

# Keep Learning (5 Ways to Wellbeing)

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 [mindcharity.co.uk/wellbeing-article/keep-learning-5-ways-wellbeing/](https://mindcharity.co.uk/wellbeing-article/keep-learning-5-ways-wellbeing/)

## What is learning?

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Learning is about gaining new knowledge, developing skills and having new experiences that enrich our lives. Learning is about challenging ourselves to do something different or improve upon what we've done before. Learning can take many shapes and forms – it could mean taking a new educational or vocational course, refining existing skills, challenging ourselves to develop new ones or approaching new tasks and events that we've not tried before. Broadening our minds helps us gain insight into life, ourselves, and the world around us, which are all good things for our mental wellbeing.

*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 will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do. – New Economics Foundation [1]*

## Why is learning good for us?

Learning is good for our minds and our bodies – it's good for our mental wellbeing. Learning has been shown to have a number of benefits to our sense of wellbeing and life satisfaction:

### **Increases our self-esteem**

Learning new skills, experiencing new things and overcoming a challenge (however big or small) can help us feel better about ourselves. Achieving what we've set out to do, or becoming wiser through our experiences can help us feel better equipped to take on life's challenges and achieve our larger goals in life. With the knowledge that we've been able to deal with challenges, we feel more confident in ourselves and our abilities and better able to take on new ones. The practice of setting goals, which is related to learning in particular has been strongly associated with higher levels of well-being [2]

### **Gives us a sense of hope and purpose**

Studies and anecdotal evidence have shown how learning new skills and gaining new knowledge can contribute to us having a greater sense of hope and purpose in life. Through learning new things and having new experiences we may begin to feel that there is more hope for the future at the direction we are going in. Setting goals, which is linked to learning, has been shown to increase our sense of well-being. By setting goals for ourselves and working to achieve them, we gain a sense of purpose and the feeling that things are 'moving forward'.

## Better ability to cope with stress

People who carry on learning after childhood report higher wellbeing and a greater ability to cope with stress. They also report more feelings of self-esteem, hope and purpose.- [NHS](#). When we are learning we are often focusing our mind's attention on the here-and-now. Being in the present moment, we focus our mind's away from past experiences or future worries, which has been shown to reduce stress and promote mental wellbeing – read our wellbeing article on this here -> [Take Notice \(5 Ways to Wellbeing\)](#).

**“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you”**

**- B.B King**



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## References

[1] 5 Ways to Wellbeing – The Evidence, New Economics Foundation

[2] 5 Ways to Wellbeing, South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust