DARLENE: Afternoon, everybody. Its Darlene here and I’d like to start by acknowledging that I’m coming to you from lutruwita, Tasmania Aboriginal land, sea and waterways and acknowledge with deep respect for the traditional custodians of the land on which I am today, the palawa people. And I also would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of any of the various lands on which we are meeting today and any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are participating in this Webinar. Today's Webinar is ‘Permission to be Human’. What happens when we are not happy, does it mean we are failing in some ways to look after our wellbeing? Fantastic topic and probably just right at the right time for many of this at this stage. So I'll hand over to you, Deb.

DEBBIE: Thank you, Darlene. Hello everyone for our 12 at 12, our mid week recharge. Welcome again. I'm feeling a bit - I've just said I'm feeling very proud because I've just set up a new work station for myself. Yes, I can do it. I can't always do it with IT. That's when I get frustrated. Yeah, what happens when we don't experience positive emotions all the time? If you've joined us for the last few weeks, you know that positive emotions are really important for our well-being. It just makes sense that they are. But just sometimes life is so full of, kind of, frustrations and hurt or boredom or self-doubt, rejection, failure, loss. So they're just an inevitable part of life. So what happens with those kind of emotions? It's actually not possible to be happy all the time. It's not possible, it’s not realistic and it's those painful or difficult emotions, they are just such a part of our life but rather than think that there's something wrong with us, actually we need to give ourselves permission to experience some time. Not all the time. There's a bit of debate about how much positive emotions verse negative emotions that we can get through in order to feel happy or in order to look after our well-being and the thinking is around about that 80/20. It's always a good rule of thumb anyway, that 80/20. So if we can, kind of, aim for that, rather than think that we have to get 100 per cent of, kind of, really feeling great all the time. Imagine if you could. You'd just end up driving everyone around you crazy anyway. So Tal Ben Shaha, I really love his phrases, giving us permission to be human. Giving ourselves permission to just feel down sometimes and know that nothing is wrong, we're not broken. We can still look after our well-being and have those times that we're feeling down. In fact, this is work from Robert Biswas-Diener who talks about when we are comfortable with our whole range of our emotions, both the comfortable ones and the uncomfortable ones, or the negative ones and the positive ones, that we actually have a deeper sense of well-being. That we are better learners, that we become more successful in whatever we choose to do. So rather than trying to brush those negative or uncomfortable emotions aside, we actually learn to, kind of, see them as part of the experience of being human and he talks a bit like it's like camping. So when you go camping, you know, you might be sleeping on the uncomfortable mattress and, you know, your food might not be cooked so well and you might be exhausted after a day of hiking but that's part of the whole experience of camping and you accept that. You accept that for that great experience of being outdoors and achieving when you do your walk at the end of your trek of the day as part of the whole experience. So experiencing those uncomfortable emotions is part of being whole. If camping is not your thing, I actually experience lots of uncomfortable emotions when I'm camping, it might be something else that you do. It might be going to the gym and you experience that bit of uncomfort or it might be cooking, trying a new recipe and there's a whole lot of difficult and uncomfortable emotions that come with that. Or, it might be like me trying to set up my new workstation, getting a new desk up. It was a whole lot of difficult emotions and physical strains with that but it's just part of, kind of, being whole and know that in order to get that overall feeling of accomplishment that it's part of life. It's really - so rather than think, I'm broken, it's not fair, why can't I be happy? I'm not happy all the time? It's just part of being human and it's giving ourselves permission to be that. So Robert Biswas-Diener also says we need that physical or psychological agility. When I use the word agility, what comes to mind? If you want to put it into chat, what comes to mind when I use the word agility? Is there a picture that you can see or words that come to mind? Flexibility. Yep. Adapt to change. Quick to react. So a lot of, kind of, you know, flexibility, quickly able to adapt, pivot. I see a gymnast, you know, with that whole lot of agility that they can go on the balanced bars, balance beams, they can do cart wheels in the air, the whole flexibility and can stretch and bend in all sorts of ways. So if we think of our emotions like that too. So when we're emotionally agile, we know that our difficult emotions are part of who we are and rather than, kind of, lean away from them that we - and also rather than become worried that we're worried, we become anxious that we're anxious or we become stressed that we're stressed, we just know they're part of who we are and we see them as data and not as directives. We see them as a message we might need to take action on something or something that we care about is at stake, rather than think we've got to take action. So they're not facts. They're just really, kind of, data that we can use. So, for example, when someone might