

RURAL WELLBEING – community helping community

How can I help?

IDEAS AND TIPS FOR ANYONE SEEKING TO
SUPPORT THE WELLBEING OF OTHERS
IN THEIR RURAL COMMUNITY



Workbook

Mental & Physical Health
Social Connection
Work & Wellbeing

FURTHER ENQUIRIES For enquiries or further information about this publication, please visit the Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNNSW) Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub's website at: <https://www.unisq.edu.au/sqnnswhub>

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How you can help

You are an important part of a community.

There are many ways to help others – and giving of your time and skills is one of the most rewarding ways to give back.

Whether you are volunteering with a local organisation, or you personally want to help out someone you know in the community, this toolkit helps you consider the best strategies for doing so. In particular, this toolkit will help you learn how to **recognise** when people need help, **connect** people to resources needed and give ideas for how you can provide **support**.

- **RECOGNISE**

Listen, understand, and identify what a person is needing

- **CONNECT**

Assist people in finding qualified and appropriate support

- **SUPPORT**

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer



What is wellbeing?

If you look up the word ‘wellbeing’ in a dictionary, you will find a description similar to “the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy”. Wellbeing is how each person achieves positive outcomes in their life that are meaningful to them and makes them feel good. Wellbeing includes mental and physical health, as well as social, economic, cultural, and spiritual.

This toolkit provides information and resources to help you help others in your community, with a focus on **4** areas of wellbeing.



Mental health affects **how we think, feel and act**. It also affects our everyday life, such as work, relationships, and study. When we're feeling emotionally healthy, we can be fully present with our family, friends, and community. Mental health is also linked to our physical health.



Physical health and wellbeing is much more than good health. It is the direct result of lifestyle choices that include **sleep, diet, physical activity, hygiene, and relaxation**. Maintaining a **healthy balance** and taking care of your body will allow you to get the most out of daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress.



The **quantity and quality of social relationships** affect your mental and physical wellbeing. The benefits of social connections include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher, self-esteem, and also strengthen physical health.



Work and financial security are essential components of wellbeing. They allow a person to satisfy their needs and life goals. Life experience, education, career goals and decision making are based on a person's aspirations, abilities, skills, and ability to adapt. This area of wellbeing opens opportunities for people, local economic growth, and stronger social cohesion.

Throughout this rural wellbeing toolkit, you will find the following types of media and resources to **help you help others**.



TIP SHEET

Quick and easy tip sheets are available throughout the toolkit. Each sheet provides an **overview of the wellbeing topic covered** and is designed to be a printed resource that will look great as a desk or wall poster.



CASE STUDY

Within each wellbeing section of the toolkit, you will find case studies that provide opportunity for you to **recap and apply ideas to various community examples**. Remember to refer to the other resources (tip sheets, activities, and useful links) for additional ideas.



ACTIVITY

Activity sheets are designed to be **printed and used with the person you are wanting to help or for yourself**. Use each activity as a conversation starter and for ongoing discussion.



USEFUL
LINKS

There are so many useful **wellbeing resources available online** from support services, community organisations, researchers, and government. Each wellbeing module in this workbook has a resource page with links for you to explore!



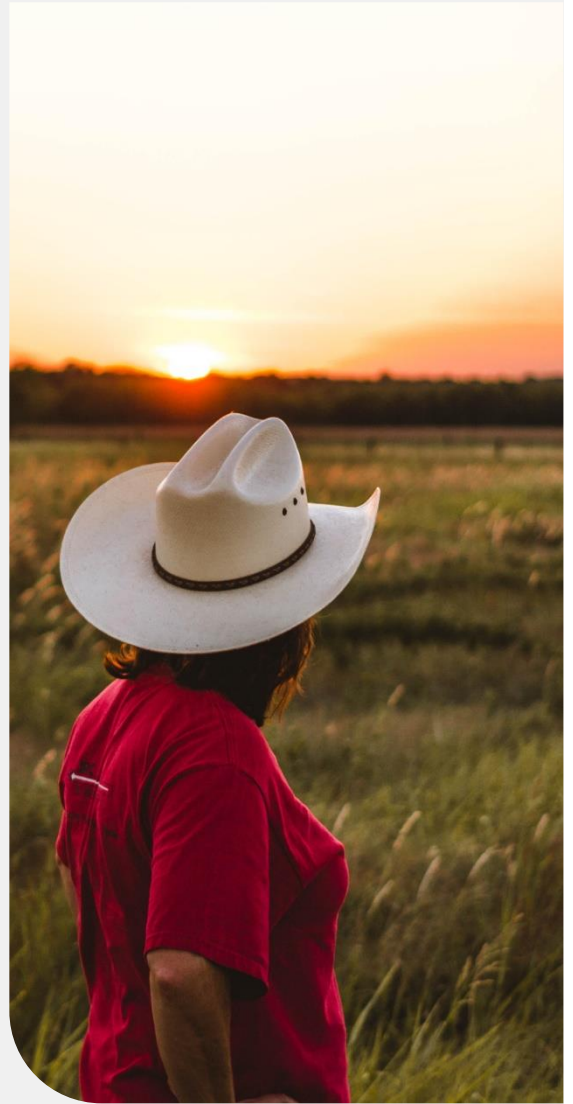
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MODULE 1

Mental Health

Helping someone seek help

- ☐ Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression
- ☐ How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help
- ☐ Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

Mental health plays a significant role in our lives and is connected to many other aspects of wellbeing and physical health. Good mental health can boost your resilience to stress, help achieve goals and provide more opportunities to build social connections.



RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

The reason that mental health is included in this Rural Wellbeing workbook:



1^{IN}5

Australians aged between 16 – 85 experienced a

MENTAL HEALTH disorder or illness in 2022

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. www.aihw.gov.au

22%



of Australians living in outer regional and remote areas experience

MENTAL HEALTH

or related behavioural conditions

Think about what has impacted your local town and community?

Rural and remote Australian towns and communities are diverse in both people and challenges. **Natural disasters and extreme weather** events are more frequent as is **limited housing** and **medical access**, **unemployment**, and **social isolation**. Any of these can affect a person's mental health in the form of **stress, anxiety, or depression**.

Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

Signs of Stress

Stress is a natural physical and mental reaction to life experiences. Everyone expresses stress from time to time. Your body responds to stress by releasing hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates and ready your muscles to respond. This is a natural response.

While stress is usually referred to as a negative experience, not all stress is bad. Some stress can be helpful, motivating us to get a task finished, or spurring us to perform well.

However, if stress is ongoing or the stress response continues over a long period, it can impact negatively on our physical and mental health. The figure below shows the different ways stress can impact us.



