



Module: Creating a Wellness Plan

This module covers how to develop a personal wellness plan, including strategies for creating and maintaining healthy habits and focusing on thoughts and behaviours that are within one's control.

About CanWork BC

CanWork BC aims to make it easier for youth with disabilities ages to 15 to 30 years old to find and keep employment. There are a series of tools and resources for youth, employers, service providers, educators, and caregivers.

CanAssist at the University of Victoria, with the support of the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, wrote the Provincial Employment Strategy for Youth with Disabilities (ESYD). This strategy informed the tools and resources.

The Youth Tool

The CanWork BC youth tool is available as an interactive online platform at portal.canworkbc.ca and through PDF workbooks such as this one. There are five dimensions of content available.

For the full PDF workbook content and accompanying facilitator guides, as well as other CanWork BC tools and resources, go to canworkbc.ca.

Additional Resources

Throughout this workbook, we'll be discussing wellness supports, however, if you're feeling significantly down, overwhelmed, or in need of immediate support, please remember to reach out for help.

Available resources include:

- **Kids Help Phone:** The leading phone and online professional counselling service for young people in Canada – not just for kids. It's free, anonymous, and confidential.
 - Call for immediate support: 1-800-668-6868
 - Chat online: kidshelpphone.ca
- **Crisis Support:** Immediate support for people feeling suicidal or concerned about someone who might be suicidal.
 - Call: 1-800-784-2433.
 - Text or call: 9-8-8.
 - Visit: suicideprevention.ca/need-help/
 - For maps of crisis support in your area visit: crisislines.bc.ca/mapcrisis-lines
- **Mental Health Resources:** Find additional mental health resources and support through these organizations.
 - helpstartshere.gov.bc.ca/wellbeing/healthy-living/mindfulness
 - healthlinkbc.ca/mental-health-substance-use/mental-health/mental-health-supports-and-resources
 - Canadian Mental Health Association - cmha.ca/
 - Mental Health Commission of Canada - mentalhealthcommission.ca/

Introduction

This module has three sections to help you build your understanding of wellness. You'll explore:

- Taking control of your wellness by identifying and focusing on the areas you can influence.
- Building wellness habits to keep up your well-being over time.
- Maintaining habits by staying resilient when challenges come up and adapting when needed.

Each section will take around 15-30 minutes to complete, and you're welcome to take breaks in between.

Each section has activities that connect wellness to your own life to make sure this is useful for you. Be prepared to think about and record your answers in whatever way works best. That could be writing your answers in this workbook or using a different format that works for you like voice recording or typing in a notes app.

At the end of the module, you'll have the chance to put what you've learned into practice with reflection questions. Let's get started!

Section 1: Taking Control

Talk about taking care of our wellness is great, but sometimes it can feel hard to know where to start. Life is full of uncertainties and challenges and sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by all the things happening around us. It's easy to start focusing on things outside of our control, which can get overwhelming. Focusing on what we can control can make things a little less overwhelming and is important for creating realistic and manageable habits.

In this section we'll cover:

