



**LIVE WELL
SHEAR WELL**



Supporting you in and out the shed.

FARMSTRONG
Live Well Farm Well

farmstrong.co.nz

**NEW ZEALAND
SHEARING
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION**

Power up your mental fitness

Just like you can become physically fitter, you can also build your mental strength and fitness to help you manage the ups and downs of life and work. That's what being Farmstrong's all about. Getting more out of life and work and keeping well despite the challenges that come your way.

Staying Farmstrong means making your own mental state a priority. It helps to think of what's going on in your mind as a bit like your bank account. Investing regularly in your mental fitness means you'll have plenty to draw on when you need it. Make time for activities that help you think more clearly, de-stress and recharge your batteries. Different things work for different people so lock in what works for you.



Rowland Smith

Live Well Shear Well Champion



- 7 x NZ Shears titles
- 8 x Golden Shears titles
- 2014 world title in Ireland

Rowland has been shearing since he was 10 and competed in his first novice competition at age 13.

In 2017, the Hawkes Bay-based shearer smashed a world shearing record in England, shearing 644 Romney and crossbred ewes in 8 hours - averaging 44.72 seconds per sheep caught, shorn and despatched! The event was live-streamed to thousands of shearing fans around the world.

Free mental fitness tools and resources: farmstrong.co.nz

Professional advice for contractors: nzshearing.co.nz



CATCH IT, CHECK IT, CHANGE IT

Everyone has days in the shed when nothing seems to go right. This can lead to a downward spiral of negative thoughts and make a bad situation even worse. The good news is you can train your brain to have more helpful thoughts using **Catch It, Check It, Change It**.

ACTION PLAN

- When you feel frustrated about a work situation imagine standing outside yourself and hit the 'pause button'.
- Take a deep breath and see if you can 'catch' your thought.
- Check your thinking and ask yourself whether it's helping you to achieve your goal or not. If it's not, change it for a more helpful thought.
- This creates a much calmer space for problem solving.

Using **Catch It, Check It, Change It** stops you getting bogged down mentally and makes it easier to make decisions under pressure.





“I couldn’t think of a better job... I shored sheep, travelled the world, and made a lot of money and good friends. It’s a great industry to be a part of.”

Rowland Smith | Live Well Shear Well champion

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

Sometimes shearing can be an emotional rollercoaster. There are many factors outside of your control like the weather, the state of the shed or how sheep are presented. A great way to relieve stress is to **work out what you can control**.

ACTION PLAN

- Make a list of the things you feel you have control over and the things you don't.
- Prioritise the things you can control, then focus on two or three so you have a plan of attack.
- You could include another column called 'Things I can influence'.
- Sometimes we can't fully control a situation, but we still have some influence. A good example might be checking to make sure the sheep are well presented before a competition.

Aim to let go 'mentally' of things you can't control. Focusing on a few things at a time allows you to keep moving forward so you're not overwhelmed by the scale of everything.





“Fuelling the body properly is one of the big things in shearing. You need to look after your health, nutrition and wellbeing so you can keep going again and again.”

Rowland Smith | Live Well Shear Well champion

REFRAMING A BAD DAY

Everyone has days when nothing seems to go right. **You can use a technique called ‘reframing’** to feel less negative and achieve better outcomes. To use it when you are in the heat of the moment – you could start by doing some deep breathing to help you calm down and focus.

ACTION PLAN

- Ask yourself if there are other explanations for what has happened that are less negative?
- Get some perspective – take a step back and ask yourself ‘how important is this setback really in the overall scheme of things?’
- Talk to someone who will help you see any upsides and talk up your good qualities. Avoid people who are blamers and complainers.

Even if a situation is difficult, ask yourself if there is anything that you could learn from it so things go better in the future?

Sometimes a setback can be a useful lesson.



LEARN TO 'TURN OFF THE TAP'

"We all need to vent from time to time but constant complaining makes a tough day worse. If you need to complain think of it like a tap - turn it all the way on and get things off your chest, but then turn it all the way off, rather than leaving it on and it's dripping the whole time."



KNOW YOUR 'WHY'

Having purpose and direction helps you prioritise what matters in life/work and allows you to walk away from thoughts, people or activities that don't help with where you want to head. It's also a key driver to staying motivated when things get tough and helps you set and achieve goals.

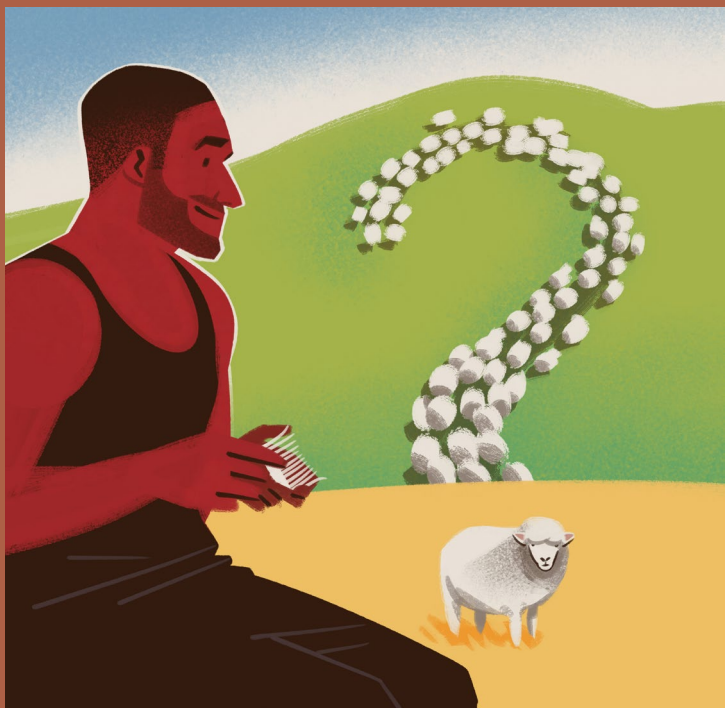
ACTION PLAN

- Set a goal that motivates you and gives you reason you go to work every day - hitting your first 300 tally, winning a shearing competition, saving up for something.
- Put that goal on a pedestal in your head and make sure it gets done.
- Do things each week that energise you and keep you heading towards your goal. Connecting with mates, going to the gym, a sport or a hobby - whatever turns your crank.

Sometimes it can be hard to work out your purpose.

In the long run, allowing other people or random circumstances to dictate what you do can be a recipe for feeling lost and resentful.

Knowing your 'why' puts even the toughest day in the shed into perspective.



“Keeping shearing fit can be as easy as doing simple warm-up stretches and exercises each day before you hit the board. This keeps the body flexible and prevents unnecessary strains, niggles and injuries.”

Rowland Smith | Live Well Shear Well champion



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BENEFITS OF A STRONG SHEARING MINDSET:

- improved focus and attention
- more flexible thinking
- the ability to see the big picture, reframe challenges and remain calm under stress
- higher quality rest and recovery time
- better work communication
- more positive relationships
- improved diet, sleep and exercise.



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