

STAYING SANE PACKAGE

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- Using stress productively
- Knowing what improves your immunity
- Staying sane at the coal face
- Using wind down productively
- Knowing your personal red flags

STAYING SANE PACKAGE



STRESS TOLERANCE NOT ALWAYS GOOD!

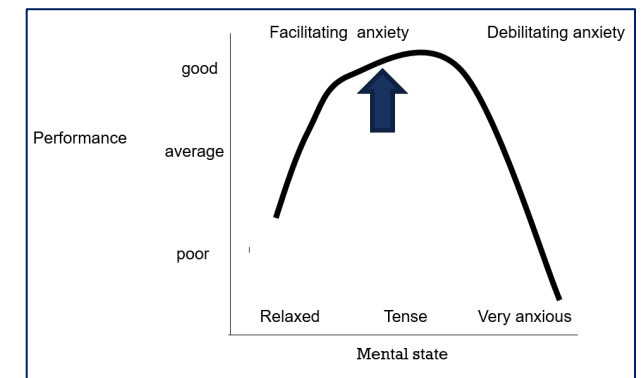
- If you throw a frog into very hot water, the frog will jump out, but if you put the frog in room temperature water and just slowly heat the water up, the frog will die there.”



- To ‘make stress your friend’* and develop good practices involves self knowledge, self reflection and a good support network

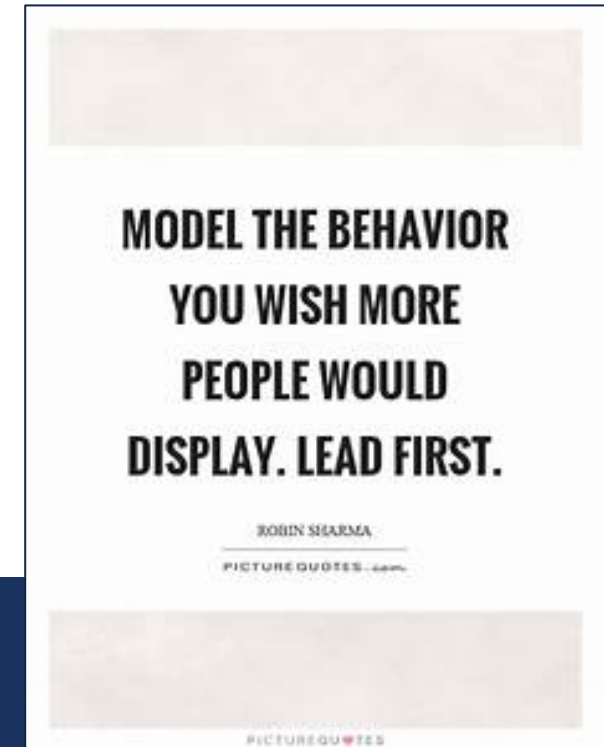
https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend

- Understand your sweet spot (where you function best)



- Sufficient sleep is a key shield against COVID-19*
 - Exercise improves mood, cognition, sleep and immunity
 - Eating well and staying hydrated also important
 - Not smoking
 - You are a model for your colleagues
-
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system>
 - Michael Moseley article (attached)

LIFESTYLE AND IMMUNITY



HOW DO WE DEAL WITH STRESS?

DIFFERENT STYLES: DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

These tend to compound stress down the track, hamper sleep, immunity



Emotion focussed

- ✓ Distraction/creativity
- ✓ Talking to friends
- ✓ Shopping
- ✓ Wine and food
- ✓ Exercise, yoga
- ✓ Relaxation
- ✓ Mindfulness

Problem focussed

- ✓ Information seeking
- ✓ Discussing problem,
- ✓ Seeking help
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Making lists
- ✓ Goal setting

Avoidant

- Denial to self and others
- Avoiding behaviours
- Getting angry
- Ignoring/downplaying warning signs
- Substance use (smoking, alcohol, sedatives, stimulants), gambling
- I have to do everything myself: others will mess up
- “Going through the motions...I’ll try.....”
- Putting off the inevitable

