

# Mental health brain story

A story about the way mental health and illness affect the brain



## Yarning about mental health

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Inside your head is your brain.

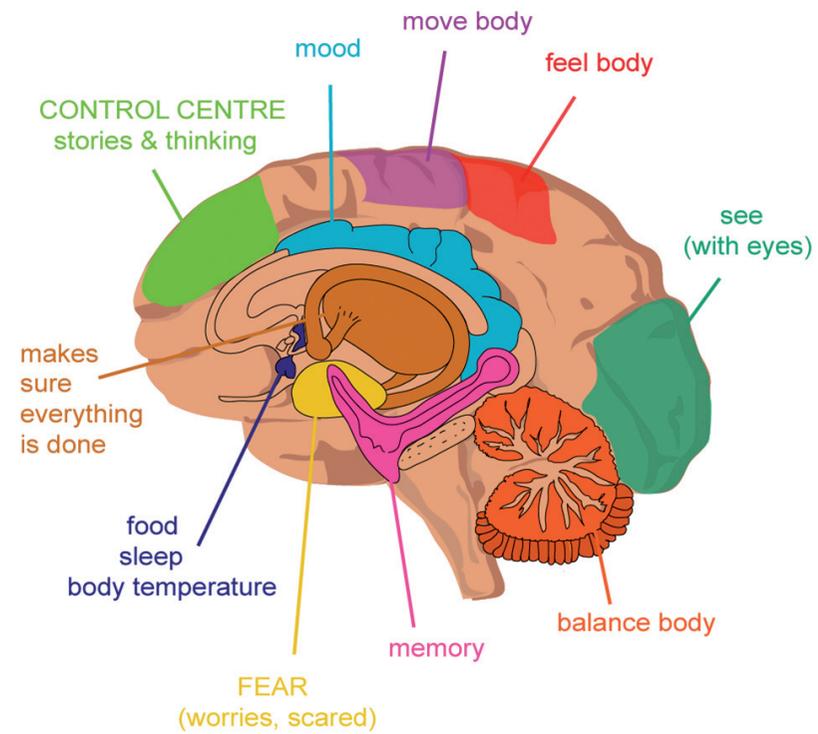
Each person's brain is very different.

The brain is like our control centre.

The brain is where our personality, our actions and emotions are controlled.



# Jobs of the brain





Each area of the brain has a special job to do.

This picture shows where each different job is controlled in the brain.

At the top of the brain, the **red** area receives messages FROM the body like how the body is moving or how it is feeling.

The **purple** area sends messages TO the body telling it how and when to move.

These different areas are always working together and talking to each other.

