

A growing body of research is drawing a link between mental and physical health - and the connection is much stronger than you might realise.

Simon Rosenbaum, a senior research fellow in school psychiatry at UNSW, had been researching [the role of exercise in mental health treatment](#) for years when he teamed up with a colleague – Ruth Wells.

Wells is a PhD candidate in clinical psychology at the University of Sydney and a research fellow at the school of psychiatry at UNSW, and her research expertise focuses on the mental health of refugees.

Late last year, the pair flew to Gaziantep in southern Turkey, where about one in four people are Syrian refugees. They wanted to explore what role exercise might play in improving the mental health of Syrian refugees.

Today on Trust Me, I'm An Expert, we hear from Simon Rosenbaum and Ruth Wells on what they found when they got there; how exercise might fit with existing treatments for refugees with PTSD and other conditions; and how exercise can help people anywhere who are trying to improve their mental health.

We'd love you to listen to the whole episode, but we've included a few snippets below to get you started.

## **What does the science say on exercise and mental health?**

The science linking exercise and mental health.

## **Simon Rosenbaum teaches the Syrian refugee women how to do a push-up.**

Simon teaches female participants how to do a push-up.

The work Ruth Wells and Simon Rosebaum have been doing in Gaziantep has come out of

years of collaboration with their partners in the field, including Rania Said Yousef and Raiya Al Said. So a special thanks goes out to them, as well as Omar Said Yousef, Dr Ammar Beetar and the organisation [Syria Bright Future](#) .

### **Raiya tells us that music, exercise and dance can help depression.**

Raiya explaining the importance of dance and exercise.

For support, call Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636, Lifeline on 13 11 14 or visit [Headspace](#) , which has information for schools, young people, and family and friends.

If you're interested in more information about, or donating to, the women's gym that Simon and Ruth are working with, you can find their contact details [here](#) and [here](#) .

Trust Me, I'm An Expert is out at the start of every month. Find us and subscribe in [Apple Podcasts](#) , [Pocket Casts](#) or wherever you get your podcasts.

---

## **Additional audio**

Kindergarten, Unkle Ho, from [Elefant Traks](#)

Free Music Archive, [Gushe Cheman](#) by Turku, Nomads of the Silk Road

Free Music Archive, [Muhabet](#) by Turku, Nomads of the Silk Road

Free Music Archive, [Drum Solo](#) by Turku, Nomads of the Silk Road

## Trust Me, I'm An Expert: 'Dancing out of depression' - how Syrian refugees are using exercise to improve

Written by Madeleine De Gabriele, Deputy Editor: Energy + Environment

---

Free Music Archive, [Penceresi Yola Karsi](#) by Turku, Nomads of the Silk Road

Authors: Madeleine De Gabriele, Deputy Editor: Energy + Environment

**Read more** <http://theconversation.com/trust-me-im-an-expert-dancing-out-of-depression-how-syrian-refugees-are-using-exercise-to-improve-mental-health-94412>