



What are the factors that drive executive wellbeing?

**Advances in the measurement and development of subjective wellbeing**

Audrey McGibbon

# Credentials...

- ❖ **Qualifications:** MA (Hons) Psychology and Business; MSc in Psychotherapy Studies. Registered psychologist in Australia and UK, Chartered Occupational Psychologist with British Psychological Society (BPS), Associate Fellow of the BPS, member of the Division of Occupational Psychology and Psychotherapy Section of the BPS, Principal Member of Association of Business Psychologists.
- ❖ **Experience:** 25 years' corporate experience of coaching senior leaders and their teams. Experienced executive in own right, having operated as GM & Managing Director of the Australian operations for a major global talent management consultancy – SHL (CEB). Coaching experience extends across a range of sectors including banking, finance, insurance, telecommunications, digital, logistics, retail, mining and professional services sectors in Australia, NZ, UK, Europe, Singapore and Hong Kong. Coached over 250 executives and has 2000+ hours of coaching contact experience.
- ❖ **Specialization:** Master's research (2013/14) into factors driving wellbeing for senior executives in Australian corporations. Has since extended research via in-depth measurement and study of the wellbeing of a further 500+ executives. Other short courses of relevance include: 'Cultivating Mindfulness' (5 days in August 2011); Wellbeing & Mental Health M.Sc. module; 'Overview of Different Methods of Personal Change' M.Sc. Module and 'Development Through the Lifecycle' M.Sc. Module. Approach to coaching underpinned by a person centred methodology (i.e. a focus on the individual and relationship with the individual) and by emphasis on existential philosophy (i.e. helping executives face up to the challenges of everyday living and taking full responsibility for the choices they have in how they lead their lives and approach their work.)
- ❖ **EEK & SENSE:** is the culmination of a long-term partnership between Audrey McGibbon and Karen Gillespie. Interest in wellbeing coincided with observations of leaders experiencing serious, persistent and unprecedented threats to their wellbeing, creating knock-on damage to performance and business outcomes. Development of MEWS in response to these concerns, with the goal of helping individuals and organisations achieve sustainable and strong performance, and flourish as contributors to the wellbeing of their teams, families and community at large

[www.MEWSwellbeing.com.au](http://www.MEWSwellbeing.com.au)



# Session Outline

- ❖ Relevance to unlocking potential
- ❖ Conceptualisation and model of wellbeing for whole person
- ❖ Propose a new framework with which coaches can explore client wellbeing
- ❖ Applications within an individual and team coaching context
- ❖ Principles of exploring wellbeing as part of a coaching agenda
- ❖ Share original research findings
- ❖ Key messages

# State of Play Today

- ❖ Knowledge & digital economies have dominated this century
- ❖ Technology has increased our flexibility BUT also elevated intrusion into personal life and removal of boundaries
- ❖ Inability to “unplug” is a major source of increased stress
- ❖ Great Recession / GFC of 2008 intensified global competition and concerns over job security / incomes
- ❖ Increased pressure on people to “up their game” as machines replace and outperform even highly skilled professions
- ❖ Mounting backlash against unfettered economic growth (“do more with less”) at the expense of wellbeing
- ❖ Growing sense of awareness and empowerment about the human condition – speaking up and out about burnout, lack of balance, lack of autonomy, lack of respect and dissatisfaction with work
- ❖ Culture and engagement rated number one challenge affecting business around the world (Deloitte 2015)

# Unlocking Potential

- ❖ The rationale for a stronger focus on executive wellbeing as a means to achieving potential and sustainable high performance is both compelling and increasingly recognised. Investing in wellbeing makes good sense, for individuals and organisations for both social and economic reasons.
- ❖ Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2003 state that there can be no doubt wellbeing is key to achieving a range of positive business outcomes such as:
  - increased productivity
  - increased engagement
  - reduced unwanted attrition
  - lower numbers of sick days
- ❖ For example, Sims (2010) reports a 40% improvement in employee engagement and 50% improvement in creativity and innovation, and Margeson & Nahrgang (2005), Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill & Stride (2004) and Skakona, Nielsen, Borgb & Guzmanc (2010) have all found a significant relationship between enhanced wellbeing and enhanced leadership performance.
- ❖ Building on what has become universally referred to as the ‘happy-productive-worker thesis’ (which examines the link between positive affect, employee engagement and business outcomes generally), Hosie et al (2013) investigated the relationship specifically within a management population and found that:
  - Positive self-reports of affective wellbeing were strongly associated with enhanced managerial and leadership performance and also the opposite
  - Diminished affective wellbeing is associated with poorer managerial performance and judgement
- ❖ Leaders’ enhanced wellbeing is positively contagious in the sense that they act as role models and create a domino or ‘ripple effect’ across their teams that then cascades to teams lower again the organisation’s hierarchy



# The Wellbeing Paradox

- ❖ Despite such data showing that investment in wellbeing makes good sense for individuals and organisations for both social and economic reasons, **the levels of wellbeing among those at the top of organisations is in decline** – the wellbeing of managers is under more threat than ever before. (Forster & Still, 2001)
- ❖ The incidences of personal sacrifice, burnout, emotional exhaustion, strain and pressure among those in management roles and those who have the largest responsibility and accountability in organisations are well documented trends and stress or burnout is increasingly common (Reinhold, 1997) and emotional exhaustion is prevalent in managers' workplaces. (Lee & Ashforth, 1996)