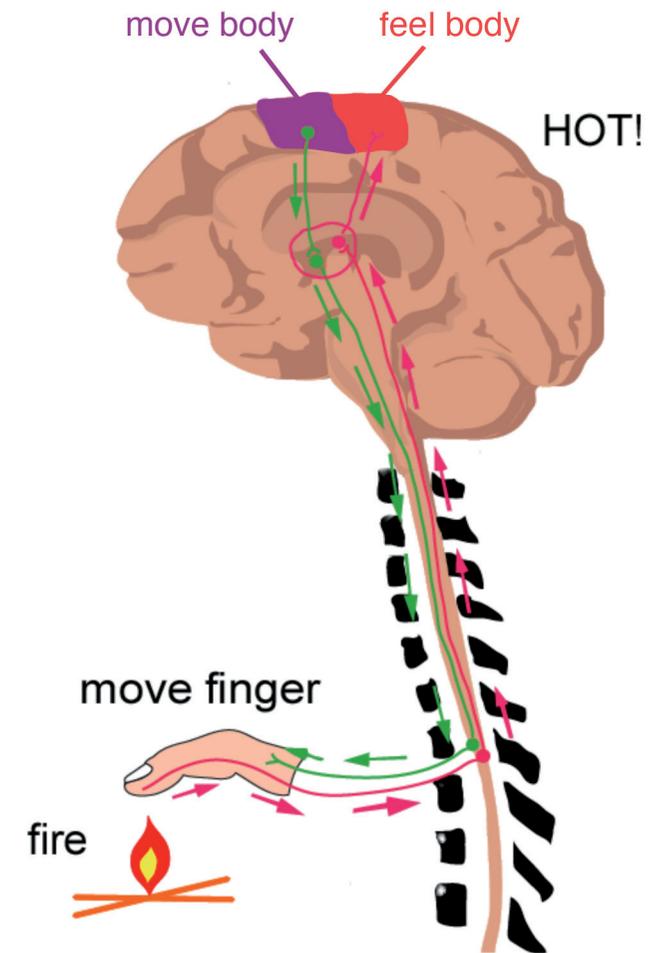


This picture shows how messages go around the brain and body.

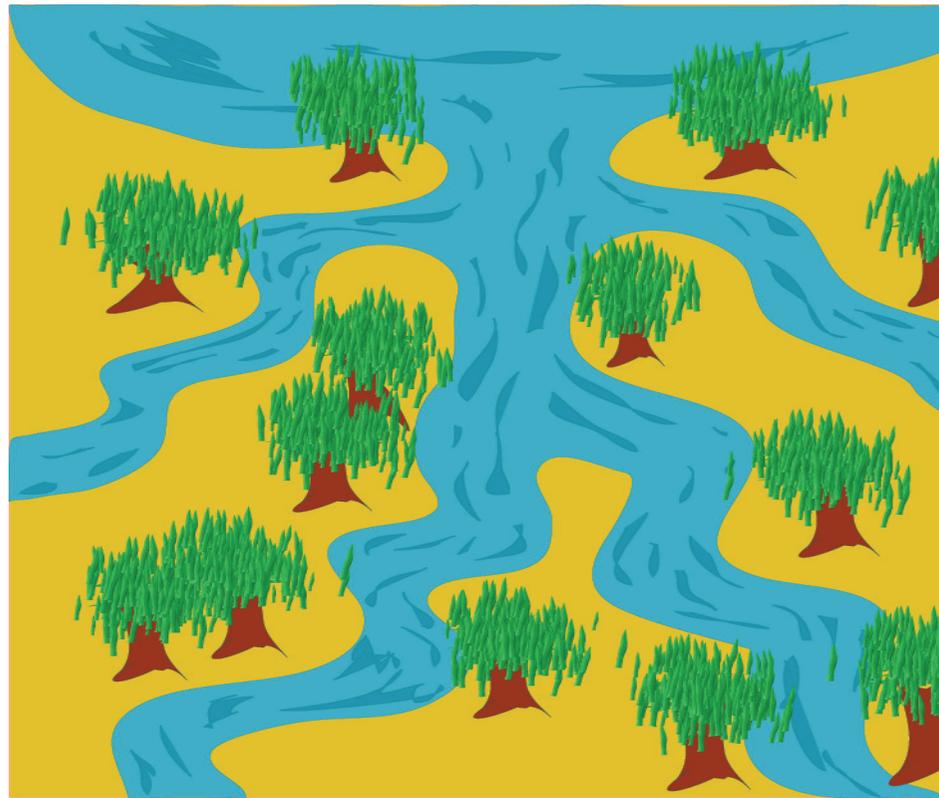
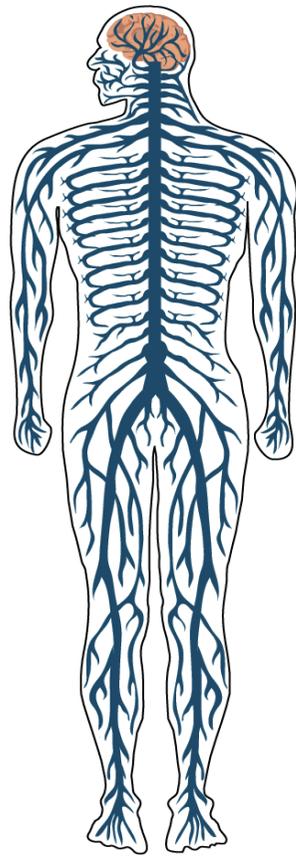
A message goes from the finger to the **feel body** (red) area of the brain saying that the finger is hot.

