



# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

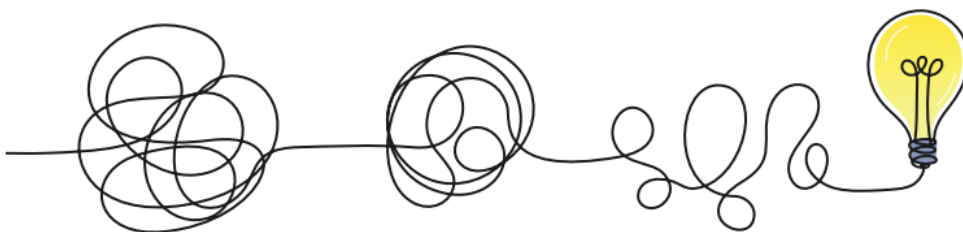
Training Module

Mental illness affects 1 in 5 Australians each year, with anxiety being the most common disorder, followed by depression. Given the prevalence of mental illness among working-aged Australians, workplaces have a significant role in recognizing and promoting mental health.

Increasing mental health awareness is essential for providing a safe and healthy work environment. A healthy and safe workplace benefits all employees and the community they work and live in. It also makes good business sense, offering various benefits, including:

- Increased productivity
- Increased engagement and job satisfaction
- Increased retention and attraction of top talent due to an enhanced reputation
- Increased morale and resilience
- Decreased illness, injury, accidents, and workers' compensation claims
- Decreased absenteeism and presenteeism (when employees are not fully functioning at work due to illness, injury, or other conditions)
- Decreased turnover and recruitment costs
- Decreased lost management time
- Decreased workplace conflicts, incivility, and bullying

Additionally, Australian employers are legally obligated to provide healthy and safe workplaces, both physically and mentally. Mental Health Awareness training is a crucial component in fulfilling this Work Health and Safety obligation.



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# Learning Objectives

In this training module, you will learn about common mental health conditions, how to identify the warning signs, what actions to take, and what help is available for yourself and others, including practical strategies for building resilience.

This module is designed to:

- Build mental health literacy
- Reduce stigma
- Promote help-seeking behaviour

By completing this module, you should learn:

- What mental health and what is mental illness
- Understand the causes, signs, and symptoms of common mental health conditions including stress, anxiety, depression and substance use.
- How to recognise and respond to early signs of poor mental health
- How to seek help and available resources
- Strategies to promote personal resilience and wellbeing, and how these translate into daily life

This module is intended to be used alongside SIEMAG TECBERG Australia's Mental Health Awareness Booklet.



# What is Mental Health?

What words come to mind when you think about mental health? Often when we talk about mental health, people think we're talking about mental illness.

“Mental health is a **state of mental well-being** that **enables** people to **cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well** and **work well**, and **contribute to their community.**”

(World Health Organisation, 2022)

Good mental health is not simply the absence of a mental illness. It is a state of wellbeing where an individual can realise their own potential, manage everyday stressors, interact positively with others, work productively, and contribute to their community.

When someone is struggling with their mental health, you may notice an impact on the person's:

- Ability to enjoy life – a person is no longer happy.
- Ability to have a productive life – affects performance
- Ability to achieve work/life balance – eg. Bringing work home, which leaves little time for personal or family time.
- Ability to cope with stressors – finding it hard to cope under pressure.
- Ability to adapt to sudden changes – inability to be flexible to change and recover when the unexpected occurs
- Resilience to deal with distress – bouncing back after stress
- Ability to function well within all aspects of life: family, friends, work, and community.

# Understanding Mental Health



**Good Mental Health**

**Mental Health Issues**

**Mental Illness**

Mental health sits on a continuum, with one side being where you feel on top of the world, and the other side being where you are in crisis. Everyone has mental health, and we all fall somewhere on that continuum at different times in our lives.

Good mental health is at one end of the continuum. Having good mental health means feeling in control of one's emotions, having good resilience, and experiencing high levels of wellbeing. When stressed, a mentally healthy person can cope well and bounce back from any challenges. This allows them to perform well at work and in family and social relationships.

On the other end of the continuum, mental health conditions, especially when not managed well, can negatively affect a person's thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and impact their physical health and ability to function in the world. This can cause marked distress and severe impairment to everyday functioning.

In the middle, people may start to have difficulty coping and experience an increase in the severity and frequency of symptoms.

Mental health is not fixed and can move back and forth along this continuum at different times during our lives, in response to different stressors and circumstances.

- We will all encounter mental health issues during our life.
- They are usually understandable reactions to life events, personal and social problems.
- They are usually not too severe or long-lasting.

When mental health issues continue for a long period and begin to severely affect people's daily life it is possible they may have a mental illness. There are degrees of mental illnesses, ranging from mild to moderate to severe.

Not all people who experience a mental health crisis go on to develop a mental illness. Protective factors can reduce your risk to developing a mental illness.

