

Looking to the Future: Embracing a Wellbeing Perspective

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Earl E. Bakken Center for
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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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THINKING ABOUT PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

- What are the greatest challenges they face?
- Where are the gaps in care?
- How are outcomes impacted by social determinants of health?



What matters most?



WELLBEING

- Wellbeing in Persons, Families and Communities
- Wellbeing in Your own Life – personal wellbeing



WELLBEING

- What is wellbeing?
- Why is it important?



DEFINING WELLBEING

- Happy, healthy and prosperous
- A state of being in balance or alignment
- Content
- Peaceful
- Connected to purpose
- In harmony
- Safe

A long-exposure photograph of a river flowing over rocks at sunset. The water is blurred into a smooth, white, misty flow, creating a sense of motion and tranquility. Large, dark, moss-covered rocks are scattered throughout the scene, particularly in the foreground and middle ground. The background is filled with a dense forest of evergreen trees, their silhouettes softened by the warm, golden light of the setting sun. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and yellows, with wispy clouds catching the low light. The overall mood is peaceful and serene, capturing a moment of natural beauty.

Whole

A serene beach scene at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the water and sand. Gentle waves are washing onto the shore. In the foreground, a single white feather lies on the reddish-brown sand. The background shows a line of trees on a distant shore.

WELLBEING

The reasons we want to
be alive — Atul Gawande M.D.



What Impacts Wellbeing?

WELLBEING

- Whole person
- Increase capacity and expand potential
- Possible even with chronic illness and maturing bodies
- Individual, family, organization and community





HEALTH

- Physical Health
- Emotional Health
- Mental Health
- Spiritual Health



HEALTH

- Physical Activity
- Healthy Eating
- Sleep
- Thoughts and Emotions
- Stress Mastery

“Lifestyle behaviors impact health outcomes and longevity.”



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One Stop MyU

TAKING CHARGE
of your
HEALTH & WELLBEING

[Manage Health Conditions](#)[Try Holistic Practices](#)

be MINDFUL live HEALTHY create CONNECTION feel SAFE find MEANING healing ENVIRONMENTS

Enhance your wellbeing

You're in charge. Learn how a holistic approach to [wellbeing](#) can help you discover health, contentment, purpose, and connection.

[Assess your wellbeing](#)[Set a goal](#)



Popular Resources



ENVIRONMENT
Move from ME to WE



COMMUNITY
Healing Justice for equity



HEALTH CONDITIONS
COVID-19 anxiety



COMMUNITY
Mindfulness for racial justice



HEALTH
Free wellbeing webinars



STUDENT CORNER
Dealing with student debt stress



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PURPOSE

What gets you up in the morning?

Aim

Direction

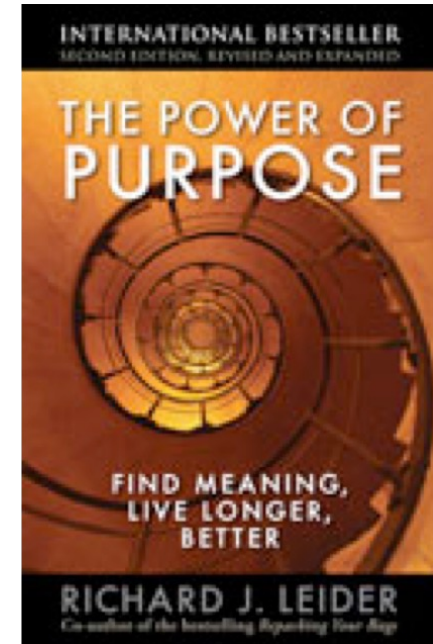
Different from job or career

“Purpose matters.”





- Be more reflective.
- Be more courageous.
- Be clear earlier about purpose!





PURPOSE, WELLBEING AND LONGEVITY

- Study of over 6,000 people funded by the NIA, researchers found that people who had a greater sense of purpose and direction in life were more likely to outlive their peers.
- People with a sense of purpose had a 15% lower risk of death compared to those who said they were aimless.
 - (Hill et al, 2014)



Discovering your Purpose

G + P + V = Calling



What is a Calling?

