



# afea



# Preface

Welcome to the Afea Culture Book 2023!

This book is dedicated to you: the compassionate, caring, hard-working, authentic, purposeful, responsible and understanding Afeans and potential Afeans! We want to thank you for continuing to embrace our values and mission to empower people, in your own unique way.

Let's make a difference together.





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# Our Journey



**2008**

The start of the Afea journey.  
Anju joined as Afea's first staff member.

**2010**

We invested the first \$80,000 of our earnings to launch ABMS.

**2011**

We achieved ISO9001 Quality Management System certification.

**2014**

We were a Telstra Business Awards Small Business Finalist.

**2013**

The team kept growing and we moved into a new office in North Sydney.

**2016 Oct**

We transitioned from a care agency to a direct care services provider 3 months after the NDIS rolled out nationally.



**2017 Jan**

3 months after the transition, we onboarded our first 50 NDIS clients.

**2018 May**

Afea Online Client Portal and Carers Mobile App launched.



**2019 Oct**

We decided to extend our services line and received approval for 3 new NDIS services - Supported Independent Living, Support Coordination and Plan Management.



**2017 Nov 11**

We moved into our Chatswood office.



**2021**

We opened two new hubs in Liverpool and Parramatta, bringing our services closer than ever to our clients in western Sydney.

**2021**

We were recognised as one of Australia and New Zealand's Best Places to Work by Australian Financial Review (AFR), ranking #3 on the Health list.



**2022 Apr**

For the second year in a row, Afea was #3 for Health on the Best Places to Work list.

**2022**

We turned our Parramatta hub into our new headquarters.

**2023**

Afea celebrates 15 years of service!

**2021**

Afea was named Employer of Choice for Sydney Metro by Business NSW.

**2022 Jan**

We opened new SIL and SDA homes in Penrith and Jordan Springs.

**October 2022**

We were named Outstanding Employer of Choice at the Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence.



**2021 Nov**

Afea ranked #94 on the AFR Fast 100 Companies List. The list ranks organisations across Australia that have shown the most growth over the past three financial years.

**afea**  
*Caring for people you love*

# Afea, Yesterday, and Today.

## ***Founder & Director Esha***

I had a number of jobs in my early twenties that were not particularly meaningful to me personally. I had struggled with poor mental health and found myself in some destructive relationships, leaving me feeling alone and sometimes helpless.

It wasn't until I began working as a Carer that I found a sense of purpose through helping others.

I was working in a nursing home and realised a lot of people I was caring for actually could have continued living in the comfort of their own homes with a little support. They weren't in the need of full-time care and they could have managed with a couple of in-home care visits a few times a week. This is an option a lot of people aren't aware that they can have from

providers like Afea. This for me sparked the idea of a loving, compassionate care service that would redefine the experiences of the most vulnerable in the communities. Over time, I healed myself through my work and found a passion for helping others.

So, at 24 I started Afea, and proudly, it is now a leading Disability and Aged Care provider, having over 500 Carers and helping over 750 families each week.





*If you believe in  
yourself you're  
halfway there!*

Caring for others helped me understand the significance of self-care and hence I continue to build this business around the principals of nurturing love and compassion. It is now our purpose through our work that we empower people to continue living at home for longer, with the support they need when it's required.

Having overcome mental health challenges myself, I can empathise with our clients and their health needs. It is also very important to me that Afeans feel safe and stable, which

is why we often partake in mindfulness sessions together and meditate before meetings. I find it helps boost creativity and provides a calm and nurturing environment.

My learnings from my experiences are: never multi-task, set your mind on one activity and provide your full attention to it; spend time on yourself – exercise, meditation, whatever that means for you; and finally, write your goals as if you have already achieved them. If you believe in yourself, you're halfway there!