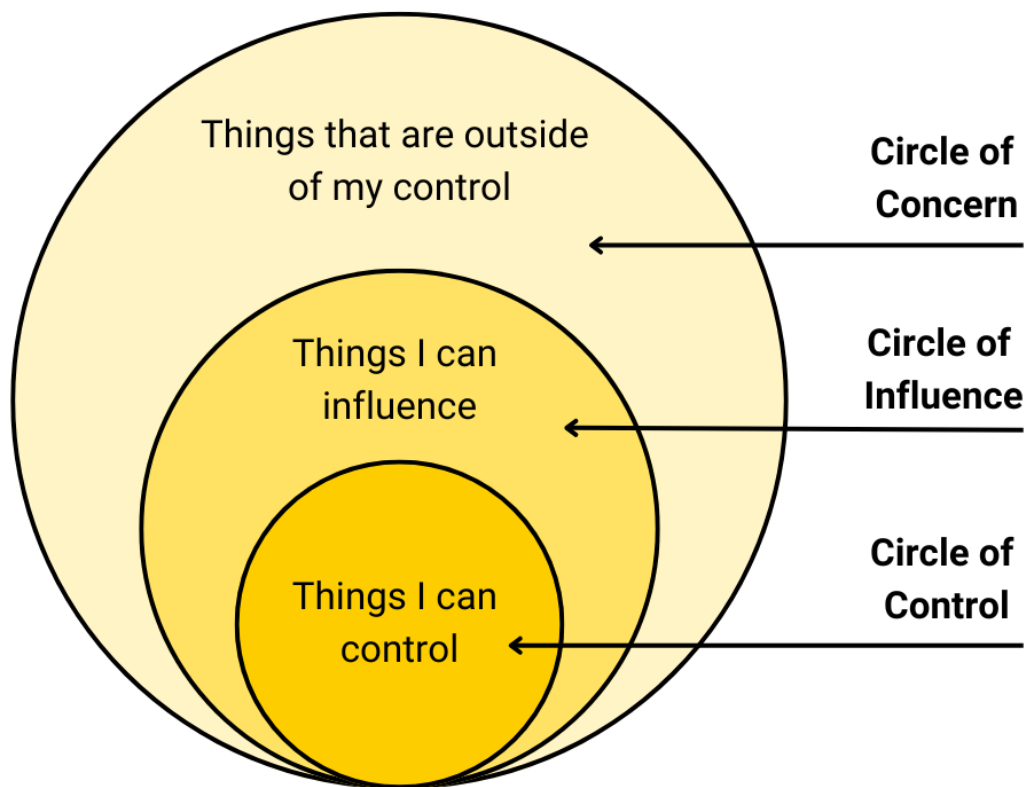
- Understanding what we can control and what is out of our influence.
- Applying what we learned to better navigate situations in everyday life or our employment journey.

By the end of this section, you'll have a better understanding of what is in and out of your control so you can navigate situations and set clear intentions.

Engage and Explore

Your Sphere of Influence

Let's get started! Below, you'll find the Sphere of Control. It's an image that can help us understand what we can and cannot control. Read about each area.



The Sphere of Control resource is largely based off Stephen Covey's circle of concern, influence, and control developed in 1989.

Sphere of control

This represents the things you can directly control in your life. You can change and take responsibility for these things. This includes your:

- Thoughts and choices
- Behaviours and actions
- Attitudes and feelings

Sphere of influence

This represents the aspects of your life you can't control directly, but you can influence a little. This includes your:

- Relationships with others
- Communication
- Interactions

Sphere of concern

This represents things you have little control or influence over. Focusing too much on these things can make you feel stressed or helpless. This includes:

- Other people's thoughts and opinions
- Other people's choices and actions
- Global events
- Future situations
- Past events

Recognizing what you can control and influence can help you reduce stress by allowing you to focus your energy on what you can change. It empowers you to make informed choices, set realistic goals, and improve your relationships with others by communicating more effectively.

By accepting what's beyond your control and adapting to challenges, you build resilience and grow personally, which are both important for your well-being!

What You Can and Cannot Control

Let's look at things you can and cannot control. Sort the examples of items you might see in your daily life into where they would fit on the Sphere of Influence by writing it's number in the blank table provided. If you need help look at the Sphere of Influence above or the answers at the end of the section.

Items to sort:

1. The way others receive the advice or feedback you give them
2. How you manage your time
3. Your teacher's or manager's decisions
4. Your relationships with coworkers or classmates
5. The goals you set for yourself
6. The way you react to other people's opinions
7. What you ate for dinner last week
8. How your team or group project works together
9. Your personal habits (e.g., eating, sleeping, etc.)
10. The boundaries or expectations you have with your friends
11. Events that are going to happen in the future
12. How you respond to a stressful situation
13. The atmosphere in your class or your workplace
14. Other people's thoughts
15. The weather

Sphere of Control	Sphere of Influence	Sphere of Concern

There will be situations out of our control and feelings we have about them – that’s natural! What is important is that we can identify the parts that we can control and accept the parts we cannot. Doing this helps our overall well-being.