# The Issue with Wellbeing for Coaches

- ❖ Many of the organisational wellbeing approaches on offer today tend towards an approach that is generic, surface level or based on spot interventions with an overly medical emphasis, and which underplay the psychological factors of wellbeing. This is likely to limit the extent of their effectiveness as wellbeing strategies.
- ❖ The Future of Wellness at Work 2016 report from the Global Wellness Institute reports:
  1. **The majority of formal wellness initiatives as they exist today, simply don't work.** Roughly one in ten report it has any positive impact on their health.
  2. The problem is that the one-size-fits-all approach is viewed by employees as an empty gesture. If the goal is to improve employee wellness, then the opposite is being achieved, with **75% of workers cynical, believing workplace wellness programs to be self-serving and benefiting only the company.**
- ❖ We don't think wellbeing is something organisations can 'fix' for or 'give' to their people in a paternalistic way; we see an organisation's key role as providing a system that facilitates and supports leaders to take more personal responsibility, to be more accountable for their wellbeing.
- ❖ Coaches have star role to play in such a system!! Executive coaching is being increasingly seen as an appropriately personal, tailored, holistic intervention of choice, which can be more effective in helping individuals deal with work/life issues, stress and preventative health.
- ❖ Core Competencies....
- ❖ Perhaps the key issue facing the emergence of wellbeing as a psychological construct of major influence is that **without an accurate diagnosis of the specific wellbeing needs and circumstances of individual leaders, it becomes difficult to achieve better wellbeing outcomes**, in part because of the highly subjective and individualised nature of wellbeing and in part, because like any personal development strategy, having a clear, detailed and specific understanding of the nature of the development need and what 'better' looks like is a prerequisite to achieving effective change.
- ❖ In response to these concerns, the '**Managerial and Executive Wellbeing Survey**' (MEWS) was developed in order to measure leaders' wellbeing in a comprehensive and holistic manner providing a framework and specific insights with which to measure and develop wellbeing for this target population.

# So what is Wellbeing? Conceptualisation

- ❖ Wellbeing as a topic for scientific understanding has suffered from a “*confusing and contradictory research base*” (Pollard & Lee, 2003, p. 2). Nevertheless, there seems to be emerging consensus about some of its key elements and these are summarised briefly below
- ❖ **Wellbeing is a largely subjective phenomenon** – for a white-collar socio-economically advantaged population, wellbeing is a feeling and a state of being rather than an objective measurement or statement of fact. Indeed, the research literature is focussed on Subjective Well Being (‘SWB’) as a major line of enquiry and is heavily influenced, though not synonymous with, personality. (Felce & Perry, 1995; Diener & Diener, 1995; Diener & Suh, 2000; Shah & Marks, 2004; Diener, 2013)
- ❖ **Wellbeing is multi-dimensional** – there are different aspects or criteria that we use as the basis for deciding how ‘well’ we feel. (La Placa, McNaught & Knight, 2013)
- ❖ **Wellbeing pathways** – stem from two broadly opposing philosophical perspectives. The first of these philosophical pathways, ‘Hedonia’, is concerned with maximising pleasure and positive emotional affect. The second pathway to wellbeing, ‘Eudaimonia’, reflects the Aristotelian values of living an authentic life of virtue, self-actualization and positive functioning. Despite the historical contention, the current view is that both these perspectives are inherently valid and that an integrated approach encompassing both aspects will optimise the probability of a flourishing state. (Henderson & Knight, 2012)
- ❖ **Wellbeing generally occurs within a ‘set range’** – each of us has our normal homeostatic defensive range (Cummins, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The aim is to lead our lives in a way that is likely to push us to the top end of whatever our set range is, and to ensure we don’t dip underneath the bottom end of what constitutes our ‘normal’.
- ❖ **Wellbeing is a dynamic rather than static or a particularly stable trait** – it fluctuates like a see-saw depending on the events, challenges and experiences we encounter in our lives. When individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge, then wellbeing ensues, and vice versa. (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012)



# Wellbeing Model

Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders 2012

**RESOURCES:** An individual's social, emotional, psychological and physical **assets**



**CHALLENGES:** The particular social, emotional, psychological and physical **liabilities** they are facing in life and at work

When individuals have more challenges than resources, their see-saw dips along with their wellbeing, and vice-versa

