

---

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

1ST JUNE 2026  
EDITION 7

---



## Welcome!

May have been ambitious. May have been busy. May have also reminded us why intentional wellbeing matters.

As we've worked alongside organisations across the Pilbara this month, one theme has continued to emerge: when pressure increases, systems matter more than ever. I even experienced this myself this month.

The balance I intended probably didn't quite play out but, that's ok. I also had to practice what I preach about leadership; having difficult conversations, leading by example and acknowledge my limitations.

June is full steam ahead and is setting the tone for the rest of the year which is exciting! Moving forward we will be opening space for key events and mental health themes so stay tuned for those details.

As always, we are looking forward to new opportunities for partnership and connection to help those looking to enhance their workplace wellbeing culture and increase their performance and outcomes.

See you in the next edition.

*Brooke*

## Follow Us



For more regular updates and insights give us a follow on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

@empoweredwellbeingservices



## What's Been Happening?

May provided plenty of professional development opportunities in terms of leadership and learning about my own leadership, but also more of what I love, the literature around it. Speaking to Dr. Nancy Pavisich, author of *Leadership That Lifts Others* about leadership research, workplace experience, and practical reflection, she highlights the impact leaders have on trust, psychological safety, confidence, engagement, and team capability. The central message is simple but powerful: leadership isn't measured by how much authority a leader holds, but by how people feel, grow, and perform under their influence.



I attended KDCCI State Budget Luncheon which shared WA Government's vision for the "Seven Cities"; with Karratha identified as a major regional growth hub. While investment in housing, infrastructure and industry will support future growth, the conversation reinforced a challenge many organisations are already facing: attracting, supporting and retaining a sustainable workforce. For us at EWS, it's a timely reminder that strong leadership, healthy workplace cultures and proactive wellbeing strategies will play an increasingly important role in helping organisations thrive as the Pilbara continues to grow.

This is an interesting space for our community so I am looking forward to seeing what this brings for us.



I loved attending KDCCI's Lego Serious Workshop that really delved into our personal leadership journey and how we respond to the challenges of leadership using Lego. As always, these workshops are great opportunities for reflection to learn something about yourself and to connect with our community.

This month we focused on supporting our clients with their projects and development, seeing some step into their creative energy to trial and error interventions that have been driven by their qualitative and quantitative data. The highlight of this is hearing how they're teams are responding to their leaders be proactive in planning for psychosocial hazards such as the next lot of school holidays coming up.

## Community Spotlight: Sheridan Cocks

Sheridan Cocks works in Karratha supporting children, young people, and families through early intervention and wellbeing programs. With a background in psychology, youth development, and community engagement, he has worked across local government, schools, and community organisations to strengthen wellbeing, connection, and resilience. Outside of work, Sheridan volunteers in surf lifesaving, coaches volleyball, and serves in community leadership roles. He is passionate about prevention, education, and helping people understand how relationships, environments, and everyday experiences shape mental health. His long-term goal is to contribute to healthier communities through evidence-based education, policy, and systems change.



### **How would someone who knows you well describe you — outside of your job title?**

Someone who knows me would describe me as deeply curious. My partner described me as an environmentalist, but not quite in the traditional sense. Yes, I care about nature and protecting it, but I'm also interested in the environments that humans find themselves in, and the way this interacts with their experience of the world. Whether it's their geographical location, their local community and culture, the organisations and institutions they find themselves in, the economic and financial environment, the government, or even their digital environments, it all plays a part of their perceptual reality and their experience of the world – and I'm deeply interested in how we can change our environments to make our lives better.

### **How has living or working in the Pilbara shaped the way you see mental health?**

I'm really not sure how else to say this but, living in the Pilbara really reinforces my conviction that connection to community and country are vital for mental health, and that translates to any part of the world you're in. Being here and physically seeing it, being immersed and a part of it – it strengthens this belief in a way that can't be taken away.

### **Was there a time in your life when you had to rethink how you look after your mental health?**

A very uncomfortable experience I think everyone has to realise at some stage in their life is that taking care of your mental health is a very proactive process, that involves your own participation and motivation. It's not something we can ignore and neglect and wait for it to just go away. It tends to linger until we give it the proper attention it needs to address to root cause. Kind of like the equivalent of having back pain and seeing the chiropractor but not working on your posture.

Even when we are mentally well, we have to continue engaging in positive activities that nurture our mental health, to support our resilience and prepare us for the next series of inevitable tough times that are yet to come.