Emotional modulation

- “Are you OK?”
- Mindfulness strategies
- Relaxation strategies
- Burst of activity (weights, skipping, bike)
- Have warm food/drinks
- Know when to have breaks
- Allow time for wind down

Problem solving

- Goal setting for self
- Goal setting as a team
- Information seeking
- Debriefing
- “What did we learn?”
- Keep notes
- Night journaling*

STAYING SANE AT THE COALFACE



STARTING AND ENDING SHIFTS



Starting shift

- Is everyone OK?
- Anything to consider?
- Have we fastened our safety belts?
- Consider how to have breaks
- Have a team motivator such as
“Clear eyes, full heart, can’t lose”

Ending shift

- Is everyone OK?
- Have we unfastened safety belts?
- Team clap
- Remind team of resources available
- Remind team to have plan for
 - downtime/sleep/exercise
 - keep substance use down before return for next shift

PERSONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT



- Be aware of your triggers: ask partner or friend if you can't identify
- Debrief by talking over with a colleague, then leave at work
- Write down your reflections at end of shift or after an event
- Develop and use support strategies
- Go easy on alcohol, stay away from substances, including tobacco
- Do some exercise every day
- Try the following brief techniques
- All are evidence-based strategies: you need to find what works best for you
- They need practice to have at your finger tips when needed.

TAKING DEEP BREATHS: DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

A SIMPLE BUT UNDERVALUED STRATEGY GOOD FOR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

10 deep breaths in morning

10 at night....and as many as you need in between to relieve stress

Take a deep breath in slowly

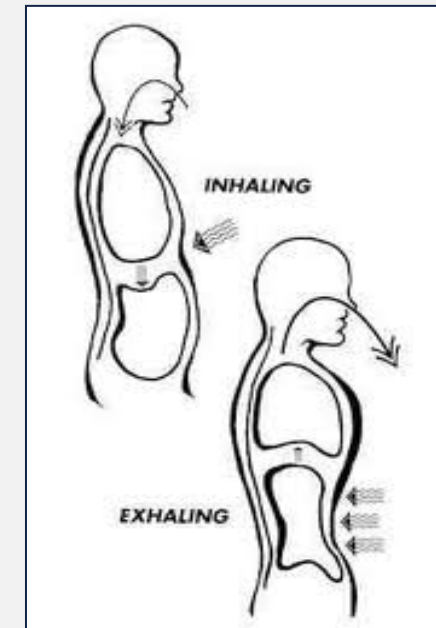
Imagine your lungs filling up with air

Takes about 5 seconds, then hold as long as comfortable

When your lungs feel full, exhale slowly

Takes about 7 seconds to let all the air out, hold again....and repeat

TRY IT!!! USE DURING BREAKS



Deep breathing relaxation (ABC Health and wellbeing site) <http://www.abc.net.au/health/library/stories/2008/12/16/2440879.htm>

MUSCLE RELAXATION

TENSE & **RELAX**

TENSE your entire body
HOLD IT without feeling pain

KEEP BREATHING then

SLOWLY RELEASE TENSION
FEEL IT LEAVE YOUR BODY

Concentrate on different
parts of your body in turn

REPEAT 3 TIMES

TENSE & **RELAX**

For quick results, focus on
Releasing tension from jaw,
shoulders and wrists

It is good to practice this, so
it is ready when needed

© SY&MHS 2009

5-10 MINUTES

This is a well tried technique.
Practice so you can relax tension
from jaw, shoulders and wrists when
needed

Try it at home or on a break
Ask yourself: How could I use?

Rating

/10

DEFUSING ANGER

DEFUSING **ANGER**

When your anger surges or
when you feel heated up/
hot under the collar

DELAY reacting
Take a DEEP BREATH
DRINK some WATER
RELAX your jaw and
shoulders as you
slowly breathe out

REPEAT this

DEFUSING **ANGER**

ASK YOURSELF:

Does this really matter to me?
Will it matter later on?