# our mission is to *Empower People*

We empower our *Office Team*

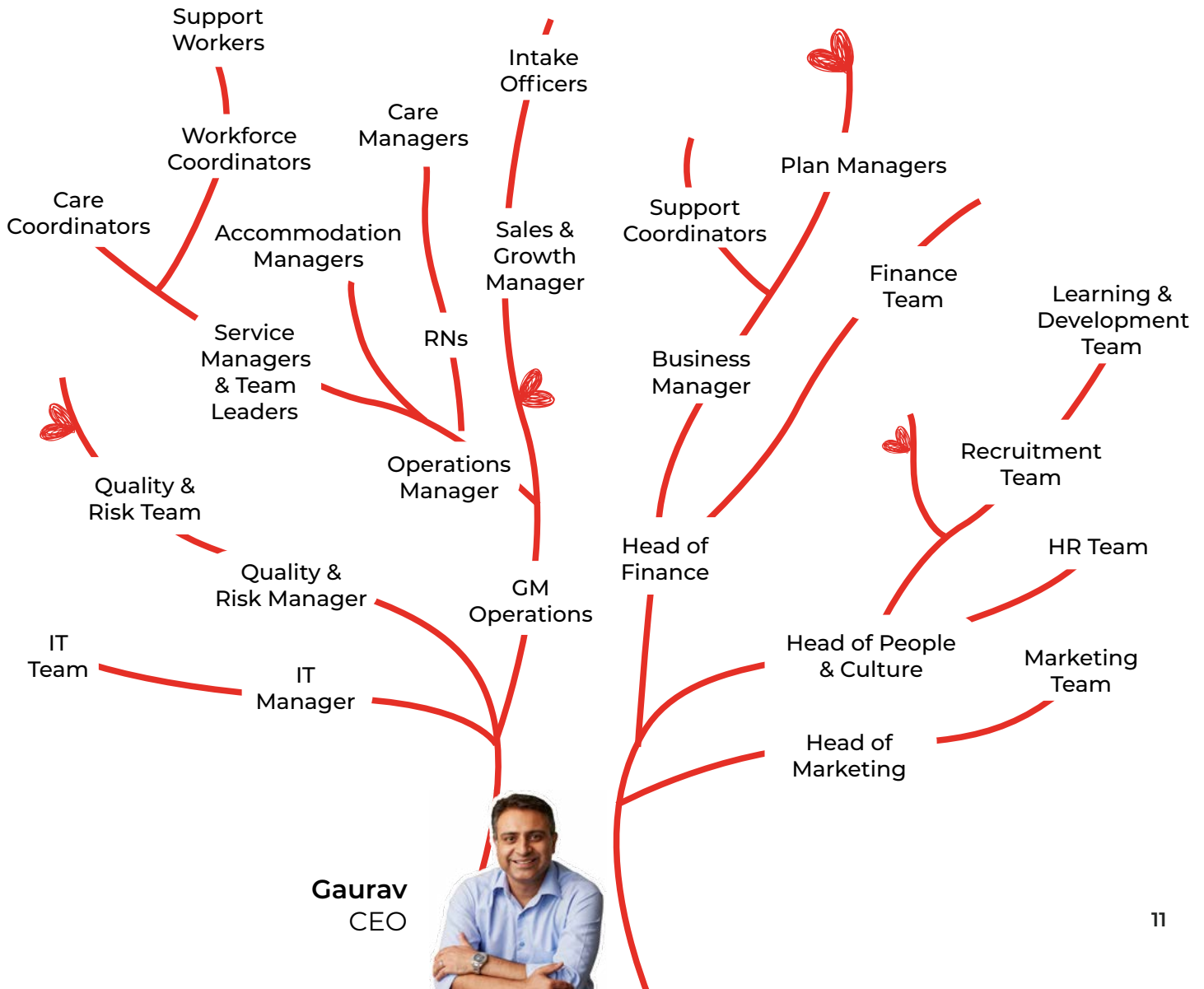
We empower our *Carers*

We empower our *Community*



# Organisational Chart

Afea believes in empowering you to reach your potential for growth. We've designed a systematic organisational structure to provide opportunities for development and to support you in your journey.



# Success is When our People Grow

You really get a sense of fulfillment knowing that the work that we do genuinely helps people in the community. Through the opportunities offered to me, the mentorship and guidance from my managers, and the support from my colleagues, Afea has helped me realise my potential. I'm continuously supported while I work to become the best version of myself as an employee, a colleague, and a leader.