- What you love to do.
- How you like to serve.
- When you lose yourself in the task.
- Your calling is found in the things you love to do for others.



Gifts

- Gifts are natural, skills are learned.
- Skills are acquired through education and practice.
- Gifts often emerge naturally and early in our lives.
- They show up in the things we love to do.



Gifts

- What comes naturally to you?
- What do others observe you doing effortlessly and superbly?
- What do others say you are naturally good at?



Passion

- What you care deeply about?
- What moves you?
- What inspires you?
- What is worth doing?
- What is it that life is asking us to fulfill?



Values

- Do you stand for?
- What do you care deeply about?



Purpose

Are you using your gifts on things that you care about, that fit with your values, and in an environment that supports you?



RELATIONSHIPS

Close connections between people, formed by emotional bonds and interactions.

Health risks of being alone are comparable in magnitude to the risks associated with cigarette smoking, high blood pressure and obesity.

“Isolation is fatal.”



LONELINESS IN ICELAND

- Women experienced more loneliness and stress than men.
- Rate of loneliness and stress lowered with increasing age.
- Physical exercise reduces symptoms of stress and loneliness. Also contributes to happiness.

Source: Study on Health and Wellbeing of Icelanders (Directorate of Health, 2017) and Þróstur Hjálmarsson MA Thesis (2022)



Loneliness

- 47% of Americans often feel alone, left out and lack meaningful connection with others.
- This is true for all ages, from teenagers to older adults.
- With social media, while we are more “connected” that ever, we are also more lonely.



RELATIONSHIPS

- Are there people you are close to – family, friends?
- Are there people you can turn to when you are
- Are your personal relationships balanced in terms of giving and receiving?

Qualities of a Healthy Community:



COMMUNITY

- Livability
- Equity
- Connectedness



COMMUNITY

Livability

- Economic
- Social
- Cultural
- Political
- Technological
- Infrastructure - jobs, schools, transportation, crime, internet access, theaters, green space



COMMUNITY

Equity

- Access
- Fairness
- Diversity



Engagement:

- Participation
- Connections

Empowerment

- Moved to action
- Networks of citizen efforts





COMMUNITY

- Meal Access
- Help-Lines
- Intergenerational housing
- Parks
- Porches
- Neighborhood gathering places



COMMUNITY

People living in US cities with low wellbeing are twice as likely to have a heart attack as those who live in a city with high wellbeing.

“Community nurtures and sustains us.”



COMMUNITY

- Societies with highest level of wellbeing:

STRONG RULE
OF LAW

LOW RATES OF
CORRUPTION

EFFICIENT &
EFFECTIVE
GOVERNMENT

PROGRESSIVE
TAXATION

INCOME
SECURITY
PROGRAMS

POLITICAL
FREEDOMS

HEALTHFUL
NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT



- Feeling safe and secure — a basic human need
- Financial, food and housing security
- Safety and preventive health measures
- Violence

“Fear immobilizes.”

SECURITY

- Assaults on human rights pose a threat to human dignity, livelihoods, and safety.
- Racism, intolerance and the lack of civility have a corrosive effect on the social fabric that binds us together.





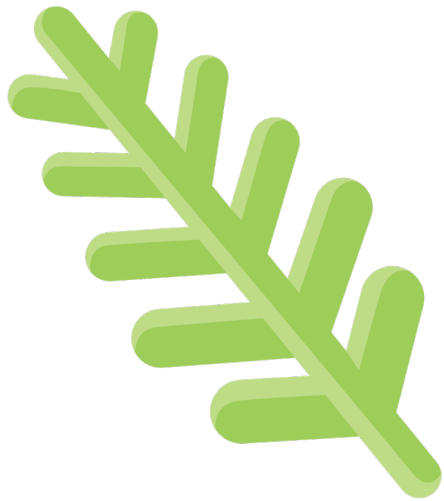
Security

- Make safe choices – focus on what you can control.
- Face your fears and anxieties so they don't become debilitating.
- Re-think money.
- Protect others.
 - When everyone is secure, we all benefit.
 - Work toward a just, equitable society.
 - Security is deeply interdependent with equity.