Is what I am thinking right
now helpful or hurtful?
If I react now, is it helpful?

Should I take more time
to mull it over?

1-5 MINUTES

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- Everyone knows that you get more angry when tired, stretched, frustrated... so expect it may happen
- Try it at home or on a break
- Ask yourself: How could I use?
- Rating

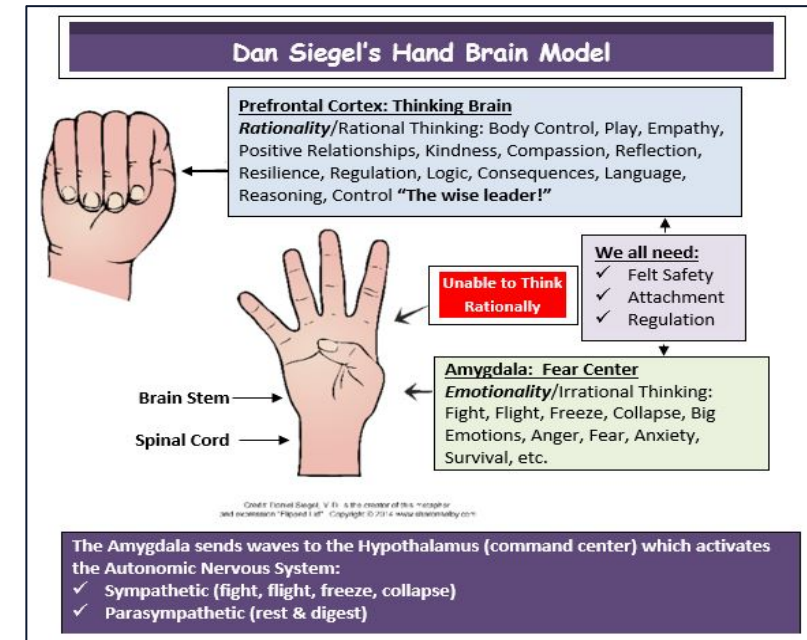
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BRAIN MODEL FOR EMOTIONAL REGULATION

FROM NEUROPSYCHIATRIST DR DANIEL SIEGEL



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFTljLoIbK8>



This is a brief, really useful technique for you and your family. Well worth a look.

PROBLEM SOLVING



PROBLEM SOLVING

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

WHAT are POSSIBLE OPTIONS?

WHAT RESOURCES are NEEDED?

WHAT MIGHT GET IN THE WAY?

PROBLEM SOLVING

Is there anyone who can help?

How would someone else deal with this?

What is the first step?

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5-10 MINUTES



This is an evidence-based approach which aims to deconstruct and tackle a problem in achievable steps.

This can be used for any issue in your life – you can start practising on something to get used to the technique. Again, can be used by team or patients and families

GOAL SETTING



SMART GOALS

Make your GOALS

Specific: What is my aim?
What do I want to achieve?

Measurable: How will I know
when I've got there?

Achievable: Can I achieve this?
What do I need?

Realistic: What are the likely
problems? Is this possible?

Timely: Am I willing to do this?
Is the timeframe reasonable?

Check List:

