

How do I use information from sources? – the essentials

All of the examples below use the Harvard Style, 5th edition, for the in-text references. Note that ALL methods of using information from sources rely on in-text referencing. Any information derived from sources needs referencing.

Finding relevant academic sources is an essential first step, and if you are finding this challenging, resources are available on the [SkillsHub](#) and you can also contact your [Academic Librarian](#) for help.

Summary: condense or boil down what a source says over several pages into a single sentence, by choosing the key ideas only. Put these into your own words.

Keyes (2005, p.539) distinguishes between the idea of mental well-being as an active presence, and the traditional view of the absence of mental health leading to mental illness.

Quotation: take the words exactly as they are from the source. Use quote marks to indicate where the phrases taken from the source begin and end.

As Keyes (2005, p.539) states, "There exists no standard by which to measure, diagnose, and study the presence of mental health".

Paraphrase: put the ideas into your own words.

As Keyes (2005, p.539) highlights, diagnosis and research on positive mental health is dependent on a fixed standard, which currently does not exist.

Synthesis: compare or contrast what two or more different authors say about the same idea. Establish whether they agree or disagree, or use one to add more information to another.

Keyes (2005) argues that the absence of mental illness cannot be equated with mental well-being, which is consistent with James' (2007) view that there are many people who experience emotional distress that does not qualify as a formal 'mental illness'.

Comment: after a paraphrase, a quote or a summary, explain what you think this idea means, why it is important and/or how it relates to your point. This should be your own interpretation and idea, and as such does not require a reference. If you are instead using someone else's interpretation, it DOES need a reference.

Keyes (2005, p.539) distinguishes between the idea of mental well-being as an active presence, and the traditional view of the absence of mental health leading to mental illness. (paraphrase) **This differentiation is key, because it allows research to focus on what makes people lead happier, more fulfilled lives.** (comment)

References:

Keyes, C. L. (2005). Mental illness and/or mental health? Investigating axioms of the complete state model of health. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, **73**(3), 539.

James, O. (2007). *Affluenza: how to be successful and stay sane*. London: Random House.