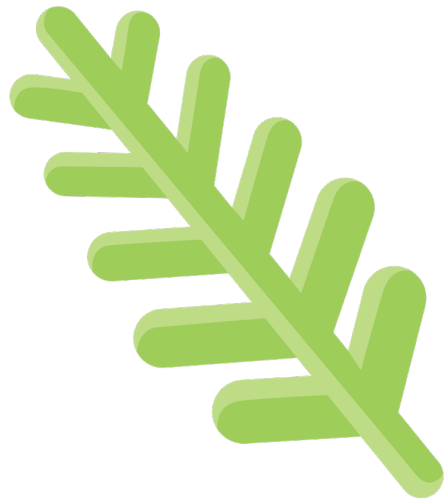
ENVIRONMENT

- Clean air and water
- Free of toxins
- Built environment
- Access to nature
- Climate Crisis



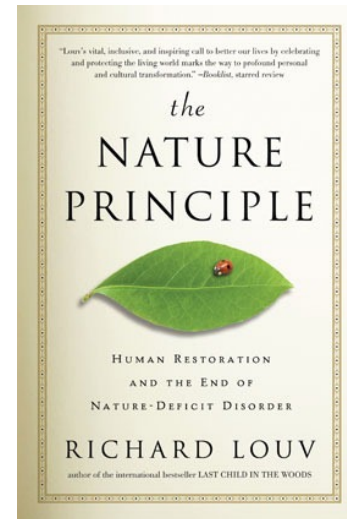
- Creating Healing Environments in work and at home

ENVIRONMENT



ENVIRONMENT

- Nature heals.





NATURE CONTACT AND HUMAN HEALTH

- Humans are increasingly disconnected from nature.
- Over half of the world's population and 4/5 Americans live in urban areas where access to nature may be limited.
- Americans spend 90% of their time indoors, most of the time in buildings.
- Total media consumption for US adults in 2016 – 10 hours and 39 minutes daily. (Fumkin et al, 2017)