After defining your goal, write
it down and tick achieved

_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐

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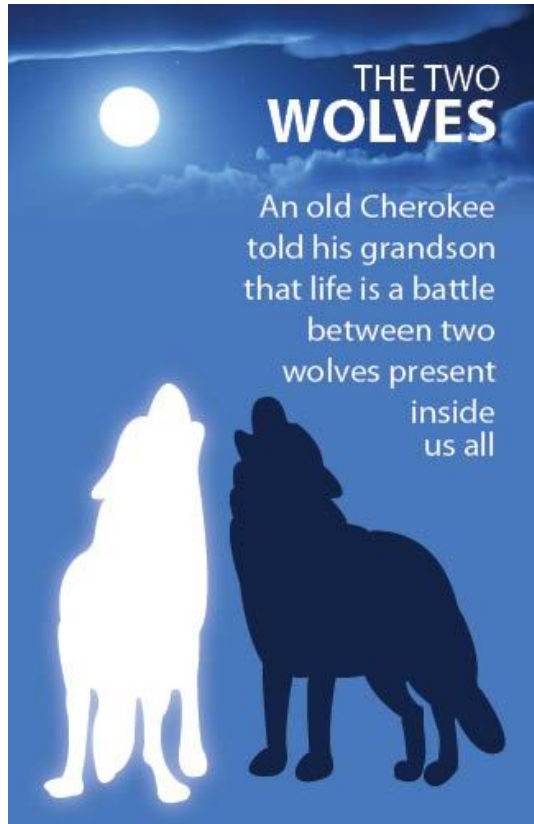
5-10 MINUTES

This is technique used in many
health and business
settings.

Again, the trick is to make
a goal that is SMART.

Again, can be used by team
or patients and families

CHANGING YOUR VIEWPOINT



THE TWO WOLVES

The evil wolf embodies envy, greed and self-pity

The good wolf embodies love, hope, and faith

The grandson asked:
Which wolf wins?

The old man simply replied:
The one you feed

CONSIDER which wolf you are feeding now

1-5 MINUTES

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This story reminds you to connect with your positive, coping side rather than ‘feeding’ the negative.

If you find yourself dwelling on negative thoughts, just say to yourself “feed the other wolf”.

- Tending to self-care
- Reflecting
- Using mindfulness
- Turning off
- Accentuating the positive



STAYING SANE INCLUDES WINDING DOWN

SELF-CARE

- Locking in relaxation and breathing exercises
- Hobbies/interest performed with attention
- Physical activity (yoga, walking in nature, weight/resistance training, sport)
- Eating and sleeping well
- Music
- Tending to your family and friends
- Cognitive approaches: acknowledging, questioning thoughts, reframing
- Information seeking
- Journaling, reflection
- Practicing humour, seeing light side
- Prayer
- Gratitude



ONE MINUTE MINDFULNESS



- An amazingly simple but extremely effective technique that introduces mindfulness.
- It can be used anywhere, any time.
- PLEASE GIVE IT A GO.
- Try it at home or on a break
- Ask yourself: How could I use?
- Rating

/10

EMOTIONAL CENTRING

PROMOTING **STABILITY**

IMAGINE a beautiful, majestic,
firmly centred MOUNTAIN

VISUALISE the mountain and
what is on it, include the part
under the earth

As you visualise it,
LET your body
become the MOUNTAIN

PROMOTING **STABILITY**

Feel the qualities of
steadiness, stability,
strength, majesty

REST in your mountain
body, unmoved by worries,
fears, unwanted experiences
around you as the
mountain is unmoved by
weather patterns

