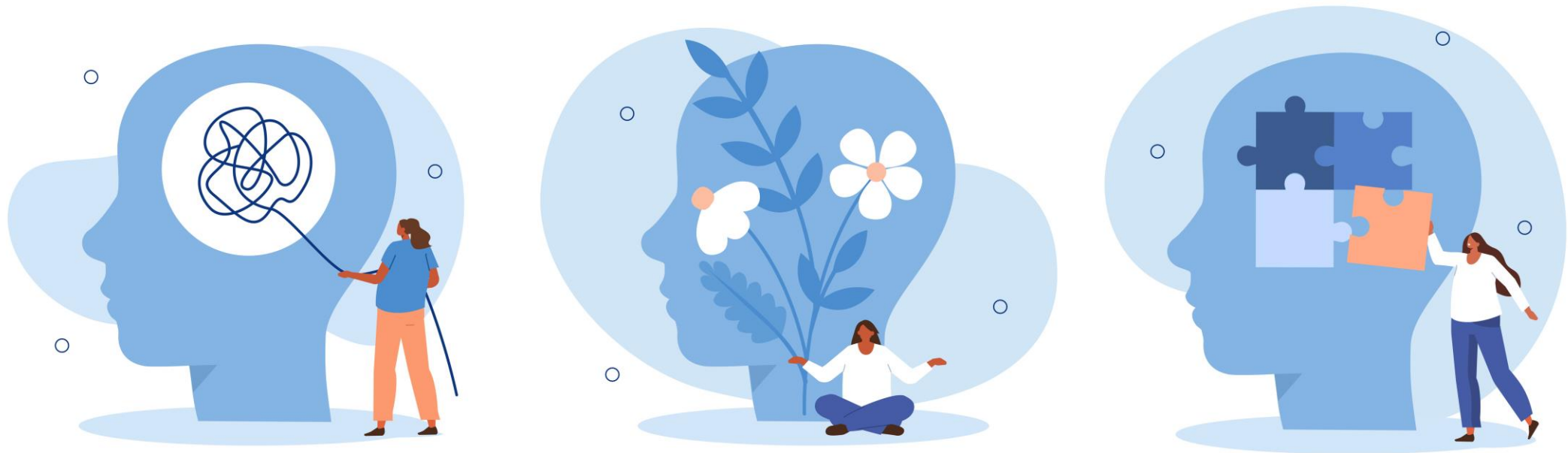




Mental Health and Aviation

Lize Weich

Global mental health crises





Mental Health in South Africa

MENTAL HEALTH



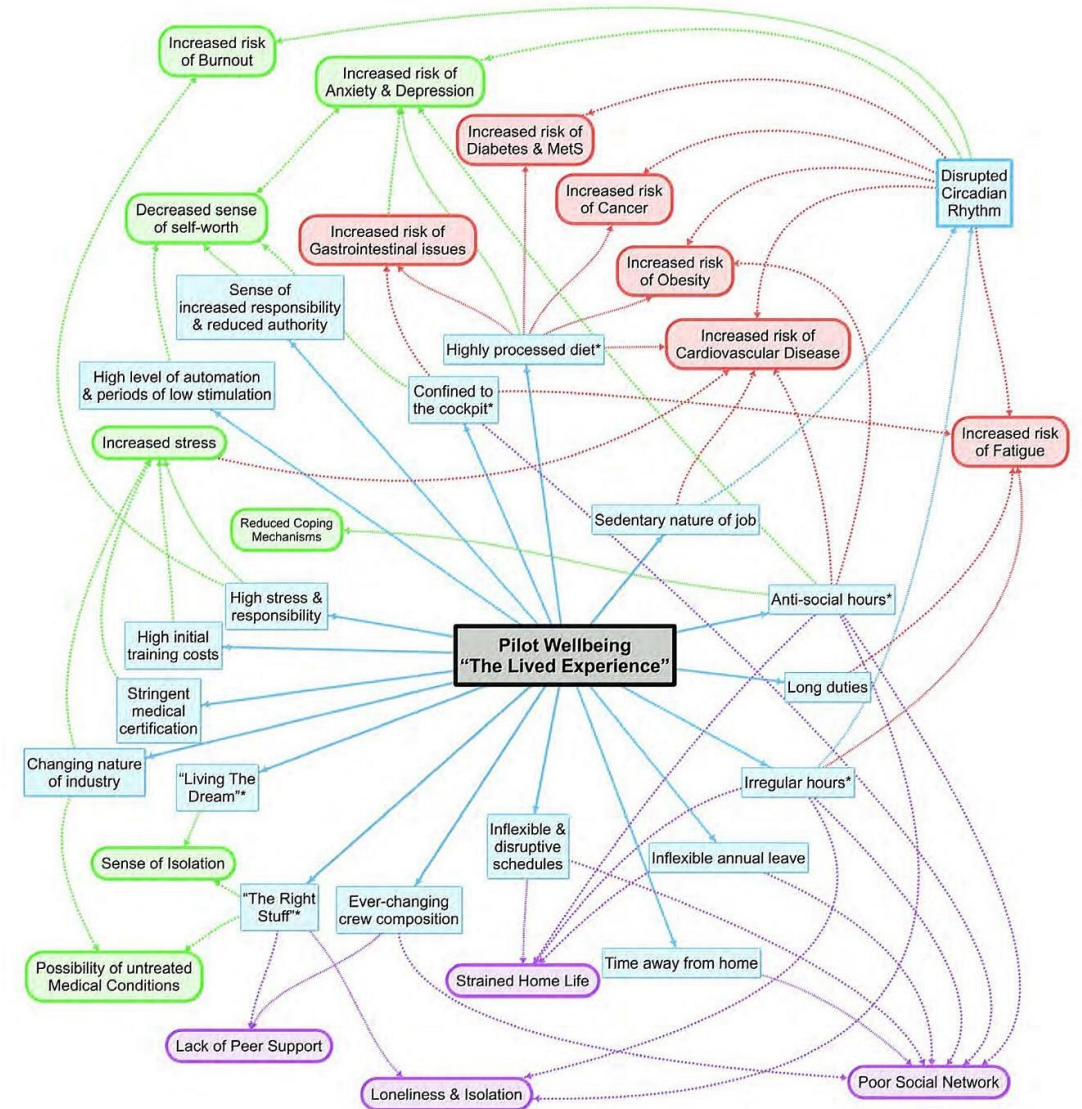


Why does mental health matter in aviation?



Unique pressures in aviation

From: Pilot Wellbeing: The lived experience of a pilot by Capt Paul Cullen in Views from the Air.



What do we
know about
the MH of
aviation staff



Mental Health: The Invisible Engine of Aviation Safety

IMPAIRED COGNITIVE FUNCTION



- Untreated mental health issues directly compromise decision-making ability, situational awareness, memory, and concentration—the core faculties required for managing complex flight environments.

BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK



- Psychological distress can hinder effective interpersonal dynamics, which are critical safety factors for successful Cockpit/Crew Resource Management (CRM).

THE CYCLE OF SLEEP AND FATIGUE



- Mental health problems are strongly associated with sleep disturbance, creating a dangerous feedback loop that exacerbates fatigue in an already high-pressure occupation.

DYSREGULATED EMOTIONAL STATES



- Psychological distress leads to impaired wellbeing and poor emotional regulation, reducing a professional's ability to remain calm and focused during high-stress scenarios.

THE LINK TO AVIATION INCIDENTS



HUMAN FACTORS AND NEAR-MISS DATA

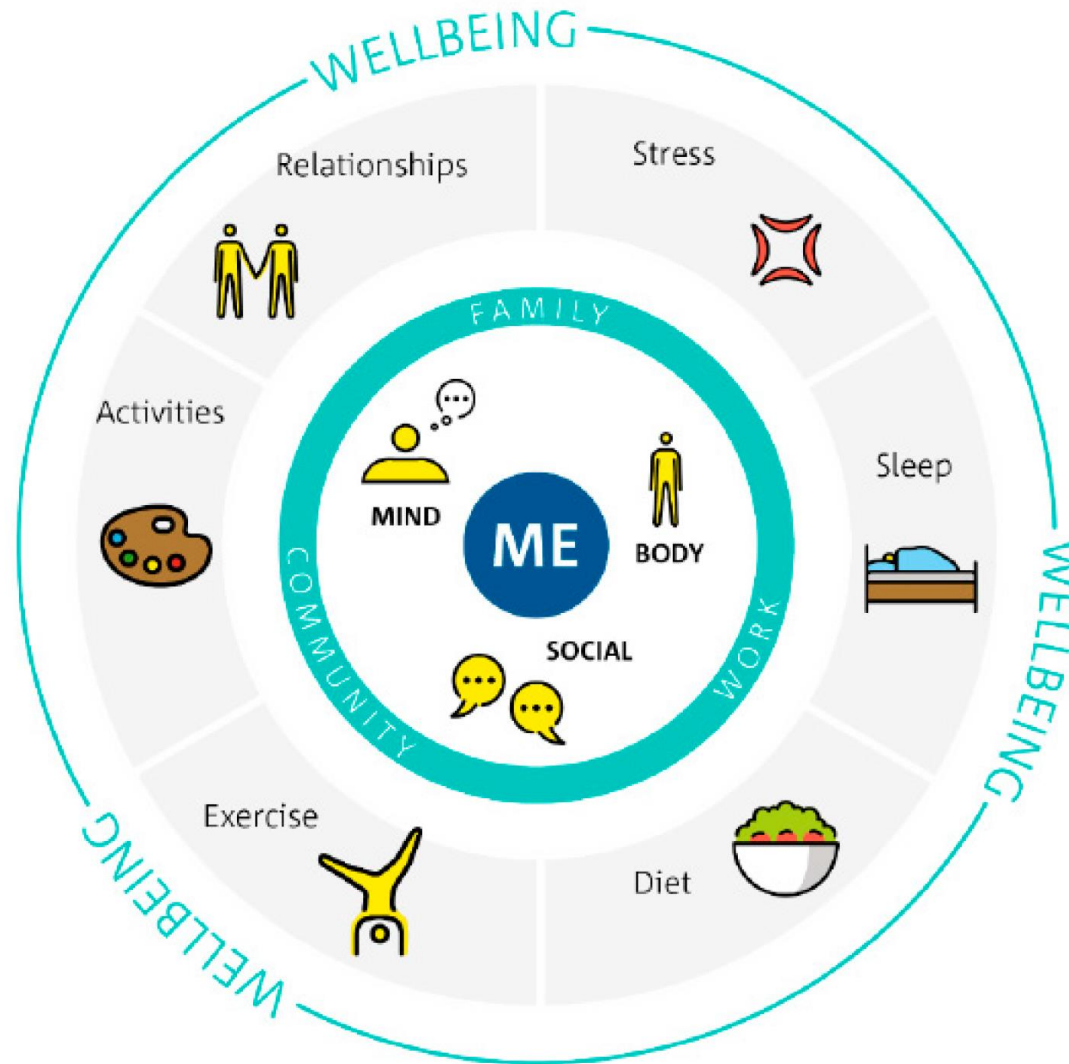
Safety reporting systems and near-miss data have repeatedly and consistently linked serious aviation incidents to underlying human factors.



MENTAL HEALTH AS A SAFETY STRATEGY

Optimising mental health is not just a personal health priority; it is an essential safety strategy designed to mitigate human-factor risks in the aviation industry.

A CRITICAL SAFETY MANDATE: Optimising mental health and wellbeing among aviation staff is a critical safety strategy to address human factors in aviation safety.



Wellbeing wheel (An Aviation Professional's Guide to Wellbeing, Flight Safety Foundation, 2020).

