

Podcast Series: Conversations that Connect

Episode 3

Tips for nurses and midwives on how to make health, wellbeing and self-care a priority with a bonus mindfulness activity

Carolyn McDonald is a Registered Nurse and Senior Clinician with NMHPV and an Iyengar yoga teacher. She provides advice, tips and techniques for how students, graduates, early career nurses and midwives can nurture your emotional, physical and spiritual health. This includes how to establish self-care as a routine so it becomes part of your nursing and midwifery toolkit to refresh and restore your health and wellbeing.

Host: Mark Aitken | **Guest:** Carolyn McDonald | **Duration:** 42:00

Tags: Nurse health, Midwife health, Mental Health, Wellbeing, Self-care, Mindfulness, Yoga

Episode 2 Transcript

Glenn Taylor

[0:19] Hello, and welcome to the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria podcast series. My name is Glenn Taylor and I'll be introducing today's podcast host. I'm a registered nurse and CEO of Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria, also known as NMHPV.

NMHPV is an independent support service for nurses, midwives and students of nursing and midwifery who are experiencing sensitive health challenges related to their substance use, mental health or family violence concerns. NMHPV is confidential and independent, is unique to Victoria and it's provided free of charge to our colleagues. You can call on for any professional or personal matter between Monday and Friday, 8.30am - 5.00pm, the number is 9415 7551. You can also email us at admin@nmhp.org.au via our website at www.nmhp.org.au

Today's host is Mark Aitken. Mark is a registered nurse and Deputy Director at the NMHPV. He has over 35 years' experience in the profession and tremendous passion for the health and wellbeing of our colleagues. Welcome, Mark.

Mark Aitken

[1:48] Welcome to the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria podcast: Conversations that Connect. I'm Mark Aitken, the podcast host. I'm a registered nurse and the Deputy Director of Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria. Today's podcast is all about self-care, health and wellbeing for nurses, midwives and students. I couldn't think of a more important topic to discuss in these challenging times when so many are impacted by COVID-19, still reeling from the devastating bushfires in many parts of Victoria, and indeed some people have been impacted by prolonged drought. My guest today is Carolyn McDonald, registered nurse and clinician with the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria. Welcome and hello, Carolyn!

Carolyn McDonald

[2:38] Hi, Mark.

Mark Aitken

[2:40] How you going?

Carolyn McDonald

[2:41] I'm good. How are you going today?

Mark Aitken

[2:43] Good, thank you. Feeling very lucky that I can do this wonderful job we do from home when so many of our nurse and midwifery colleagues are working incredibly hard at the frontline supporting Victorians impacted by COVID-19. So, to all our colleagues out there doing this work, thank you very much from all of us at the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program. Please know that if you need us, we're available to talk to anytime. You can contact the program via the website, www.nmhp.org.au or phone us, Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm, 9415 7551, offer 24/7 support, Nurse & Midwife Support, 1800 6667 877 or via the website www.nmsupport.org.au

So, Carolyn, would you tell our listeners about your background and the great work you currently do as a registered nurse and clinician with the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria, which I know you're incredibly passionate about, and let us know how you landed at the NMHPV.

Carolyn McDonald

[4:04] No worries, Mark, and I just wanted to say how amazing it is, the technology to be able to do this from home, to be able to actually have this discussion. And also acknowledging that that's been a really big factor in a lot of people's lives today, actually navigating new technology.

But my history with nursing...I've been nursing for over 25 years now and I'm a university-trained nurse from Deakin University in Melbourne. In my last placement, I was able to move to Far North Queensland, and to do my last month placement at Cairns Base Hospital. Of course, being young and free I was going to go and travel but I actually ended up falling in love with Cairns and stayed there for about five years and worked up there, did my grad program up there. During that time, I had lots of experience in clinical areas and then moved into the PACU area, so recovery room, and ended up coming back to Melbourne.

At that stage, I did more study in recovery room, or Post-Anesthetic Care Unit as it's known now, and travelled to London, did a year in London during that time. When I came back from overseas, I thought there were some changes pending, I developed some maladaptive coping strategies, I was starting to feel really burnt out, and my self-care and wellbeing became a priority. So, I started looking after myself at that time, I started doing my yoga teaching qualification. It may sound a little bit silly, but I felt the need to not be working with so many unconscious people. You know, the perioperative area being a place where people are...we don't get a lot of live action, except with staff.

So, I moved out into the community and started working with young people in addiction as a home-based withdrawal nurse, which I absolutely loved. It was such an amazing change. So did some more work, studies in the alcohol and other drug and mental health area, and here I am, I landed at NMHPV. I love the fact that it's landed, because I feel like that because I am really passionate about nurse and midwife health and I've always displayed that. A colleague of mine when I was working with young people, she knew Heather Pickard who was the founding member of VNHP, which is Victorian Nursing Health program, and she encouraged me to apply for the job. So, I did.

Can I share a funny story about that?

Mark Aitken

[6:35] I'd love you to, Carolyn. I'm sure our listeners will enjoy it.

Carolyn McDonald

[6:39] Well, it was one of those things where I just thought, "This is my job." I really wanted it. I bought a new pair of grey pants, I had this beautiful white shirt and got all dressed up and went to the interview. As I was interviewing, I shared my passion, but I did feel like I probably didn't have enough experience in the community area having come from inside the hospital...to offer the program really the best start.

So, Heather and I talked about that and the fact that I probably needed a bit more experience. I didn't give up, I just put those pants and my white shirt in the cupboard and waited for the next opportunity. It came around about three years later, where the possibility of becoming clinician with the NMHP was advertised.

I was encouraged to apply; I did and I was successful! It was those three years that helped me build my confidence with program development and teaching. I did first aid teaching and it was amazing the amount of rows that happened for me in that time to then make me feel really comfortable and confident to share my passion about health with nurses and midwives in this role today. So, I pulled out those pants, lucky for yoga, I hadn't changed size. I always think that's funny. Pulled out those pants and that white shirt, and I went back into my interview and I got the job. I landed the job!

Mark Aitken

[8:09] What a great story Carolyn. So many nurses and midwives listening to this will have these incredibly connecting career stories. I hope that nurses and midwives, particularly early career nurse midwives, listening to this podcast will be inspired by Carolyn's career journey to date. I love the idea that you've got an interview outfit, as so many of our colleagues do, and will. I have the interview suit! Hopefully when I applied for this job four years ago, I wore that for the last time because I love this job and hopefully it will be my job until I retire. But you're such an inspiration. Thanks for sharing that, Carolyn.

Carolyn, what does health wellbeing and self-care mean to you? Why do you think it's important for nurses, midwives and students?

Carolyn McDonald

[9:01] Health, wellbeing and self-care for me are really important because I spent my career putting everyone's needs first. We - nurses and midwives - can be guilty of doing that, putting everybody's needs first, caring for others, caring for [the] vulnerable, but never really turning it back on to ourselves. A few sayings that came to mind when I think about this question is 'nurturing the nurturer' and that idea of the first aider and who's the most important person in a first aid situation. And you know, the airplane...not that we're going on airplanes anymore, but that idea about putting on your own oxygen mask first, or else you're no good to anyone. Those things really stand out to me. In this work, I meet the most amazing resilient nurses and midwives who often, by the time they've spoken to me, they just need reminding

that all of the care that they give to other people, they can turn back to themselves.

Mark Aitken

[10:05] That's great, Carolyn. I think it's really important that people connect with what health, wellbeing and self-care mean to them individually, because it does actually mean different things to different people. So, for me, it's around finding your passion in relation to those elements. I think if you have passion around health, wellbeing and self-care, then it's going to drive you to achieve those things that will indeed assist you to achieve your greatest quality of life or your best life. That's really great advice. Carolyn, thanks so much.

Carolyn, many people listening to this podcast, as we said at the beginning, have been impacted by COVID-19. Indeed, we're recording this the 24 of July, and the COVID-19 numbers in Melbourne have steadily increased over the last few days. People are concerned about that, their troubled, hospitals are filling up with people impacted by COVID-19. Carolyn, how do you suggest nurses and midwives look after themselves while they're dealing with this uncertain situation? They're stretched, they're stressed, many of them, uncertain and impacted by the various challenges of the pandemic. What advice do you have for them?

Carolyn McDonald

[11:24] Well, oh my God, strange times. People have been impacted by this in so many ways and continue to be, and it's almost like sometimes when I'm speaking with nurses and midwives today, they are not even sure how or why it's impacting. Ways of thinking and behaving or looking after ourselves has suddenly being removed living your values, like you were talking about living your passions or living your values have been removed, and people don't even notice that that's happened and they're wondering why they've got such a low mood, but actually, they can't go off and have an adventure anymore or can't just play or be light and free. It's also because of the unknown.