Examples are:

- Good physical health,
- Coping skills,
- Social supports,
- Healthy relationships.

Recognise when you need help! Seeking support early can prevent you from developing a mental illness. Mental health conditions, such as anxiety disorders and depression are common and can be effectively treated with professional help. Early intervention, results in better outcomes. With support and access to treatment, people do recover from mental illness.



# Facts About Mental illness

**2 in 5** people experience a mental health condition at some point in their life and **1 in 5** Australians aged 16-85 experience mental health conditions each year.

It is likely that you will come across mental illness in your workplace. Mental illness is now the leading cause of sickness absence and long-term work incapacity in Australia. More workers are absent due to stress and anxiety than flu and other physical illnesses or injuries. Mental illness is also associated with high levels of presenteeism. (Black Dog Institute, 2022)

**Anxiety conditions** affect **1 in 3** people in Australia in their lifetime.

- Women 1 in 3 in their lifetime.
- Men 1 in 5 in their lifetime.

**Depression conditions** affect **1 in 7** people in Australia in their lifetime.

- Women 1 in 5 in their lifetime
- Men 1 in 7 in their lifetime

Women are more likely to experience anxiety and depression, men are more likely to experience substance use disorders.

There is no single cause for mental illness. Rather, it is the result of a complex group of biological (genetics, physical health, disability), psychological (temperament, coping skills, social skills, trauma, relationships), and environmental (family circumstances, work, peer, drugs) factors.

Reference:

ABS (2022) National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2020-21. Available at <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/mental-health/national-study-mental-health-and-wellbeing/2020-21>



# What is stress?

Stress is a hot topic, particularly in workplaces where the cost of absenteeism due to stress is high.

Just the day-to-day stress, pressures of everyday life and demands of work can lead to high levels of stress. When stress starts to become intense, comes from multiple sources, or is drawn out for long periods of time, it can increase our risks to physical and mental ill health.

Numerous surveys and studies confirm that occupational pressures are becoming the leading source of stress for adults and that these have steadily increased over the past few decades.

Stress is something we all experience, whether due to pressures from work or in our personal lives. No one is immune from stress.

It is important to understand stress so that we can prevent it, **recognise the signs and symptoms** and **do something about it**.

- Stress is part of everyday life, it is a 'normal' condition experienced by everyone
- We all react to stress differently. What is stressful for one person may be fun and exciting or have little effect on others. Eg. watching a scary movie or riding a roller coaster.
- A little bit of stress – like the stress you feel during a job interview – can help you perform better. It is usually temporary and can help you to focus and do your best under pressure. Stress can be helpful and good when it motivates people to accomplish more. Stress has positive effects on motivation and performance, enabling us to meet deadlines, think and respond quickly. It can keep us vital, energised and excited about life. Examples of good stress: getting married, starting a new job, bungee jumping.
- When there is a perceived imbalance between the coping skills of the individual and the demands of the environment we get stressed.

In short, Stress is what we feel when we think we've lost control of a situation.

Stress can trigger the body's 'fight and flight' response. It can therefore be thought of as a state of 'readiness', involving both physical and psychological responses to prepare the body for conflict or escape.

Distress is the result of the 'fight or flight' response occurring repeatedly for a prolonged period.

## Activity: What does stress look like and feel like?

We are all familiar with stress. Let's consider what ongoing stress looks like and feels like for someone.

In the table below, jot down what you believe some of the impacts of ongoing stress may be? Consider changes in thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and physical.

Tips:

- Think about changes to day-to-day functioning, relationships at work and home, etc.
- These may be changes that you've noticed in others, yourself, or have heard about.

<u>Thoughts</u>	<u>Feelings &amp; Behaviours</u>	<u>Physical</u>

## Indicators of Potential Distress

Here are some of the indicators of distress, how many of these did you jot down on the previous page?

Physical	Emotional	Cognitive	Behavioural	In the workplace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent illness</li> <li>• tiredness</li> <li>• change in appearance or dress</li> <li>• rapid weight loss or gain</li> <li>• complaining about physical health issues (headaches, muscle pains, nausea, skin irritations, palpitations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• anger</li> <li>• sad, tearful</li> <li>• sensitive to criticism</li> <li>• high or exaggerated emotions</li> <li>• uncharacteristic loss of confidence</li> <li>• loss of sense of humour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficulties with focus</li> <li>• increase in mistakes</li> <li>• problems with decision making</li> <li>• Inability to concentrate</li> <li>• memory loss</li> <li>• performance decline</li> <li>• negativity</li> <li>• lacking perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• find it hard to sleep</li> <li>• change in eating habits</li> <li>• smoke or drink more</li> <li>• avoid friends and family</li> <li>• lack motivation, energy</li> <li>• not want to go to work</li> <li>• Becoming more introverted or extroverted</li> <li>• generally acting out of character</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arriving late</li> <li>• increased absence</li> <li>• decrease in motivation</li> <li>• not taking lunch breaks</li> <li>• taking unofficial time off</li> <li>• not joining in workplace banter</li> <li>• not meeting deadlines</li> <li>• working longer hours</li> <li>• team conflicts</li> <li>• increased grievances and complaints</li> </ul>

# What is Anxiety?

Just like stress, everyone experiences anxiety from time to time. It is a normal part of life and human emotion.