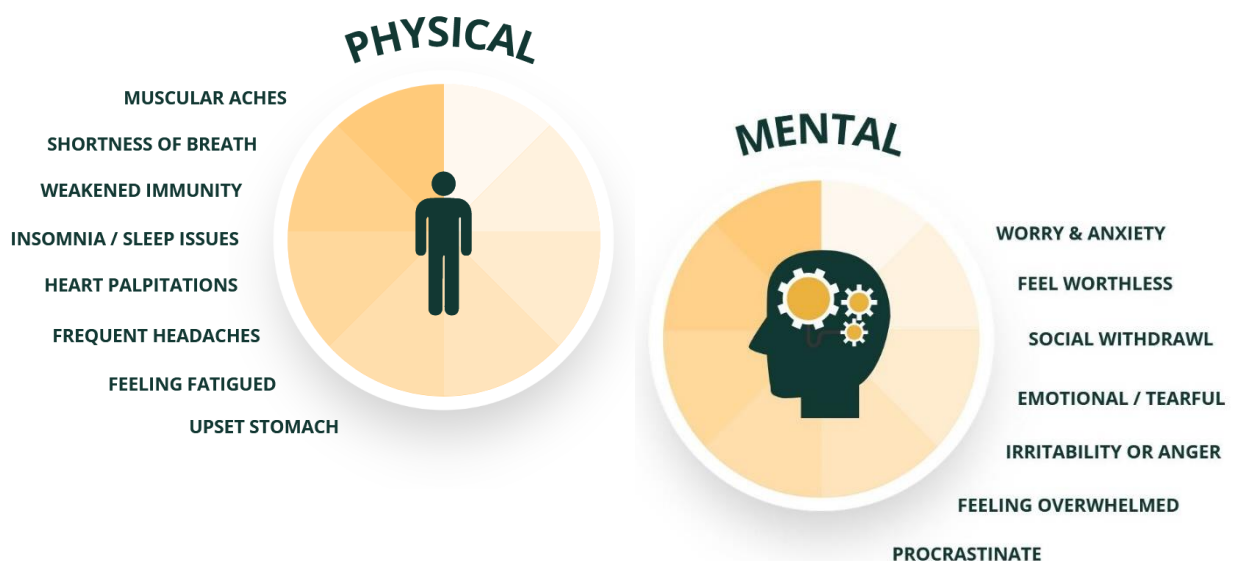
Signs of Stress



What to look out for in Acute or Chronic Stress.

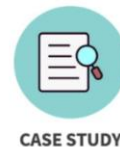
Visit the appendix to find this tip sheet.
A4 sized and ready to print.

Look out for these signs of stress



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

Stress is your body's physical, emotional, and mental reaction to changes or challenges in your life. Everyone experiences stress differently and so what you may see as a challenge might be different for someone else. Stress can also be acute or chronic.



CASE STUDY

Meet Sally

Do you see signs of acute or chronic stress?

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

How could you help?



Acute stress happens immediately and typically lasts for a short period of time. Situations such as **meeting deadlines, starting a new job, or completing exams** can trigger acute stress. Your body usually recovers well if effectively managed, however sudden life-threatening situations (e.g., being in a car accident) are also examples of acute stress and can sometimes lead to post-traumatic distress.



Chronic stress is stress that continues for a long period of time and does not go away. Ongoing **financial difficulties, social isolation, relationship or health problems, work burnout, bullying, or unsafe living conditions** can be triggers. Stress levels can remain extremely high due to a number of triggers occurring at the same time. High levels of stress over extended periods can have a huge impact on our bodies and mental health.

Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression



The positive side of stress

Acute stress can be helpful if managed and is useful in completing short-term tasks.

- Keeps you alert and aware of harmful situations to avoid
- Can boost your job or task performance as you have increased motivation
- A deadline can provide a burst of focus and attention
- Stressful situations can better prepare you for similar situations in the future



The negative side of stress

Short amounts of stress can help in completing a task or adapt to challenges, but if it continues – then it becomes chronic stress.

- When a situation continues to cause mental and physical effort for a long amount of time, it can negatively impact on your health and overall wellbeing
- Ongoing stress can affect your physical health such as blood pressure, strain on your heart, tiredness, exhaustion, and immune system
- Often, people may look for other solutions (e.g., drinking alcohol) to manage ongoing stress. Sometimes this creates additional problems

A **Not-To-Do List** is a useful tool to help you or help someone else stay focused on the important things in life and eliminate unnecessary stress. Think about all the tasks that emotionally drain you, are out of your control, or are actually the responsibility of someone else.

Noting all of the tasks that are not your priority right now will help you maintain better focus on the tasks you do need to do; as well as take away some of the pressure that could otherwise continue and become chronic stress.



ACTIVITY

My Not-To-Do List. Taking the pressure off.

What tasks, issues, or events can a person identify as not a priority and that they can take off their To-Do-List?

Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression



ACTIVITY

Begin to create your Not-To-Do List.

1. Write down what you feel you need to complete.
2. What unnecessary things can you remove?

Everything I feel I need to do



What can I remove from my list?

Actions or events that are out of my control.

Actions or events that are the responsibility of someone else.

Things that don't need to get done.

Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

What is Anxiety?