Being a yoga teacher, mindfulness is very much a part of my self-care, and mindfulness, it's really about just having some degree of control over what the mind does. When we're in a place of the unknown, the mind can just come up with all sorts of ideas about what the future might hold. It's all ideas; they're not necessarily positive or negative, but often if we're inundated with lots of negative thinking, we can be really impacted by that. Our mood and our ability to continue on with life as we know it, or...you know, life changed, which is what it is for many people today.

Things that I was thinking about just increased fear on the front line...back in the first lockdown that we had initially it was to do with how people coped with what was happening at the time, who was going to be presenting, what was our PPE equipment. Were we allowed to use this or plans and codes and policies and procedures, and all of that stuff. Now there's more realization of the impact of that on us personally. People are actually scared for contracting it or taking it home to families. It's impacting everyone in different ways. People were impacted by reduced work originally, because everything was locked down and theatres were stopped. There actually was no casual work, so there was a lot of nurses who were out of work.

So, there was the fear of financial insecurity and yeah, all of those things. The other thing is in that first lockdown, we thought we had done okay, I think everybody has just a little degree of, "Yeah, we flattened the curve. We've done okay." Then with this next spike, everybody's been a little bit exhausted, we've been up in that fight or flight response to it, and now everyone's a bit exhausted. We're having to be in that again. The effect of this on people's mental health, it's really big, it's not small.

I guess my first bit of advice is give us a call. If you feel like you're a bit lost in something, just give us a call. It doesn't need to be something that is diagnosed or increasing alcohol or drug use or anything that's major, it can be just...I'm in a low mood, and I don't know how to get out of it. Or I just don't know what I'm doing here and how I'm feeling. Sometimes just having one phone call, you can just get back on track. It's okay.

Mark Aitken

[14:37] That's great advice, Carolyn. So just for people listening, call 9415 7551, 8.30am - 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, or Nurse & Midwife Support 24 hours, 7 days a week, 1800 667 877. As Carolyn says, if you're not sure or you're feeling a bit wobbly, it's fine to give us a call. We want to hear from you because early intervention and support is much better than letting the issue become full blown and completely whacking you off track. Call us sooner rather than later for support, or even if you just want to talk through the way that you're feeling, and some advice for how to get yourself back on track.

Caroline, for those people who do call us or are connecting in with us, and they're seeking support to get their health and wellbeing and self-care on track, what advice would you give them? How would you have that discussion with somebody?

Carolyn McDonald

[15:38] Initially just making that connection and seeing where people are at...people often describe where their mood is at, in response to what they think is going on. [I've] been speaking to people, like I was saying about the fear of exposure for themselves...our aging workforce, worried about their own health, et cetera. Generally, it's about the discussion and teasing out what has been lost. Like I feel for a lot of people...well, the thing that I've been focusing on is trying to work out where someone has lost the ability to live their values. I have had quite a number of people who have lost that motivation to be working [inaudible 16:26] they do, and they've lost that. So how can you now put that into your life where it will look after you?

Mark Aitken

[16:33] Caroline, if a nurse, midwife or student is seeking support to get their health and self-care on track, and they call our service and speak to one of our fabulous clinicians, what advice do we give to them and how would we work with them in that situation?

Carolyn McDonald

[16:50] If any of the nurse, midwives, student nurses, midwives gave us a call, generally they would speak to our receptionist initially. She's very lovely, she might be able to organize an appointment straightaway with one of our clinicians. Maybe me, it could be any number of about six clinicians now on staff. Basically, you'll be greeted with a very non-judgmental, confidential conversation to work out where you're at.

People often have their own solutions to their problems and sometimes people just need some validation, they just need a sounding board. It could be that a way of thinking is not working anymore and you just need some guidance on how to deal with that or how to change that, whatever that might be, to cope with what's going on.

Nurses and midwives generally are very resilient, but also very apprehensive of asking for help. We're set up totally for that purpose, to just give you a hand. May not need to be long-term, short-term, brief intervention...just finding your way through something.

Mark Aitken

[18:07] Great advice, Carolyn. Thank you.

Students, graduates and early career nurses, as we know often struggle to establish a routine to manage their health, wellbeing and self-care. That's often for many reasons, because many have just entered the world, the working world of shift work. It's hard when people do shift work to set up regular routines or commit to regular group sporting activities, because you might be going off

to netball on a Monday but rostered to do a late shift. So often their routine or their habit of self-care and recreation is disrupted.

Carolyn, why is it important that these early career nurses make their health wellbeing and self-care a priority? What tips do you have for them to establish their routine?