It is quite useful in helping our bodies to respond to and keep us safe from danger. It can help us avoid dangerous situations, triggering our 'fight or flight' response.

**Anxiety can happen whenever we feel under pressure** and can motivate the solving of everyday problems. For example, it is normal to feel anxious in high-pressure situations such as a job interview or moving house. Anxiety can help to keep you focused and alert.

Some people use words such as stress, worry, tense, uptight, or nervous to describe feelings of anxiety. Symptoms can vary in intensity from mild worry through to a fear-stricken panic attack, but feeling anxious or stressed is a normal response to a stressful situation and feelings usually go away once the stressful event has passed.

Anxiety becomes a problem when these occasional feelings of anxiety worsen, won't go away, and interfere with our ability to do the things we want to do in our day-to-day life. When we experience anxiety, our thinking, feelings, behaviours and physical wellbeing can be affected.

Anxiety problems (disorders) differ from normal anxiety in the following ways:

- Symptoms are more severe
- They don't go away and continue for no apparent reason
- They interfere with day-to-day life (such as job performance, schoolwork/study, relationships or other daily activities)

Anxiety problems can occur at any time in life and is common in all age groups. It is often caused by stressful life events and psychological factors.

Some personality traits may put a person at greater risk, such as:

- being sensitive
- being emotional or experiencing general nervousness
- inability to tolerate frustration
- feeling inhibited and having perfectionist tendencies

An anxiety disorder is a medical condition diagnosed by a registered and experienced health professional (GP, psychiatrist or mental health professional).

There are several types of anxiety disorders. Each type has different symptoms and is treated differently. Some common types of anxiety include social anxiety disorder and generalised anxiety disorder (GAD).

## Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

Even though anxiety is very common, it often goes untreated. Because we all experience anxious feelings, it can be hard to know when to seek help, which is why it is important to know what signs to look out for.

### Anxiety can affect your behaviour:

- Anxiety can cause you to **avoid situations that make you feel anxious**. These may be certain events, places or people that trigger feelings of anxiety.
- Can lead to **social withdrawal and isolation**.
- An **increased use of alcohol or other drugs** to manage symptoms.

### Anxiety can make you feel and think:

- unrealistic and/or excessive **fear and worry** about things that might happen or things that have happened in the past. 'Everything is going wrong'. Fear is associated with feelings of impending doom or dread that something very bad is going to happen.
- mind racing and intrusive negative thoughts. Worried you're going crazy. Unable to control your anxious thoughts or worries.
- impaired concentration and memory, indecisiveness, procrastination. Can't focus on anything but your worries.
- Feeling restless, tense and on edge. Can't calm yourself down or relax. Feeling panicky.
- Feeling irritable and angry. 'I can't handle the way I feel'. Feeling your losing control.

Anxiety may cause physical symptoms such as:

- **rapid heartbeat** (pounding heart, chest pain, blushing) – cardiovascular response
- rapid **shortness of breath** and shallow breathing – respiratory response
- **dizziness, headache, sweating**, tingling and numbness – neurological response
- **nausea, stomach aches**, dry mouth, vomiting, diarrhoea – gastrointestinal response
- **muscle aches and pains**, restlessness, **tremors** and shaking – musculoskeletal response
- **sleeping problems** - difficulty falling asleep or restless sleep

# What Is Depression?

Depression is more than just feeling down or having a bad day. We all feel sad or moody sometimes, and to experience these emotions is quite normal. It's a normal part of life.

Depression is quite different. It typically lasts longer than sadness and is accompanied by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness of an intensity that has a strong negative effect on someone's day-to-day life. It is a serious condition that affects your physical and mental health, it is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide (WHO).

- Depression is a type of mood disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves, (and physical wellbeing) and it can interfere with day-to-day activities – including their ability to carry out their work and to have satisfying relationships.
- Depression lasts longer than sadness and is felt every day, most days for at least 2 weeks or more.
- Like with anxiety, symptoms range from mild to moderate to severe.

**Workplace stress** is a significant risk factor for developing depression.

- The World Health Organisation predicts that by 2030 depression will be the second biggest health problem in the world – behind heart disease
- Only 3% of the population identify depression as a major health problem despite it being the leading cause of non-fatal disability in Australia

## Signs and Symptoms of Depression

If any of the below symptoms have been consistently present every day for more than 2 weeks, it might be a sign that you have depression and should seek professional help.

