adopt the following to monitor and track our wellness journey:

- ✓ Assess impact by watching trends closely and explain changes in the levels of wellness over time.
- ✓ Ensure conituous learning, knowledge of and commitment to wellness amongst all stakeholders
- ✓ Define a list of core indicators that will enable tracking of progress in the most critical areas of wellnes
- ✓ Develop and mantain wellness management plans including indentified needs, standardized indicators, clear tools and procedures, roles and responsibilities inorder to implement a functional wellness strategy
- ✓ Fundraise and prioritize resource mobilization for wellness activities
- ✓ Develop and maintain wellness databases that enable stakeholders to access relevant data for benchmarking, policy formulation and program improvement through consistent evaluatons and one on ones with the teams.
- ✓ Identify key evaluation and research questions and coordinate studies to meet identified wellness needs from the emerging trends as a result of the consistent evaluations.
- ✓ Less depression and anxiety
- ✓ Create institutional climate and culture that is conducive to wellness and comprehensive identification of psycho-social health risks
- ✓ Promote life-work balance through flexible policies to accoodate work, personal and family needs



We have considered the following questions:

- 1 What does wellbeing and selfcare mean to the people in MEMPROW?
- 2 How can we enable our teams and organisation to thrive beyond simply signposting?
- 3 Does the current MEMPROW culture support open and honest conversations?
- 4 How equipped and confident do the leaders feel at all levels to have great conversations with their teams?
- 5 What support and interventions can we provide within the core areas :physical, financial and psychological?
- 6 Is our current approach treating symptoms or is it strtaegic, preventive and positive?
- 7 What are we already doing to prevent mental ill health for everyone?
- 8 Are there processes, structures, opportunities and budgets to enable the teams to thrive in the work environment ?

Key Priorities:

- ✓ Ensure coaching and mentorship is embeded across the organisation teams
- ✓ Emphasis on wellbeing and selfcare right from the induction processes
- ✓ Commit to creatig healthy enabling environments for our people to thrive
- ✓ Incorporation of wellbeing and selfcare in all our policies and processes



The process of curating this strategy was both consultative and was able to feed into the whats already exciting at MEMPROW and improve it for better results. The staff were interviewed seperately from the partners and local networks, 18 of 26 partners participated in the session and some of the feedback that was shared is summarized in the table below:

What does wellness mean to you?



It's the state of being stable in the physical, spiritual and emotional aspects of life.

A general wellbeing of a person's social, spiritual and emotional state.

Act of practising health habits that lead to attainment of total well-being.

It means being good, and having a good life (money, good health, happiness etc.).

To me, wellness is having food and a caring loving family.

Wellness is when life is good, when you actually feel you make sense of your life and have impact on lives of others.

What do you think MEMPROW Should incorporate in a well balanced wellness strategy?



Active involvement of parents and the boy child in the planning of the strategy, girls do not live in a vacuum.

It should contain an aspect of sensitisation on all aspects pertaining to a girl child's wellbeing and must involve the boy child too.

It should include a training on life skills such as communication, interpersonal and confidence building skills.

It should state out the strategies of attaining a happy good life.

It should have an aspect of awareness about well-being embedded in it.

It should be people centred, and should involve awareness on what wellbeing actually is.



What does wellness mean to you?

It is when you do not have stress. It is basically physical fitness and mental stability.

It means having a clear mind and conscious and also, relating well with the society.

It is when you are happy, successful, and okay, accepted by society, can speak well and are happy for others.

Wellness is when you are peaceful and are surrounded by peaceful people.

Wellness is the state of being able to provide for oneself.

What do you think MEMPROW should incorporate in a well balanced wellness strategy?

It should involve a mentorship aspect of educating parents on upbringing because parents, just like the children, are having issues around handling parent-child relationships. It should capture all aspects of a girl's life.

It should be comprehensive to involve all aspects that pertain to life, especially activities that are relieving of stress.

It should be inclusive and mindful of gender.

It should involve elements of prayer, hard work, counseling and should be informed and guided by the community.

use of the bottom-up approach of service delivery (reaching out to people in villages and working with them). Change of mindset and extension of sponsorships to girl children.

Career building, asset accumulation and access to opportunities.