Carolyn McDonald

[19:05] Good question. Why? So that they've got longevity in the job. So that they actually can be the best nurse/midwife they would like to be and do well in their job without being injured by the work.

Nursing and Midwifery work can be really stressful and really demanding. So a lot of the things when I'm talking to graduates that I'll talk about, one of the first ones is with shift work, actually having to hand your whole month over to your workplace to tell you when you're working and when you're not...I just advise that they have at least one day that they put in as a request for their own, for their own wellbeing. Just as you were saying to stay connected to groups or sporting—I'm not sure what people are allowed to do today because even that's changed—but finding those connections, making sure you just have a little bit of power in looking after yourself. One day that you can guarantee you're doing an early, one day you can guarantee you're doing a late, so it works for you. Realizing that you can be flexible with some things, but you don't have to hand your whole life over and just be at their mercy.

Getting enough sleep, but not too much because I do hear of...I mean, I myself had this experience of being a new graduate and getting home after an early and then sleeping for four hours, just spent a lot of time sleeping and recovery. Finding that balance; getting enough sleep but not getting too much, no doona-diving. Exercising between shifts and using your time wisely. Preparing meals if possible, that's a good one, keeps you well and healthy eating nutritious foods. Doing a big batch of something and freezing it and being able to take it to work the lates and stuff like that. Making sure you have enjoyable activities, things that you like that keep you feeling good.

A lot of people in their graduate year can be mothers, carers of parents and have so many other roles that keeping a balance of all of those...counting your wins for a day. This is a big one for 24-hour nursing, and I often talk to graduates who can just feel really deflated about that end-of-shift shift handover, where you have to hand over everything you haven't done. You need to acknowledge all the things you have done, so that you're not left with that

empty, "Oh, I didn't do this." Because it's 24 hours, you've got to be able to hand stuff over. There's a whole productivity element to nursing that's not necessarily there unless you make it a part of your thinking and bring it to your own conscious state. Making sure you take time and slow down, don't get too wound up. And then mindfulness plus, the practice of mindfulness, which we'll talk about a little bit further. Just making sure that you know your red flags, too, when you're not traveling okay, and you know what are the things that show up for you. Some people talk about going home...I'm sure that every graduate has this experience of going home from a late and then falling asleep and dreaming about work all night and getting up for an early, just feeling like you never leave work or ruminating thoughts or questioning decisions you made or questioning, just knowing that you might need a bit of support to work through that and develop the skills. The practice of mindfulness will help you. How's that sound, Mark?

Mark Aitken

[22:28] Great advice. Thank you, Carolyn.

The Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria recently developed some excellent resources to support nurses, midwives and students, even if I do say so myself on behalf of the team that developed those resources. They include a self-care survey, the self-care plan, and a health and wellbeing toolkit, full of resources and excellent strategies to assist with your health and wellbeing and you can access those from the website www.nmhp.org.au And on our home page, look for the health and wellbeing tab, click on that, and it will link you into the self-care survey. Now, I really encourage you to complete that survey, because it really helps you to understand your self-care needs and your intentions. That assists you to develop your own self-care plan, which I strongly encourage you to do as well. What I say is that nurses and midwives are really great at developing care plans for those they care for, so why wouldn't you do that for yourself. Indeed, if you document that it helps you order what's important to you. Set it up as a priority. What I encourage you to do is print it out. Share it with people that are important in your life, so they support you doing the things that are on your self-care plan that keep your health and wellbeing on track, and indeed put it on the fridge or somewhere prominent, so other people and you can see it, regularly connecting with it, and really assists you to focus your health and wellbeing and self-care.

Caroline, do you have any other advice for how you'd encourage our listeners to use some of these resources?

Carolyn McDonald

[24:21] Yes, I forgot to mention that earlier about using that to explore other information and ideas and resources that are all available on our website. But the self-care plan, I found that absolutely amazing that setting my intention and writing what I intended to do, and it was during the period of the first lockdown...actually writing that, it just gave me so much more resolve to do it. It was almost like the plan was set. So, I just had to do the things that I had intended for myself. And it's really quite powerful, it's a really great thing to do. And we do it for so many others, we're always sorting out everybody else's plans. Why not make us as important as that? Yeah, I think that's great advice, Mark.

Mark Aitken

[25:13] Thanks heaps, Carolyn. Now, Carolyn, you've talked a bit about yoga, and our listeners probably have connected with the fact that you're a yoga teacher as well as a nurse as well as an all-round, amazing person. Please share with our listeners about the benefits of yoga in relation to health and wellbeing because the chances are some of our listeners will do yoga regularly and some people may have been thinking about it. If you could shed some light on it, I think that'd be great.

