

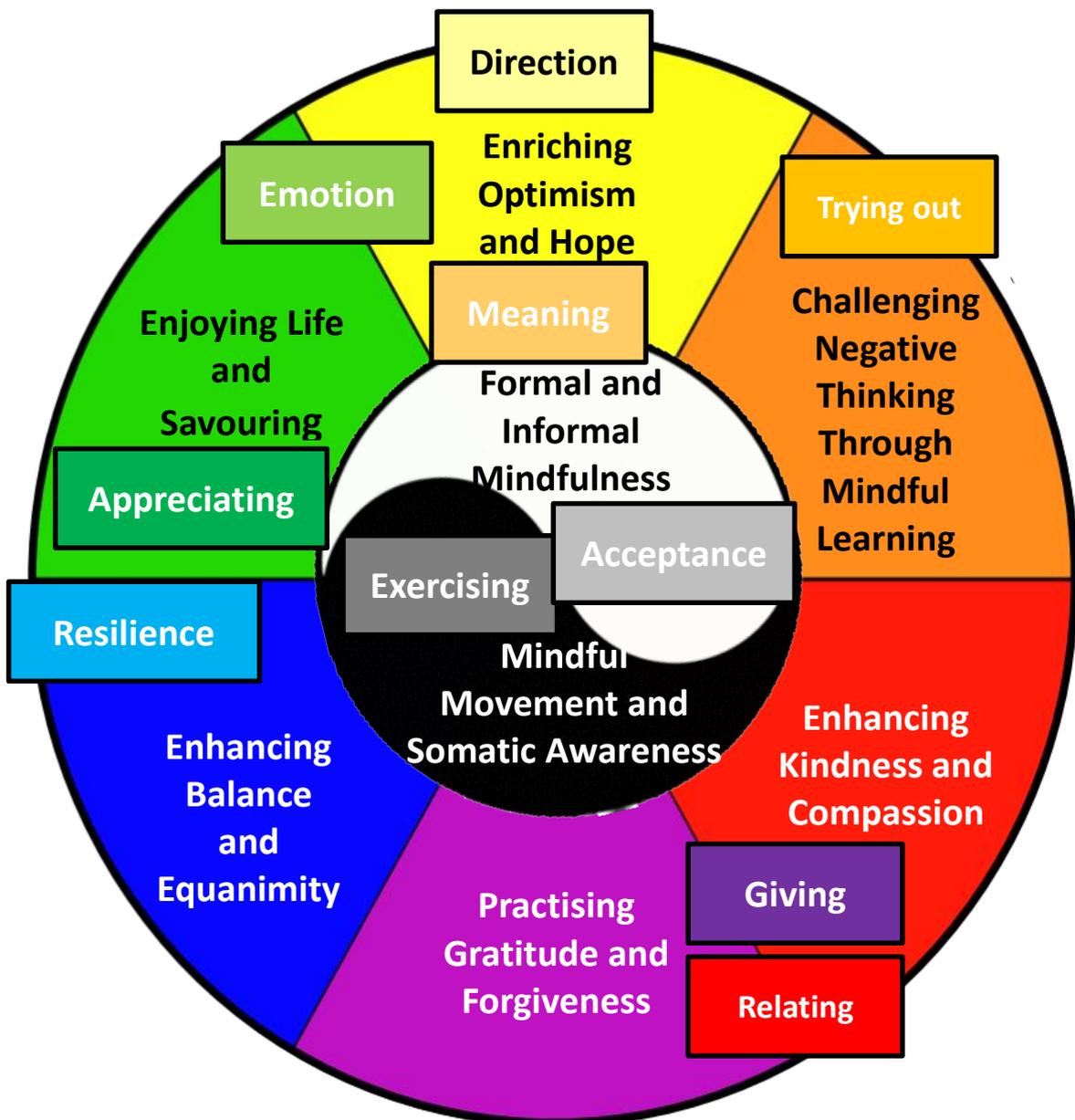
MINDFULNESS AND WELLBEING

The Five Ways to Wellbeing were identified by the New Economics Foundation [NEF] from evidence gathered in the UK government's Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. The Project, published in 2008, drew on state-of-the-art research about mental capital and mental wellbeing through life. The five ways are **Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning** and **Give**. These have been extended into ten by Action for Happiness, with the mnemonic Great Dream, as shown below.