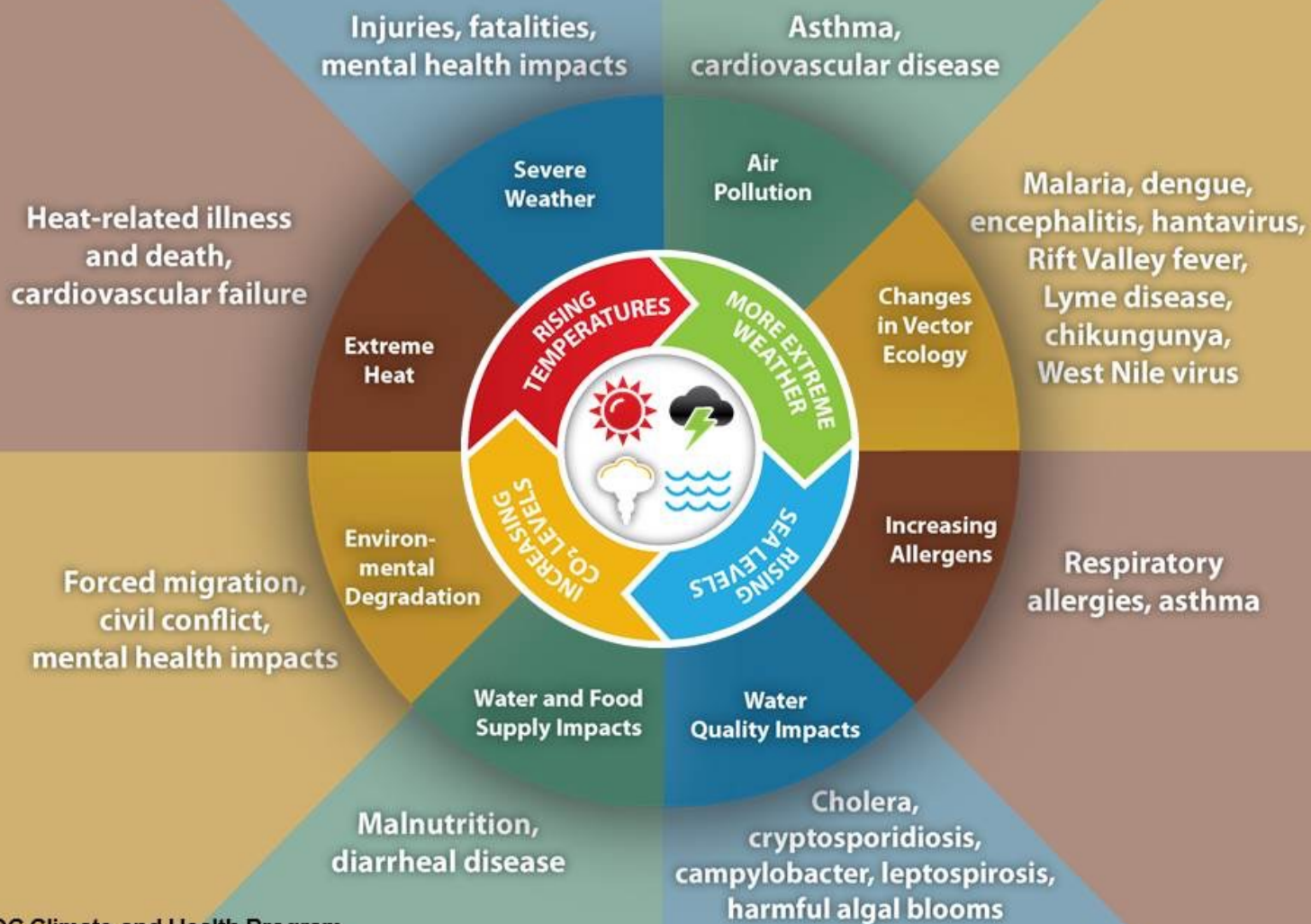


BENEFITS OF NATURE CONTACT

- Reduced stress
- Improved sleep
- Decreased anxiety and depression
- Greater happiness and life satisfaction
- Reduced aggression

(Fumkin et al, 2017)

Impact of Climate Change on Human Health





SOBERING STATISTIC

- Today's young adults may be first generation in modern history to be less healthy than their parents.

7 TIPS to CULTIVATE WELLBEING



Get enough sleep

Everyone regrets pulling all-nighters. Make sure you get between 6 and 8 hours of sleep each night to keep your mood, concentration, energy, and stress levels in check. (Pro tip: For optimal rest, steer clear of electronic screens for a couple of hours before bed.)



Stock your fridge

Every fridge should always contain: a fruit, a vegetable, and a source of calcium (such as cheese, beans, milk, or calcium-fortified soy milk). Nutrient-rich foods you can grab, such as apples or yogurt, will help keep you feeling satisfied and less likely to reach for salty or sugary snacks, which can zap your energy and leave you feeling lethargic.



Buy a plant

Adding some green to your home or office can improve your mood, decrease stress and anxiety, and even help you focus! Try a spider plant if your area has lower light.



Say hi to your neighbor

Help develop a sense of community by greeting others with a smile. Our behavior is “contagious”—your kindness will spread, contributing to a friendlier, more trusting community.



Make time for fun

An hour of leisure activity that brings pleasure (think concerts, Frisbee, or even video games) can be a great source of relaxation, as well as a boost to your problem-solving skills and creativity. Just make sure the activity fits harmoniously into your life and doesn't create stress or interfere with your relationships or obligations.



Schedule time to de-stress

Don't wait until you feel overwhelmed to try and manage stress—make time now for things that you know will keep you calm. Plan ahead to use free Bakken Center resources, like free Mindful Mondays or our wellbeing webinars!