F Staff Interviews & FEEDBACK



EXISTING MECHANISMS

- ✓ Medical insurance
- ✓ Good leadership
- ✓ Growth opportunities
- ✓ Team meals and allowances
- ✓ Staff workout sessions
- ✓ Therapy sessions
- ✓ Staff retreats and capacity building
- ✓ Good partners and networks
- ✓ Strong team
- ✓ Annual leave
- ✓ Staff salaries and other benefits
- ✓ Good programs and exciting work with girls
- ✓ Work environment and space

CHALLENGES WITH THE MECHANISM

- Cover is limited for mental health and therapy
- Succession and transition coaching and therapy
- No scholarships to upgrade academically
- Variety of food and drink options is still a challenge
- Not regular
- Budget better for therapy sessions
- These are scheduled and seem more like work than retreat
- There is a communication gap sometimes
- We could use more hands to move the heavy load
- Many do not take their leave, workload is sometimes heavy
- Not enough plant life and space

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ✓ Expand medical cover to cater for unforeseen things
- ✓ Spend more time with the team
- ✓ Raise money to support further studies / point teams to available scholarships and recommend them
- ✓ Improve the diet to include many healthy meals and practice healthy habits
- ✓ Set specific times and days to play together and work on health together
- ✓ We should be more intentional about therapy
- ✓ Be more intentional about REST and retreating to work
- ✓ Be more intentional about following up our relationships
- ✓ Flexible work hours and shifts
- ✓ Leave should be taken, not just on paper. Ensure people actually REST
- ✓ Salary increments with availability of funds / also a savings scheme for staff
- ✓ We are happy with our work
- ✓ Expansion so that everyone has an office, more plants around the office and beautifying it with other accessories.
- ✓ We should take more pictures together as a team

Dear Younger Me...

Letters From Staff



Dear Self,

There are several things I wish I knew about self care years back. Soren Kierkegaard says that life can only be understood backward but you must live it forward. I reflect on this and choose to act better going forward.

So I write you this letter to remind you that self-care is important; remember, you need to look after yourself first. You can't help others or even yourself if you're not allowing yourself the time to recharge.

Whatever causes negative feelings, please remember that these feelings pass and never last forever. It's important to remember this and to be gentle to yourself.

Show yourself some love and care. Remember to reinvent yourself and exhale when stressed; be kind to yourself and others.

Take care of the body God gave you. It is your responsibility to eat right, exercise right, dress smartly and take care of this mortal body while you are still here. You must work on your health.

Lastly have some quiet time to meditate, pray frequently and rest enough.

D

Letters From Staff

Hey Ms. Khadija,

Hope you are doing well, this is to welcome you to MEMPROW and encourage you to pursue what you are already desiring because MEMPROW is the best place where your desire of living a wellness life will be met.

First of all, just be you as you step into MEMPROW. We have a pool of wellness activities ranging from provision of drinking water to keep you succulent, once in a while yoga and aerobics. Most importantly we do reflections as a MEMPROW team and give listening ears to each other.

We also have a very conducive working environment with nature filled. Come with an open mind ready to learn as much as possible but also enrich us with the wealth of knowledge you already have on wellness for us to progress and improve individually but also as a team.

Please do not hesitate to ask for anything from any staff member.

YOU ARE WELCOME!!!

Letters From Staff

Dear Iona,

You are welcome to MEMPROW. As you officially start your journey here, kindly note that as per your appointment letter, the working times are from 8:30am to 5:00pm. This implies that you will have to wake up very early in order to beat the traffic jam or otherwise, you face the risk of high expenditure on transport and other associated dangers of hiring a motorcycle (Boda B) to work. Please avoid coming in late. I am sure that your departure time is fine except that it means you will forego some of the social activities with your friends whose programmes are in the afternoons of working days (Monday-Friday).

MEMPROW is a very interesting place to work; it provides opportunities for learning and very soon you will be put in charge of a project. What this means is that you are at the forefront of running that project; ensuring its success - meeting the requirements of target groups, the donor and MEMPROW. You should be prepared to learn fast and a lot. The team is very supportive but sometimes they also get busy with their projects. Even then though, MEMPROW ensures that once in a while we get together to debrief, review, learn, and sometimes do wellness activities to contribute to staff physical and mental wellbeing.