For example:

- You feel stressed about an upcoming due date and worry you won’t finish everything on time.
 - You can’t control how much time you have left or how quickly time passes.
 - But you can control how you manage your time and break tasks into smaller chunks, accepting that you can only do your best.
- You feel like your friend is in a bad mood and you’re stressed that it’s something you’ve done.

- You can't control how your friend is feeling.
- But you can control how you communicate with them by asking if everything is okay.

Keep going to explore what is in your control each day.

Make it Personal

Focusing on What You Can Control

Let's practice focusing on what's in your control and build skills to do this in your daily life! Read the everyday situations below (or think about one of your own) and consider the questions below to identify what is in your control, what you can influence, what is outside your control, and what you can do with what's in your control. Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you.

Situation 1

You have a big due date coming up soon and you're not sure if you'll be able to finish everything in time.

Question: What is in your control?

- *Example: The amount of time I spend on the task, how I organize my work and break down the tasks, or whether I ask for help if I need it.*

Question: What can you influence but not fully control?

- *Example: The grade that I get on my work.*

Question: What is outside of your control?

- *Example: The due date.*

Question: What can you do with what's in your control?

- *Example: Set up a realistic schedule for what I can get done, break the work into smaller, more manageable steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed, or ask for help or clarification from others if I need it.*



Situation 2

You feel like a friend or family member is upset with you, but you're unsure why.

Question: What is in your control?

- *Example: How I respond to the situation, like approaching the person to talk or how I choose to manage my emotions or reaction.*

Question: What can you influence but not fully control?

- *Example: The outcome of the conversation or whether the misunderstanding gets cleared up.*

Question: What is outside of your control?

- *Example: The other person's perspective or reasons for being upset or how the other person chooses to express their feelings.*

Question: What can you do with what's in your control?

- *Example: Reach out to the person and ask if they want to talk about what's going on, stay open-minded and listen to their perspective while trying not to get defensive, or manage my feelings of confusion or worry in a healthy way.*

Situation 3

You're feeling overwhelmed because your teacher or boss keeps changing plans, and you don't really know what's expected of you.

Question: What is in your control?

- *Example: How I manage my tasks and prioritize them or how I ask for clarification or seek further details about expectations.*

Question: What can you influence but not fully control?

- *Example: The clarity of communication between me and my boss or teacher.*

Question: What is outside of your control?

- *Example: Changes in the overall plan or direction made by my teacher or boss.*

Question: What can you do with what's in your control?

- *Example: Stay organized taking time to adjust my work plan whenever things change or proactively ask for clear and consistent updates on what is expected.*

Great work! Focusing on what's in your control is an important skill for taking care of your wellness.

What You Can and Cannot Control Activity Answers:

Sphere of Control: 2, 5, 6, 9, 12

Sphere of Influence: 1, 4, 8, 10, 13

Sphere of Concern: 3, 7, 11, 14, 15

Section 2: Building Wellness Habits

Now that we've looked at focusing on what's in our control and actions we can take, we'll look at the way our actions help us take control of our wellness with wellness habits.

Wellness habits are the small actions you take every day to support your overall well-being. These habits help you stay healthy, energized, and focused. Creating a routine makes it easier to take care of yourself without having to actively think about it every day. Small actions add up and help you make big progress for your overall well-being!

In this section, we'll cover:

- Understanding what wellness habits are and why they are important.
- Exploring your habits and how they impact your well-being.

By the end of this section, you will have a better understanding of the small things you can do each day to support your overall well-being.

Engage and Explore

Wellness Habits

The thing with habits is that they don't need to be big actions – they just need to be consistent. For example, if you want to eat healthy at work, maybe you plan and prepare a meal the night before so

you're not scrambling in the morning. Or, if you want to work out in the morning, you could set out your clothes the night before, making it easier to get up and go. These small actions save time and energy during the day, so you can focus on what you've planned to do.

