

NEWSLETTER

EDITION 5

1ST MARCH 2026



Welcome!

Goodbye February and hello, March!

Was our February filled with *purposeful action* as we had planned in our previous newsletter? Absolutely not! More like actions driven by good intention while fielding unexpected interruptions... “character building” some people call it! Did we achieve what we wanted to achieve this month? Not at all. But that’s ok!

Sickness reigned supreme in my household this month, which meant rescheduling meetings, clients, rosters, not even opening the laptop, catching up on dozens of emails and of course, practicing what I preach and self-regulating. Did I successfully do this every time I felt overwhelmed? Nope. But that’s ok, too! Because wellbeing is never linear. It’s always going to be up and down. What I was good at doing though and something I have been working on, is not beating myself up about that. Felt it, dealt with it and moved on from it so that I could focus on what I needed to.

In saying that, we did have some great wins this month making the hurdles seem irrelevant. We have continued to work on our research projects, gaining greater insight into various local industries by speaking with people in the field about the challenges workers face at various levels and been able to reconnect with clients and check in on their progress with their wellbeing strategies, as well as form new connections within the community and much more.

February has set up for March, and we can’t wait to see what unfolds!

From us at Empowered Wellbeing Services.

What's Been Going On?

Our research project has taken off this month! We've been conducting research through a series of interviews with local residents working in various industries, across a range of employment levels to understand the realities of mental health in their workplace and industry, their unique challenges, what they recognise is done well and what could be done better.

This research has revealed that there is a lot of willingness to discuss mental health and wellbeing in the workplace and reaffirms existing literature and what we at Empowering Wellbeing Services know to be true - that employers and leaders cannot respond to wellbeing with a one-size fits all approach. Wellbeing is unique to gender, age, experience, roles, locations, and teams, not just individuals.

We are also learning that there are plenty of leaders who want to improve wellbeing and psychological safety in their workplace, not just to tick a box to meet WHS legislation, but because they want their staff to be valued, seen and heard. However, they express that they really do not know how they can do this as individuals, when they have their own pressures, deadlines and constraints (resources, time vs. money etc.). That's where we come in! We're looking forward to conducting further research and pairing it with current literature and evidence-based support, so we can work with these industries to shift their approach to wellbeing supports in small, effortless and sustainable ways that are measured and contribute to better outcomes.

This month we invested in our branding and marketing project, where we engaged with Light and Lens, who are extending their photography services with branding and content creation for small businesses. This was a massive step for Empowered Wellbeing Services, and myself as a business owner. The interest and traction the business has gained has demanded

more presence and visibility of myself and the business, which is daunting and exciting for several reasons. It was such a fun shoot and a great way to celebrate the business.

Community Spotlight!

This month, we are spotlighting Benee who is the Creative Director of Photography at Light & Lens, specialising in strategic brand photography for businesses across the Pilbara. Her roots began at documenting families with a candid, cinematic approach - a storytelling foundation she now brings into the branding space. Today, she helps founders and leaders' step confidently into the power of their brand with elevated, intentional visuals that strengthen their presence and positioning.

What originally brought you to the Pilbara and what made you stay?

The Pilbara was explained to me like this promised land. I'd never heard about Karratha, knew nothing about mines, FIFO etc. I followed my boyfriend at the time; he said we'll stay for 5 years make bank and buy a house anywhere. For me though it was the first time I moved out of home I just turned 20. I guess what made me stay was: I married that boyfriend, we started a business in 2015, I loved my job and friends I'd made here. And weirdly the weather. I'm from Victoria and I thought I would live the rest of my life there. But no, Karratha ensnared me. So, every time the topic of



