# Wellbeing by Design - Good Work Design

Wellbeing by Design – Good Work Design

- Process developed Dr Hillary Bennett on behalf of the Business Leaders H&S Forum to better understand how work impacts mental health

- Involves raising awareness with leadership teams

- Engages with the workforce through facilitated workshops, takes them through a structured discussion about work they do everyday. They are the experts and they know the work intimately.

- Findings from initial work has led to it being further developed into a focus on Good Work Design

A Wicked Challenge
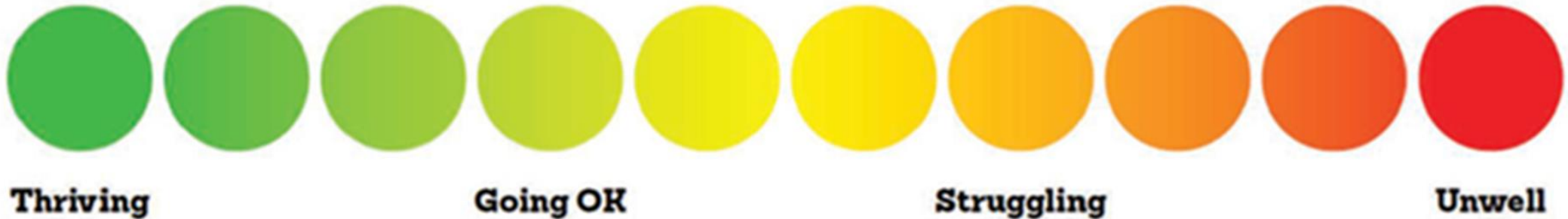
We are encouraged to create workplaces that support the mental health of our employees – and yet at the same time, meet pressing demands.
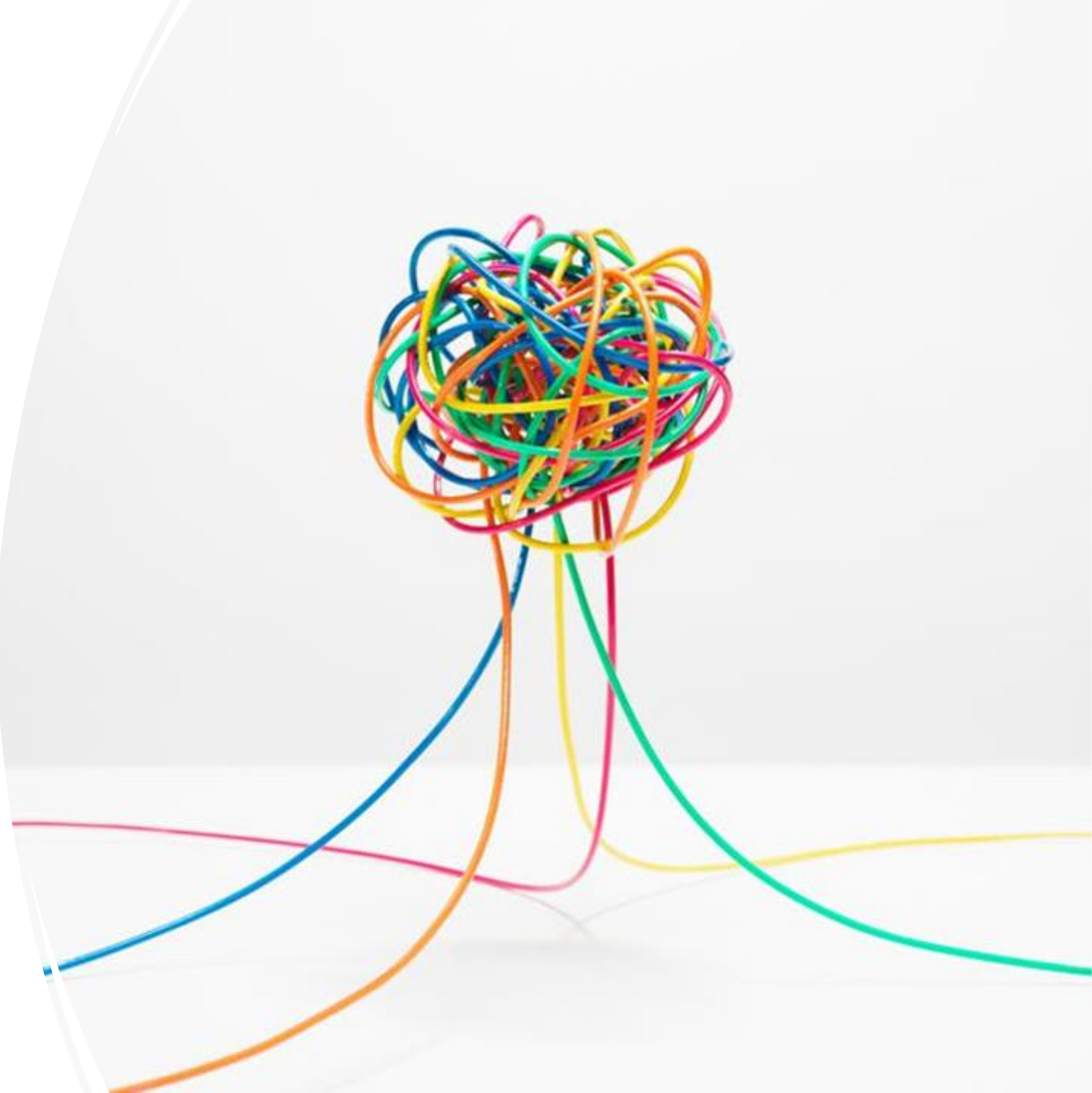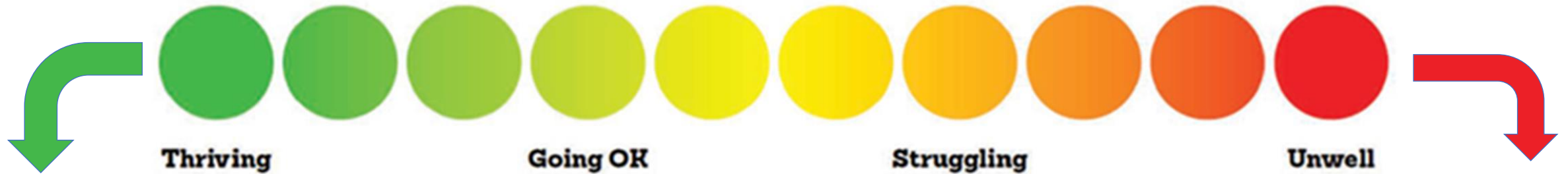
What is mental wellbeing?

