

What do you want your life to represent? What personal qualities and way of life do you want to cultivate? How do you want your relationships with others to be?

Our values guide and motivate us as we move through life. Lifestyle management is about constructing a blueprint for daily activities, choices and thinking patterns to guide you along a life path of resilience that is consistent with your values and goals. Small changes can often have a big impact.

Value your time, increase productivity and efficiency

- Write your list of what constitutes time well spent.
- Plan ahead with daily 'to-do' lists
- Prioritise short and long term goals and review them regularly
- Break down major tasks and action one part at a time
- Use commuting / waiting time by reading, writing, returning phone calls, etc.
- Avoid procrastination by confronting it – what about the task ahead scares or bores you? Identify, and proceed anyway!
- Take mini-breaks as you need them to recharge and refocus
- Identify regular, repeated drains on your time. Tackle each one and fix them, address them, or change them.
- Do you prefer working under pressure or do you leave yourself plenty of time? Identify your preferred approach -- use it to your advantage -- set realistic deadlines

A balanced approach to fitness

- Find a fitness regimen that is fun and suits you
- Small steps keep you motivated – plan a realistic routine
- Set your own pace to avoid straining your muscles (or enthusiasm)
- Use your daily commute by walking / cycling to work, or take the stairs
- Join a fitness class with a family member or a friend to help motivate you towards your health and fitness goals
- Utilise technology to document your progress (e.g. Fitbit, steps-counter)
- Vary your workouts to include strength days, fitness days and rest days
- Have regular medical check-ups, stay hydrated, quit smoking
- Incorporate relaxation into your schedule (e.g. massage, meditation, yoga, music)
- Get regular, quality sleep (minimise disruptions, average 8 hours)

Eat smart

- Find natural foods that you enjoy and incorporate into your regular shopping list
- Eat smaller portions more often
- Increase vegetable, fruit, wholegrain, proteins and foods rich in omega-3; consume only lean meat, and limit processed foods and sugar
- Only eat when you're hungry (not when you're bored!)
- Watch for emotional eating – be aware, be compassionate with yourself and address the issue triggering the emotion
- Meditate on the experience of eating, savouring the flavours – don't multitask
- Snack smart and carry fruit, nuts, raw veggies and cheese when you're at work
- Limit your intake of alcohol, sodas, caffeine and salt
- The 80:20 Rule – eat well for 80% of your meals and you can be flexible with the 20%. If you exercise most days of the week, take a couple of days off.

Darwin (Head Office)

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

easadarwin@easa.org.au

Alice Springs

(08) 8953 4225

easaalicesprings@easa.org.au

Katherine

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

Toll Free (NT only)

1800 193 123

www.easa.org.au

Lifestyle Management

Skills for resilience

- Be objective when facing stressful situations (are they *calming* or *alarming*?) -- identify your patterns of negative-thinking and work to replace them with empowered thinking patterns
- Evaluate evidence 'for' and 'against' the negative thought and recognise that *your way* isn't the *only way*
- Transform 'all or nothing' thinking to include shades of grey / yourself and others / good-ok-bad to achieve balance
- Identify and address tendencies for unrealistic expectations, assumptions or jumping to conclusions
- Identify and address self-defeating patterns such as learned helplessness, perpetual victim states, vague boundaries, impulsivity and believing you cannot do something because that is the way you are
- Stop overstating your (perceived) inadequacies or blaming bad events on external factors – focus on positives
- Eliminate a sense of entitlement, bias or justifications for actions by asking yourself “what the big deal is? Does it really matter?”
- Start practising non-judgemental awareness and focus on what is occurring in the present moment
- Be real -- not perfect – and practise an optimistic and grateful attitude
- Remember, over-thinking doesn't solve problems

Assertiveness – developing balance

- Your rights, thoughts, feelings, needs and desires are *just* as important as everyone else's!
- State your priorities and be open to honest communication and feedback
- Expressing your needs doesn't automatically sacrifice the needs of others – avoid taking guilt trips
- Each of us is responsible for our own behaviour – accept that you can't please everyone
- Endeavour to express negative thoughts and feelings in a respectful, calm and objective manner
- Remember, it's ok to ask for help when you need it
- Listen actively, don't interrupt and try to understand another's view-point
- Know your limits – say “no” if you feel someone is taking advantage and calmly discuss options for a solution
- Accept feedback as graciously as a compliment – you can agree to disagree without becoming defensive or angry. Be okay with mistakes and learn from them
- Take a problem-solving approach to conflict

Building your support network

- In current relationships, are you *giving* the kind of support that *you want*? Be willing to be present for others.
- Are you aware of the kind of support that people in your network need?
- Make an effort to remember special days.
- Be loyal and *always respect the confidences* of people in your network
- Don't wait for people to ask for help – ask how you can help and offer suggestions on what you *could* do.
- When you commit, under-promise and over-deliver
- Be approachable – make it easy for people to connect with you – and if they offer help, receive it with grace. Allow them the privilege of making a contribution
- When feeling vulnerable, maintain a positive outlook by restricting your exposure to negativity
- *Thank* often and remind people of what they do that you appreciate
- Open yourself to relationships with diverse people – don't assume people in your network need to share your interests and values
- Take time once a year to review and clean up your social media. Ask yourself: what accounts and content no longer serve your goals or wellbeing and remove them
- Take part in enjoyable group activities – volunteer, find a course, a team-sport or faith meetings. Your local council library has a list of community groups in your area, or search online
- Maintain healthy boundaries, but also be flexible and prepared to make compromises
- Honour your relationship with yourself – carve out one a day week to refuel, revitalize and rejuvenate – where the only person you say “yes” to is you!