A message is then sent to the **move body** (purple) area saying that the finger needs to move away.

These messages travel so fast that we don't even notice them.



In a healthy person, all the chemicals in the nervous system are balanced, like water in a healthy river system.

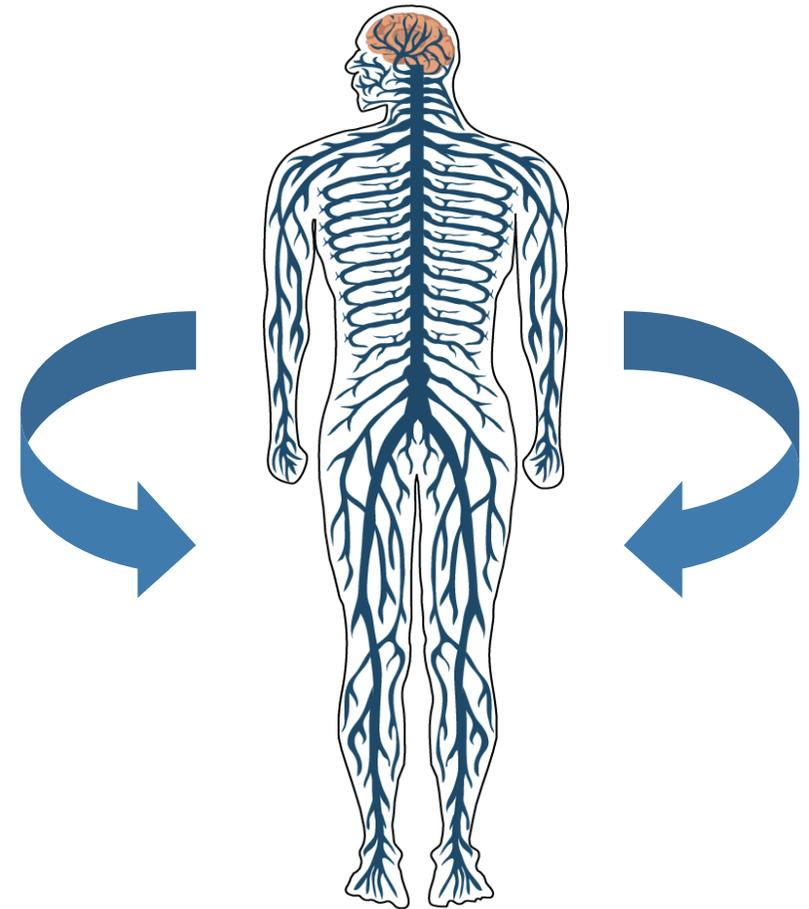