## Anna

### Quality & Risk Manager

- **Quality & Risk Manager –**  
January 2022 - present
- **Services Manager**  
Oct 2018 - Jan 2022 | 3 years 3 months
- **Executive Assistant to CEO and CFO**  
Jul 2017 – Sep 2018 | 1 year 3 months
- **Quality and Compliance Manager**  
2015 – Sep 2018 | 3 years
- **Team Leader / Operations**  
2013 – 2015 | 2 years
- **Care Coordinator**  
Jan 2012 – Jan 2013 | 1 year
- **Receptionist and Admin Officer**  
Oct 2011 – Jan 2012 | 4 months

## Sam

### Finance Manager

● **Finance Manager**  
May 2017 - Present

● **Finance Officer**  
Nov 2013 - Apr 2017 | 3 years 5 months

● **Account Officer**  
Sep 2012 - Oct 2013 | 1 year 1 month

Since the beginning, I was given a lot of support both in my professional life and personal. Whilst I was working full time and giving my all to the company, I also wanted to learn. With the support of the leaders I completed my CPA while working. I still remember at that time I didn't have enough space at home to study. Afea gave me the trust and freedom to use the office space to study over the weekends. This helped me grow personally.

Being a carer and supporting people with individual needs was always something I am passionate about. I am continuously having proud moments at Afea. The ones that truly stand out to me would be those moments where I see my clients learning new skills and achieving their goals.

## Yesenia

### Care Manager

● **Care Manager**  
Sep 2022 - present

● **Care Coordinator**  
Oct 2021 - Oct Sept 22 | 1 year 1 month

● **Carer**  
Jan 2020 - Oct 2021 | 1 year 9 months

# Rewards and Recognition

We want to encourage your growth and acknowledge your achievements.

If you are in our office team, you will receive a compounding bonus for your anniversary. We also have multiple quarterly and annual award categories. You could be the next Afean of the year!



# Learning and Development

In our recognition and rewards program, “growth and continuous improvement” is a specific category in which peers can be nominated because Afea believes in continuous learning and development.

## Upskill to support others and have fun doing it!

Staff are offered many formal learning opportunities and are encouraged to set their own growth goals and share their learnings with their team along the way.

We provide our carers free training on various topics, including manual handling, bowel care, catheter care, PEG feeding and medication management. It's also a chance for carers to ask questions, watch clinical demonstrations from our RN and bond with each other.



Onsite sessions are supplemented by an online Learning Management System packed with professional development modules to build Afeans' skills and knowledge!





# Achieving the Perfect Life Balance

*Words by Afea Carer*  
**Maggie**

Before I worked as a carer, I didn't realise I can be this good in this line of work.

I used to work in retail, but I lost my job when the pandemic hit Sydney and businesses had to close. During that time, I realised that life was a struggle for the elderly and people living with disability in my local community. I became a carer to help them.

As a mum, Ethan is my everything. I chose to work as a carer because being a carer gives you a flexible chance to balance out everything. I know I will never miss any important moments in his life.

During weekdays, my son goes to school, and he knows he can call me anytime if there's a problem. I make sure I have free time during the weekend to spend time with my son.

I've had a lot of amazing moments as an Afea Carer, but one stands out. I once had a client who is a ten-year-old boy with autism, and it was hard for us to get along in the beginning. As a mum, I knew I needed to do something to gain his trust.

I realised he is quite fond of Legos. I picked some of Ethan's Legos from home and started playing with the client. He gradually opened his heart and started talking to me. How wonderful is that?

Something I learned from my work which I want to share with my son is just to open your heart and to be open-minded, to try to treat everybody kindly and with patience.



*Words by Afea Carer*  
**Richard**

I had a life changing experience 20 years ago when I was diagnosed with brain cancer and had to leave my job as a software engineer. I would not be working for Afea if I did not receive support from the community around me.

As a carer, I want to give something back to the community. I looked at the Afea website and noticed that Afea's values aligned strongly with mine.

My work at Afea is all about having that personal connection and making a difference.

*Words by Afea Carer*  
**Bonnie**

Afea has been great to me. Being a carer is meaningful work that also offers flexibility around my study schedule.

I study nursing at university and Afea allows me to pick up work when I am able to, and also allows me to press pause on my work hours to focus on my studies. I really appreciate that.

My proudest moment as a carer would be seeing people improve their communication skills and their independence, especially in children. Seeing them reach their full potential is very rewarding. Having the privilege to be openly welcomed into people's homes and become a part of their life is very humbling.

*Purpose through Meaningful Work*

OUR MISSION IS TO

To be the Most Trusted Care Provider

### Family Focus

We are personable, collaborative and supportive of each other. We are a close-knit team without hidden agendas or ulterior motives. We genuinely care for and respect one another.