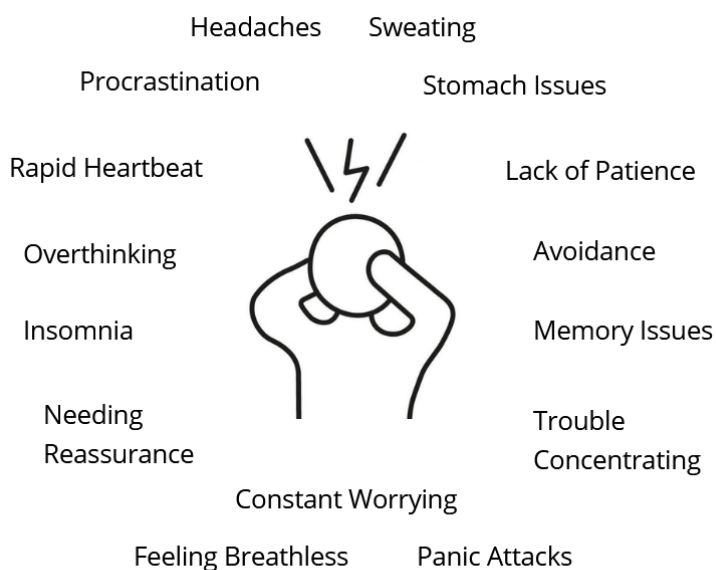
Anxiety is different from stress and a natural and usually short-lived reaction to a new or challenging situation. It normally involves feelings of worry, nervousness, or apprehension that are more than just 'stress'. Sometimes these anxious thoughts, feelings and physical symptoms can become so extreme, or occur across so many different situations that they begin to cause problems in a person's life. Anxiety can cause people to worry constantly, stay away from the things they are worried about and take over their life.



Signs of anxiety

When faced with difficult situations, people with anxiety can experience many different signs of anxiety. These can include shaking, sweating, chest pain, breathing difficulties, abdominal distress, tingling sensations, numbness, or flashes of intense fear. Other people just feel worried all the time and find it difficult to stop worrying. Some experience 'panic attacks' which involve very noticeable physical symptoms (feeling like they can't breathe, heart racing, sweating) that almost mimic a heart condition.

Noticing the signs of anxiety is the first step in being able to manage it.



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

What can trigger anxiety?

There are many different situations and experiences that can trigger anxiety, and this is different for each person. Below are a number of typical triggers for anxiety.



STRESS

When you are under pressure and feeling stressed



CAFFEINE

Drinking too much caffeine can make you feel jittery and anxious



THOUGHTS

Negative thoughts and beliefs about yourself, others, or a situation



CONFLICT

Feeling discomfort and dread about facing any conflict



PERFORMING

Feeling nervous about speaking or performing in public



MEDICATION

Side effects from medication may cause anxious feelings



SOCIAL

Feeling worried about interacting with other people



ILLNESS

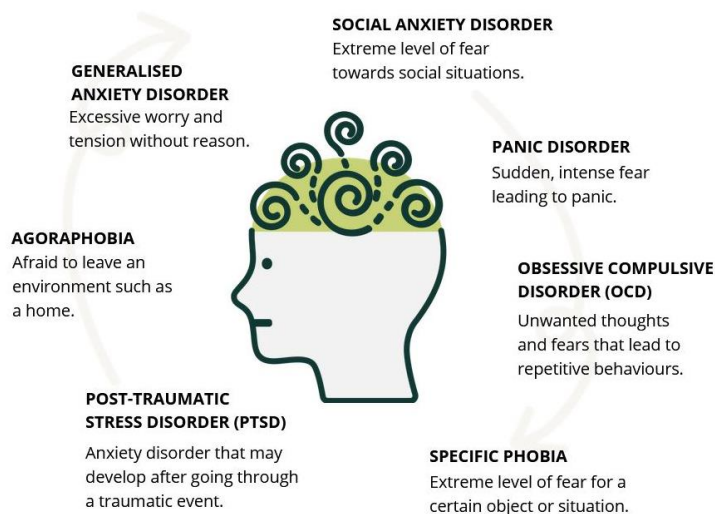
Dealing with an illness, or worried about becoming ill

Types of Anxiety Disorders

While anxiety may improve over time for some, if people continue to experience ongoing anxiety and it impacts on their life, it is important to seek help from a qualified mental health practitioner as soon as possible.

These persistent symptoms may be considered as an anxiety disorder which often needs professional support. There are many different types of anxiety which might require different treatment approaches.

