

LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

A Practical Guide to Navigating
Life's Ups and Downs





Taking care of your mental health is just as essential as looking after your physical health. Positive mental wellbeing is the foundation for living a meaningful, connected, and productive life. This guide is designed to help you better understand your mental health, explore the factors that influence it, and learn practical ways to protect and enhance it - benefiting both your personal and professional life.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a state of wellbeing that helps you manage life's challenges, realise your abilities, work productively, learn effectively, and contribute to your community. It supports our ability to make decisions, build and sustain healthy relationships, and engage positively with the world around us.

Your mental wellbeing influences how you think, feel, and act. It plays a role in your relationships, your work, and your studies. Just like your physical health, your mental health deserves consistent care and attention. When you feel emotionally strong, you're better able to support your family, friends, and community, and fully engage in life.

WHY IS MAINTAINING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?

Maintaining good mental health is vital for many reasons. It helps you manage stress more effectively and supports your physical health

by reducing risks of chronic illness. Positive mental wellbeing strengthens relationships by fostering empathy and communication, boosts productivity, and enables you to make meaningful contributions to your community. It also enhances your confidence and self-worth, helping you feel more capable and resilient.

WHAT FACTORS CAN IMPACT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Several factors can impact your mental wellbeing, including:

- Prolonged stress
- Physical health problems
- Negative self-talk and low self-esteem
- Poor diet or nutrition
- Feelings of loneliness or disconnection

Recognising these influences is a powerful step toward taking positive action.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE AFFECTED?

Mental health conditions are more common than many people realise, and they can affect anyone - regardless of age, background, or circumstances.



1 IN 6

Australian workers live with a mental health condition.



42.9%

of people aged 16–85 have experienced a mental health condition at some point in their lives.



21.5%

of people experience a mental health condition within a given year, with anxiety being the most common.

These figures remind us that mental health conditions are a normal part of human experience, and you are never alone.

HOW CAN I ENHANCE MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING?

There are many simple, practical ways to look after your mental health:



Stay active and exercise regularly



Eat a balanced, nutritious diet



Prioritise getting enough sleep



Reduce or avoid alcohol and other drugs



Talk openly with trusted friends and family



Make time for hobbies or activities that bring you joy

Taking small, consistent steps to build these habits can have a profound impact on your overall wellbeing.

SIGNS OF POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

Positive mental health is often reflected through:

- Improved learning and concentration
- Greater creativity
- Higher productivity
- Stronger social relationships
- Good physical and behavioural health
- Increased life expectancy

Investing in your mental health helps you flourish in all aspects of life.

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING



<https://mtaq.com.au/looking-after-your-mental-health/>

GETTING HELP

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger you should call the police on 000. For non-emergency police help, contact 131 444.

If you are experiencing crisis and need support, there are many free, confidential support services available:

- **Lifeline** is a free and confidential service staffed by trained telephone counsellors to assist people in crisis. Lifeline is open to people of all ages. Phone: 13 11 14
- **TIACS** is a free phone and text counselling service offering mental health support to Australia's blue-collar community. Phone: 0488 846 988
- **1800RESPECT** is available for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to support people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence. Phone: 1800 737 732
- **Beyond Blue** is available for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to support people struggling with mental health. Phone: 1300 224 636

Reaching out is a sign of strength - you do not have to go through challenges alone.

Note: The information contained in this factsheet, including contact details and links, is current at time of drafting (January 2025)