- An individual's ongoing state which enables a person to *thrive* or not.

- On a continuum.

- Universal, subjective, dynamic and holistic.

Thriving   Going OK   Struggling   Unwell

Obligation and Opportunities

Thriving   Going OK   Struggling   Unwell

Opportunity: To enable people to thrive.

Thriving occurs when a person is feeling and functioning well across multiple domains of their life.

Obligation: To prevent mental harm.

Mental harm occurs when a person experiences a significant cognitive, emotional, or behavioural impact arising from, or exacerbated by, one or more work-related risk factors. (WorkSafe, 2020)
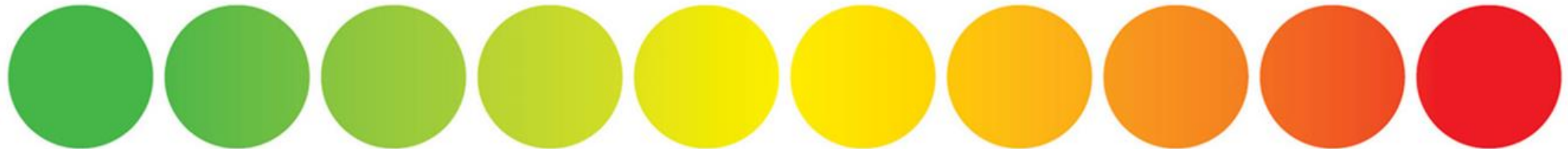
Not All Work is Equal

‘Good work’ allows people to thrive, ‘toxic work’ harms.