Types of Anxiety Disorders



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

Coping with Anxiety

Many people with anxiety will need some type of therapy or medication to manage their anxiety, and the first step is to visit a health professional (GP or Psychologist) to better understand what is happening. However, there are also some coping strategies people can learn on their own to help manage their anxiety.

See the “Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources” section of this module to find out where people can learn about coping strategies for anxiety.



Meet Tina

CASE STUDY



What could be triggering Tina's anxiety?

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

How could you help?

Here are some starting tips for understanding how anxiety is affecting you and strategies that might be helpful.

- Become familiar with your anxiety triggers. The earlier you can recognise anxiety, the easier it is to manage it
- Keep a journal of events that caused you anxiety and write down how you felt (thoughts and feelings)
- Stay connected to your family and friends
- Ask for help if your anxiety is ongoing or you feel like you can't manage it
- Think about whether you need to cut back on caffeinated drinks
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs – they can make anxiety worse
- Keep physically active and eat healthy foods – this can lift mood
- Make sure to have enough regular sleep – when you are tired, you are more likely to feel anxious and have difficulty managing this
- Stick to your treatment plan if receiving professional health support

Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

What is Depression?

Everyone gets upset or disheartened from time to time. Normally, negative emotions or a bad mood go away on their own after a little while. Depression, however, is a serious mental health issue that lingers around for a long time and can show up in a variety of ways. It is not just about 'feeling low' – depression can involve many different feelings and often will not go away on its own. Sometimes people feel very down and depressed for long periods of time, and other times it can come and go in waves.

Triggers for depression in rural communities can include:

- Loss of job or few job opportunities
- Long-term unemployment
- Personal or community traumatic events
- Housing stress or homelessness
- Physical health issues & medical access
- Family problems or death of a loved one
- End of a close relationship
- Instability in farming
- Strenuous working conditions
- Social isolation
- Recovery from natural disasters
- Sometimes there is no reason!



Meet Angelo

CASE STUDY

Angelo was a town business leader. Soon after retiring, his wife sadly passed away. Angelo has since become isolated in his home and rarely leaves it.

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

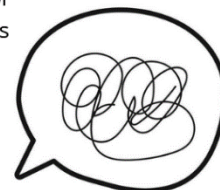
How could you help?



Signs of depression

The signs of depression will vary for each person and can range from mild to severe. It can be experienced as something that regularly returns and can also become chronic (ongoing without stopping).

- Feelings of sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness
- Angry outburst, irritability or frustration, even over small matters
- Thoughts or attempts of self-harm
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities
- Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much



Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression

Depression or ongoing anxiety requires treatment

Ongoing anxiety or depression is not something that tends to go away on its own. It is a condition where the brain no longer finds pleasure in previously enjoyable life or work activities. People might feel continually dissatisfied, hopeless or guilty, and this can become overwhelming for a person and those close to them.

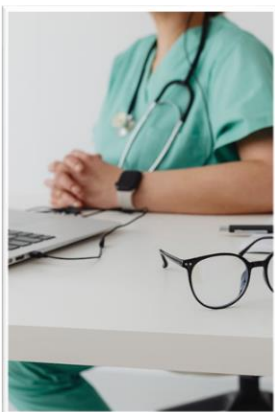
Well-meaning friends or family members may tell someone with anxiety or depression to “just be positive” or “snap out of it” – which unfortunately can make things worse. Anxiety or depression are not signs of a person’s weakness or a character flaw. Whether anxiety or depression, it should not be ignored and may need professional mental health treatment.



Depression

SYMPTOMS & TREATMENT

Visit the appendix to find this tip sheet.
A4 sized and ready to print.



Where to get help? Where should people start?

A person’s regular General Practitioner (GP) is a good place to start the conversation about their mental health. GPs are often well placed to refer people to a mental health professional (such as a psychologist) and advise on how to access rebates for such services.

Sometimes it is hard for people to take the first step, so you may consider helping them to make an appointment.

Did you know that GPs can arrange a Mental Health Care plan for people?