OPEN your eyes, BREATHE
mindfully, MOVE gently

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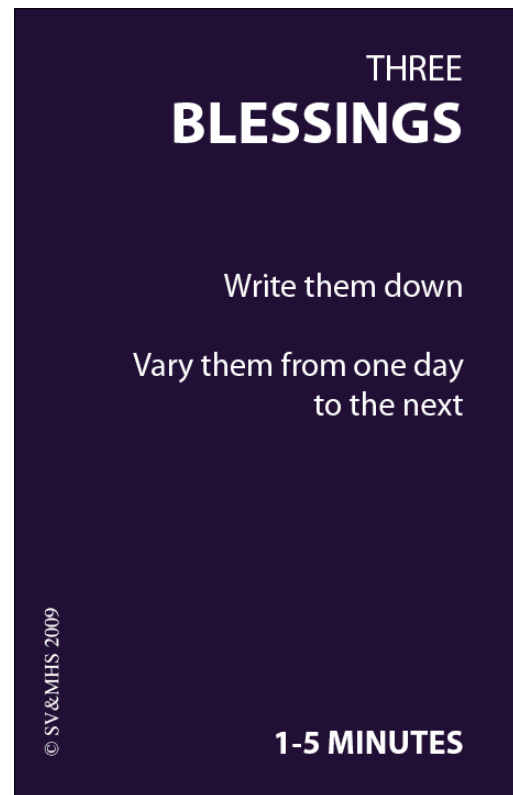
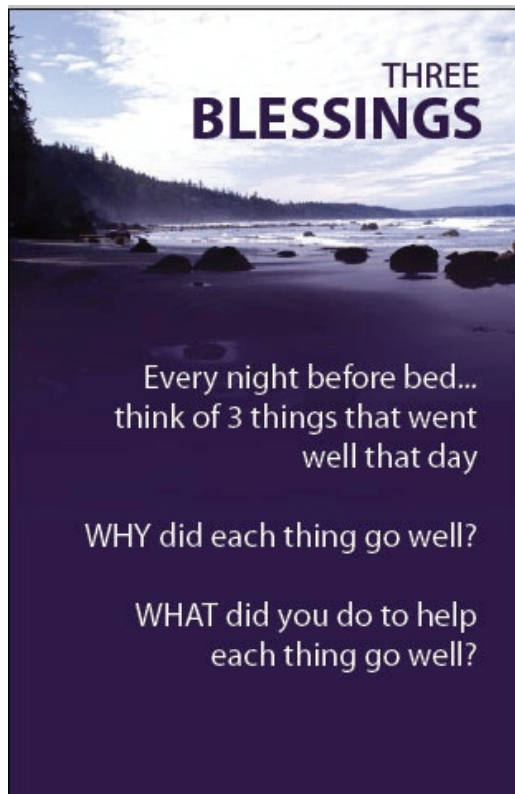
2-5 MINUTES

- This exercise is to ground you before a shift or if being overwhelmed
- It can heighten your sense of being in control

■ Rating

/10

GRATITUDE EXERCISE



This is a good way of rebalancing. This can be done after a shift while regrouping emotionally, at bedtime, with your family or with your team.

Please give it a try in at least one of these areas

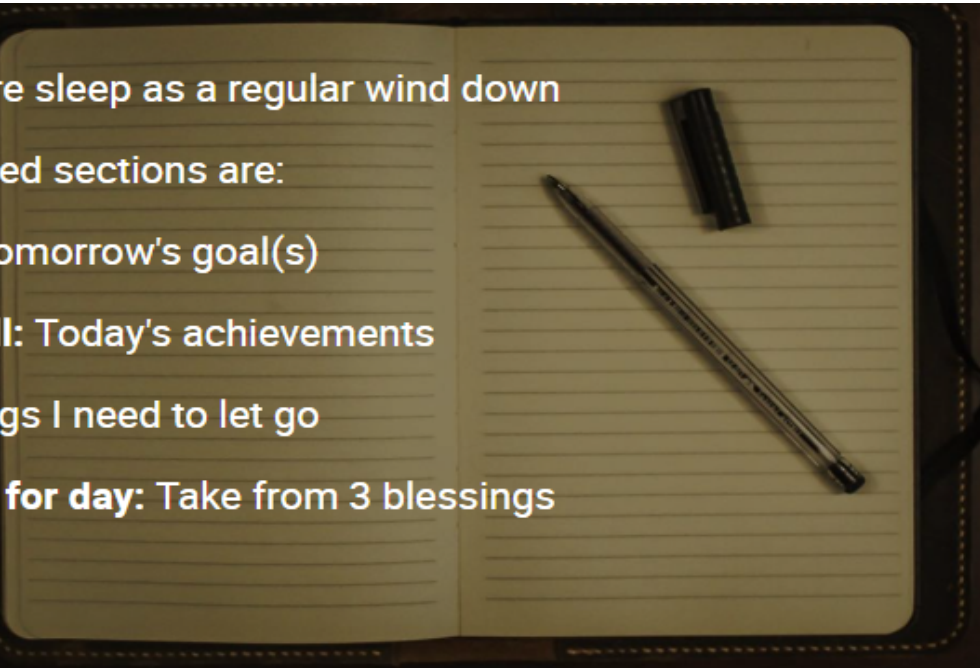
PUT YOUR THOUGHTS TO BED



Night Journal Prompts <https://www.pocketmindfulness.com/night-journal/>

Writing just before sleep as a regular wind down routine. Suggested sections are:

1. **Top 3 goals:** Tomorrow's goal(s)
2. **What went well:** Today's achievements
3. **Let it go!:** Things I need to let go
4. **Happy thought for day:** Take from 3 blessings



EXPRESSIVE WRITING

Find a comfortable place and **WRITE** about your deepest thoughts and feelings about an experience that is personally significant to you

LET GO and **EXPLORE** your very deepest emotions and thoughts related to this event: how it affected your view of yourself, others or the world in general

EXPRESSIVE WRITING

Just write without stopping, without worrying about spelling or grammar

Write for 3-4 days in a row

15 MINUTES

Wilhelm K, Crawford J. Expressive Writing and Stress-Related Disorders *Oxford Handbook of Stress & Mental Health* Ed Harkness K, Hayden E. Baikie K, Wilhelm K. Emotional and physical health benefits of expressive writing. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 11, 5 <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.11.5.338> online Cambridge Uni Press: Jan 2018 Pennebaker J, Smyth J. Opening Up by Writing It Down 3rd Ed How Expressive Writing Improves Health and Eases Emotional Pain. Guildford.

YOGA FOR RELAXATION AND BEDTIME



Legs up the wall

If on floor, you can support under the hips with a blanket, be aware of neck support under head. It can be done lying on your bed, place 2 or 3 pillows underneath the heels to lift legs up. Stay for at least 5 rounds of breath. Try slightly lengthening the out breath



One of 6 exercises in In Winding Down section of Staying Sane module

1. Relax the muscles in your face, including your tongue, jaw, and the muscles around your eyes. Drop your shoulders as low as they'll go.
2. Then relax your upper and lower arm on one side, then the other.
3. Breathe out, relax your chest. Finally, relax your legs, first thighs, then calves.
4. Take about a minute to go through the list, relaxing every body part fully, and then clear your mind for ten seconds.
5. You can pick one of these mental images:
 - Lying in a canoe on a calm lake, nothing but blue sky above you.
 - Snuggled in a black velvet hammock in a pitch-black
 - Repeating “let them go” for 10 seconds when thoughts come.



HOW TO FALL ASLEEP FAST

Relaxation exercise developed by US Air Force for combat troops.

The basics are to relax your body, part by part, and then attempt to totally clear your mind for ten seconds. Uses same technique as muscle relaxation exercise: it needs practice.

US Army advises “The bottom line when it comes to getting restful sleep is doing what works for you. There is no magical formula other than listening to your body.”



<https://thiswayup.org.au/how-we-can-help/courses/managing-insomnia/>

is This Way Up's insomnia module

PERSONAL RED FLAGS

At start and during shift. Ask yourself “Am I OK?”

Am I getting more irritable/angry?

Is my sleep OK? Am I getting adequate food and drink?

Who is watching **my** back?

Am I going to take breaks myself (or just letting others)?

At end of shift. Ask myself “Am I OK?”

“What I have learnt from this shift”?

Should I take brief notes about events? Use Riskman?

Have I taken up smoking? Am I drinking more than using?

Am I taking something for sleep? or to keep me awake?

Am I factoring in exercise and ‘down time’?

Do I need to debrief/talk to someone away from the coal face?

Which of these brief techniques would work best for me?



Am I aware of SVHS This Way Up programs? MyCompass program?
Black Dog Institute, Beyondblue and ReachOut programs?