Iona, there will be days when you are excited to come to work and there will be those when you don't feel like showing up. When you feel excited to work, please do as much as you can but when you do not feel like coming, please communicate and stay at home. You are allowed to take some days off to re-energise and work on some other aspects of your life. I also acknowledge that there are scenarios when the excitement wears down while at work, or when you do not feel like coming but you still come. During those moments, I urge you to be intentional in ensuring that you draw energy from the nature around office, or talk to our Resident Professional Counselor. MEMPROW also hires services of external professional Counselors who can be reached out (I will share their contacts with you).

It is very important Iona that while at MEMPROW you communicate your needs and triggers. This way, you will be supported well as the staff desires that everyone on the team is happy. Some of us have needs which may seem minor but when they are not met, they negatively impact our performance. For example, the need for a nap after lunch can affect one's concentration the rest of the afternoon. There are some needs that are already catered for at MEMPROW e.g drinking water and tea, there is also a room that can be used to rest. I personally communicated my need for a platform for my laptop to enable me get off the chair while working. This was met and it contributed to reduced back pain.

I earlier told you Iona, that MEMPROW provides for group wellness but the activities may not meet your individual needs. I advise you to regularly have a meeting with yourself and identify your wellness needs. Plan to meet these out of your salary. Invest in yourself. The good thing is that MEMPROW pays on time, so your wellness plans are not likely to be frustrated by MEMPROW. They will only be frustrated by you. There are also many practices that you can cultivate without any extra cost; for example, quiet time, journaling, reading, walking, jogging, sleeping well, affirming yourself, choosing to see and take in goodness, and many more as you will discover. These will contribute a lot to your daily wellness and enable you perform well in your new role.

The girls and young women we serve are exposed or have experienced many forms of violence. You will learn of many of these stories some of which you relate with. You are therefore likely to experience secondary trauma but do not let this get over you. Debrief with team member of interest or the Counselor, even when it means doing this every day.

I once again welcome you Iona to MEMPROW. Work with a sense of optimism, set your personal goals and priorities and be more assertive for self-progress as you contribute to MEMPROW's growth. Remember that your wellness is key to your performance, take care of this yourself.



Dear Amaara,

Welcome to the best days of your life. Work is a gift as; time, people and the environment. As far as I remember, I joined the work environment earlier in life, when my mother asked me to support her with her work. My support for her included scrubbing verandas, washing clothes and dishes. After a while, her boss decided to create for me “child friendly work” she was a “Mzungu”. She asked me to organize her library and type all the books in her computer; she would later give me other tasks and pay for them. I cannot describe fully how excited I was when I received my first pay from that work- that experience opened my eyes to the leverage and power one has when they earn their own money through work. I have never looked back.

After graduating from university, I joined MEMPROW and have since belonged. It is an amazing feminist place that has grown over the years.

Whilst work is a gift, it is often abused by employers in many ways, unfortunate for people with shaky confidence that fall for exploitation through; irregular work hours, insane expectations and demands from the boss, legal irregularities and often time albescence of formal binding documents like contracts. The high un-employment rates and peer pressure ensnare young people into exploitative working environments.

As a result of these undesired circumstances, it is easy to lose oneself and hide in “24/7 work schedule” in order to make ends meet. It’s all but a fallacy and may get you in an abyss of physical, mental, financial and social distress. Be on your watch.

I hope that you have your values straight and the WHY Questions clear. These will give confidence to your voice and swag in your feet- to speak up against injustice when you have to and to run for dear life when you must.

May your work space be empathetic, may it be one of the reasons you wake up, dress up and show up with gusto to conquer the world. May it be a place that enables you to bask and blossom on your personal ventures and desires.

May it be meaningful! You have a role to play in that and I pray that you find the space to proactively make it exactly that with the support of your colleagues.

Letters From Staff



A love letter to my sweet Tendo

Hello cute pie!!!

I have written this letter after observing your behavior from the first day you joined MEMPROW as an intern to date. For the past six weeks, I have seen you stressing yourself over unfinished work to the extent of staying in office after office hours to complete assignments even when it is not urgent. I have witnessed you take life so serious that you rarely play or laugh even when jokes are thrown to you. Girllll, breathe! During the lunch hour, you keep and have lunch at your desk even when others are having lunch together, interacting and cracking jokes in the dining room. Seeking approval on every small thing including your dress code is your daily bread. Your emotional unsteadiness with episodes of anger, agitation and tantrums is what I have witnessed you do for quite some time. You rarely participate in the physical and emotional wellness sessions claiming to be occupied with work even when it's your turn to take lead on the happy hour. My dear girl, lighten up...living life is totally upon you and remember we only live once.