- Persistent **sad mood that does not go away**
- Unable to **find enjoyment in activities** previously enjoyed
- **Feeling worthless, hopeless or helpless.**
- **Fatigue or lack of energy** and motivation
- becoming **agitated and unable to settle.**
- **Difficulties with concentration**, making decisions or remembering things
- **Sleeping problems** – too little or too much - such as insomnia or excessive sleeping.
- Changes in appetite – too little or too much – **weight loss or gain**
- Physical symptoms like headaches, stomach or muscle pains.
- **Thinking about death a lot or wishing they were dead** – thoughts of suicide and/or death. Sometimes people think or say things like: 'Life's not worth living.' 'People would be better off without me.'





# Alcohol & Substance Abuse

Substance abuse occurs when the use of a substance causes harmful effects on a person's life

For example:

- Use of alcohol or a drug at a level that is causing damage to health – physical or psychological
- Use of alcohol or a drug that leads to problems at work, home, education, relationships, or with the law

## What do you think the most commonly used drug in Australia?

2019 National Drug Strategy Household Survey

Found that the below percentage of people, aged 14 years or older, had used alcohol or other drugs in the past year.

1. Alcohol – 76.6%
2. Cannabis – 11.6%
3. Tobacco – 11%
4. Prescription drugs for non-medical purposes – 4.2%
5. Cocaine – 4.2%
6. Ecstasy – 3%
7. Hallucinogens – 1.6%
8. Inhalants – 1.4%
9. Meth/Amphetamines – 1.3%
10. Heroin – 0.1%

Source: AIHW (2019) *The National Drug Strategy Household Survey*. Available at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/national-drug-strategy-household-survey-2019/contents/summary>

Alcohol use problems are the most common type of substance use problem and substance abuse problems in general are a major cause of mental health problems

People who abuse alcohol or drugs are much more likely to develop a mental illness than those who don't. The two are closely linked, many people with substance abuse problems also have mental health problems (e.g. depression, anxiety).

Having a mental health problem can make a person more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs to lessen or help manage symptoms, resulting in making them feel better. This short-term solution, if not addressed can result in substance use becoming a problem.

In other people, drug problems may trigger the first symptoms of mental illness.

People with mental illness experience substance use problems at a far higher rate than the general community. Around 1 in 20 Australians has a substance abuse problem. And 35% of Australians with a substance use disorder also experience a mental health problem.

Alcohol and substance abuse may lead to a number of short and long term problems;

- **Short-term problems:** physical injuries, aggression and antisocial behaviour, risk-taking, suicide and self-injury, victims of crime, legal problems, death.
- **Long-term problems:** alcohol and other substance use disorders, depression and anxiety, relationship, social problems, financial and physical health problems (such as heart disease, cancer, liver disease and dementia).

## How Much Alcohol Is Too Much?

Due to the different ways that alcohol can affect people, **no amount of alcohol can be said to be safe.**

The term 'safe levels of drinking' or 'low-risk drinking' is no longer used.

People choosing to drink must realise that there will always be some risk to their health and social wellbeing. However, there are ways to minimise the risks of **alcohol-related harm**. The less you drink, the lower your risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury over your lifetime.

In 2020, the *National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)* released new guidelines to inform Australians how to stay healthy and reduce the risks of drinking alcohol. Healthy adults should drink no more than:

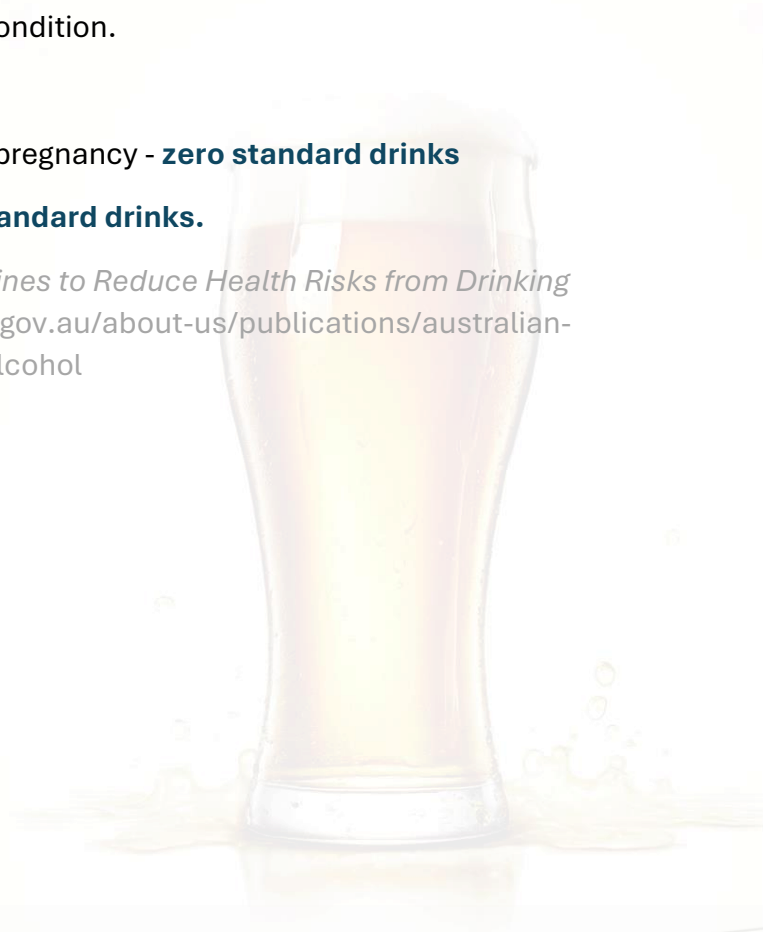
- **10 standard drinks a week**
- **4 standard drinks on any one day.**

