



THE THREE 'HOWS' OF MEMBER WELLBEING

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As QASSP Service Officer, part of my brief is to directly support the wellbeing of individual members and to be available to assist Branch Service Officers to establish structures and processes at a local level.

When I am invited to visit a branch and talk about member wellbeing I generally invite the people present to ask themselves three 'How' questions.

These are:

1. **How** is member wellbeing (including my own) in our branch?
2. **How** do we know?
3. **How** can we enhance wellbeing?

The conversation goes something like this:

1. **How is member wellbeing (including my own) in our branch?**

When you are at a meeting or other QASSP activity and you think about your branch, who specifically do you think about? Do you mean the members who come to most meetings or activities? Do you expand that thinking to include people who are financial members but rarely or never participate in meetings or activities? Or do you expand your thinking to include all of the potential branch members in your area?

My invitation for you to consider as you ask yourself and each other the first **how** question is to expand your thinking of 'branch' to include all potential members of your branch.

And who are the potential members? Firstly include all classified officers from primary, secondary and special state sectors. Do you think also of secondary HOD's as well as HOSES and GO's from

all sectors? Do you think of HOC's? Do you think of teachers in acting roles or who are aspiring leaders? Do you think of past service members?

Importantly do you think of yourself?

So as you now think of yourself and this very broad group, what is your best guess about wellbeing?

Consider wellbeing as a scale of 1-5 where one (1) is you can hardly drag yourself out of bed to face the day and five (5) is a work life that is so rewarding that you would almost do it for nothing. Where are you on this 1-5 scale and what is your best guess as to where others in this group are?

The first how is an important question and a good base for reflection and leads into the second question.

2. **How do we know?**

This is a powerful question and invites us to consider what processes we have in place to monitor, manage and take personal responsibility for our own wellbeing. It also begs the question that if you weren't faring too well would anyone know? Would someone be there for you if they did know?

If I or my colleagues aren't travelling at our best do we notice? Does our branch have processes and structures in place so that we do know and then seek or extend support?

Every branch is different and often people are surprised as they start to list the informal and formal ways that they extend collegial support to each other, just how much there is in place.

We intend to post on the QASSP website

a list of the strategies and processes that each branch has in place, to allow for sharing and celebration. When your branch has this discussion simply send your summary of strategies to me at earle@qassp.org.au and they will be posted.

The discussion leads to the final **how**.

3. **How can we enhance wellbeing?**

What are we currently doing that we must make sure we continue to do?

What are we not yet doing that we could?

What would an organised support structure for all potential members look like in our local area?

How can we make this happen?

How can this be made sustainable?

How can we contact and offer support to all potential members?

What are the barriers and how can we overcome them?

What if?

How?

I would love to be invited to come to your branch and be part of a discussion like this. Failing that, I will be delighted to plan an agenda topic with your Branch Service Officer (and perhaps with other interested members) over the telephone and provide support in that way.

Service (collegial support, networking, wellbeing) is one of the three pillars of QASSP, and one of the main reasons that many of us became, and continue to be, members. Let's make sure member wellbeing is a recurring agenda item and high on our branch priorities.

Contact Earle when: you have a challenging situation or issue; or know of a colleague facing challenges; when you wish to set yourself goals; or simply feel like having a chat to explore possibilities. Email earle@qassp.org.au or telephone 0422 278 281.