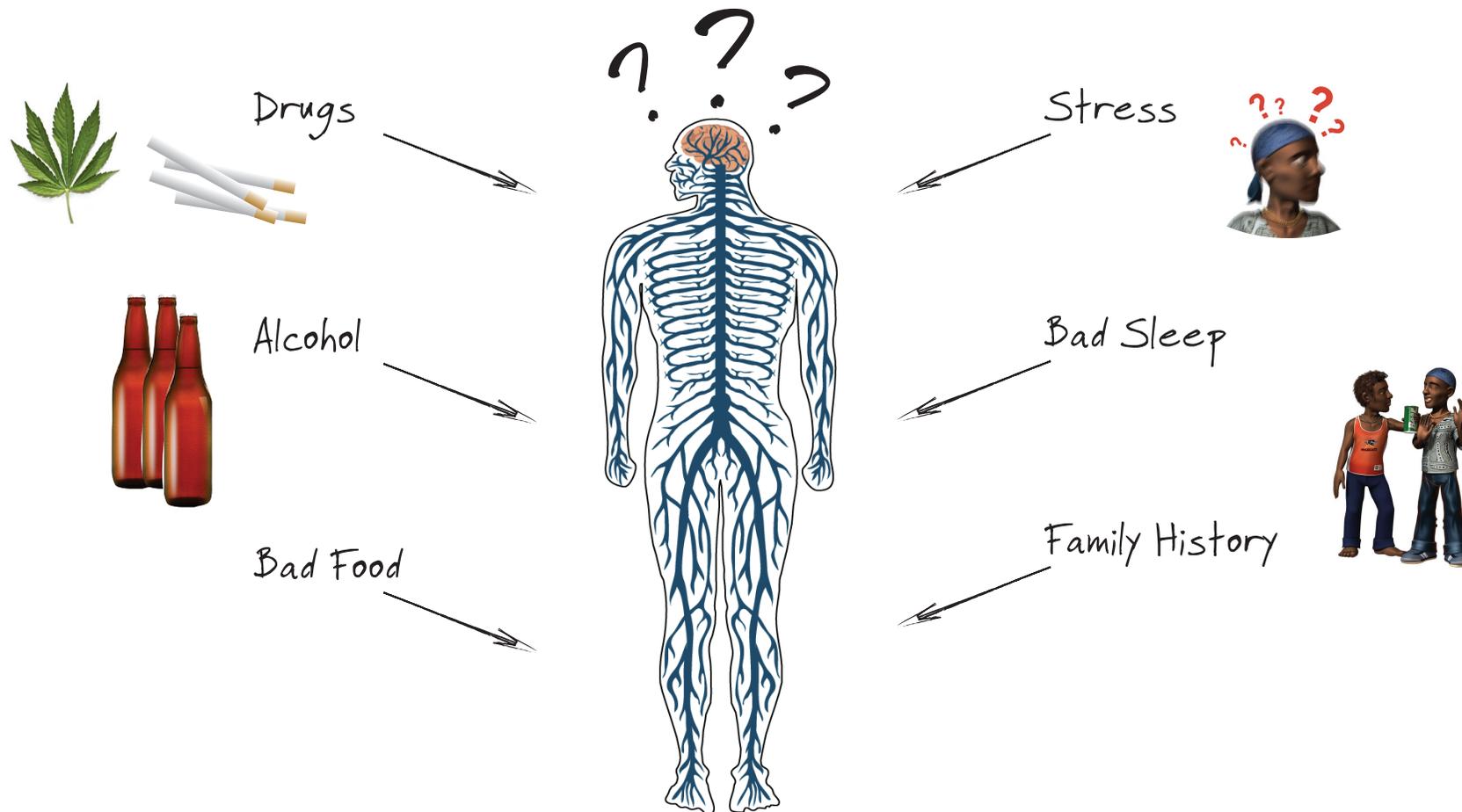
How do messages get around the brain and body?

They are carried by the **nervous system**. The nervous system is like our 'knowledge system'.

Messages are carried by natural chemicals in the body — like water in a healthy river system.



Some things can make the balance in the nervous system all wrong.