Healthy adults drinking within the guideline recommendation have less than a 1 in 100 chance of dying from an alcohol-related condition.

In addition to the above:

- For women pregnant or planning a pregnancy - **zero standard drinks**
- For breastfeeding women – **zero standard drinks.**

Source: NHMRC. (2020) *Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol*. Available at: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-guidelines-reduce-health-risks-drinking-alcohol>



# Five Ways to Wellbeing

Everyone is different, with different roles at home and at work – and there is no single best approach to staying mentally well, but there are several things you can do every day to improve your wellbeing and build your resilience.

Based on international research, there are five simple ways to improve our psychological and emotional health on a daily basis. These activities are known as the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing Are:

- Be Active
- Connect
- Keep Learning
- Take Note
- Give

These activities play an active role towards improving, protecting and maintaining your wellbeing. They help manage stress and reduce the risks of developing a mental illness.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing was developed by the New Economics Foundation for the UK government, and is based on extensive research and evidence about protective factors for psychological and emotional wellbeing operating at an individual level. The Five Ways focus on practical actions to improve wellbeing. Practising self-care can protect us from developing a mental illness.

Source: Five Ways to Wellbeing, New Economics Foundation 2008

<https://www.5waystowellbeing.org.au>

## Be Active

Engage in activities that you enjoy on a regular basis. Being **physically active**, not only improves your physical health but also has a **positive impact** on your **mood** and overall **mental fitness**. Exercise can make you feel good, help clear your mind, boost motivation, and improve sleep. As well as reduce stress.

So, find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your routine to experience these positive effects on your mental and physical health. Just 30 minutes of exercise at least three days a week can lift your mood.

Take a moment to think about what you are putting into your body. Being active also includes eating well and managing your alcohol consumption by following the guidelines. Do you need to make some changes?

There are many ways to be active. You can:

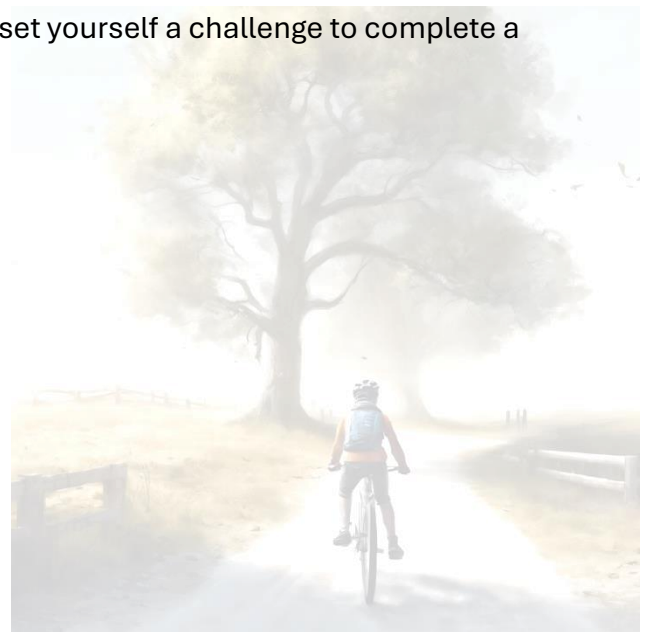
- Step outside for a walk or run.
- Go for a bike ride.
- Complete a gym class.
- Play a sport.
- Try gardening or a dance class.
- Consider standing or going for a walk during a work meeting.
- Organise a step challenge at work or with a friend.
- Download a walking or running app and set yourself a challenge to complete a certain distance
- Walk instead of drive

### Exercise:

What are you currently doing to 'be active'?

What do I want to change or do more of?

Write down one thing you can do to get started.



# Connect

Feeling **connected, valued, and supported by others**, both personally and professionally, is crucial for boosting our mental fitness. **Meaningful connections** can lead to higher levels of **happiness, increased resilience**, and contribute to a **longer and more fulfilling life**.

Connect with family, friends, neighbours or people you meet at work, school or in the community.

Dedicate time with your family, friends or other social networks. Make sure you have people to talk to when you're feeling stressed. Friends can pick you up when you're sad, provide insight when you have a problem, and help you have fun when you need to blow off steam.