Let me tell you the things I wish I had known and practiced even before I joined MEMPROW. I really hope and pray that you create some time to reflect on them, and find the desire to change for the betterment of your life. As I mentioned earlier..... You Only Live Once (YOLO)

- Starting the day with an affirmation
- Listening to my body and respond to its demands
- Ignoring the things that I have no control over
- Knowing that I am a human being and learning to forgive myself
- To take a break/ stop
- Learning to say No
- Doing physical exercises whenever I can
- Having a "me" time to rest or do things for me
- Appreciating myself and celebrate even small achievements
- Practicing gratitude
- Being mindful of what I eat.
- Keeping friends that add value, those that can be there for me at my best and at my worst.
- Learning to let go
- Avoiding toxic environments including toxic people
- To learn as much as I can in the different spheres of life

Ohhhh, the list is endless my lovely girl. I therefore advise you to be open to learning many other ways and practices to boost your well being, keeping in mind that self-care is not selfish. I look forward to seeing you take charge and in control of your life dear one.

Please give me a call after reading this letter and if you wish, we will continue with the conversation.

Lots of hugs!!

Lillian.

Letters From Staff

Following the letters from the team, it is evident that health is not just about what we are eating or doing, it is also about what we think, feel and say. Our mindsets, habits and routines are the building blocks for success towards our wellness goals. Whatever these goals may be, the Perma theory is a good tool to adopt in trying to achieve them well.



THE PERMA MODEL / THEORY

This is an easy to understand and evidence based framework that helps us to take action and strengthen our wellbeing and resilience as well as support other people to do the same.



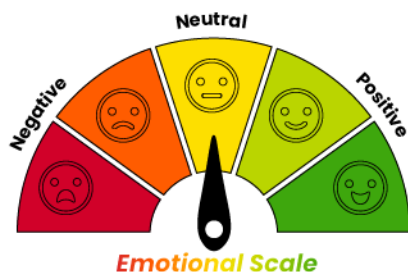
Dr. Seligman’s PERMA theory of well-being is an attempt to answer the fundamental question, “what is human flourishing and what enables it?”. This theory assumes that there are five building blocks that enable flourishing; – Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (hence PERMA) – and there are techniques that can be applied to increase each in order to improve our well-being.

Different people will derive well-being from each of these five building blocks to varying degrees. A good life for one person is not necessarily a good life for another. There are many different routes to a flourishing life. We are therefore applying Positive Psychology through this strategy which is

generally descriptive and not prescriptive. In other words, MEMPROW is not telling her team/ partners and friends what choices to make or what to value, but is offering some research on the factors that enable flourishing that can help us all make more informed choices to live more fulfilling lives that are aligned with our values and interests.

The PERMA model is an easy to understand and evidence based framework that helps us to take action and strengthen our wellbeing and resilience as well as support other people to do the same. This theory / model of wellbeing has five pillars as examined below: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment.

Positive Emotion



This path to well-being is characterised by pleasure as a means of increasing positive emotion. Within limits, we can increase our positive emotions about the past by cultivating gratitude and forgiveness, the

present: by savoring physical pleasures and mindfulness and the future: by building hope and optimism. Unlike the other paths to well-being described below, this path is limited by how much an individual can experience positive emotions. In other words, positive affectivity is partly heritable and our emotions tend to fluctuate within a range. Many people are, by disposition, low in experiencing positive emotion. Traditional conceptions of happiness tend to focus on positive emotion, so it can be liberating to know that there are other routes to well-being. It is important as we cultivate a culture of wellness to be open minded and mindful of the factors that create or hinder our positive emotions. A constant self evaluation of the past, present and future is a great start on this path to wellbeing. Positive emotions can be developed through but not limited to the following activities:

- Practice gratitude and forgiveness
- Open questioning or practicing the open door policy
- Celebrations of achievements, birthdays etc
- Practice affirmations and positive feedback
- Play , laugh, read , listen to music