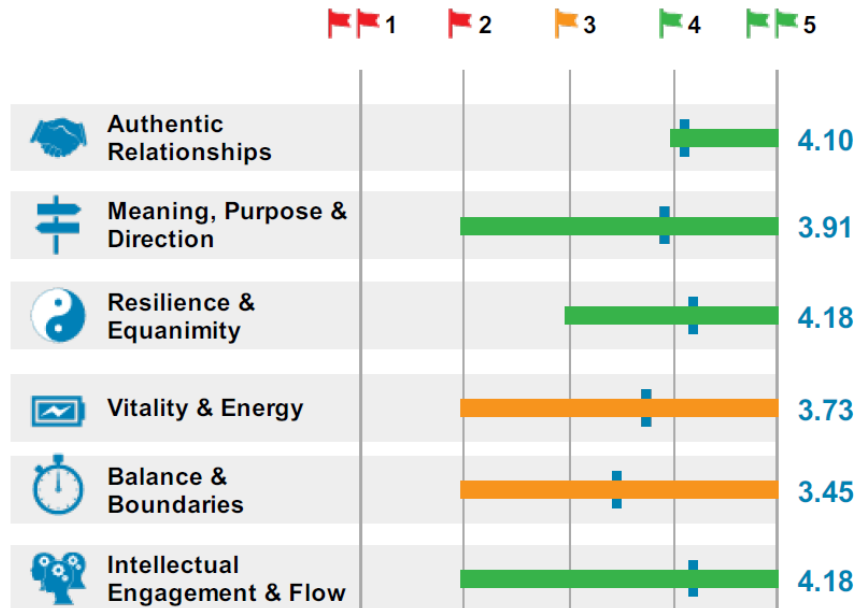
# Wellbeing Framework



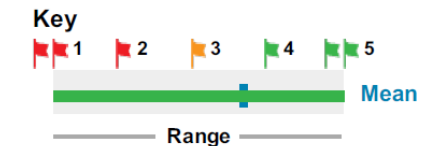
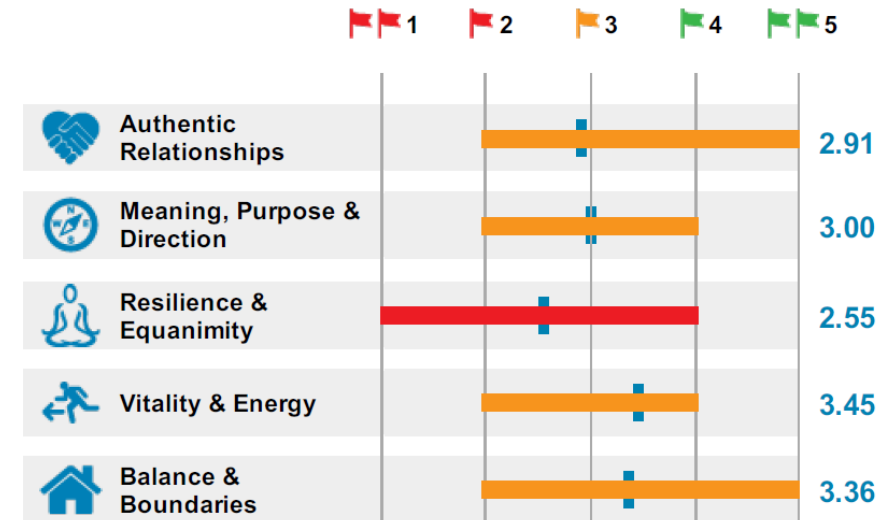
# Your Wellbeing Profile



## WORKING WELL



## LIVING WELL



**1** Indicates an aspect in your life that may be **significantly detracting** from your wellbeing  
Never (+), Always (-)

**2** Indicates an aspect in your life that may be **detracting** from your wellbeing  
Rarely (+), Usually/Often (-)

**3** **Sometimes** this aspect in your life is working for you and **sometimes** it isn't. Close review of these items is recommended to ascertain what you might change to enhance your wellbeing  
Sometimes (+/-)

**4** Indicates an aspect in your life that may be **enhancing** your wellbeing  
Usually/Often (+), Rarely (-)

**5** Indicates an aspect in your life that may be **significantly enhancing** your wellbeing  
Always (+), Never (-)

# Authentic Relationships



## WORKING WELL (4.10)

- I always feel part of a close, supportive team
- I usually/often feel respected at work and that other people take me seriously
- I usually/often have fun and share light-hearted moments with my colleagues
- I am usually/often treated by my colleagues in the way I want to be treated
- I rarely experience toxic relationships at work
- The politics at work rarely detract from my wellbeing
- At work, I usually/often go out of my way to show empathy for others' feelings and needs
- My work is usually/often acknowledged and appreciated
- I usually/often know where I stand with regard to my performance at work
- I rarely feel I miss out on building close relationships at work because of the demands of my personal life
- ? I trust my boss

### About Authentic Relationships

According to Aristotle, humans are 'social animals' and naturally seek the companionship of others as part of their wellbeing. Our lives depend on other humans and whether at work or elsewhere, the quality of our relationships will influence our overall sense of wellbeing, possibly more than any other factor. Bear in mind that what we give to others is just as important for our wellbeing as what we get from them.

For senior leaders, the quality of your relationships in the workplace is key to your success as an influencer and inspirer of action and outcomes. For most, this is only possible and sustainable when you are equally well supported by strong and authentic relationships in your personal life.

In worldwide studies, the top 5% of the happiest people have close supportive relationships - every single one of them! (Diener & Seligman 2002)



## LIVING WELL (2.91)

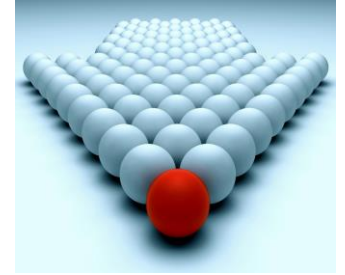
- I always have a fulfilling relationship with at least one significant person in my life
- I usually/often feel I am important to my family and friends
- I sometimes contribute to other people's success and happiness
- I sometimes spend time and do things with the people I like
- I sometimes give and receive love, warmth and affection
- My family and friends would say I'm sometimes distracted when I am with them
- I sometimes feel my personal relationships suffer as a consequence of my work
- My relationships with the key people in my life are rarely as I want them to be
- I usually/often feel lonely or isolated
- I can rarely openly raise concerns or problems with family and friends
- I usually/often experience damaging relationships in my personal life

### You have Authentic Relationships when...

...you feel you belong (to a team, family, social group and/or community); you trust others and are able to talk honestly and openly with them, solving problems and making decisions collaboratively; you feel close and connected to others, supporting them and showing kindness; you are respected and loved by people who are important to you; and you invest your time and give your attention to those you are close to.