### Care & Compassion

We balance the commercial reality of business with showing care and compassion towards the individuals we support and employ. Caring is what we do!



### Can-Do Attitude

We are always confident and willing to take on new challenges and deal with any situation that comes our way.

### Growth & Continuous Improvement

We are committed to constantly growing and improving. We approach our work intending to continuously improve on what we already do.



## The Afean Way

What makes Afea different is a variety of factors. It's the way we operate, it's the way we behave, and it's the way we think.

We narrowed down those differences to nine principles that characterise and define the Afean Way.

### Dicipline & Commitment

We are disciplined in our approach and avoid distractions. We are committed to each other, our work and the people we care for.

### Going Above & Beyond

We strive to exceed what is required or expected from us. We set the bar high but work hard to surpass that.



## Being Present with Intent

We are always present and focused in all our interactions. We approach our interactions with a positive and meaningful intent.



## High Performance & Goal Focused

We have high expectations around our performance and ensure our efforts are directly linked to our goals.



## Flexible & Adaptive

We are nimble and ready to deal with changes to the workplace, industry or external environment. We embrace change.



# Afean Leave

## #TAKEABREAK

As part of our continued commitment towards supporting our people's health and wellbeing, we encourage Afeans to take some "me" time with their Afean Leave.

Afeans, who are full-time office employees, are given this additional day of paid leave each year to focus on their own wellness, physical and/or mental health, or just their general happiness.



The chance to put smiles on people's faces and make a difference in their lives. That's why I enjoy being with this company and what keeps me moving forward in life.

**Jack**



My amazing and supportive colleagues and how each employee has the opportunity to grow. You will be valued, appreciated and recognised for all your efforts. **Riya**



The value of mental health and family culture. I feel comfortable with being myself and I feel like I have a voice. **Midori**

What do you love  
about working with Afea?



Afea is very passionate about helping others, about going the extra mile to make the impossible happen. That is right up my alley! The teams here are amazing, and everyone is always so friendly and welcoming and very happy to help. I felt welcomed and part of the team instantly. **Daniel**



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# Afea is a Tribe

We share the same **VALUES**

We celebrate **DIVERSITY**

We **SUPPORT** each other





We Are

AUTHENTIC

—

PURPOSEFUL

—

RESPONSIBLE

—

UNDERSTANDING

# Ivania

Support Coordinator

What I like about working at Afea is the positive attitude we have when dealing with challenges. We all have our clients' best interest at heart and we are fully part of their journey to a better quality of life. This gives me a purpose to work every day, and I'm thankful that I'm able to help my clients make positive changes.





## Luke

### Digital Marketing Manager

I believe Afea's values says it all. As a whole, the work culture and people who work at Afea are authentic. I was drawn to the fact that we're community-driven, and ultimately to assist those in need. No matter your role at Afea, the team all support one another and focus on the end goal - to deliver the service for those in need.

## Rajee

### Services Team Leader

My experience in Afea has been enlightening. I feel empowered as an individual. I have felt on many occasions that Afea has helped me climb up Maslow's Hierarchy. It's a unique experience to be a part of something so big that Esha envisioned in an early stage of her life. It's inspiring. And it makes me proud to be a part of this strong family and also a part of the healthcare history that Esha is creating. I thank Afea for all that it has offered me.



# Celebrating Diversity

*Joseph Assad*  
**Head of People and Culture**

How do we view and approach diversity and inclusion in our workplace?

For me, diversity and inclusion is much like a puzzle. Pieces of a puzzle are diverse. They come in various shapes, sizes, colours and they each connect together in distinctive ways.

It takes time, effort and focus to put the pieces of the puzzle together but once the puzzle is complete, it forms a whole picture—an inclusive unit where every piece of the puzzle feels like it belongs!

We are proud to see the pieces of the puzzle coming together at Afea every day.

This is never more exemplified than through our everyday interactions and multicultural

celebrations which include Harmony Day, Diwali, Eid al-Fitr, Lunar New Year and NAIDOC, to name a few.

We make a concerted effort to recognise and celebrate the diversity of our workforce in an environment that is courteous, harmonious and unified.

Even though we come from different backgrounds, cultures and religions and share in different opinions or ideologies, we are very respectful of the views of our colleagues and are determined to support these differing perspectives.

I find it both a humbling and rewarding experience to be invited, included and actively involved in celebrations which are deeply rooted in the culture and beliefs of many peoples across the world.





# From the Heart

## #SOCIALRESPONSIBILITY

Afea is committed to giving back to the community in ways beyond our jobs. We want to support the causes our team is personally passionate about.

Every quarter, we support a different charitable cause that is nominated by an Afea employee.





Afea kicked off its From the Heart initiative when it launched its special **Blood Donation Leave** on World Blood Donor Day (14 June 2022), enabling staff to donate blood and plasma at their nearest donor centre.

For STEPtember, Team Afea took over 8 million steps together and raised \$3,752! The **funds raised were donated to the Cerebral Palsy Alliance** to support vital cerebral palsy research and assist thousands of people in accessing therapy and support. Work that is certainly close to our heart!

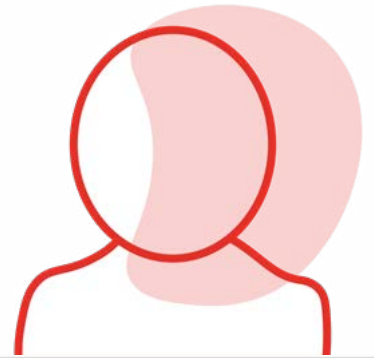
To wrap up the year, we launched our **Christmas food drive for the Salvation Army**. Donations of tinned foods, cleaning and hygiene items and special gifts from staff will be packaged into hampers and dropped at our local Salvos to provide a feast to individuals and families, just in need in time for the festive season.



We support  
**EACH OTHER**



#RUOK

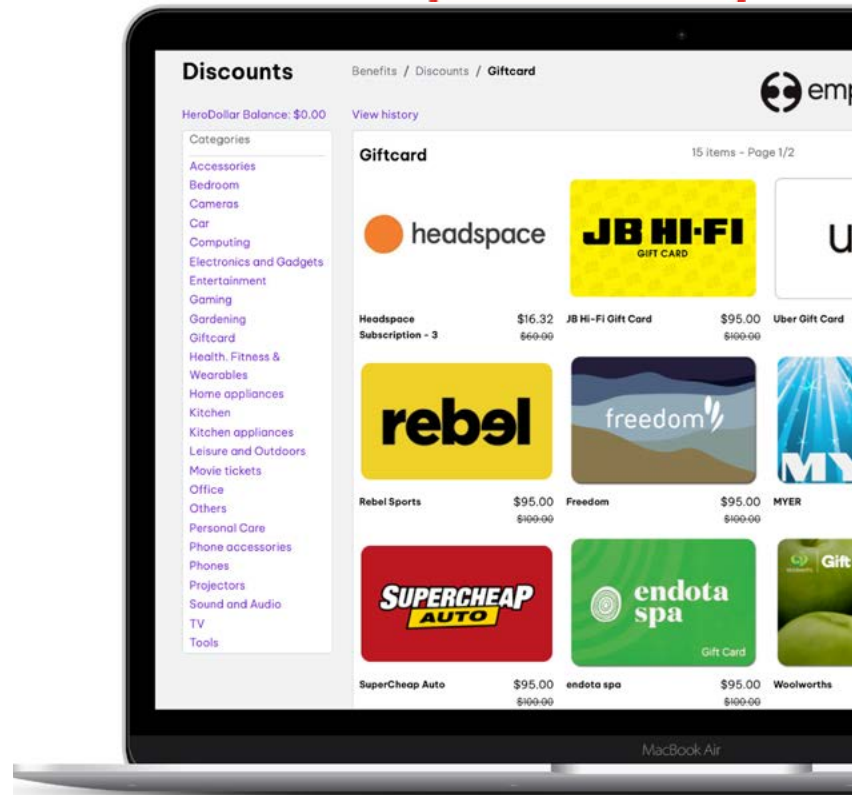


All our Carers and office staff have access to a powerful employment platform called Employment Hero.

With Employment Hero, health and wellness resources are at your fingertips!

You can read articles such as “How to deal with uncertainty” and “How to overcome communication barriers in the workplace”.

You also have immediate access to exclusive discounts at major retailers such as Woolworths, Uber Eats, Event Cinemas, JB Hi-Fi and more!





We're taking our employee assistance program (EAP) to the next level with Leora, a mental health platform blending state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) with human therapist support.

The Leora Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is your AI-powered coaching and counselling service providing confidential support for home and work.

As your virtual self-care coach, Leora is your very own personal mental health champion, accessible anytime, anywhere.

### With Leora's help, you can:

- Have a chat 24/7 to manage negative thinking and cope with stress and anxiety
- Access tools for instant relief or to build resilience
- Undergo online screening and assessments to better understand what you're feeling
- Book a therapist for further support – no need to wait on the phone!





# Self-Care Program

While you are taking care of our clients, we want to make sure you are taking care of yourself as well.

We've provided the following self-care program to help you enhance your health and wellbeing, manage your stress and maintain professionalism.

You'll find tips on practicing mindfulness, self-compassion and how to cope with everyday worries. We've also added a guide to help you create your own self-care plan.

Simply spend 15 to 20 minutes a day on yourself and you will see positive effects in all facets of your life!

# How to be Mindful



## Practising mindfulness in listening, gratitude and daily chores

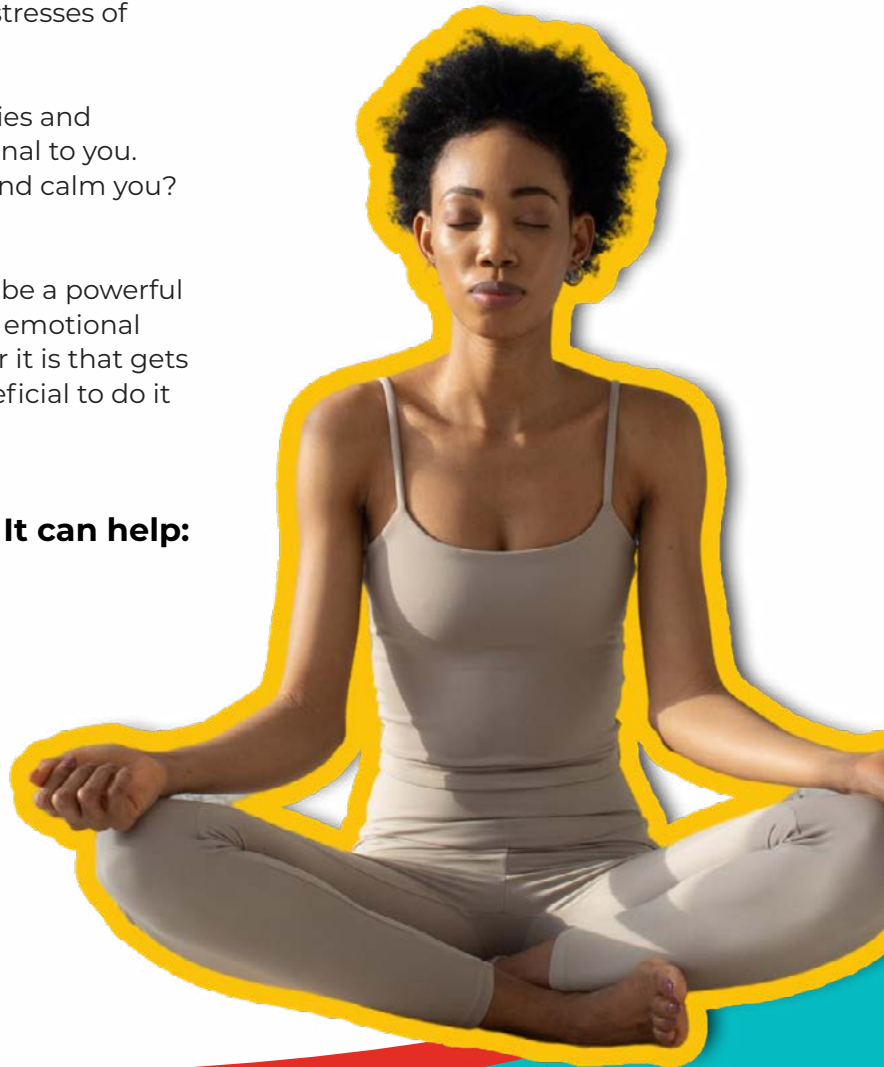
Mindfulness is slowing down and being fully present in the present moment. It helps reduce the noise in our minds and is one way for us to combat the stresses of daily life.

Each person is different, with different abilities and different needs. So make mindfulness personal to you. What is that one activity that helps centre and calm you? Meditation? Walking? Listening to music?

Mindfulness is not a miracle cure, but it can be a powerful tool to assist you in paying attention to your emotional needs and to the world around us. Whatever it is that gets you through the tough times, it can be beneficial to do it mindfully and with intention.

### Mindfulness has a lot of benefits. It can help:

- ♥ Reduce stress
- ♥ Lower anxiety levels
- ♥ Increase attention and focus
- ♥ Improve emotional regulation
- ♥ Improve relationships with others



# Mindfulness and Gratitude

The uncertainty and anxieties brought by the past two years may have made it more difficult to focus on the things that make us grateful. But practising gratitude has been known to improve mood, sleep and overall quality of life!

Combining gratitude with mindfulness means being more in tune with the things you are thankful for. It also means allowing yourself to accept and feel painful emotions instead of denying them, so you won't fall in the trap of toxic positivity.

## Mindfulness in daily tasks

So many things compete for our attention, and oftentimes we find ourselves just rushing from one task to the next. How many times have you gone through your morning as if you were on autopilot?

Just because something is “routine” doesn't mean you can't do it mindfully.



Pay attention to your breathing as you go about your daily chores



Avoid multi-tasking as you eat – focus completely on your meal and enjoy every spoonful



Pause between tasks and check in with yourself: How am I feeling?

Set aside 5 minutes today to close your eyes and think of the one thing you are grateful for, no matter how small. And say thank you.

*Remember that mindfulness is all about slowing down and savouring every moment!*

## Mindful listening

Are you a good listener? The demands of modern life sometimes require us to juggle several tasks, and we often find ourselves doing or thinking of something else while someone is talking to us.

The truth is, we won't be able to absorb someone else's story if we're simultaneously writing a to-do list or already thinking of a way to interrupt.

Mindful listening means offering our full attention to someone. Stopping what we're doing, withholding judgment and taking a moment to reflect on what we've heard can help us cultivate a deeper connection with another person.

# Letter of Compassion



We are often too hard on ourselves. This can be reflected in the emotions we experience and the guilt, shame, and fear regarding how we feel.

Writing a letter of self-compassion can prompt us to be more forgiving and refocus our thinking on being more accepting, caring, and supportive to ourselves and others.

Describe an event that happened today when you felt your emotions were out of control or unwelcome.

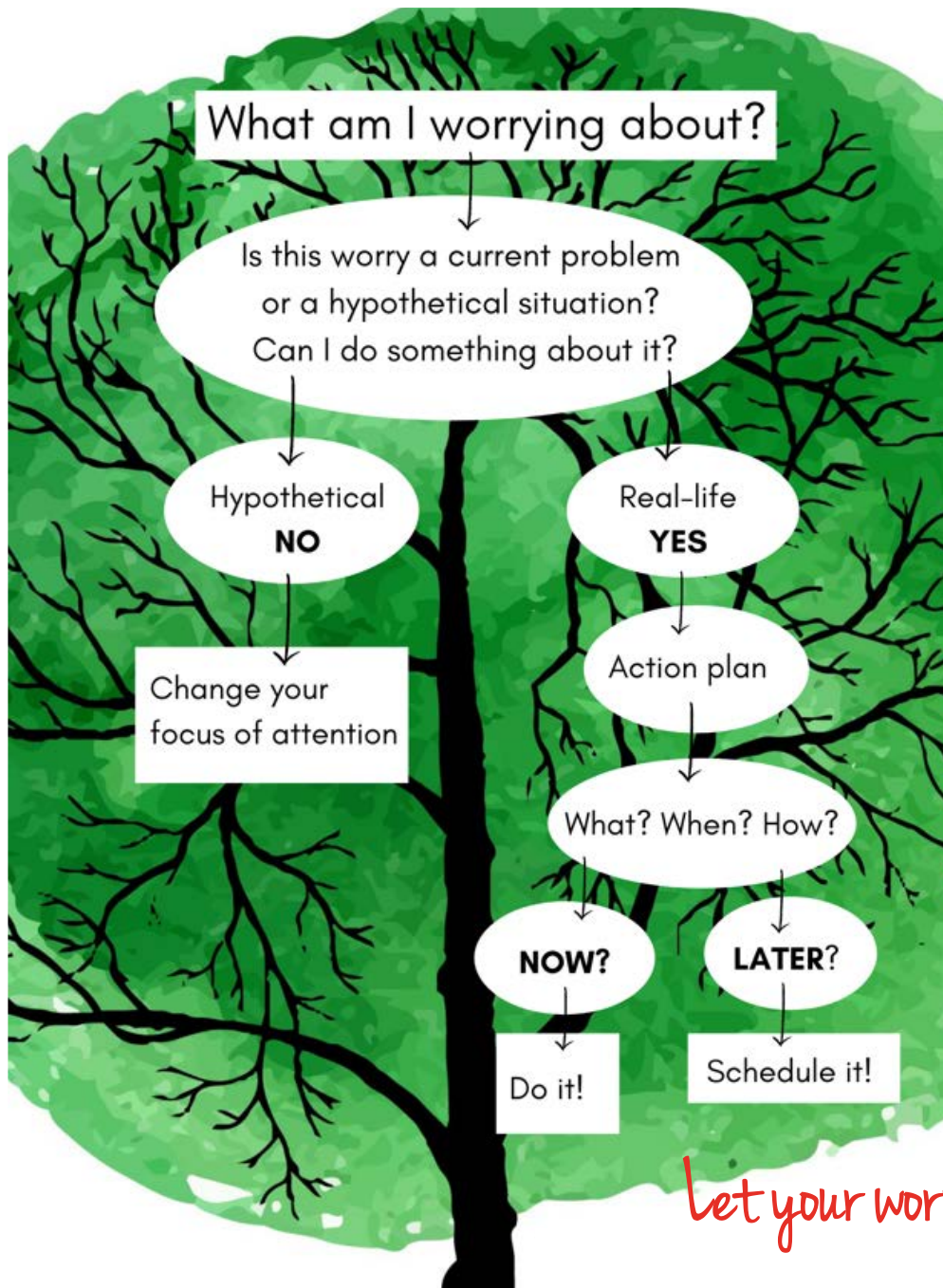
Now, write a brief letter to yourself. Write the letter with a message of forgiveness and acceptance for who you are and the emotions you experience.

Write as though you were talking to a close friend, and show your compassion (for example, I am sad that you felt so angry today, that must have been distressing).

Write down whatever thoughts come into your head. No one needs to read it. You are safe to be open regarding your feelings.

Read back what you have written. Recognize that all of us have emotions we wish we could avoid, but that we can see them as separate from who we are and share them with others – showing our vulnerable side

A large yellow-bordered box containing horizontal lines for writing.



*Let your worry go!*

# Developing a Self-Care Plan

Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage with to take care of yourself physically, emotionally, socially and mentally.

## Physical Self Care

The things you can do to take care of your body and physical health. Examples include nutrition, regular health care visits and exercise.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Emotional Self Care

The things you can do to take care of your feelings. Examples include personal and professional support systems, professional therapy, journaling and talking about feelings in healthy ways to trusted friends/family.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Social Self Care

The things you can do to build long-lasting relationships with others, your community, and the environment. Examples include spending time with friends and family, joining social groups and taking part in activities that encourage positive social connections.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Mental Self Care

The things you can do to take care of your mind and understand yourself better. Examples include reading for leisure, writing, meditation and engaging in continued education.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

JUST AS THE SUN RISES  
EACH & EVERYDAY TO  
SHINE LIGHT INTO  
THIS WORLD

SO WILL WE



# Afea, Today, and Tomorrow

## **CEO** Gaurav

I would like to thank you all for what you do best: caring. Caring for our clients, their families and each other.

It is the collective effort of this team – our loving carers, support office staff and valued industry partners – that the people in our community are able to trust us with the wellbeing of their loved ones.

Together, we have been caring for people for the past 15 years. What began as Esha's journey of personal growth and discovery has transformed into a growing family of more than 80 office staff and 600 carers, providing 7,500 hours of compassionate care each week, united in the goal of making our local communities a better and more inclusive place to live.

A decade and a half since we started, we now provide a more streamlined and holistic

experience for our carers and clients. We continue to form and evolve new functions, such as the Workforce Coordinator role that is dedicated to assisting our carers. We are expanding our portfolio of Supported Independent Living properties and increasing our clientele in Support Coordination and Plan Management services, to build our clients' capacity to live independently and with dignity.

Thank you again for being here and for your commitment. I can't wait to see us growing together in the future!





**Afea Care Services**

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