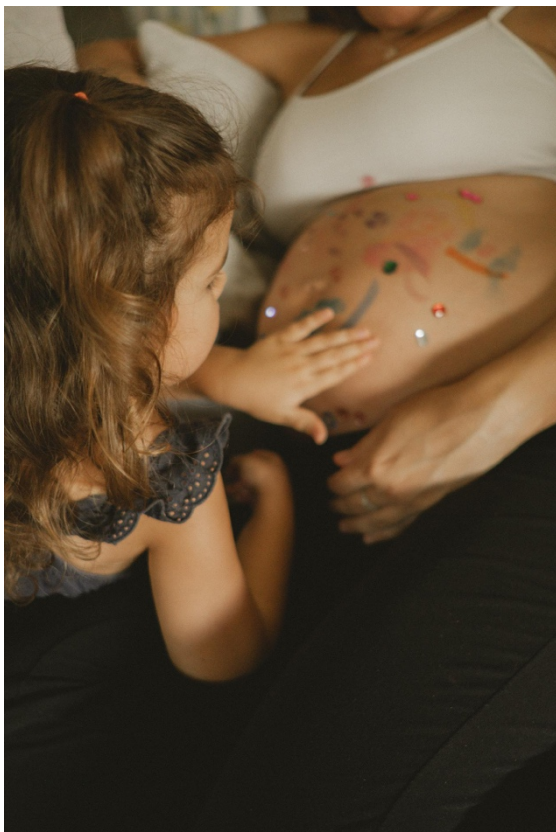
moving comes up I spiral!

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

When I was first diagnosed with depression and anxiety, I tried to push the diagnosis down and away. I refused medication, instead I decided to change jobs and career trajectory. Admittedly I was quite ashamed of the diagnosis. I found it hard to even tell my partner or mum. It didn't make sense at the time. I didn't know signs and didn't understand that early life experiences are contributing factors. I see now that having adequate support and access to services is vital if you want to stay here. It's tough in the Pilbara. If not the weather, the isolation, it's hard to make friends here as it's so transient too.

What's something the Pilbara has taught you about resilience?

It is tough up here! No matter your age or gender the Pilbara can be a hard place to get used to. We are so isolated and lot of us move here without knowing anyone or have any family support. So, leaning into yourself is quite important.



What do you think the Pilbara does well when it comes to looking after people?

Depends what community you identify with but there's a lot of groups up here to join or become a part of! For example, the Multicultural Association is fantastic. They have lots of events on throughout the year. Groups and micro-communities fulfill your need for a sense of belonging, and you don't realise how good they can be until you become a part of it. There's also a fair bit of adjunct wellbeing services that aren't counselling related, such as breathwork.

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

Yes, motherhood! Oh my goodness what a ride, right?

I could no longer just get up and go to the beach and SUP or just drop in to friend's place when I was overwhelmed. Seeking help once I was a mum felt wrong because women are supposed to just get it and be able to do it and that all girls are maternal – complete myth!

What's something about mental health you wish you'd known earlier in life?

I wish I'd known how much it will affect my relationship with myself and others and that behaviours like addiction are a symptom of a mental illness. It would have helped explain a lot of my early life family experiences.

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

Behaviour and mood for sure. I didn't realise that my anger meant dysregulation and then I used to always want to go out and drink - clearly avoiding the inner work needing attention!

How does your business or role contribute to people's wellbeing — even indirectly?

Photography is evidence of your existence. Documenting people is what really matters for

me. I hope through my photography I can show my clients how they and their lives are extraordinary and that they loved and were loved. I really hope that I make people feel good and worthy.

What message would you like to leave with the community?

You are the most important person in your life. Look after your own health in every way. Lean into yourself and notice when things feel off and, it's never weak to seek help in any form!

How can people support your work or connect with you?

Anyone who wants to connect and follow my journey as a business owner or mum who is also just figuring it out - I'd love to hear from you if any of my answers resonated with you!

You can email me to say hey benee@lightandlens.com.au or follow along my socials Ig: @__light.and.lens

*Note: all images are captured by Benee and are not for copyright.

What's Next?

March is already filled to the brim with celebrations for International Women's Day and Harmony week, travel to Onslow and Pannawonica for industry and community events, continuing to develop our resources and provide ongoing support our clients.

Being busy does not mean we do not have opportunities and time set aside to connect with prospective clients, so if you have been sitting on the fence about how we can assist you and/or your colleagues, please reach out. We want to hear from you!

Thank you for reading. We hope this edition resonated with you in some way and we look forward to updating you next month.

Follow Us!



HOTLINES

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)