If seeing a GP, it is important to advise them that it is a mental health care plan appointment (so they can book an extended appointment). The GP will work with the person to understand what help is needed and then arrange a mental health care plan and referral. This often involves seeing a Psychologist, where Medicare rebates are offered.

Understanding the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression



Mental Health Professionals

When trying to work out what is happening for a person, a psychologist will ask many questions and look for a range of symptoms that may impact on their daily life. There is no single cause for anxiety or depression.

Only certain health professionals can make a clinical diagnosis and prescribe medication.

GPs are a good starting point and it may be necessary to also see a Psychiatrist, Psychologist, or other mental health professional. Only GPs and Psychiatrists can prescribe medication.

The next topic is “**How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help.**” This topic will focus on how to encourage someone to seek mental health support and receive a diagnosis.

How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help

Barriers to seeking help

The earlier people seek help, the easier it will be to manage their difficulties. Unfortunately, we know that sometimes people are very reluctant to seek help.

Sometimes a person might not think that they are experiencing mental health issues, but they might be able to recognise that something is not quite right – but not know where to start.

There are varying reasons for why members of your rural community might not seek help for a mental health concern. If you can recognise these, it is the first step to overcoming them.



Why someone in your community may not seek help

Each of the following could be the reason someone in your community is struggling with seeking out help with their mental health.

- Concerns about confidentiality
- Lack of awareness of mental health
- Religious or cultural considerations
- Language barriers
- Financial hardship or debt
- Overwhelmed by natural disaster
- Lack of motivation
- Social isolation or grief
- Believe it will affect career opportunities
- Lack of access to mental health services
- Stigma. Fear of judgement or shame either about mental health generally, or about seeking help

There are a lot of solutions and services that try to overcome these barriers, and being able to understand people's concerns is the first step in helping them find the *right* support, at the *right* time. It can be helpful to understand exactly what 'help-seeking' involves, to think about where the problems may lie.

How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help

Recognising help seeking behaviours

Help-seeking behaviour is any action performed by someone seeking treatment or support for a condition (whether it be physical or mental health). Depression and many other mental health conditions are very treatable – but many people are wary of seeking support and possible treatment.

To help someone get the help they need, you can assist them through the following steps of the **help seeking process**.

1

Awareness

Be able to recognise any mental health symptoms and understand that it is ok to seek help from others

2

Explain Symptoms

To feel comfortable in clearly explaining how they are feeling and what they are needing support with

3

Understand Available Support

To clearly understand where and how to access help and support services

4

Willing to Talk

Be willing and able to discuss any mental health concerns and support options with someone

Rickwood et al. (2005)



How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help

Strategies: Checking if someone is okay

When you're worried about someone, the best thing you can do is observe, listen, and let them know you're there for them. Understanding the reasons why you are concerned is the first step.

Observe

- Are you aware of the reasons why you are concerned for someone?
- Was it a fleeting observation you made or has there been ongoing signs?
- Are there other people who have similar concerns?
- If you are armed with this information, it will make it easier to discuss with them



Checking if someone is ok.

Observe and Chat

Visit the appendix to find this tip sheet.
A4 sized and ready to print.



Have a chat

Find a nice quiet time and private place to chat with the person – don't force it if they say they don't feel like talking but let them know you are there if they need. Be aware of the personality (openness) of the person and their communication style.

- **Starting the conversation.** Ask open-ended questions, rather than just telling someone what you think. When people are going through any form of stress or anxiety, they often just want to be understood.
Example question: *"How are you going? You haven't seemed yourself lately. Is there anything you want to chat about?"* Follow up with more specific questions if they don't raise anything, such as *"I've noticed you've been missing from the recent meetings"*.

If you know there is something specific that has happened for the person, ask general questions about that. Example: *"You've been through a lot this year. How have things been going for you and your family since the fires?"*

How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help

More strategies: Checking if someone is okay

Be a good listener and offer your support

Pay attention and ask questions that allow you to check you have understood what is being said. Ask someone what is going on for them, listen, and acknowledge their feelings. Sometimes it can be helpful to say back to them what you've heard, just so you can check you've understood correctly.