Good Work   Decent Work   Toxic Work

Thriving   Going OK   Struggling   Unwell
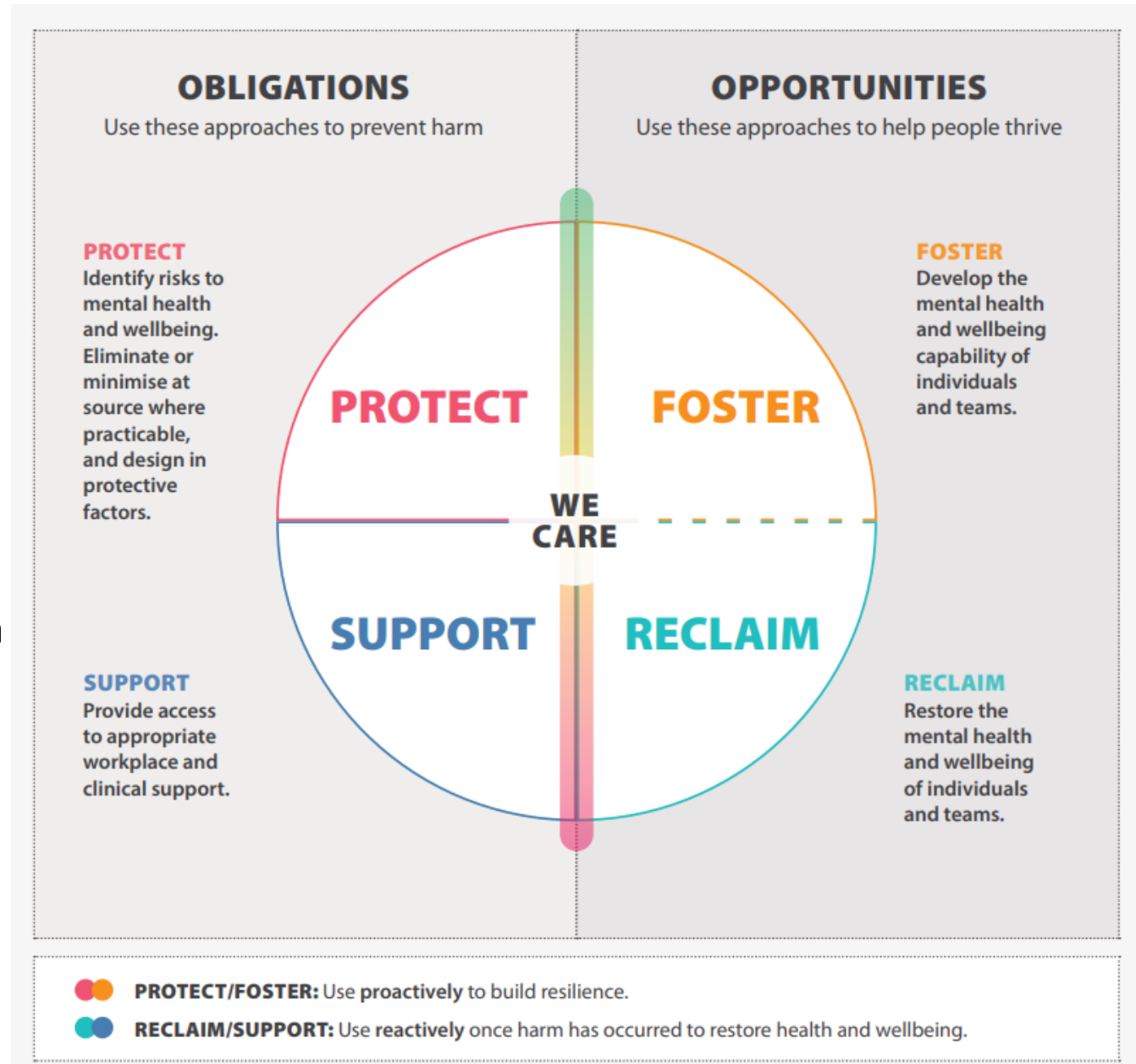
Approaches to Mental Wellbeing At Work

An effective wellbeing strategy uses all four approaches.