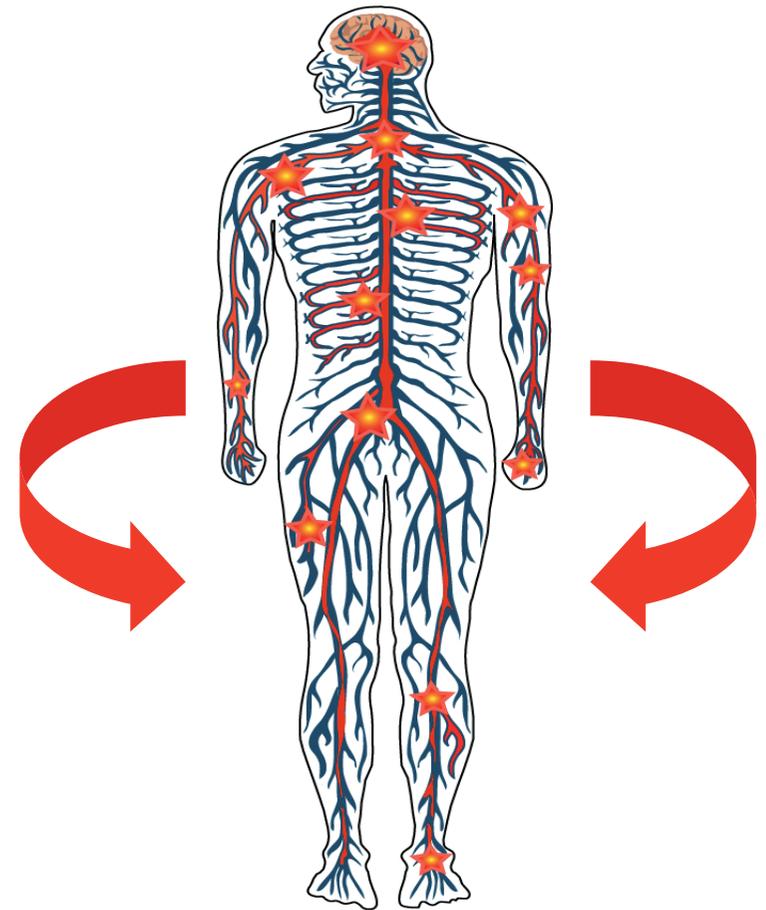




Some things can make the balance in our nervous system go all wrong.

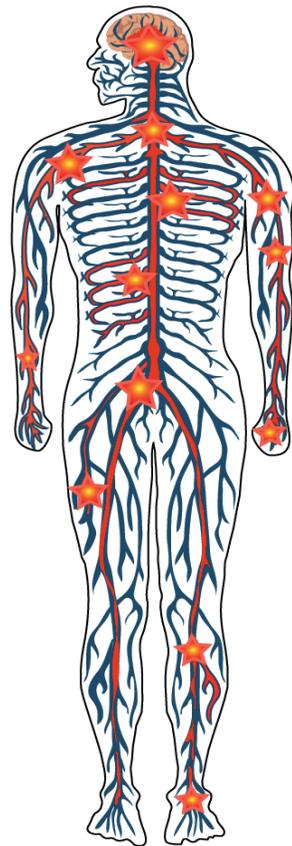
Things like:

- drinking grog
- sniffing petrol
- using gunja or other drugs
- too much worries or stress.



Drugs, alcohol and stress can make the balance wrong.

The person's balance is all wrong, like a river system with dams or bad chemicals.





When the balance goes wrong in the nervous system, confused messages are sent around the brain and body.

When the balance is all wrong in the person's brain and body, they may get a mental illness.



# Mental illness

A person with mental illness needs to get the balance back.

They need to get the chemicals in their brain balanced again.