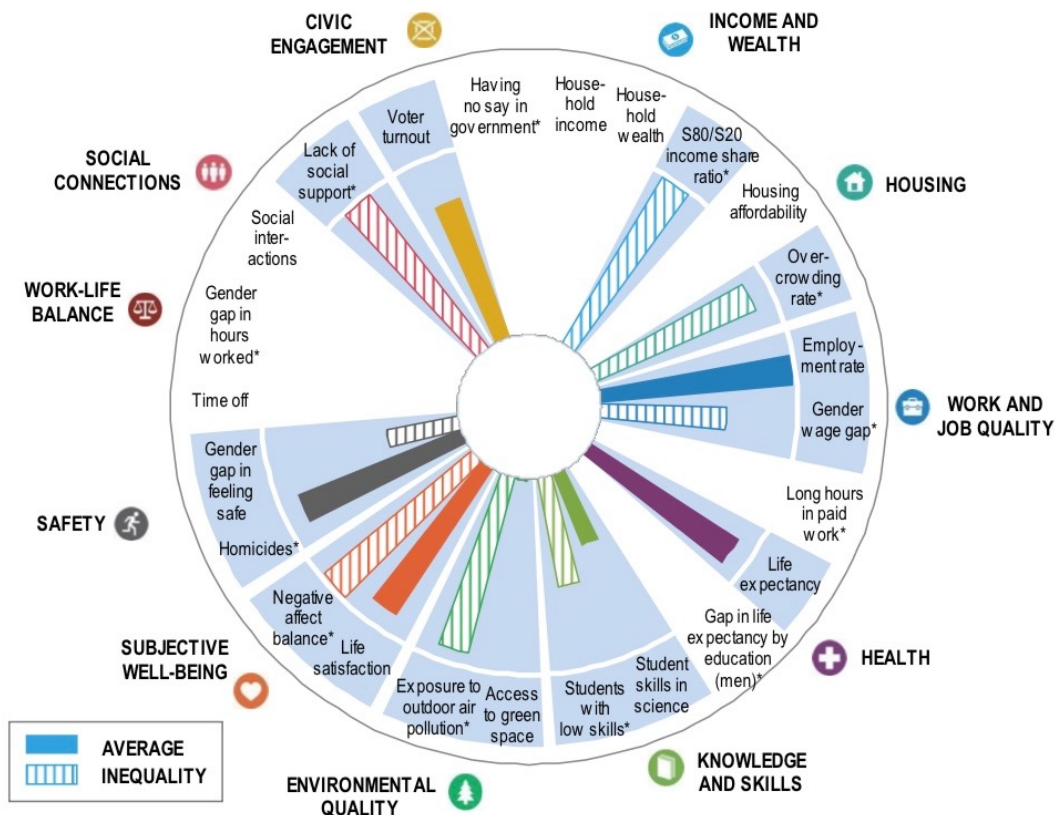


Connect to something bigger

Connecting to 'the big picture' in whatever way feels meaningful for you – volunteer work, attending a religious service, sitting in front of a painting at a museum, or taking a mindful walk in nature – is a beautiful way to untangle yourself from the stressors that arise during your day.





How's Life in Iceland?

Iceland's current well-being, 2018 or latest available year



Note: This chart shows Iceland's relative strengths and weaknesses in well-being compared to other OECD countries. Longer bars always indicate better outcomes (i.e. higher wellbeing), whereas shorter bars always indicate worse outcomes (lower well-being) – including for negative indicators, marked with an *, which have been reverse-scored. Inequalities (gaps between top and bottom, differences between groups, people falling under a deprivation threshold) are shaded with stripes, and missing data in white.

Iceland's resources for future well-being, 2018 or latest available year

Natural Capital 	Economic Capital 	Human Capital 	Social Capital 
Greenhouse gas emissions per capita 3 ↔	Produced fixed assets	Educational attainment of young adults 3 ↗	Trust in others 1 ...
Material footprint 3 ↔	Financial net worth of government 2 ↔	Premature mortality 1 ↔	Trust in government 2 ↔
Red List Index of threatened species 2 ↘	Household debt	Labour underutilisation rate 1 ↗	Gender parity in politics 1 ↗

Note: 1=top-performing OECD tier, 2=middle-performing OECD tier, 3=bottom-performing OECD tier. ↗ indicates consistent improvement; ↔ indicates no clear or consistent trend; ↘ indicates consistent deterioration, and "..." indicates insufficient time series to determine trends since 2010. For methodological details, see the Reader's Guide of *How's Life? 2020*.