# Applications – Individual Coaching

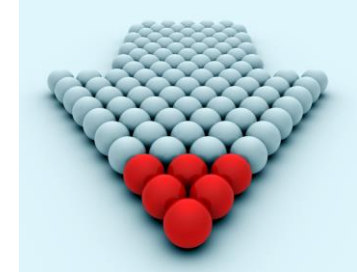
- ❖ Building change readiness for individuals impacted by major change / challenges
- ❖ Intervention or value add to help with retention & engagement of key talent
- ❖ Support during period of career or role transition
- ❖ Help with more effective self-management – reducing stress and burnout, building resilience, satisfaction
- ❖ Support following return from parental leave





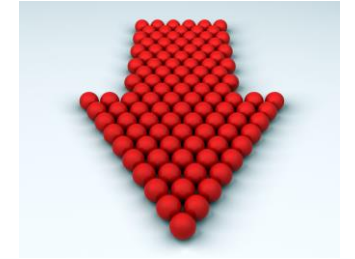
# Applications – Team Coaching

- ❖ Team planning and reviews – working on “ourselves” and how we are as a team
- ❖ Team building and recharging, following periods of sustained change / disruption / heavy demand
- ❖ Change readiness, capacity and resilience building
- ❖ In situations of unwanted high turnover, low engagement or other ‘difficult’ periods
- ❖ To help a team change its behaviour and culture to align to organisation’s wellbeing strategy



# Applications for MEWS – Programs / Groups

- ❖ Standalone health, wellbeing & resilience programs
- ❖ Incorporation in any leadership development / high-potential and talent management programs where self-management and sustainability is a key concept
- ❖ As a component of approach to promoting diversity & inclusion
- ❖ As a tool to promote a culture where there needs to be an emphasis on leaders as role-models for healthy and sustainable practices



# Results: Factors Significantly Correlated with ‘Overall Wellbeing at Work’ Evaluations

## Scales & ‘Overall Wellbeing at Work’ Evaluations

- ❖ **Research Question:** How do the MEWS wellbeing scales/domains relate to how respondents report overall wellbeing at work?
- ❖ **Method:** Product-Moment Correlations between MEWS scales and self-evaluations of ‘Overall Wellbeing at Work’
- ❖ **Results:** As expected, all 6 Working Well scales correlate higher than do the 4 Living Well scales/domains

.65	Working Well – Meaning, Purpose & Direction
.59	Working Well – Challenge, Boundaries
.57	Working Well – Intellectual Engagement & Flow
.53	Working Well – Authentic Relationships
.53	Working Well – Resilience & Equanimity
.48	Working Well – Vitality & Energy
.43	Living Well – Meaning, Purpose & Direction
.42	Living Well – Vitality & Energy
.40	Living Well – Resilience & Equanimity
.39	Living Well – Authentic Relationships

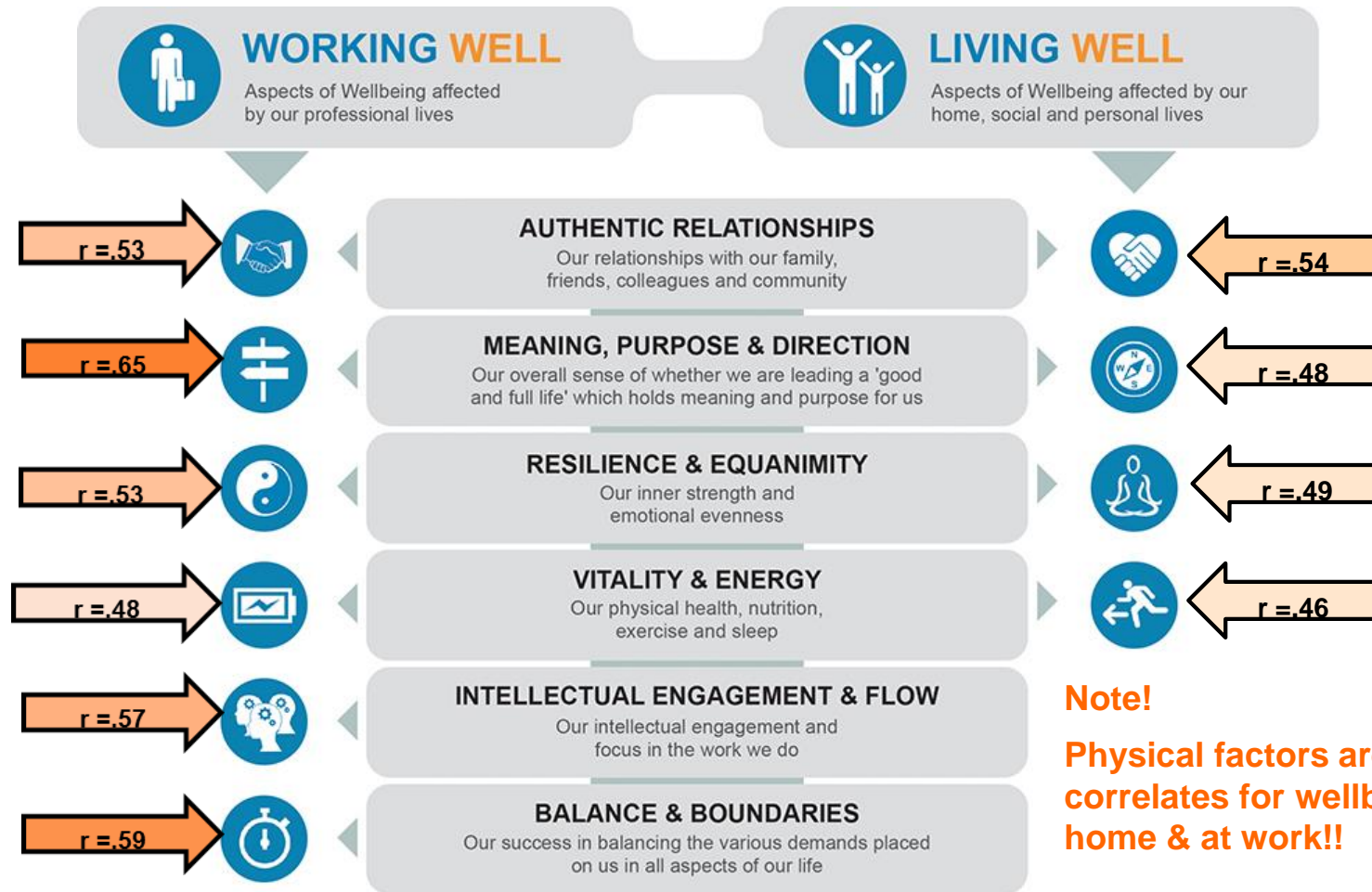
# Results: Factors Significantly Correlated with 'Overall Wellbeing in Life' Evaluations