# Get the balance back

- Family help
- Ceremony
- Healer
- MH team/health workers

- Medicine
- Counsellor
- Stop drugs and alcohol
- Music
- Dancing

- Culture
- Country
- Work

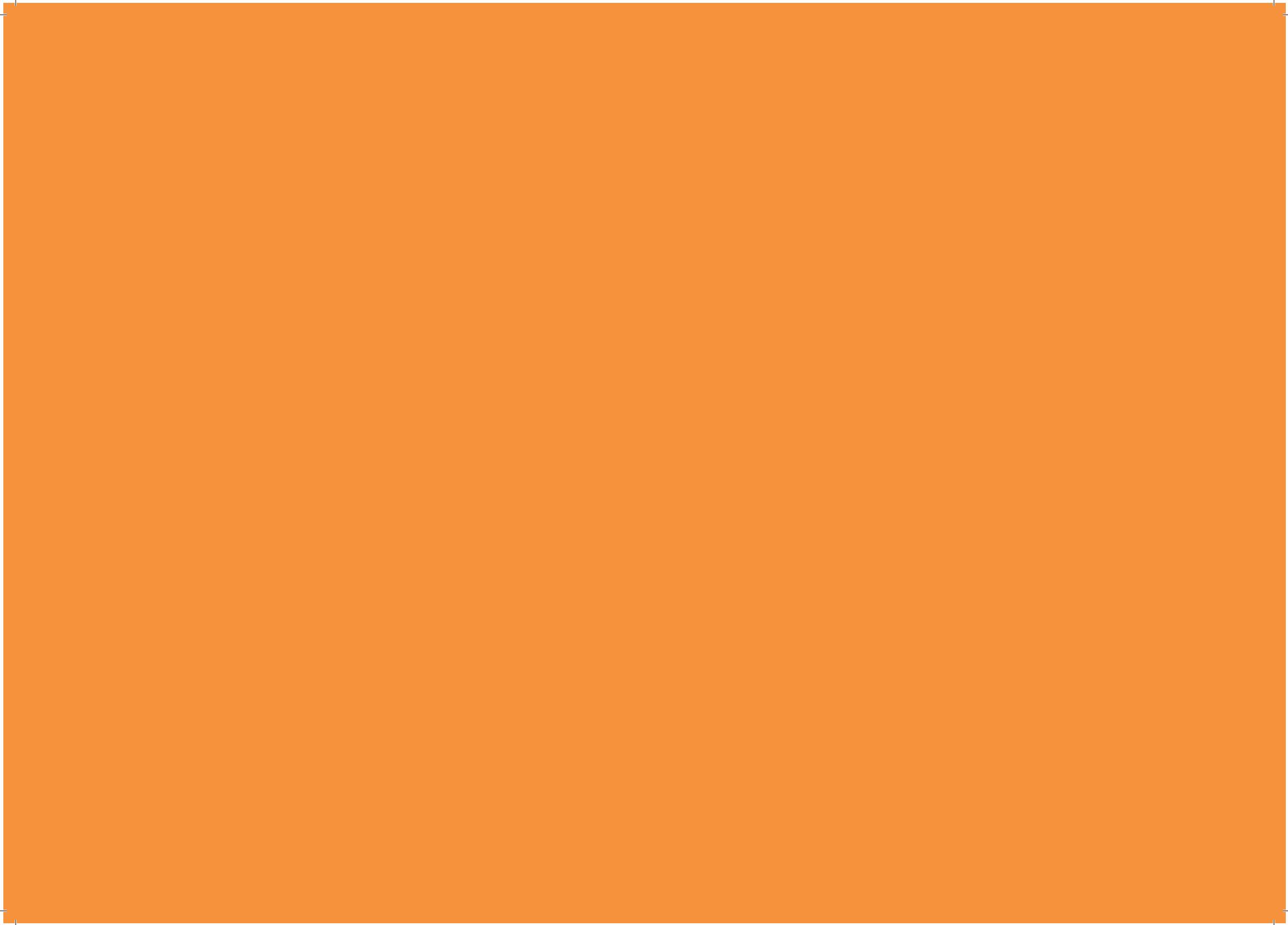
- Good food
- Good sleep
- Exercise



# 4 steps to get the balance back



1. Talk to family or friends.
2. Do more of what keeps you strong.
3. Do less of what takes your strength away.
4. Go to your local health centre or medical service.



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**Graphic Design:** Inprint Design (08) 8201 3223 • www.inprint.com.au

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**Photography:** Mary Moloney, Robert Mills, Glen Norris, Tricia Nagel, Valerie Thompson, Neil Spencer, Sheree Cairney and Joseph Fitz

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ISBN 978-1-921889-08-0

**AIMhi NT is supported by Department of Health and Community Services and The Lowitja Institute**