undermine you in a meeting, if you're kind of really rigid, that you might clam up or lash out at them or if someone brings up a problem about something that you've done, you know, you mightn't have got a talk right or you mightn't have done a spreadsheet right, if you're emotionally rigid you can quickly change the subject because you don't want to go there, you don't want to lean into those uncomfortable emotions. Or if you get a difficult medical diagnosis you can do all sorts of magical thinking and wish it away. So that's what rigidity looks like. We go into these automatic reactions rather than taking the time and responding about who do we want to be, what do we want to do, think about that flexibility and adapting to change. Some of you might know Viktor Franki who has said lots about this kind of stuff and Viktor Franki was a prisoner in a Nazi war camp during World War 2. He talked about one of his favourite insights. Between stimulus and response there's a space. There's always a space between something that happens and how we respond. In that space is our power to choose our response and in our response lies our growth and freedom. Rather than reacting we can use that space between what happens and how we respond to choose our response. Being emotionally agile requires us to intentionally seize that space and make a choice. It helps us respond and not react. So parts of emotional agility, this is work from Susan David. So we show up to all those emotions and we look at them as data. What information are they giving us? What's it asking of us? So I want you now to think of something difficult that's happened recently in your life. Not too hard. You know, if you're kind of looking at difficulty, no more than a 5 out of 10 but something that's happened to you lately. It could be a family tension. It could have been miscommunication at work. It could have been a bit of a conflict. It could have been something that didn't just go as well as you want. I want you to try and name it specifically as possible the emotions. You don't have to share this in chat. I just want you to reflect on it just for a couple of seconds because that's all we have at our 12 at 12. Name your emotions as specifically as you can. There's a great saying name and tame. If you name your emotions specifically you're more likely to tame them. That's the first step. Just showing up to all those emotions and name them. Once you've named your emotion often we say, I am. I am anxious or I was anxious. But the thing is that we're more than that. We're not anxious. It might be part of us but it's not our entirety. Then stepping out is that next step. Creating a bit of a distance between your emotions, so you're more likely to see them as data. Instead of saying, thinking back to the emotions that you felt in that difficult situation, think then, I am noticing that I was feeling a bit of anxiety. I notice that I was feeling stressed. I notice that I was feeling frustrated. So just that change of saying, I was frustrated, to saying I am noticing that I was feeling frustrated, gives you a little bit of space between you and that emotion. You're more likely to see it as data. Specifically when you can talk about stress in really nuance ways by naming up those different emotions that you experience as part of that stress, it starts to activate your brain to take action and I think we covered that before when we looked at stress. Then what you do is you choose. You choose your response. So how do you choose it? You base it on your values. So what matters most to me in this situation? What might be a helpful way to respond? What relationships do I want to build? How do I want to show up and be? So I just want to close by giving you a couple of little bits more of information. It can be helpful also to know that studies suggest that most of us are actually wired for resilience. A lot of studies by a guy called George Banaro that most of us bounce back up after six months. If we're really experiencing difficult emotions that most of us will naturally bounce back. It won't last forever. The effects won't last forever. So, you know, yeah. It doesn't have to weaken us forever. We can bounce back. While most of us like 65, 75% bounce back after six months, another 15% of us bounce back in another few months after that. There's just a small percentage of us that need some external help when we get stuck. Some of us not only bounce back but bounce forward. So we come through it in some way better. It can be hard to know at the time but if you keep thinking when you're going through these difficulties, how can I get through this better than before? It reminds me of that beautiful art of precious scars, the Japanese terminology for it is Kintsugi, which means golden joinery. That sometimes when we crack and we come out and put ourselves together, that there is beauty in that. That we are stronger in some way. That we are wiser in some way. We might be more compassionate in some way and more beautiful in some way. So, you know, it's bouncing forward and thinking, how am I a better person for what happened to me, not that we never wanted it to happen in the first place, nor would we want it to happen again, but because it happened, because we experienced that really difficult time, that I have come out of it in some way more better and there could be lots of people that you know in your life that have come through things in some way better and that's all because I've ran out of time.

DARLENE: Thanks, Deb. As always the 12 minutes goes so fast. And once again Deb, it’s just great to sit and stop for 12 minutes to reflect. So, thank you. Have a great day, everybody.

DEBBIE: Thanks, everyone. See you next week.

DARLENE: Bye.