## Scales & Overall Wellbeing in Life Evaluations

- ❖ **Research Question:** How do the MEWS wellbeing scales/domains relate to how respondents feel about their overall wellbeing in life?
- ❖ **Method:** Product-Moment Correlations between MEWS scales and self-evaluations of 'Overall Wellbeing in Life'
- ❖ **Results:** As expected, all 4 Living Well scales correlate higher than do the 6 Working Well scales/domains

.54	Living Well – Authentic Relationships
.49	Living Well – Resilience & Equanimity
.48	Living Well – Meaning, Purpose & Direction
.46	Living Well – Vitality & Energy
.42	Working Well – Vitality & Energy
.35	Working Well – Challenge, Boundaries
.31	Working Well – Meaning, Purpose & Direction
.28	Working Well – Resilience & Equanimity
.25	Working Well – Authentic Relationships
.19	Working Well – Intellectual Engagement & Flow

# Original research: factors of most significance to managerial, executive & professional wellbeing



**Note!**

**Physical factors are lowest correlates for wellbeing at home & at work!!**



# Top 10 individual items for executive wellbeing @ work

- ❖ **Research Question:** Which MEWS questions are most closely related to respondents ratings of their overall wellbeing at work?
- ❖ **Method:** Product-Moment Correlations between MEWS 'Working Well' items and self-evaluations of 'Overall Wellbeing at Work'

<i>My contribution at work is valuable and makes a difference (.48)</i>	}	<b>MEANING, PURPOSE &amp; DIRECTION</b>
<i>My personal values align well with those of the organisation I work in (.52)</i>		
<i>I feel able to shape my future at work (.53)</i>		
<i>I feel genuinely satisfied and interested in my work (.54)</i>	}	<b>INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT &amp; FLOW</b>
<i>My work enables me to develop a sense of mastery and expertise (.48)</i>		
<i>My job and work environment enable me to play to my strengths (.48)</i>		
<i>I am happy with the amount of time I spend working (.49)</i>		<b>BALANCE &amp; BOUNDARIES</b>
<i>Politics at work (don't) detract from my wellbeing (.52)</i>		<b>AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS</b>
<i>I (don't) feel depressed at work (.52)</i>		<b>RESILIENCE &amp; EQUANIMITY</b>
<i>I (don't) feel drained at work (.56)</i>		<b>VITALITY &amp; ENERGY</b>

# Development of MEWS (1)

## Subjects / Target Group

- ❖ The target group for MEWS was identified as employees in professional, managerial or leadership roles.

## Research Aims, Objectives & Vision

- ❖ MEWS is concerned with the Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) of individuals, where SWB is defined as ***“a delicate balancing act between an individual’s social, emotional, psychological and physical assets (resources) and the particular social, emotional, psychological and physical liabilities (challenges) they are facing in life and at work.”***
- ❖ MEWS was designed with the aim of developing a better understanding of what is occurring for the target group’s wellbeing in the workplace *as well as* their functioning as ‘whole’ people who have relationships, activities, responsibilities, challenges and pressures beyond the office door.
- ❖ The objective of MEWS is to assist people who are employed in professional, managerial or leadership roles with identifying the specific range of factors which, if addressed, will help push up their wellbeing to the top end of their natural range or perhaps even exceed this, in a way that they experience as a holistic wellbeing intervention.
- ❖ The vision for MEWS is to have leaders, teams and organisations aligned and acting in harmony for sustainable high performance.

# Development of MEWS (2)

## Survey Design & Methodology

- ❖ **2013:** Literature Review of wellbeing & existing diagnostic tools.
- ❖ **2014:** Develop alpha trial tool: 150 item generation & alpha model conceptualisation of the MEWS Framework.
- ❖ Subject matter expert review.
- ❖ Alpha trialling with 106 executives & statistical analysis of results; results formed basis of MSc. *“What factors significantly impact the subjective wellbeing of senior executives and managers in Australian based organisations.”*
- ❖ **2015:** Refinement of beta version of tool and MEWS Framework to create a diagnostic with 120 specific questions across 10 wellbeing domains, with exactly 12 items per domain, plus 5 global measures of overall wellbeing. Software development and migration to Qualtrics platform technology, and creation of individual and team output reports
- ❖ **2016:** Quantitative (statistical analysis) & qualitative (feedback) review of first 245 respondents to the MEWS beta version, including an independent review by psychometricians Kendall Want Associates to verify design & methodology. Final version of MEWS created to comprise **121 domain items (11 items per domain, 11 domains), plus 5 global SWB items and final version of the MEWS Framework.**
- ❖ MEWS is open to accreditation by other registered psychologists.



