



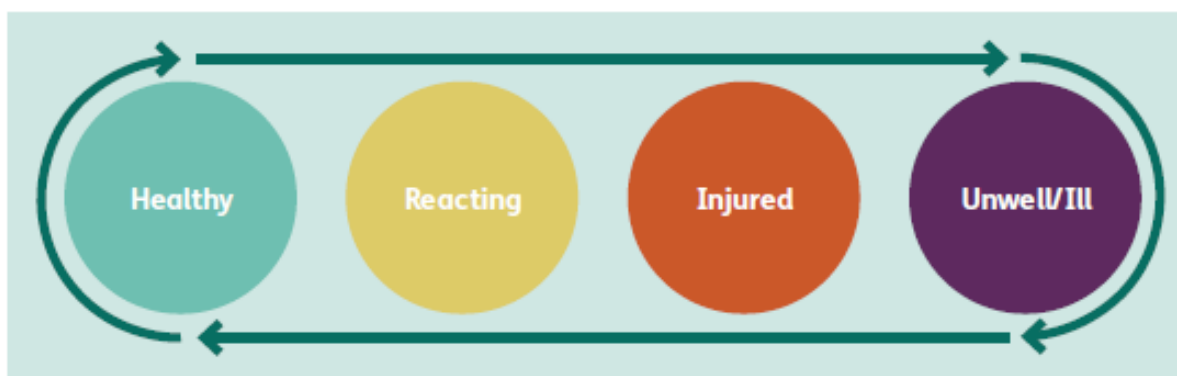
Mental wellbeing as a continuum

There is an acknowledged mental health continuum on which all of us sit, at various points, with our location changing at times. At one end is 'healthy', and at the other end are those who are severely impacted by a mental health condition, again to varying degrees.

Everyone possesses varying degrees of mental wellbeing in the same way that everyone possesses varying degrees of physical health. The factors highlighted in the biopsychosocial model on the previous page can all contribute to where we sit on this continuum at any one time.

It is important to understand that individuals may move along the continuum depending on biological, social and psychological factors, and being aware of this continuum helps us to recognise symptoms in others and intervene early.

The following model details some of the characteristics that may fall under 'healthy', where an individual not only has an absence of ill health symptoms, but experiences positive mental wellbeing (eg. good energy levels, feeling calm and relaxed and is performing well). This is ideally where we would like everyone to be! 'Reacting' is where someone is beginning to show symptoms of a condition which are likely to be noticeable. 'Injured' people are most probably at a diagnosable stage, and finally moving into 'unwell' where the mental health condition is seriously impacting on the individual's life and wellbeing.



Healthy

- Normal mood fluctuations
- Calm and takes things in stride
- Good sense of humour
- Performing well
- In control mentally
- Normal sleep patterns
- Few sleep difficulties
- Physically well
- Good energy level
- Physically and socially active
- No or limited alcohol use or gambling.

Reacting

- Irritable or impatient
- Nervous
- Sadness or overwhelmed
- Displaced sarcasm
- Procrastination
- Forgetfulness
- Trouble sleeping
- Intrusive thoughts
- Nightmares
- Muscle tension or headaches
- Low energy
- Decreased activity or socialising
- Regular but controlled alcohol use or gambling.

Injured

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Pervasively sad or hopeless
- Negative attitude
- Poor performance or workaholic
- Poor concentration or decision making
- Restless disturbed sleep
- Recurrent images or nightmares
- Increased aches and pains
- Increased fatigue
- Avoidance
- Withdrawal
- Increased alcohol use or gambling is hard to control.

Unwell/Ill

- Angry outbursts or aggression
- Excessive anxiety or panic attacks
- Depressed or suicidal thoughts
- Over insubordination
- Can't perform duties, control behaviour or concentrate
- Can't fall asleep or stay asleep
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Physical illness
- Constant fatigue
- Not going out or answering phone
- Alcohol or gambling addiction
- Other addictions.

Source of model: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
 (jointly developed with United States Marine Corps Department of Psychiatry)
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