Look at the example timelines below to see how different habits work to support our wellness each day.

Example Timeline 1	
Mornings usually look like...	
8-8:30 am	Wake up, grab phone, and scroll social media
8:30-9 am	Brush teeth and get ready
9-9:30 am	Eat breakfast
Daytime usually looks like...	
Around 1 pm	Eat lunch
Around 1:30 pm	Take a break, get some exercise or movement in

Evenings usually look like...

6-6:30 pm	Eat dinner
7:30 pm	Watch TV
Around 10:30 pm	Get ready for bed and scroll my phone for a bit

Example Timeline 2

Mornings usually look like...

Around 10 am	Wake up and take a few minutes to reflect on what I'm grateful for
10:45 am	Drink some water take a moment to loosen up my muscles
11 am	Get ready for the day

Daytime usually looks like...

Around 2 pm	Try and grab something to eat
Evenings usually look like...	
7 pm	Make or order dinner
8 pm	Get some stuff done that I've been putting off, maybe clean the house
10 pm	Watch some TV, game, or see friends
Around 12 am	Start getting ready and head to bed

Example Timeline 3	
Mornings usually look like...	
6:30 am	Wake-up and stretch for 5-10 min, maybe do a short meditation.
7:30 am	Get ready for the day, think about goals for the day to stay focused

10 am	Take a 5 min break, step away from work, stretch, or walk around
Daytime usually looks like...	
12 pm	Have lunch
Around 1:30 pm	Take a short break to do a quick mindfulness exercise and check-in
4 pm	Get outside or do some light stretching to decompress
Evenings usually look like...	
6-6:30 pm	Eat dinner
7:30 pm	Relax with a hobby or maybe spend some time with family or friends
8:30 pm	Start winding down, limit screen time, take a hot shower or bath

Around 10:30 pm	Get to sleep try and get a good night's rest for the next day
-----------------	---------------------------------------------------------------

We can see that there are many things we do each day without even thinking about it and these routines and habits impact our well-being each day. There are some habits, like brushing our teeth, that we have been doing since we were a child and others that we learn over time, like grabbing our phone when we wake up. We usually do these things without thinking so making small changes each day can have a large impact over time. Continue to the next page to look at some of your habits.

Make it Personal

Map Your Habits

Now it's your turn to map out your habits! You can see things that are going well and what could change to support your wellness over the long run. These could be things like getting more sleep, making more food at home, or getting more exercise.

Step 1: Create your own timeline

Use the times of day to think about the things you usually do each day to understand your routines and habits. Record your habits in the chart below.

Mornings usually look like...	
<i>Approximate time</i>	<i>Key habit</i>
Daytime usually looks like...	
Evenings usually look like...	

Step 2: Identify what works well

Think about the things that work well with your current routine and habits.

Question: What are things you do right now that you want to keep doing?



Step 3: Think about things you would like to change

Question: Are there any routines or habits you would like to start or stop doing?



Great! Now that you've identified habits you want to work on, let's explore how. Creating lasting wellness habits can sometimes feel

challenging, but small, manageable changes can add up to big results over time!

Explore the strategies below to help you build new wellness habits.

Strategy	Description	Example
Set yourself up for success	Make your habits easy to achieve. Use natural starting points like the beginning of the week or month. Small changes in your environment can make a big difference.	<i>If mornings are busy, move your workout to the afternoon, or start with a 10-minute walk if running feels too hard. To eat healthier, place fruits and healthy snacks in easy to reach places.</i>
Start small	Begin with a simple step tied to the habit you want to build. Make it realistic and easy. Starting small helps you ease into a habit without	<i>Stretching for five minutes in the morning or writing down one thing you're grateful for at night.</i>