# MEWS Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables

## MEWS Scales & Biographical Variables

❖ **Research Question:** How does income, company size, role seniority, gender and age relate to wellbeing?

❖ **Method:** Product-Moment Correlations between MEWS scales/domains and Biographical Variables

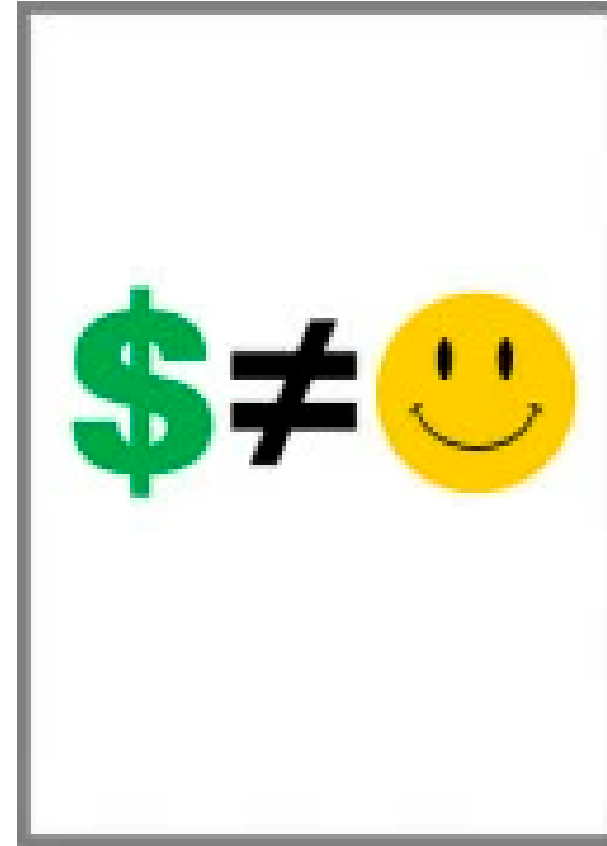
❖ **Results:** Seniority and size of organisation have strongest relationships with wellbeing; whereas gender and wealth appear less significant; whilst age (maturity) shows some positive associations

	Authentic Relationships		Meaning, Purpose & Direction		Resilience & Equanimity		Vitality & Energy		Intellectual Engagement & Flow		Balance & Boundaries	
	Working Well	Living Well	Working Well	Living Well	Working Well	Living Well	Working Well	Living Well	Working Well	Living Well	Working well	Living Well
Income / \$ Wealth	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-	NS	-
Size of Organisation	-.23**	NS	-.19**	NS	NS	NS	-.20**	NS	-.13*	-	-.17*	-
Seniority / Level of Role	.14*	NS	.23**	.18**	.14*	NS	NS	NS	.16*	-	NS	-
Gender	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-	NS	-
Age	NS	NS	NS	.22*	NS	NS	.15*	NS	NS	-	.17*	-

# Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables – Discussion of Findings 1

## On Income/Wealth: N/S

- ❖ None of scales showed significant correlation
- ❖ Our findings bear testament to the claim that for high earning tertiary qualified professionals – **‘money doesn’t buy happiness’**.
- ❖ Beware the affluenza virus!





# Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables – Discussion of Findings 2

## On Size of Organisation:

- ❖ Managers in smaller organisations report better relationships (AR  $-.23^{**}$ ), more meaning & purpose (MP&D  $-.19^{**}$ ), more engagement (IE&F  $-.13^{*}$ ), more energy (V&E  $-.20^{**}$ ) and better boundaries (B&B  $-.17^{*}$ ).
- ❖ MEWS findings bear testament to the fact that **‘big is not always best’** and **‘small(er) is beautiful!’**



# Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables – Discussion of Findings 3



## On Seniority / Level of Role:

- ❖ MEWS findings bear testament to the benefits of ‘climbing the corporate ladder’ – **those in upper echelons of management report generally higher wellbeing** than their counterparts in middle/lower management in the following ways:
  - ✓ More ‘Meaning, Purpose & Direction’ at work and in life more generally (WW.23\*\* / LW.18\*\*)
  - ✓ More ‘Intellectual Engagement & Flow’ (WW.16\*)
  - ✓ Better ‘Authentic Relationships’ (WW .14\* feelings of security, feelings of respect in their relationships)
  - ✓ More ‘Resilience & Equanimity’ (WW .14\* greater freedom from self-doubt and anxiety)

# Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables – Discussion of Findings 4

## On Gender:

- ❖ MEWS findings suggest **NO significant differences between males and females in any of the overall scales/domains of wellbeing** from either a workplace (Working Well) or outside of work (Living well) perspective.
- ❖ However, item level analysis indicates some nuanced gender implications.
- ❖ **Females** significantly more likely to:
  - ✓ Take care of themselves through recommended preventative health measures than their male counterparts (LW Vitality & Energy 0.35\*\*)
  - ✓ Go out of their way to show empathy for others' feelings and needs (WW Authentic Relationships 0.23\*\*)
  - ✓ Be attuned to where they carry stress and tension in their bodies (WW Vitality & Energy 0.23\*\*)
  - ✓ Use breathing techniques as a tool to slow down and stay calm (WW Vitality & Energy 0.21\*\*)
  - ✓ Make more time to develop their spiritual side (LW Meaning, Purpose & Direction 0.19\*\*)
- ❖ **Males** in our sample reported a significantly more positive wellbeing picture on only 2 counts:
  - ✓ Lower occurrence of self-doubt (WW Resilience & Equanimity, -.21\*\*) and
  - ✓ More likely to report sufficient energy to perform at their peak (LW Vitality & Energy -.19\*\*)