### **Was there a time in your life when you had to rethink how you look after your mental health?**

A very uncomfortable experience I think everyone has to realise at some stage in their life is that taking care of your mental health is a very proactive process, that involves your own participation and motivation. It's not something we can ignore and neglect and wait for it to just go away. It tends to linger until we give it the proper attention it needs to address to root cause.

---

Kind of like the equivalent of having back pain and seeing the chiropractor but not working on your posture.

Even when we are mentally well, we have to continue engaging in positive activities that nurture our mental health, to support our resilience and prepare us for the next series of inevitable tough times that are yet to come.

### **What does vulnerability look like for you now, compared to earlier years?**

Vulnerability is hard to conceptualise. The word itself brings feelings of danger, like a weakness that can be exploited to cause you harm. It brings to mind an achilles heel, or a soft underbelly, hidden beneath spikes or scales. It repels feelings of safety and security.

But I've come to see it differently. I genuinely feel that vulnerability is a tangible strength, something we value deeply in the people we admire, trust and feel safest around. To be vulnerable is to live more openly, and to acknowledge your soft underbelly.

Once you walk through that unknown feeling of revealing the parts you once hid, it feels less like stepping off a cliff, and more like diving into dark water you were sure would be freezing, only to discover warmth beneath the surface.

In an environment where you feel that people won't exploit your secrets, insecurities or shame, you can be unburdened. It can improve your sense of safety, that now that they know your vulnerabilities that they can support you in that.

In environments where people feel safe from shame, ridicule, or exploitation, vulnerability becomes unburdening rather than dangerous. When people know our struggles, insecurities, or fears, they are better able to support us — and we no longer have to spend so much energy hiding parts of ourselves.

I feel that real vulnerability takes courage. It builds strength within ourselves, gives strength to others, and deepens the connections between us.

### **How do you personally separate caring deeply from carrying too much?**

I think it's important to recognise that every player in a sports games wants to perform their best. No one willingly makes errors.

It's a difficult balance and can feel dissociative at times.

You're building a deeply trusting and intimate relationship that is unlike any other they may have experienced before. It can be confusing for young people and can feel like a strong friendship. It may be the first time in their lives that they have feel seen, and heard or understood – and that feels very loving and caring.

It can feel very maternal/paternal for some. It can be difficult as a practitioner to choose not become that for them, and to separate yourself from the clients perception of the relationship, and reclarify our boundaries. Ultimately, 'this relationship feels like we're friends, but we're not - and we can't be'.

Having clear boundaries and being sure of your role in the therapeutic alliance can maintain that healthy separation and ensure you don't take on the load and roles that isn't yours to bear.

### **How do you personally separate caring deeply from carrying too much?**

I think it's important to recognise that every player in a sports games wants to perform their best. No one willingly makes errors.

It's a difficult balance and can feel dissociative at times. You're building a deeply trusting and intimate relationship that is unlike any other they may have experienced before. It can be confusing for young people and can feel like a strong friendship. It may be the first time in their lives that they have feel seen, and heard or understood – and that feels very loving and caring. It can feel very maternal/paternal for some. It can be difficult as a practitioner to choose not become that for them, and to separate yourself from the clients perception of the relationship, and reclarify our boundaries. Ultimately, 'this relationship feels like we're friends, but we're not - and we can't be'. Having clear boundaries and being sure of your role in the therapeutic alliance can maintain that healthy separation and ensure you don't take on the load and roles that isn't yours to bear.

---

### **When work gets tough, what usually tells you first — your body, your mood, or your behaviour?**

For me, work is tough when I know that I either don't have the ability or the influence to make things better. And that is really frustrating for me, trying to rack my brains about new ways of solving a problem. I notice first that I'll feel angry. I'll become snappy and irritable, and ultimately I'll decide to become a bit of a recluse until I can sort things out or talk out the problem and get some help to solve it.

### **In your experience, what actually helps mental health at work — beyond posters and policies?**

I think the thing that helps mental health at work, is to some extent, the relationship between the manager and employee. It has to be very close to a therapeutic alliance to be able to feel psychologically safe to negotiate workplace practice to optimise your wellbeing and productivity. We have to understand that wellbeing isn't parallel to productivity – it's the foundation of it, and it should be the priority of any employer to be adaptable and flexible to make a workplace that works for you, not just somewhere you work for them.

### **How do cultural or gender expectations influence how people seek support?**

Regardless of how far we have come (and we have come a long way), many men still perceive a strong sense of shame when seeking support, and are ultimately much less likely.