There are lots of ways to connect:

- Catch up with friends for a coffee or meal.
- Ask people how they're going and really listen.
- Chat with a colleague over lunch
- Join a group of people with common interests
- Call a family member or a friend.
- Find a mentor through your workplace or professional networks and use that person's support to help you grow professionally and personally.

Positive social connections are essential to our mental and physical health and overall wellbeing. According to WHO social isolation and loneliness are increasingly being recognised as a priority public health problem that needs to be addressed, particularly in older people.

## Exercise:

What are you currently doing to 'connect'?

What do I want to change or do more of?

Write down one thing you can do to get started.

## Keep Learning

Being curious and open to new experiences has a positive impact on our brain. When we **actively learn new skills** and **broaden our knowledge**, we **enhance our problem-solving capabilities**, **boost self-esteem**, and **increase resilience**. Learning involves challenging ourselves to approach things differently than before, which can lead to a sense of achievement and build our confidence.

So, embrace curiosity, seek out new experiences, and continuously challenge yourself to learn and grow for the benefit of your mental wellbeing.

To keep learning you can do a course, but it isn't just about formal learning.

You could:

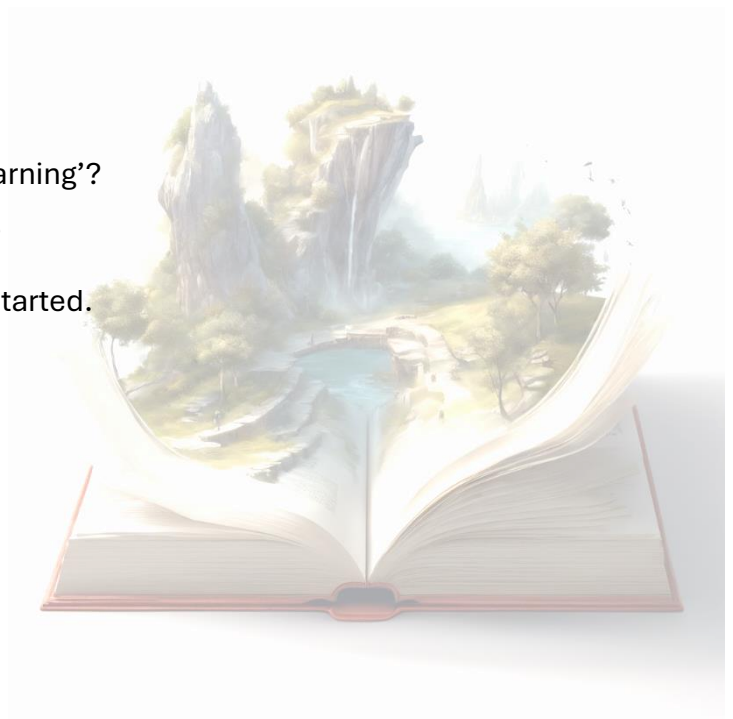
- read a new book, journal or join a book club
- listen to a podcast on something new
- take on a new responsibility at work.
- learn a musical instrument.
- take an art class.
- learn a new DIY skill
- rediscover an old hobby.

### Exercise:

What are you currently doing to 'keep learning'?

What do I want to change or do more of?

Write down one thing you can do to get started.



## Take Note

Taking a moment to **pause** and **fully engage** with our surroundings and present experiences can **positively impact** on the way we **feel** and how we **approach** life's challenges.

By paying more attention to the present moment, we can experience a greater sense of calm and reduce stress. In our busy lives, it's easy to overlook the small details. However, being mindful and attuned to our thoughts, feelings, and the world around us can significantly boost our overall mental wellbeing. Taking notice improves sleep.

You can take notice by:

- Taking a deep breath and notice how you feel
- Notice the sights, smells and sounds around you.
- Focusing on one task at a time and minimising distractions
- Driving or walking a different way home from work
- Savouring a favourite meal or drink
- Each day reflect on one thing you are grateful
- Downloading a meditation or mindfulness app and practising daily – headspace app, smiling minds, insight timer (guided meditation and mindfulness)

### Exercise:

What are you currently doing to 'take notice'?

What do I want to change or do more of?

Write down one thing you can do to get started.



# Give

Helping others not only benefits those we assist but is also good for us. Engaging in **acts of kindness**, whether small or large, can provide us with a sense of **purpose and belonging**, help **build friendships** and **stronger communities**. Doing something nice for a friend or a stranger will enhance your happiness, life satisfaction, and overall wellbeing.

Giving can also lead to people giving back to us, and to others in their lives.