# Wellbeing Correlates with Biographical Variables – Discussion of Findings 5

## On Age:

### ❖ MEWS findings suggest that with chronological maturity comes:

- ✓ Greater perspective and discipline to help us balance and manage our work-life boundaries (WW Balance & Boundaries.17\*)
- ✓ The wisdom to find and follow our path in life (LW, Meaning, Purpose & Direction .22\*)
- ✓ A maturing of our willingness and ability to look after our physical health (WW V&E.15\*)



- ❖ Are the foibles of old age being at least in part offset by this wiser and wider perspective on what counts, on the bigger picture of life, by a general movement towards self-actualization and an awareness of our mortality; and an eventual understanding of the importance of pacing ourselves and of looking after our bodies and minds?

# Psychometrics

## Reliability

- ◆ Test-retest: wellbeing is a dynamic and fluid state of being, changes expected
- ◆ Internal consistency: split-half within the domains, Cronbach's alpha = 0.76 to 0.86
- ◆ Alternate/parallel forms: not practical

## Validity

- ◆ Strong face-validity
- ◆ Strong content validity – evidence based items
- ◆ Construct validity - under way
- ◆ Predictive validity - future consideration?

### Resources:

*PDF: The Psychometric Properties of the MEWS*



# Results: Reliability Coefficients of MEWS (Beta Version 2015)

## MEWS Reliability

- ❖ The literature regarding test and scale construction suggests that an acceptable level of reliability is a function of the intended use of the test results. If a test is to be used to make decisions about an individual, it is important for that test to be highly reliable. This need for higher levels of reliability goes up as the risk associated with a poor decision based on the test increases. The MEWS is not intended for use as a tool to make any selection decisions and is only for use in personal development applications
- ❖ **Test-retest:** Variability of behaviours between Time 1 and Time 2 is not necessarily a measurement error and in the case of SWB this is likely to be particularly true – because wellbeing is a dynamic and fluid state of being we would expect to see changes in wellbeing in accordance with either the benefits of any targeted wellbeing interventions and/or the degree of unforeseen challenges experienced during the elapsed time
- ❖ **Internal consistency:** The process of obtaining reliability estimates (e.g. Cronbach's Alpha) through a single administration to a group of individuals.
- ❖ For MEWS, reliability coefficients (Coefficient Alpha) were computed on the data set for each scale (or 'domain') of the MEWS Framework which in the beta version, had 10 scales across the Living Well and Working Well sections
- ❖ Results (see Table 1 MEWS Beta Version Internal Consistency Reliability) show **highly satisfactory Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all 10 scales falling well within the currently recommended (by the International Test Commission) range of 0.76 to 0.86.** Scale reliabilities higher than 0.90 suggest some item redundancy whereas scale reliabilities lower than 0.7 suggest possible multi-dimensionality

# Reliability Results: Split-Half Internal Consistencies of MEWS (Beta Version 2015)

Table 1 MEWS Beta Version Internal Consistency Reliability

Working Well	Authentic Relationships	.810	12 items
Working Well	Challenge, Boundaries	.767	12 items
Working Well	Intellectual Engagement	.813	12 items
Working Well	Meaning, Purpose & Direction	.856	12 items
Working Well	Resilience	.799	12 items
Working Well	Vitality & Energy	.764	12 items
Living Well	Authentic Relations	.811	12 items
Living Well	Meaning, Purpose & Direction	.808	12 items
Living Well	Resilience	.817	12 items
Living Well	Vitality & Energy	.785	12 items

# MEWS Scale / Domain Inter-correlations (Beta Version 2015)

**Table 2 MEWS Beta Version Mean Scale / Domain Inter-correlations**

N =246 / Spearman Rho.	Working Well Section of MEWS Framework						Living Well Section of MEWS Framework			
	Authentic Relationships	Meaning, Purpose & Direction	Resilience & Equanimity	Vitality & Energy	Intellectual Engagement & Flow	Challenge & Boundaries	Authentic Relationships	Meaning, Purpose & Direction	Resilience & Equanimity	Vitality & Energy
WW.Authentic.Relationships	1	.711**	.606**	.400**	.663**	.481**	.489**	.486**	.436**	.422**
WW.Meaning.Purpose.Direction	.711**	1	.615**	.479**	.791**	.532**	.503**	.679**	.490**	.463**
WW.Resilience.Equanimity	.606**	.615**	1	.386**	.547**	.602**	.428**	.512**	.633**	.472**
WW.Vitality.Energy	.400**	.479**	.386**	1	.365**	.664**	.437**	.641**	.334**	.650**
WW.Intellectual.Engagement.Flow	.663**	.791**	.547**	.365**	1	.443**	.416**	.531**	.366**	.349**
WW.Challenge.Boundaries	.481**	.532**	.602**	.664**	.443**	1	.509**	.578**	.503**	.610**
LW.Authentic.Relationships	.489**	.503**	.428**	.437**	.416**	.509**	1	.663**	.690**	.488**
LW.Meaning.Purpose.Direction	.486**	.679**	.512**	.641**	.531**	.578**	.663**	1	.590**	.598**
LW.Resilience.Equanimity	.436**	.490**	.633**	.334**	.366**	.503**	.690**	.590**	1	.497**
LW.Vitality.Energy	.422**	.463**	.472**	.650**	.349**	.610**	.488**	.598**	.497**	1