GREAT DREAM	
GIVING	Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, as linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.
RELATING [CONNECT]	With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
EXERCISING [BE ACTIVE]	Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.
APPRECIATING [TAKE NOTICE]	Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons! Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.
TRYING OUT [KEEP LEARNING]	Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.
DIRECTION	Have goals to look forward to. Feeling good about the future is important for our happiness. We all need goals to motivate us and these need to be challenging enough to excite us, but also achievable. If we try to attempt the impossible this brings unnecessary stress. Choosing ambitious but realistic goals gives our lives direction and brings a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction when we achieve them.
RESILIENCE	Find ways to bounce back. All of us have times of stress, loss, failure or trauma in our lives. But how we respond to these has a big impact on our well-being. We often cannot choose what happens to us, but we can choose our own attitude to what happens. In practice it's not always easy, but one of the most exciting findings from recent research is that resilience, like many other life skills, can be learned.
EMOTION	Take a positive approach. Positive emotions – like joy, gratitude, contentment, inspiration, and pride – are not just great at the time. Recent research shows that regularly experiencing them creates an 'upward spiral', helping to build our resources. So although we need to be realistic about life's ups and downs, it helps to focus on the good aspects of any situation – the glass half full rather than the glass half empty.
ACCEPTANCE	Be comfortable with who you are. No-one's perfect. But so often we compare our insides to other people's outsides. Dwelling on our flaws - what we're not rather than what we've got - makes it much harder to be happy. Learning to accept

	ourselves, warts and all, and being kinder to ourselves when things go wrong, increases our enjoyment of life, our resilience and our well-being. It also helps us accept others as they are.
MEANING	Be part of something bigger. People who have meaning and purpose in their lives are happier, feel more in control and get more out of what they do. They also experience less stress, anxiety and depression. But where do we find 'meaning and purpose'? It might be our religious faith, being a parent or doing a job that makes a difference. The answers vary for each of us but they all involve being connected to something bigger than ourselves.
First five: New Economics Foundation 2011 [words in brackets indicate the original title]; Second five: www.Actionforhappiness.org	

This diagram indicates the links to our course in Mindfulness Based Life Enhancement, expanded below.



GREAT DREAM	HOW MINDFULNESS BASED LIFE ENHANCEMENT CONTRIBUTES
GIVING	We can Give by expressing <i>gratitude</i> , by practising <i>tonglen</i> , by <i>forgiving</i> [ourselves and others].
RELATING [CONNECT]	We can Connect through meditations such as the <i>Four Immeasurables</i> , and through informal practice such as <i>Random Acts of Kindness</i> and the expression of <i>compassion</i> .
EXERCISING [BE ACTIVE]	We can Be Active through <i>mindful movement</i> and greater <i>somatic awareness</i> .
APPRECIATING [TAKE NOTICE]	We can Take Notice by <i>savouring</i> – the small as well as the large – and by <i>taking joy</i> in both our own happiness and that of others.
TRYING OUT [KEEP LEARNING]	Among the things we can Keep Learning are recognition of automatic pilots which are unhelpful, the harmful stereotypes we create about ourselves and others, the power of negative thinking, and the <i>second darts</i> we often fire at ourselves.
DIRECTION	Having a sense of <i>purpose</i> is important, and we explore this in MBL.
RESILIENCE	Studies have shown that <i>mindfulness</i> is helpful in building resilience. Thus Boyatzis and McKee [2005] identify three key requirements for resilience in leaders: <i>mindfulness</i> , <i>compassion</i> and <i>hope</i> , all of which feature in MBL.
EMOTION	Taking a positive approach to life – without seeking to deny the negative – can be furthered by <i>enjoying life</i> and <i>savouring</i> , as well as by <i>challenging negative thinking through mindful learning</i>
ACCEPTANCE	This is a central feature in all mindfulness courses
MEANING	In the exploration of the <i>Four Immeasurables [Loving Kindness, Compassion, Empathetic Joy and Equanimity]</i> the individual is invited to relate these to ‘something bigger’ – to the community we know, and the wider community of living beings.
	Practices introduced in MBL are given in italics.