Engagement

Engagement is an experience in which someone fully deploys their skills, strengths, and attention for a challenging task. This produces an experience called “flow” that is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake, rather than for what they will get out of it. The activity of engagement is its own reward. Flow is experienced when one’s skills are just sufficient for a challenging activity, in the pursuit of a clear goal, with

immediate feedback on progress toward the goal. In such an activity, concentration is fully absorbed in the moment, self-awareness disappears, and the perception of time is distorted in retrospect, e.g., time stops. Flow can be experienced in a wide variety of activities, e.g., a good conversation, a work task, playing a musical instrument, reading a book, writing, building furniture, fixing a bike, gardening, sports training or performance, to name just a few. This path combined with positive emotions will birth a lifestyle of good feelings that eventually translate into good health and wellbeing. Engagement can be exercised through:

- ▶ Practicing living in the moment with mindfulness
- ▶ Reading a book
- ▶ Scheduling tasks and following through
- ▶ Helping a team member to brainstorm or finish a task

Relationships

Good relationships are very fundamental to well-being. The experiences that contribute to well-being are often amplified through our relationships, for example, great joy, meaning, laughter, a feeling of belonging, and pride in accomplishment. Connections to others can give life purpose and meaning. Support from and connection with others is one of the best antidotes to “the downs” of life and a reliable way to feel up. Research

shows that doing acts of kindness for others produces an increase in well-being. From an evolutionary perspective, we are social beings because the drive to connect with and serve others promotes our survival. Developing strong relationships is central to adaptation and is enabled by our capacity for love, compassion, kindness, empathy, teamwork, cooperation, self-sacrifice, etc. In building strong relationships at the workplace, we are not only enabling well being, we are also facilitating productivity.

- ▶ Show up, be present
- ▶ Take initiative
- ▶ Have conversation, ask questions, be intentional
- ▶ Connect

Meaning



A sense of meaning and purpose can be derived from belonging to and serving something bigger than the self. There are various societal institutions that enable a sense of meaning, such as religion, family, science, politics, work organizations, justice, the community, social causes (e.g., being green), among others. MEMPROW is mentoring and empowering young women and girls and people want to be associated with this cause. It gives them purpose and a sense of belonging that in turn improves their outlook on life and general well being.

- ▶ Define Boundaries
- ▶ Focus on what you love
- ▶ Try new things

A ccomplishment

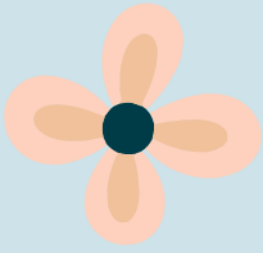


People pursue achievement, competence, success, and mastery for its own sake, in a variety of domains, including the workplace, sports, games, hobbies, etc. People pursue accomplishment even when it does not necessarily lead to positive emotion, meaning, or relationships. In seeking accomplishment, they are constantly building towards strong relationships, positive emotions, finding meaning and living fully. All these blocks combined and intentionally

growing will improve our wellbeing greatly and make us stand out in community for living full lives.

Each of the above five building blocks contributes to well-being and should be pursued, each for its own sake, not as a means to an end and they ought to be defined and measured independently of the other elements to add value to well being. It is our duty to ensure that we have internal mechanisms in place to facilitate these building blocks as they help us move steps towards our well bring goals.

Wellbeing goes beyond just these few elements, and should include other important area such as optimism, nutrition, physical activity and sleep. These are areas equally important to mental wellbeing. Optimism is a positive emotion critical to building resilience and wellbeing. In believing that life will have more good outcomes than bad we tend to more likely be resilient to stressful life events.



30 DAYS of Intentional Living



(This Can Be Customised to Fit Individual Needs)

Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day
<p>1</p> <p>Unplug for one hour before bedtime</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Write down three things to accomplish tomorrow</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Savor a cup of tea slowly without phones, Tv , or people</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Do a 15 minute workout or walk</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Have lunch with a team member you rarely talk to</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Write in your journal for 10 minutes or more</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Listen to a song you love and move your body (dance) if you can</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Spoil yourself with a gift, or take yourself out</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Create a vision board and day dream about the things you could accomplish</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Enjoy a long hot / cold shower</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Mask, wash, blowdry your hair slowly and enjoy the process (you can visit a salon if you cant do it yourself)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Take a couple of pictures and post your favorite with a funny caption</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Read a book</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Visit an older person you havent seen in a while</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Perform a random act of kindness on a stranger</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Give someone a compliment</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Write a card /letter to a member of MEMPROW you admire</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Drink lots of water and eat healthy</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Get dressed up just because – put on your best and go to work</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Watch the sun rise or set – take a picture</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Write down something that is bothering you and burn it</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Light a candle and allow the light to illuminate you</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Practice deep breathing</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Clean out your office / closet at home – declutter and create space for new things</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Learn something new, change your point of view and think with care</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Be thankful for the love in your life, give more than you get</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Work with your phone in another room for two hours</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Call a friend, just to chat</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Play: some boardgames, run with children, just let loose</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Repeat any of the ones you found interesting</p>