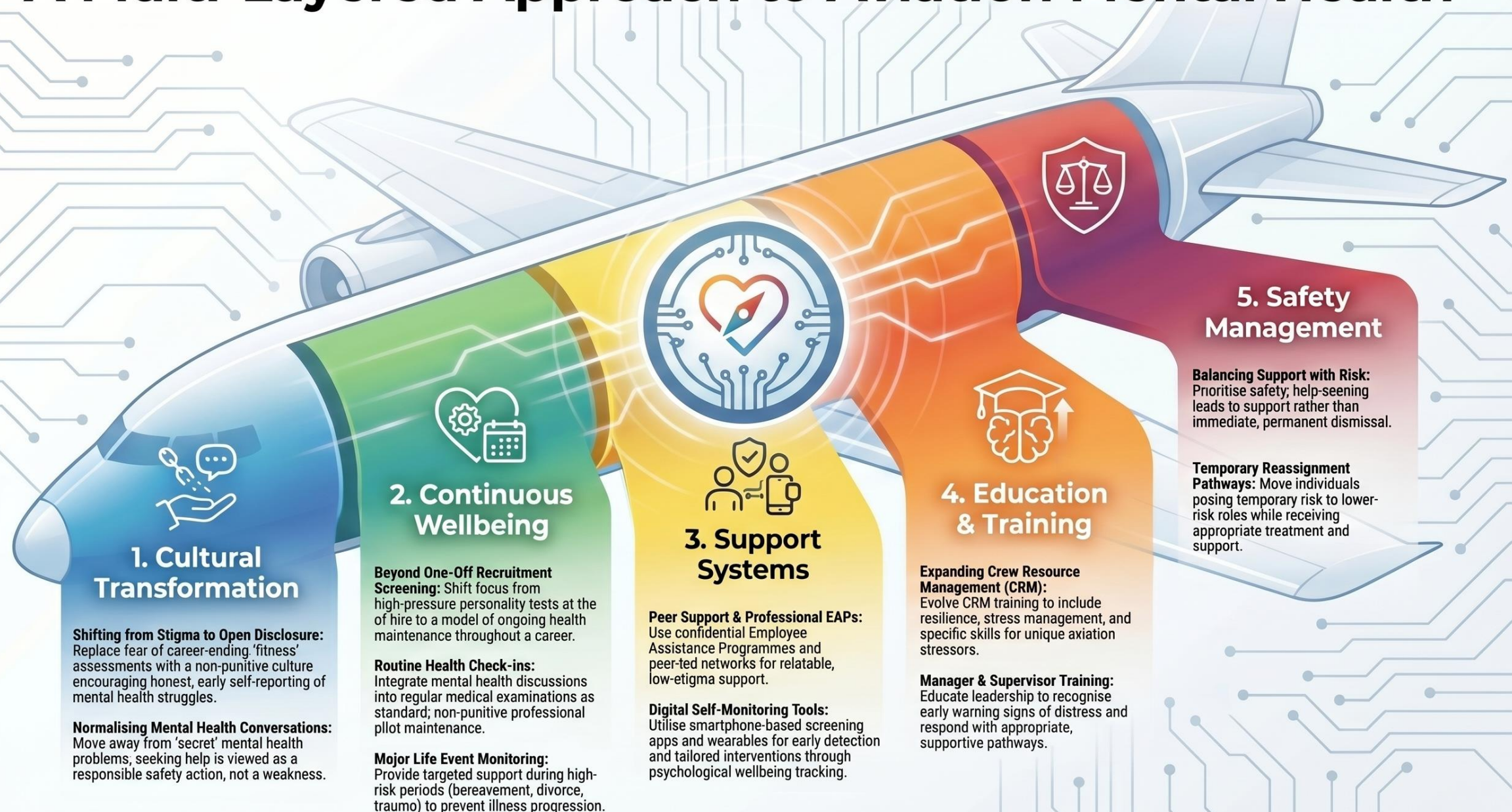
What can aviation employees do to improve their mental health?

From: Carhill J, et al. The Requirements for New Tools for Use by Pilots and the Aviation Industry to Manage Risks Pertaining to Work-Related Stress (WRS) and Wellbeing, and the Ensuing Impact on Performance and Safety *technologies* **2020**, 8(3), 40; <https://doi.org/10.3390/technologies8030040>

Aviation industry and staff mental health



A Multi-Layered Approach to Aviation Mental Health



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