	feeling overwhelmed.	
Build gradually	Once you've achieved a small goal, challenge yourself to go further. Gradual progress keeps you motivated while avoiding burnout.	<i>Stretching for five minutes in the morning or writing down one thing you're grateful for at night.</i>
Use triggers and cues	Identify reminders in your daily life to prompt your habit. Reminders make them more automatic and easier to complete.	<i>This could mean doing the habit at the same time each day, like going to bed at 10 p.m., or attaching new habits to existing ones, like flossing your teeth immediately after brushing them.</i>
Be consistent	Consistency is key to building habits. Challenges and missed days will happen, but don't	<i>If evening workouts don't fit, try mornings. If you miss a day or feel unmotivated, that's okay, try</i>

	let them discourage you. If the habit isn't working, adjust your approach. Keep trying and remember that challenges are part of the process.	<i>refocusing on why you started.</i>
Celebrate your wins	Acknowledge your progress and celebrate small wins. Regular check-ins help you refine your strategy and build your habits.	<i>If evening workouts don't fit, try mornings. If you miss a day or feel unmotivated, that's okay, try refocusing on why you started.</i>

These strategies are largely based on Strategies for Creating Lasting Change through Habit Formation from the Ontario Psychological Association.

Section 3: Maintaining Wellness Habits

Now that we've explored taking control of our wellness by building healthier habits that work for us, we are going to look at how to keep up these habits. It's important to know that wellness isn't a straight path. This is completely normal and learning to be kind to ourselves as we bounce back after setbacks is a crucial skill.

This is also important for the employment journey. Through the journey we'll face successes and failures, and we'll need strategies to respond to both.

In this section, we'll cover:

- Understanding resilience.
- Building strategies to overcome setbacks.

By the end of the section, you will have a better understanding of strategies to overcome challenges and how to use these to maintain healthy habits.

Engage and Explore

The Journey of Wellness

If you've ever tried to build a new habit like going to bed earlier or exercising regularly, you know that it can feel like one step forward

and two steps back. The good news is that these ups and downs don't mean you're failing. It's all part of being human.

Imagine you've told yourself you will go for a short stroll outside every day. You do great for a week! Then it rains. The next day, you oversleep. The day after that, you forget until later and think, "What's the point? I didn't go yesterday." Before you know it, you've missed three days in a row, and you completely give up on your new habit.

Moments like this can feel frustrating, but they're also completely normal. It's important to have the skills to learn from these experiences and say, "It's okay that happened. Now, what can I do to move forward?" Instead of giving up when something goes wrong, resilience is when you adapt, try different strategies, and stay flexible. This is an important part of maintaining your habits and routines over time.

Resilience Exploration

Let's look at some strategies for resilience in different situations. Read the scenarios below and circle a response that feels the most supportive for you or think of your own that would work best for you.

This is just for exploration, there are no right or wrong answers. It's a way to think about different approaches and see which one could work best for you.

Situation 1:

You planned to get outside after work to reduce stress and decompress after your shift. Your boss has asked you to stay late, though. By the time you get home, you're feeling too tired to go outside.

Do you:

1. Give yourself permission to reschedule for a time when you're more rested.
2. Go outside for five minutes because even if it's shorter than you planned, it's better than nothing.
3. Decide you're going to change your approach and start going outside before your shifts instead, because the time you start work is more reliable.

Situation 2:

You decided to start your day with a quick gratitude journal each morning when you wake up, but your week was busier than normal. You were exhausted and kept waking up too late to do your journal.

Do you:

1. Shift your journalling time to the evening and accept that mornings aren't the best time of time for you to do this activity.

2. Start by writing just a couple quick notes or bullet points when you have a spare moment during the day.
3. Share your gratitude goal with a friend and make a plan to text each other three things you are thankful for every morning for accountability.

Situation 3:

You're trying to eat more nutritiously, but you find yourself reaching for chips late at night because you had a long and stressful day. You deserve a treat!