A FEW QUESTIONS to help you gain clarity

What is draining my energy?
When did i last tell anyone about MEMPROW's work intentionally?
What does self care look like for me today?
What would make me happy right now?
What do i want to learn more about?
How do i define success?
How am i already demonstrating the traits i admire ?
What accomplishments am i most proud of from last month?
What can i declutter physically or emotionally to find more ease and simplicity?
Who do i need to connect with to advance a certain skill i need ?
What five things do i love about myself ?
What moments have i felt most appreciated and loved?
What makes me unique ?
What three simple ways can i love myself and others everyday?
What don't i regret?
What is a lesson i have learnt recently?
How can i be and create a safe environment for those around me ?
What am i letting go of to create space for new energy ?
How can i add value to MEMPROW today?

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

We exist within a universe of possibilities
We attract abundance
We have amazing strength within us
Beautiful things are coming into our lives
We follow our dreams with passion and certainty
We love and approve of ourselves
We are right where we are supposed to be
We radiate positivity
We are grateful for our lives, space and work
We are strong and confident
We are becoming the best version of ourselves
We are fearless
We are not our past, we are creating our own future
We trust in our abilities
We are gifted
The universe wants us to succeed
We are safe and secure
Our thoughts become our reality
We possess the qualities needed to be successful
Creative energy is in us and leads us to new/ brilliant ideas
Our lives are just beginning
We have the limitless ability to conquer our challenges



Conclusion



If there is anything to learn from the unprecedented events of life, it is that life is constantly evolving and we must evolve too if we are to live fulfilled lives. It is no secret today that the world is undergoing a wave of unprecedented disruption. This wave can either disintegrate your very being or propel you to great heights of immeasurable growth. Either way, we must pay keen attention to its effects. In so doing, we are preparing ourselves to cope with and evolve with the waves of change.

Not so long before today, Self care and wellbeing were words we heard and read about with no intention to live by, today the two are necessary ingredients for fulfilled living. They are no longer lifestyle choices, but rather necessities to live. Given our current context, many of us may constantly be drifting from one thing to another, being swayed from one position to another, meeting different people among other things that can disrupt our grounding and bearings. It is important, now more than ever to remain alert to your wellbeing and that of your organisation/colleagues. This strategy is therefore a key document to guide you through many unprecedented times and help you and your team cope with life's changes as you strive to live a healthy and well balanced life.

Wellbeing is particularly important, when one lives and works in an unstable world, where the professional is severed from the heart, mind, and body. You deeply need some practices to enable you reclaim and retain your wholeness. Wellbeing as witnessed through the entire strategy is a broad subject that happens at different level but we have focused our MEMPROW strategy on the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and relational or intimate wellbeing both at the individual and organisational levels. We believe that the personal is deeply political and therefore before we seek to apply the principles herein on the membership and the institution, we ought to embody them at individual level.

Wellbeing does not happen in a vacuum; it is influenced by the larger social context. This includes work, family, community, society, environment, and socialisation. Organisational wellbeing is influenced by different social movements, society, environment, socialisation, funding modalities, leadership, organisational culture and many more. For these influences to co-exist we have to desire to constantly fill our cups so that we are not poring from emptiness.

Alan Watts once said, "We thought of life by analogy with a journey, a pilgrimage which had a serious purpose at the end. Success, or maybe heaven after you are dead. But we missed the point the whole way along. It was a musical thing and we were supposed to sing or dance while the music was being played."

As you go through this strategy either by yourself or with your team, may you listen intensely for the music along Life's journey, may you learn to dance and sing, may the strategy guide you to finding self and living well, may you find purpose!



...may you listen intensely for the music along Life's journey, may you learn to dance and sing...

Our Wellness Our Priority!



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