By using all four approaches an organisation can meet its legal obligations as well as harness opportunities to help people to thrive at work.

OBLIGATIONS
Use these approaches to prevent harm

OPPORTUNITIES
Use these approaches to help people thrive

PROTECT
Identify risks to mental health and wellbeing. Eliminate or minimise at source where practicable, and design in protective factors.

FOSTER
Develop the mental health and wellbeing capability of individuals and teams.

PROTECT   **FOSTER**

WE CARE

SUPPORT   **RECLAIM**

SUPPORT
Provide access to appropriate workplace and clinical support.

RECLAIM
Restore the mental health and wellbeing of individuals and teams.

PROTECT/FOSTER: Use **proactively** to build resilience.

RECLAIM/SUPPORT: Use **reactively** once harm has occurred to restore health and wellbeing.

(CEO Guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing at Work, 2021)

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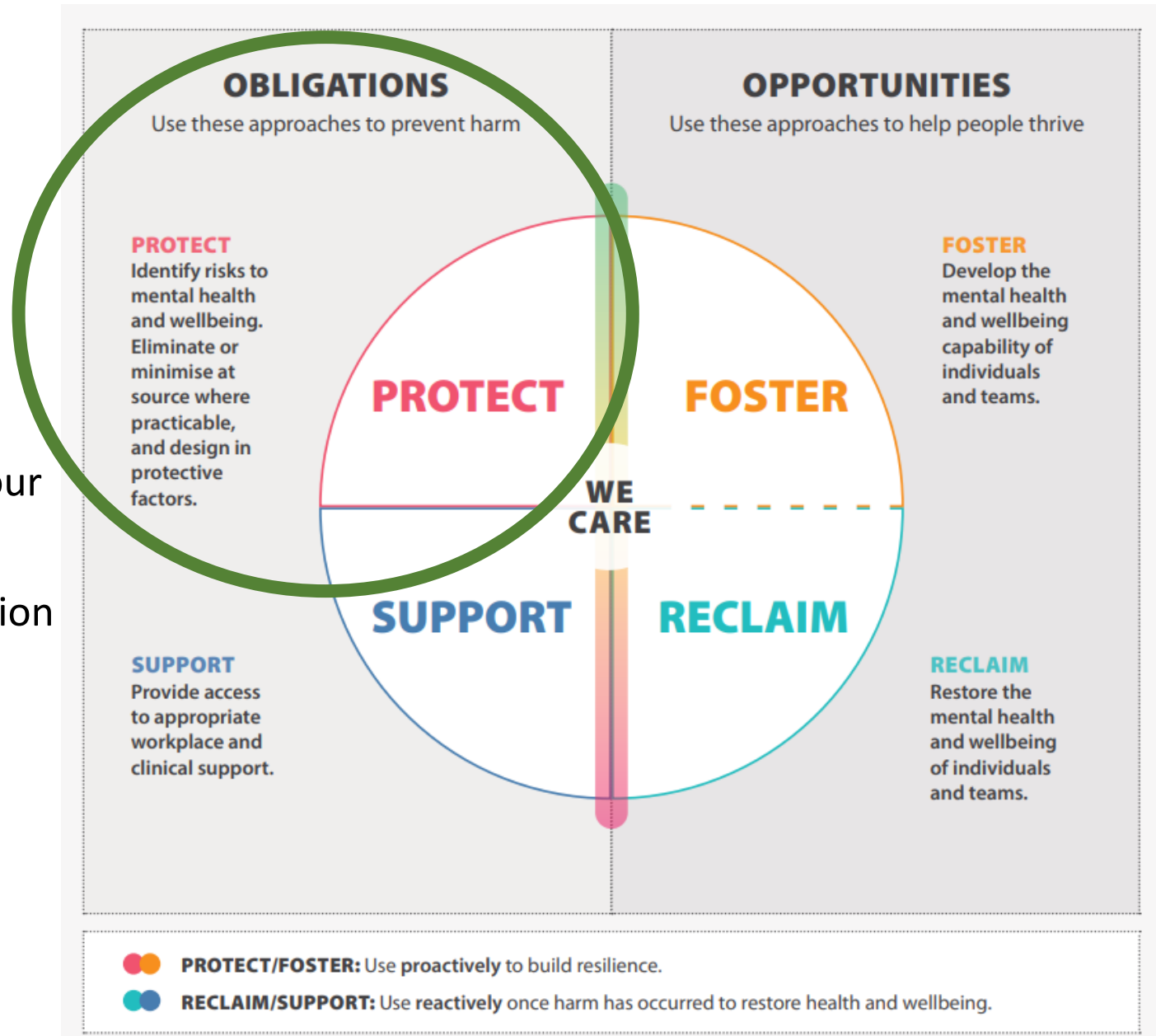
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Wellbeing By Design