Deprivations in Iceland

Deprivations in selected indicators of current well-being, 2018 or latest available year



ICELAND

5%



of the population live in relative income poverty



There is no data available on financial insecurity

25%



of poor households spend more than 40% of their income on housing costs

4%



of the population report low life satisfaction

2%



say they have no friends or family to turn to in times of need

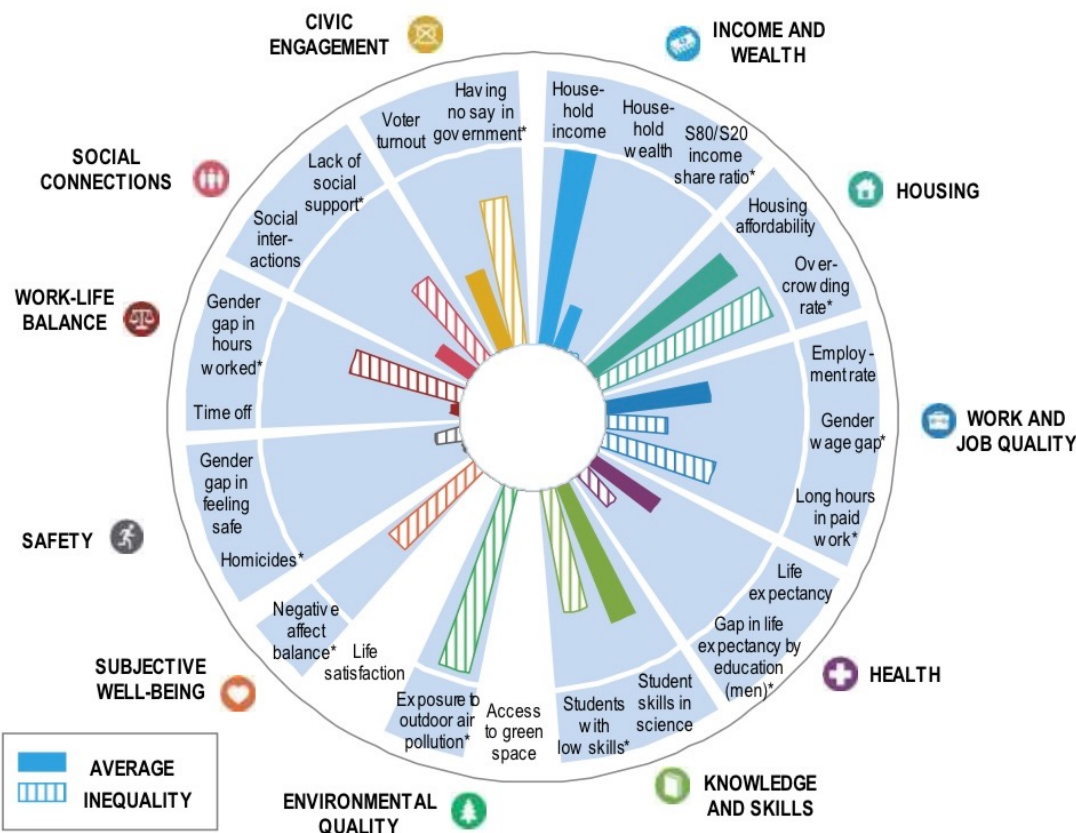
11%



are not satisfied with how they spend their time

How's Life in the United States?

The United States' current well-being, 2018 or latest available year



Note: This chart shows the United States' relative strengths and weaknesses in well-being compared to other OECD countries. Longer bars always indicate better outcomes (i.e. higher wellbeing), whereas shorter bars always indicate worse outcomes (lower well-being) – including for negative indicators, marked with an *, which have been reverse-scored. Inequalities (gaps between top and bottom, differences between groups, people falling under a deprivation threshold) are shaded with stripes, and missing data in white.



Reflection – Looking to the Future

- What strategies or interventions will contribute the most to improving wellbeing of people and families you serve?
- What can you be doing to enhance wellbeing in your life?



Thank you!