### **What helps men feel safer opening up, in your experience?**

There needs to be an invite to open up, and there needs to be a genuinely safe time and space to act on that invite.

It doesn't seem to matter how many times you tell someone that it's a safe space to open up and be vulnerable – men want proof.

They want evidence that they won't be judged, that they'll be heard completely and that an effort will be made to be understood. It starts with the small moments that others don't notice.

They're judging how safe they are by giving you something small and testing your reaction. When I tell them something about me that I've felt shame about, do they seem sympathetic and understanding, or judgemental and repulsed?

Oftentimes, men just need an invitation. Any sign that their vulnerability is welcome. That others are expectant of receiving their distress. Many men have been holding on and looking for any opportunity to open up, and it hasn't come.

That's where places like Men's Tables are really helpful in creating the invite, the time, and the space to be real.

### **What kind of conversations do we need more of in regional communities?**

I think we just need really honest conversations – no matter how uncomfortable. Every lie we tell incurs a debt to the truth. Sooner or later, that debt is paid. Whether it's the lies we tell ourselves or others, whether it's about our relationships, our behaviours or our mental health.

It could be about the culture of our communities whether that's pollution and overfishing, drug and alcohol use, family and domestic violence and sexual abuse, or FIFO men and suicide.

If there's a problem, people want to know how bad it really is. We're never going to be able to achieve a solution if we aren't honest about the problem.

---

### **What part of your work gives you the most meaning?**

It's that a simple conversation can change a life for the better.

### **What have you learned about yourself through challenge?**

Anything worth doing is difficult. If it weren't challenging, it wouldn't be rewarding. It's like winning monopoly but cheating - just doesn't feel the same.

### **What message would you like to leave with the community?**

My first message is 'live life urgently'.

The second, is 'be the person you wish you had'.

The third is 'find your values and live them unapologetically'.

For people younger than you, be the person you wish you had when you were their age. Whoever it is. Be a mentor. A good teacher. A kind stranger. A friend. Influence them positively, to be better. Give what you wish you were given.

For people older than you, be the person you wish you will have when you are their age. Someone to walk you across the street. To reach something off the top shelf in the isle. Someone to bring you soup when you're feeling unwell. A listener. A carer. A friend. Give what you wish to be given.

Conscious or unconscious, the most important force of motion in your life is your values. Explore what they are and consider whether you are living life in line with your values, and see what must happen to align with them. I encourage everyone to write a speech for your own eulogy at your funeral. What do you wish it sounded like? What do you wish your loved ones, friends, colleagues and community will have to say about you? If you can write this down, you will learn your terminal values. Then, you can walk back through life and figure out what you must do to craft a life worth writing that eulogy. These are your instrumental values. Live by them, and your life's dreams will come true. You can accept the things you've had to forego in life to achieve them and live without regrets. Find your values, and live life unapologetically.

## **What's Next?**

In June we are looking forward to heading to Onslow for their Wellbeing and Services Connection Forum on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> which showcases local providers in this space and allows us to celebrate the Onslow community.

Planning will continue on our projects in the pipeline while we explore more project opportunities and of course, continue to develop and support our current clients.

As the End Of Financial Year closes, we are already seeing availability for the second half of the year be limited, so we will be planning the rest of the year closely and intentionally.

We are rapidly approaching the months that create a run up to the end of the year which place a heavy focus on mental health and wellbeing leading into a high-risk season - Christmas.

If you're wanting to highlight the following months and events and want support planning and executing these intentionally and with real impact, book a free Strategy Session at our website and let's chat.



June - Men's Health Week



September - R U OK Day? & World Suicide Prevention Day



Mental Health Month & National Safe Work Month



Men's Mental Health Month & November

## HOTLINE SUPPORT SERVICE



**Lifeline** – 13 11 14 (24/7 national crisis support)

**Beyond Blue** – 1300 22 4636 (24/7 support for anxiety, depression)

**Suicide Call Back Service** – 1300 659 467 (24/7 telephone & online counselling for suicide)

**MensLine Australia** – 1300 789 978 (24/7 support for men)

**Kids Helpline** – 1800 55 1800 (24/7 support for ages 5-25)

**Indigenous and regional:** 13 YARN – 13 92 76 (24/7) for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander crisis support

**Rurallink** - 1800 552 002 (4.30pm – 8.30am weeknights 24 hours at weekends and public holidays)

