

# Meet our experts

Groundbreaking research is at the heart of our stories—and we're lucky to have a team of leading experts on call. Meet the psychologist we turn to for the latest on mental wellbeing



## Dr Paula Robinson

We just can't get enough of wellbeing thought leaders here at *Prevention*, so it's no wonder Paula Robinson is on our panel of bright minds. As a psychologist and managing director of the Positive Psychology Institute, Paula has conducted groundbreaking research on 'mental fitness'. "I'm passionate about the concept and development of mental fitness for everyone," she explains. "It's an important concept because mental illness is steadily but surely increasing, so we urgently need new and novel approaches to positive mental health." Here's the low-down on her work:

### **You're extremely passionate about mental fitness. Why is that exactly?**

Many reasons. The basic premise is that it's a positive term without connotations of illness implied by either 'mental health' or 'mental illness'. My research and that of others suggests mental fitness is measurable—and that it can also be improved in a similar way to physical fitness. A 'total fitness' approach can buffer us from mental illness but more importantly, mental fitness is a process that can help us achieve high levels of wellbeing in our day-to-day lives.

### **Are there any simple ways we can hone our mental fitness?**

Yes! It's possible to assess the four distinct areas of mental fitness: strength, flexibility, endurance and team. Each can be developed via scientifically validated practices. For example, one aspect of endurance is resilience; if it's low, you can put things in place to increase it. Keen to learn more? Visit [positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/mental\\_fitness.html](http://positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/mental_fitness.html)

### **You do a lot of coaching in business contexts and were a senior manager yourself. What's the number one way people can boost their job satisfaction?**

Know and use your strengths when performing your role and ensure your job description takes them into account. Research suggests that people who use their strengths at work more often are six times more engaged in their jobs. This is one area of development within the 'strength' component of mental fitness.

## PREVENTION'S TEAM OF ADVISERS

### GENERAL HEALTH

**Dr Penny Caldicott**, founding GP of Invitation to Health, an integrative medical centre in New South Wales  
**Associate Professor David Colquhoun**, integrative cardiologist at Wesley Hospital in Brisbane  
**Fiona Cosgrove**, wellness coach, trainer and CEO of Wellness Coaching Australia  
**Dr Joe Kosterich**, GP, health-industry consultant, author and motivational speaker

**Dr Vicki Kotsirilos**, holistic GP and founding past president of the Australasian Integrative Medicine Association  
**Dr Geraldine Moses**, consultant clinical pharmacist at Mater Health Services, Brisbane, and visiting lecturer at The University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology  
**Dr Stephen Shumack**, dermatologist at Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital and the Skin & Cancer Foundation Australia

### WOMEN'S HEALTH

**Associate Professor John Eden**, reproductive endocrinologist at The University of New South Wales and director of the Barbara Gross Research Unit and the Sydney Menopause Centre at the Royal Hospital for Women

### COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE

**Emily Bradley**, naturopath and lecturer at Melbourne's Southern School of Natural Therapies and the Endeavour College of Natural Health  
**Marc Cohen**, PhD, professor

of complementary medicine at Melbourne's RMIT University

### FITNESS & EXERCISE

**Donna Aston**, health and fitness expert, specialising in nutrition, exercise prescription and emotional intelligence  
**Professor Kylie Ball**, PhD, expert in nutrition, obesity and physical activity at the School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University, Victoria  
**Lisa Champion**, exercise specialist and a director of the Australian Fitness Network

### FOOD & NUTRITION

**Geraldine Georgeou**, accredited dietitian and director of Designer Diets  
**Sue Radd**, advanced accredited practising dietitian & nutritionist, director of Sydney's Nutrition and Wellbeing Clinic

### PSYCHOLOGY & BRAIN HEALTH

**Nicola Gates**, PhD, psychologist and neuropsychologist specialising in positive ageing, principal of Brain and Mind Psychology

**Paula Robinson**, psychologist, managing director at the Positive Psychology Institute and mental-fitness expert  
**Marie Rowland**, director and consulting psychotherapist at Talking-Matters in Sydney  
**Tim Sharp**, PhD, clinical and coaching psychologist, founder and CHO (Chief Happiness Officer) of The Happiness Institute  
**Gordon Spence**, PhD, psychologist, expert in performance and motivation, and lecturer at the Australian Institute of Business Wellbeing

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