You can give by simply:

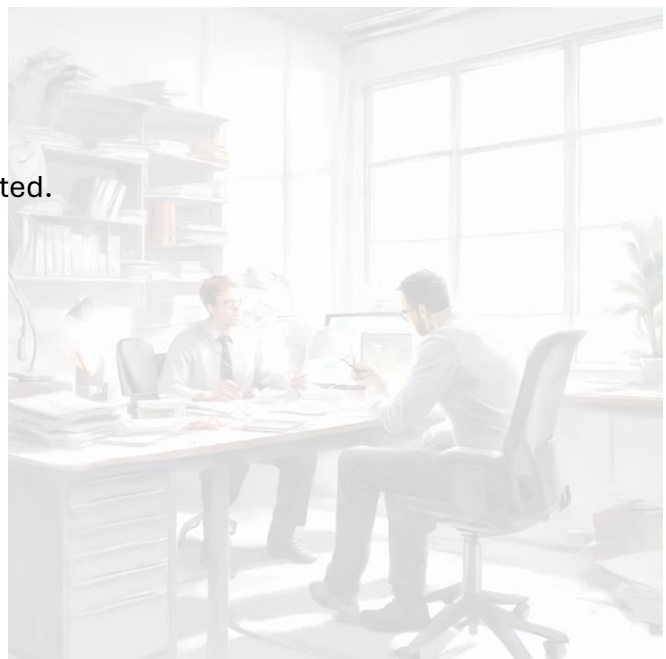
- Thanking someone for a good job or just for being a friend
- Sharing your appreciation
- Giving you time eg. helping a colleague solve a problem or volunteering in your community
- Donating to charity
- Giving the people you're talking to your full, focused attention. This tells them you value them.
- Helping a friend out on a task or project.

## Exercise:

What are you currently doing to 'give'?

What do I want to change or do more of?

Write down one thing you can do to get started.



# Self Care – Find Out What Works For You

We are all unique and what may work for others may not necessarily work for you. This is why it's important for each of us to determine what self-care means to us and how to apply it in our life.

It's easy to forget to take care of ourselves when we're busy or stressed. So make the time to develop a plan and develop a routine. We are more likely to keep to a routine if established.

- Take some time to reflect on what helps you recharge and relax
- Are there new activities you would like to try?
- Consider making specific times or days of the week for these activities so they become routine and are less likely to drop off at times of increased work demands or other competing priorities

It is important to seek help if you notice any **changes in your feelings, attitudes and behaviour**.....that continue..... and **impact day-to-day functioning, relationships, work, and other aspects of life.**

While self-care can be helpful in improving mental wellbeing, it should never be a replacement for seeking professional help if your mental health is suffering.

# Know Where To Get Help

**Activity:** Write down the names of three people and places that you can connect with during times when you are struggling.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

## Know where to get help:

- Your family, friends or support networks
- Your GP can provide an accurate diagnosis, referral to a psychologist, mental health social worker or psychiatrist for treatment. A Mental Health Treatment Plan will entitle you to Medicare rebates for up to 10 individual psychological appointments.
- Employer-provided support options may include:
  - Human resources (HR)
  - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  - Peer support programs
  - Chaplain

# Helpful Resources & Contacts

## Stress, anxiety and depression

### TELEPHONE AND ONLINE

#### Beyond Blue Support Service

Free telephone, online and email counselling for people going through a difficult time.

[www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support)  
1300 224 636 (24hrs)

#### MindSpot Clinic

Free clinician-led online courses to help adults learn how to manage symptoms of stress, depression and anxiety.

[www.mindspot.org.au](http://www.mindspot.org.au)

#### THIS WAY UP

Online, self-guided cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) programs for a range of mental health conditions and wellbeing issues.

[www.thiswayup.org.au](http://www.thiswayup.org.au)

#### Mental Health Online

Free online programs for a range of issues, with self-guided or therapist support options.

[www.mentalhealthonline.org.au](http://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au)

#### MoodGYM

Free online (CBT) program to help prevent and manage symptoms of depression and anxiety.

[www.moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au)

#### MyCompass

Free online, interactive, self-help CBT service for depression, anxiety and stress.

[www.mycompass.org.au](http://www.mycompass.org.au)

#### eCouch

Interactive, free self-help programs for depression, anxiety, worry, social anxiety, relationship breakdown, loss and grief.

[www.ecouch.com.au](http://www.ecouch.com.au)

### WEBSITES

#### Head to Health

A website that links Australians to online and phone mental health services, information and resources.

[www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

#### Mates in Mining

Suicide prevention programs on sites and 24/7 helpline for mining and construction

[www.mates.org.au](http://www.mates.org.au)

#### Black Dog Institute

Get information on anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, suicide, PTSD, and wellness.

[www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)

#### WellMob

Social, emotional and cultural wellbeing online resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

[www.wellmob.org.au](http://www.wellmob.org.au)

### APPS

#### HeadGear

An easy-to-use free app guiding users through a 30-day mental fitness challenge. Designed to build resilience and wellbeing and prevent depression and anxiety.

[www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/headgear](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/headgear)

#### Reachout WorryTime

A free app to help control everyday stress and anxiety by giving you a place to store worries, and alerting you when it's time to think about them.

[www.au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/reachout-worrytime](http://www.au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/reachout-worrytime)

#### Mood Mission

A free app designed to help individuals overcome low mood and anxiety by discovering new coping strategies.