- Team members take 'split' into opposing 'all-or-nothing' positions
- It may be hard to understand who is driving the problem, as people become very emotionally involved
- Avoid getting involved with rumours
- Talk to your supervisor if you think this is happening
- **Happens when everyone is tired and/or demoralised**

SPLITTING AS A TEAM PROCESS



SUMMARY

- Know your strengths, what works for you
- Learn to use stress productively
- Be reflective - practice night journal as technique*
- Plan ahead for your potentially stressful situations (DO IT NOW!)
- Tend to your family/friends/social network
- Know when you need to get support/assistance
- Remember you need to look after yourself to look after others

*see attached material



- Debriefing with colleagues, peer groups
- Employer Assistance Program
- Human Resources and Wellbeing Team
- Local programs (ask if you don't know)
- Online resources 
- My Compass online <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/getting-help/self-help-tools-apps/mycompass>
-  This Way Up online <https://thiswayup.org.au/how-we-can-help/courses/>
- Black Dog Institute, BeyondBlue, ReachOut all have helpful material

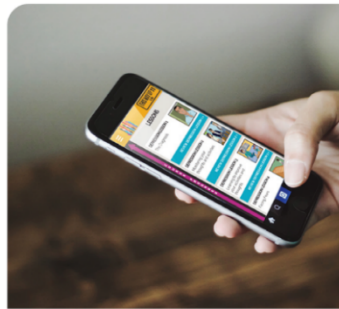
RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU



- Shout out for whatever else you need, including referral



ONLINE COURSES TO IMPROVE YOUR WELLBEING



THIS WAY UP is a leading not-for-profit initiative from CRUFAD, in association with St Vincent's Hospital and UNSW

CRUFAD



UNSW

Clinically proven online courses for anxiety and depression generally available <https://thiswayup.org.au/how-we-can-help/courses/>

Start feeling better today.

THIS WAY UP provides industry-leading online courses designed to improve your wellbeing.

We offer courses for:

- >> Anxiety
- >> Social Phobia
- >> PTSD
- >> Stress
- >> Panic
- >> Mindfulness
- >> Depression
- >> OCD
- >> Insomnia
- >> Health Anxiety
- >> Chronic Pain
- >> Perinatal Anxiety and Depression



Convenient

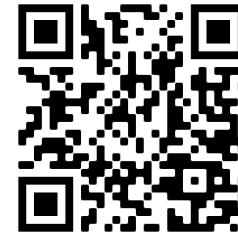
Our courses are available anywhere, anytime



Evidence-based

Developed by world-leading experts in mental health

COVID-RELATED RESOURCES



- ❑ thiswayup.org.au/coronavirus for COVID-19 specific resources
- ❑ Inpatient resources on SVHS website: *Managing Your Wellbeing in Hospital* on Inpatient section of SVHS website with another version for people isolated in hotel rooms
- ❑ Articles on sleep, night journaling (in module) plus
 - ❑ <https://www.healthline.com/health/healthy-sleep/fall-asleep-fast>
 - ❑ <https://www.jwatch.org/na51190/2020/03/27/mental-health-effects-covid-19-healthcare-workers-china>
 - ❑ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5015038/> paper on effects of diet on sleep
- ❑ TED talk mentioned https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend



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A U S T R A L I A

■ Staying Sane for Frontline Teams

- https://rise.articulate.com/share/IA8yEPGhriCtlvyeffJoLL_wD9tK9bQS#/lessons/MVWlaA0lbybg9uq6cISWLq99XzYY4VXPT

■ Staying Sane for Frontline SMOs

- [https://rise.articulate.com/share/dvGPULyGyp_zuwpVw5PE6-LtZqx5DHC0#/#/](https://rise.articulate.com/share/dvGPULyGyp_zuwpVw5PE6-LtZqx5DHC0#/)

- How best to deliver? top ups? how to maintain in 'peacetime'?
- Where to go for more individual support?*



Please contact Kay.Wilhelm@svha.org.au or Charles.Brady@svha.org.au for more information on talk/modules/cards