Carolyn McDonald

[25:45] I am a yoga teacher and I teach Iyengar yoga now. I have done another teaching course as well. Yoga is an ancient tradition that I could talk about for weeks. You can go into it as superficially or as deep as you would like. Nurses who are practicing yoga will understand, depending on the type of yoga they practice or what the type of yoga focuses on. But I think the thing that Yoga has done for me which I didn't realize, not only the physical wellbeing of the asana practice—because people often associate yoga just with the postures, being able to do a down face dog or a handstand or whatever that may be—but it's not about that it's actually about how do you do those. They do have healing qualities for the body and absolutely moving the body in any way is a good idea because what happens to stagnant water, when you think about it?

There's some very obvious reasons why exercise or moving the body is a good thing to do. But yoga is often practiced with mindfulness, being in a state of awareness instead of being in a state of thinking. People often come into a yoga class and do the hour and a half and then walk out and go, "I feel so amazing! I feel so refreshed!" That's because they've been in that state of awareness, instead of thinking. Their body is no longer in that space where thinking will activate our sympathetic nervous system and set off our fight or flight, depending on what we're thinking about. You get a break from all of that.

The aim of yoga, written in the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* is to still the fluctuations of the mind. In the practice of yoga, and there are eight limbs of yoga...asana and pranayama, which is breathwork, are two of those limbs of yoga, which is what a lot of people associate as being yoga, so only two paths. We know how beneficial mindfulness is to good mental health, so it doesn't surprise me that people will find it's a healthy pathway. It's just so many things, really.

I was often a person who emotionally ate, or have fluctuations in my body weight. Since taking the yogic path and actually making yoga practice a part of my day or my week, a lot of those things have settled down, like my awareness of my own health. Yeah. It just becomes greater and you're more inclined to look after yourself.

Mark Aitken

[28:23] Thanks, Carolyn. That's really useful information that I know our listeners will find beneficial. On the back of talking a fair bit about yoga, meditation and mindfulness, we've got a treat for our listeners today. Carolyn is going to lead a guided mindfulness activity. I'm very excited about that. I've heard Carolyn provide these activities before and they always refresh me. Carolyn, over to you.

Carolyn McDonald

[28:52] Thanks, Mark. I love the practice of mindfulness. When I was seeing people face to face at appointments, this could be a part of the process in finding out what's happening for someone and in their mind. The idea of mindfulness is that like I was talking about, that you're in complete awareness and not in the thinking part of the brain. So neurologically, that means that actually, we are free from the effects of our thinking. We've got to remember that the brain is a thought-producing factory, it will come up with all sorts of ideas about everything. They're not all believable. They're not even all intelligent. One of the best things I ever heard was, "Don't believe everything your head thinks." It really is quite freeing.

There's many mindfulness practices you can do so if, if you don't relate well to my voice, you can find a thousand on the internet. Tara Brach is a really nice voice to listen to in doing practice of mindfulness. Russ Harris does quite a number. This is very simple, and it's one that I did at a conference we had...last year or the year before, Mark? I can't remember.

Mark Aitken

[30:10] It was last year Carolyn, and many of our listeners may have attended, the ANMF, NMHPV Nurses and Midwives Health

and Wellbeing Conference, where Carolyn actually led a yoga session, which I was up on the stage for with Caroline and a whole team of fabulous nurses and midwives. That was last year. We'll run that at conference again next year if we're able to be all together again. Hopefully post COVID-19. Stay tuned for information about that.

Carolyn McDonald

[30:46] Thanks.

So, I will begin and I just want you to find a comfortable place to sit. If you can lie down, that's fantastic, but you'll have to incorporate my instructions to the lying down position. But just sitting in a really comfortable position...sitting up straight in your chair...let your shoulders drop and gently push your feet into the floor. Get a sense of the ground beneath you. You can either fix your eyes on a spot or close them, whichever you prefer. If you have your eyes open, just take the gaze downward so the eyelids are almost half closed.

Just take a moment to notice how you are sitting.

Notice what you can see.

Notice what you can hear.

Notice what you can feel against your skin.

Notice what you can smell and sense in your nostrils.

Notice what you are feeling.

Notice what you are thinking.

Notice what you are doing.