Do you:

1. Notice that you want to snack at night and plan a healthy alternative you really enjoy.
2. Offer yourself compassion and acknowledge that you're feeling stressed and remember that one moment doesn't define your whole journey.
3. Allow yourself to have late night chips once and a while. But put a specific serving size in a bowl instead of taking the whole bag and eating until you feel stuffed.

Great work! Now that we've looked at some situations and identified ways to respond that support you in keeping up with habits, let's apply this to your daily life. Continue to build some of your own strategies for resilience.

Make it Personal

Building Resilience

We've looked at some scenarios where staying resilient is key for maintaining wellness routines and habits. Now, let's create some of your own strategies to use when you run into challenges in your day-to-day life.

Below are five strategies for resilience. Read through each one and use the questions below to think about how you could apply it in your life. Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you.

Strategy 1: Look for opportunities to grow

See challenging situations as opportunities to learn and grow.

Question: What is a challenging situation you have been through?

Question: What are some things you could say to remind yourself of what you learned from the situation?

Question: How can you use this mindset next time you encounter a challenging situation?

Strategy 2: Maintain hope

Maintain a hopeful outlook on the situation and tell yourself, “This is hard right now, but it can’t be hard forever. Something good will come.”

Question: What is something you can look forward to in the future when you are going through a hard time now?

Question: What are some small things that make you happy?

Strategy 3: Be flexible

Learn to accept the things you can control and be flexible and let go of the things that you can't. Accept the things you cannot control and go with the flow of them.

Question: What are the things you know that you can control in a situation?

Question: What are strategies to focus on the present and accept that you cannot control the past or the future?

Strategy 4: Practice self-care

Lean on self-care practices and ensure you are paying extra attention to your well-being when you are facing a challenging situation. Make sure you do things like exercise well, sleep well, eat well, spend time with positive, supportive people, and lean into things you love doing.

Question: What are three self-care strategies you can focus on when you are facing a challenge?

Strategy 5: Lean on others

Recognize when to ask for and receive help from others.

Question: Who are one or two caring and supportive people you could reach out to when you are facing a difficult situation?

Great work! Now that you know some strategies that might work for you let's look ahead. The key is planning how you might apply them next time you face a challenge. Look at the steps below and take a moment to think about or record how you might use these steps next time you face a challenging situation.

1. Acknowledge the setback

Remind yourself that setbacks are normal and not a sign of failure.

2. Identify a small action you can still take

If the habit isn't possible, what's a more manageable version?

3. Have a backup strategy

If your original plan doesn't work, consider an alternative that would make it work.

4. Step 4: Reach out for support

This could mean texting a friend, using an online forum, or one of your strategies.

You're doing great work creating some steps and strategies for maintaining wellness habits. Progress isn't linear so make sure to be understanding with yourself when things come up that may feel like a setback. Small steps add up over time and reflecting on where you started can always be helpful.

Reflect and Connect

We've covered a lot in this module, including:

- How to take control of your wellness by focusing on what you can control.
- Why habits and routines are important and how to identify your own.
- How to maintain wellness habits and routines.

Take a moment to think about the questions below and how they relate to your experiences. Think of this as a reflective journal for yourself, which you can refer to later.

Happy reflecting!

What are some things you often worry about?

- *Example: "I often worry about what other people think of me at school and work."*



What parts of the things you worry about are in your control?

- *Example: "I can control how I behave and do my work, but I can't control the thoughts other people have about me."*

Think about a habit you want to create or change, what's a strategy you can use to make that happen?

- *Example: I want to start drinking more water during the day. "I'll use the triggers and cues strategy by keeping a water bottle on my desk, so I remember to drink it throughout the day."*

What are some ways that you could use strategies to be more resilient next time you face a challenge?

- *Example: I'm going to try and notice when I'm responding negatively to a challenge and remember that I have other ways that I can respond.*

Keep Going

There is so much more to learn! Access the full CanWork BC content and learn more about the program at [**canworkbc.ca**](https://canworkbc.ca).

Canada



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

This program is funded by the Government of Canada
and the Province of British Columbia.