[www.moodmission.com](http://www.moodmission.com)

### OTHER SUPPORT OPTIONS

#### Lifeline

Lifeline is a 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention service.

13 11 14

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

#### Suicide Call Back Service

The Suicide Call Back Service is a 24-hour, nationwide service that provides telephone and online counselling to people 15 years and over who are suicidal, caring for someone who is suicidal, or bereaved by suicide.

1300 659 467

[www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

#### MensLine Australia

A national telephone and online support, information and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns.

The service is available from anywhere in Australia and is staffed by professional counsellors, experienced in men's issues.

1300 789 978

[www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

#### SANE Australia

SANE Australia is a national charity helping Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life through support, training, and education via their helpline and website.

1800 18 SANE (7263)

[www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org)

#### A local GP

GPs are the best starting point for someone seeking professional help. Your GP can check your mental and physical health, provide information and discuss available treatments, including writing you a Mental Health Treatment Plan so you can get a Medicare rebate for psychological treatment.

## Substance use

### TELEPHONE AND ONLINE

#### National Smoking Quitline

A confidential, telephone counselling service to help people stop smoking.

13 7848

[www.quit.org.au](http://www.quit.org.au)

#### Drug Information and Advice Line

Information, tools and ideas to reduce the harm of alcohol and other drugs.

1300 85 85 84

[www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au)

#### National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline

Connect to alcohol and drug information services operating in your state/area.

1800 250 015

#### Counselling Online

Free counselling about your alcohol or drug use, or that of a loved one (24hrs).

[www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

#### Health Zone 'BDZ digital health'

Psycho-education program to help reduce and gradually withdraw from benzodiazepine use.

[www.healthzone.org.au](http://www.healthzone.org.au)

#### Online Programs eClIPSE

Online programs for people with depression, anxiety, trauma and drug or alcohol use problems.

[www.eclipse.org.au/ehealth-programs-online](http://www.eclipse.org.au/ehealth-programs-online)

#### Family and Friends Support Programs

For people supporting someone using ice, alcohol and/or other drugs, or people who live in rural or remote regions.

[www.ffsp.com.au](http://www.ffsp.com.au)

## WEBSITES

### **Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol**

[www.nhmrc.gov.au/alcohol](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/alcohol)

### **Alcohol and Drug Foundation**

For alcohol and other drug information, help and support service directory

[www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au)

### **Turning Point Information**

Self-assessment for addictions for, individuals and their carers.

[www.turningpoint.org.au](http://www.turningpoint.org.au)

### **AOD Knowledge Centre (ATSI)**

Information to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reduce their use of alcohol and other drugs.

[www.aodknowledgecentre.ecu.edu.au](http://www.aodknowledgecentre.ecu.edu.au)

### **Your Room**

Information about alcohol and other drugs.

[www.yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au)

### **Touchbase**

Information, support and services for LGBTIQ+ Australians on alcohol, other drugs and tobacco use and mental health. Tips to stay safe, cut down or seek extra support.

[www.touchbase.org.au](http://www.touchbase.org.au)

### **BreakThrough**

Free online tools for families supporting someone with alcohol or drug use.

[www.breakthroughforfamilies.com](http://www.breakthroughforfamilies.com)

## APPS

### **Hello Sunday Morning: Daybreak App**

A free app to help individuals change their relationship with alcohol, with professional and community support.

[www.hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak](http://www.hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak)

### **Apps On Track with The Right Mix**

Free app to help individuals keep track of drinking over time.

### **SWiPE**

Brain-training app based on neuroscience that gets to the root of a drinking habit, putting you in control of your alcohol use.

[www.swipebraintraining.com.au](http://www.swipebraintraining.com.au)

### **Drinks Meter**

A free app providing instant, unbiased, and anonymous feedback on your drinking

[www.cancerCouncil.com.au/wellness/drinks-meter](http://www.cancerCouncil.com.au/wellness/drinks-meter)

### **Breathing Space**

A moderated and secure social network for people wanting to improve their wellbeing and resilience while supporting someone with their alcohol or drug use.

[www.breathingspace.community](http://www.breathingspace.community)

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### **Alcoholic Anonymous**

[www.aa.org.au](http://www.aa.org.au)

### **Narcotics Anonymous**

[www.na.org.au](http://www.na.org.au)



If you or someone is in crisis and you think immediate action is needed, call emergency services (triple zero - 000), contact your doctor or go to your local hospital emergency department.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION - 24 HOURS

If you or someone you know needs help, call:

- Emergency on 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone)
- Lifeline on 13 11 14
- MensLine Australia on 1300 789 978
- Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467

# Take Away Thoughts

- It's normal to be **affected by stressors and events** that are distressing
- It's normal to **seek help and support** if you need it
- It's normal to **get better** as a result of that help and support
- **Self-care is good for you**, your work and your family and friends





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