❖ Results show mean scale inter-correlations all falling within a satisfactory range

❖ The 4 domain / scales that are parallel matched across Working Well and Living Well (highlighted) also indicate a unitary construct yet with sufficiently different aspects to warrant the Living Well and Working Well distinctions

# Summary of Findings

- ❖ Sharing a new way of conceptualizing and measuring subjective wellbeing (SWB) in an organisational context; after alpha and beta trialling and development, the final version of the survey comprises an integrated framework of wellbeing with 125 items across 6 wellbeing domains reflective of key research constructs:
  - ❖ **Authentic Relationships**
  - ❖ **Meaning, Purpose & Direction**
  - ❖ **Resilience & Equanimity**
  - ❖ **Vitality & Energy**
  - ❖ **Balance & Boundaries**
  - ❖ **Intellectual Engagement & Flow**
- ❖ Based on a sample of N=245 managers, this paper provides a range of psychometric perspectives regarding the factors mostly highly correlated with SWB for this group.
- ❖ Domains all show significant relationships with global evaluations of overall wellbeing at work and at home, with highly satisfactory internal consistencies (ranging from .78 to .86) and appropriate scale inter-correlations (ranging from .33 to .79). Interesting gender, age and seniority differences were found but due to time restrictions these are reported only in brief here. Details available upon contacting authors.
- ❖ The findings build a foundation for future research, may assist in the development of more effective wellbeing policy by human resources specialists, and help to promote person-centred wellbeing interventions to senior executives.
- ❖ MEWS is an advance on existing workplace wellbeing measures due to the comprehensive conceptualisation of an integrated model of wellbeing, a focus on the whole person and the application of robust psychological principles to both its development and use in the workplace.

# Future Proofing via Wellbeing?

- ❖ Futurists are envisaging a transition to 'Wisdom' & 'Human' based economies
- ❖ Work will place even greater emphasis on fluidity, adaptability, collaboration and constant learning
- ❖ High levels of intrinsic motivation, innovation, energy, perceptiveness, intuition and creativity will become the essential human qualities
- ❖ These rely on heightened physical, mental, social and emotional WELLBEING
- ❖ Companies and governments highly motivated to reverse trend of unwell workforces
- ❖ The wellness movement will gain momentum but workplace wellness programs as we know them today will disappear

# Wait! There's more...

- ❖ Employers will treat wellness as a top strategic concern at highest levels of leadership, business objectives will be explicitly linked to creating a culture of wellness
- ❖ Companies will adopt a culture of wellness as the default not the exception, where work and culture are closely aligned with workers' personal values, motivations and wellness
- ❖ Workplace is an extended social network and ideal place to promote healthy habits and choices
- ❖ Strike a balance between self-responsibility and supportive culture; people increasingly look for areas where're they can take charge of their wellness instead of passively waiting for employers and governments to take action
- ❖ The healthiest workplaces will be a destination where people go to improve their own wellness, not merely 'fixing' or mitigating but to be nourished, a source of joy!



# Key Messages

- ① Motivation to reverse decline in wellbeing is high, wellbeing movement is growing in momentum and wellbeing interventions of the future will be very different
- ② The proposed **Framework** appears highly relevant
- ③ Wellbeing needs are unique, *subjective* and variable - a '**one size approach**' to wellbeing does not fit all
- ④ It is important to look at an integrated '**whole self**' not just work self for clients
- ⑤ Use Framework to obtain a **thorough diagnosis**; accurate diagnosis precedes effective intervention!
- ⑥ The survey offers a **reliable, well constructed and detailed** measurement tool
- ⑦ We need to move beyond global measures of wellbeing to help organisations, execs and their teams support their wellbeing efforts in a **strategic, targeted and holistic** manner
- ⑧ Further research underway to examine construct validity of survey, using personality measures (Hogan's Assessments) and a range of validated wellbeing and life satisfaction measures
- ⑨ Further research to repeat the analysis reported here with larger sample sizes and on new version

# Principles in the use of MEWS®

- ◆ #1: Know and practice within professional boundaries & referral strategy
- ◆ #2: Accreditation pre-selection
- ◆ #3: Developmental – not assessment, confidential
- ◆ #4: Voluntary completion and debrief; privacy respected
- ◆ #5: Face to face / verbal debrief mandated
- ◆ #6: Diagnosis precedes intervention
- ◆ #7: Caveat - *MEWS is not to be used or relied upon or treated as a substitute for specific professional advice and we recommend obtaining independent professional psychological or medical advice before making any decisions or taking any action in relation health, wellbeing and/or lifestyle choices, requirements or circumstances*

# The MEWS Debrief Guide

- ◆ My MEWS online version and/or download the PDF during accreditation
- ◆ Hand holding for first few sessions
- ◆ How to explain wellbeing
- ◆ All the detailed information on cut offs and how to explain the profile page
- ◆ Adapt to suit you and the intervention

# The MEWS Coaching Guide

- ◆ A reference tool available after accreditation – online, item by item
- ◆ Starting points on each item - adjust to suit you, your professional boundaries and the respondent's profile and receptivity
- ◆ Some insights into rationale for the item
- ◆ NOT a fixed approach, our suggestions
- ◆ Resources library - beginnings