TOXIC WORK				GOOD WORK
Harmed	Harmful Factors, Poor Work Design	Work Areas	Protective Factors, Good Work Design	**Thriving**
Individual costs: • Hypertension & heart disease • Anxiety, depression, addictions • Poor decision-making • Etc. **Organisational costs:** • High absenteeism & staff turnover • Low engagement • Injuries • Etc.	• Unacceptable workloads • Unchallenging tasks • Poor physical working conditions • Etc.	**Task** The nature and demands of the work and how it is organised	• Acceptable workload • Challenging tasks • Clear goals • Good physical working conditions • Etc.	**Individual benefits:** • No work-related illnesses • Positive engagement • Good decision-making • Etc. **Organisational benefits:** • Higher productivity • Innovation • Reputation as a 'good employer' • Etc.
	• Work lacks meaning • Lack of learning opportunities • Inflexible work schedules • Etc.	**Individual** The impact of work on a person and its meaning to them	• Work has meaning & purpose • Good internal progression • Good work-life balance • Etc.	
	• Difficult work relations • Unsocial working hours • Bullying • Etc.	**Social** Relationships and personal connections at work	• Respectful work relations • Regular working hours • Supportive leaders • Etc.	
	• Lack of psychological safety • Lack of job security • Unacceptable rate of change • Etc.	**Organisational** The culture, systems, and employment processes at work	• Leaders value wellbeing • Fair contractual arrangements • Appropriate monitoring of work • Etc.	

Identifying and managing risk to wellbeing

Designing for 'good work'

Findings from this work

Harming Mental Wellbeing	Protecting Mental Wellbeing
• Understaffing • Workload • Pace of work • Impact of poor equipment • Lack of learning opportunities • Poor communication • Lack of appreciation and recognition • Poor match between pay/benefits and effort	• Good physical working conditions • Flexible work schedules • Supportive workmates • Inclusion and valuing of diversity • Job security (for some only)

Business Leaders'
Health & Safety Forum
ZERO HARM WORKPLACES

This is a link to a case study produced in partnership with CHEP as a result of their participation in the project I led for the Business Leaders H&S Forum

https://www.forum.org.nz/resources/mw-chep/

Mentally Healthy and Better Designed Workplaces Require Leaders To...

Focus on work not just fix people

Question how things have always been done

Be curious about how things can be different

Be courageous to make changes

Be patient to allow changes to embed

Enable a culture of psychological safety

Be well to lead

Questions?

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