There's a part of you in there that can notice everything you see, hear, touch, taste, smell, think and feel. We don't have a good word for this part of you in everyday language. For the purpose of this exercise, I'm going to call it the observing self. You don't have to call it that. You can call it anything you like.

Now for the next few breaths, I would like you to push all of the out of your lungs until there's no more left, and then allow them to gently refill, all by themselves.

Observe your breathing as if you're a curious scientist who's never encountered breathing before.

Notice the air as it comes in through your nostrils and goes down to the bottom of your lungs.

Notice it as it flows back out again.

Notice how the air that moves in through your nostrils is slightly cooler as it goes in and slightly warmer as it comes out.

Notice the subtle rise and fall of your shoulders.

The gentle rise and fall of your ribcage...and the soothing rise and fall of your abdomen.

Fix your attention on one of these areas, whichever you prefer, on the breath moving in and out of the nostrils, or the rising and falling of the ribcage, or the movement of the abdomen. Keeping your attention on this spot, continue to notice the movement in and out of the breath.

You may find this hard because the mind is a masterful storyteller. It can tell you all sorts of interesting stories to grab your attention and pull you away from what you are doing.

Let your mind just chatter away as if it's a radio playing in the background. Don't try and turn the radio off. It's impossible, not even Zen masters can do that. Just let it play on in the background, and keep your attention, your awareness on your breath.

If you can notice your breath, you cannot be your breath. When you were a child, your lungs were so much smaller, but the You who can notice your breathing as a child is the same You who can notice this as an adult.

You'll notice your body in the chair and as you do that, be aware you're noticing: there is your body, and there you are noticing it. It's not the same body you had as a baby, as a child, as a teenager. You may have had bits put into it or bits cut out of it. You have scars and wrinkles and moles and blemishes and sunspots. It's not the same skin you had in your youth. But the part of you that can notice your body never changes.

As a child when you looked in the mirror at your reflection, it was very different than it is today. But the You who can notice your reflection is the same You that notices your reflection today.

Just taking one or both of your hands and placing them on any part of the body that feels comfortable and natural for you to do so. You can place them on an area of the body that you feel needs some extra care, or you can place them over your heart, or on the abdomen.

These are the healing hands. They are the hands of a loving nurse or midwife, a loving friend or parent. Feel the warmth going from your hands into your body.

Just reflecting on the feelings you have felt throughout this exercise, the kindness, compassion, you have been reminded for others and now feed that back to yourself. Remember, always nurture the nurturer, as you grow in kindness and compassion for self, you will have more for others.

Just reflecting on something you are grateful for. Feel that feeling of gratitude in your heart. And then feel that feeling of gratitude moving from your heart, down through your arms, through your hands back to yourself. Honor yourself for being a part of this podcast, and sharing this time with me.

And then nice and slowly, just wiggling your toes...just bringing your awareness back to your body. Place your hands in a comfortable position. Very slowly raising your eyelids, coming back into the room...opening the eyes.

...and thank you.

Mark Aitken

[39:21] Thank you very much Carolyn. Every time I do one of these mindfulness activities with you, I feel incredibly refreshed and regenerated. Hopefully our listeners have had that experience too.

We have actually come to the end of this fabulous podcast now, on the very important topic of health, wellbeing and self-care. We've talked about the importance of health, wellbeing and self-care to nurses, midwives and students, provided tips, resources and strategies to enable you to establish a self-care routine, and we've discussed and shared the benefits of yoga and mindfulness as a daily practice.

Hopefully, you've got some really useful resources to enable you to ensure your self-care is on track or if not, to get it back on track. So, take care, and Carolyn, I'd like to thank you for being such a great and generous guest today. Just wondering if you've got any final words of wisdom for our listeners.

Carolyn McDonald

[40:30] Thank you so much for inviting me to be a part of this podcast. Probably the only thing would be: if you're struggling, give us a call. Call the service, make some contact, and don't forget to nurture the nurturer!

Mark Aitken

[40:43] Thanks, Carolyn. Just a final reminder, that as Carolyn says, feel free to give us a call, the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria, Monday-Friday 8.30am - 5.00pmpm, 9415

7551, or via the website, www.nmhp.org.au A reminder that we've got some really useful COVID-19 support resources there if you need some extra support in relation to what already is available in your life.

If you need support outside the hours of 8.30am - 5.00pm, Monday-Friday, as I've said, Nurse & Midwife Support is available 24/7. 1800 667 877, or via the website, nmsupport.org.au

Take care, look after yourself and each other, and I'll speak to you next time.