Sometimes people will just need a chance to talk and be heard. Other times they may need some advice on strategies they can try. And sometimes, you just can't solve their problem on your own. You may need to consider any available services or resources that you can encourage them to investigate, or even help them to access services. Whatever they decide, it is important they don't feel judged and know that you are there to help at any point in the future.

Try to focus on solutions and what the person can do

It's important to not dwell on the things causing problems for the person. While the person needs a chance to explain what's happening for them, it is also important to focus on positive changes, their strengths, and any positive coping strategies they have tried.

Get background information where it might help

Sometimes, it can be helpful to talk to the person's partner or family to find out any extra information that may help you understand what is going on for them, or to involve them in the help-seeking process. Consider how this will be received by the person, and it may be important to let them know (or ask them) that you want to talk to others about them.



How to talk to someone about their mental health and support them in seeking help

More strategies: Checking if someone is okay



Be aware of services or activities that can provide relevant support based on the needs of the person. This may be seeking out a GP appointment or simply being invited to a social group.

Be culturally aware

Be aware that a person's culture can shape how they understand mental health and their approach to seeking help. Learn about any specific cultural beliefs that surround mental health in a person's community. Respect a person's culture by using appropriate language and behaviour.

Refer to the section “**Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources**” for further information on how and where to support someone when you are checking they are okay. Remember that encouraging someone to talk to their local or online General Practitioner (GP) is a good first step.

Quick tips on how you can continue to support someone who is receiving mental health treatment.

- Gently encourage and invite them out for walks, outings, and other activities. It is important to recognise their limits and consider appropriate activities
- Help them stick to any treatment plan they have been prescribed
- Make sure they have transportation to any therapy appointments
- Remind them that with time and treatment, they should be able to better manage their anxiety or depression, and that people are there to support them

Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources

Where to start looking

Remember that your role in supporting someone is to be a good listener, understand their concerns, identify where there could be barriers, but most importantly – understand that you are not there to provide treatment, but to help connect to professional services.



CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



USEFUL LINKS

A selection of mental health support services and resources are provided below. **Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!**

- **Local General Practitioner (GP)** – GPs are an excellent first point of call, and especially in rural areas where specialist services are not available. GPs are ideally placed to conduct the first assessments of the person's experiences to understand what is going on for them and what type of help might be best. They can then arrange referrals to more specialist health providers or prescribe medication if needed.

Some GPs have specific training in mental health and can even offer some therapy-based mental health interventions. You can check if there are any GPs in your region who specialise in mental health. All GPs can arrange a mental health care plan for people in your community. It is important that the person, or you (if arranging on the person's behalf) book an extended appointment to arrange a mental health care plan. This will look different for each person. It may include medication for some, referrals to Psychologists, Psychiatrists, or other mental health professionals.

A mental health care plan offers Medicare rebates for therapy with a variety of mental health professionals. Mental health services are also covered by most private health insurance funds.

Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources

- **Psychologist support.** When people require ongoing support for mental health, it usually involves some form of ‘talking’ therapy. Psychologist-led therapy typically involves individual or group sessions with people that aims to help develop strategies for managing their anxiety and depression. Some of the more common types of therapy are Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Interpersonal Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. These are evidence-based therapies that can be used alone or together. Typically, they involve developing strategies to help people manage their thoughts, feelings and practise more helpful behaviours.

Treatment with a Psychologist is different for every person but can involve a number of regular sessions (weekly, fortnightly) over a period of time. These can be conducted face-to-face in-person, or via videoconferencing or telephone. People can self-refer to Psychologists, but if they want to access services via the Medicare rebates, they will need a referral from a GP.

How to find a Psychologist. GPs can help find a suitable Psychologist, but you can also search via the Australian Psychological Society at: <https://psychology.org.au/find-a-psychologist>

If there are no Psychologists in your local community, or if people prefer to see someone outside of their community, telehealth consultations are now easily accessed from anywhere around Australia. If internet bandwidth is an issue, these can also be conducted over the telephone. Psychologists offering telehealth can also be found via the Australian Psychological Society’s “Find a Psychologist” service. <https://psychology.org.au/find-a-psychologist>. Therapy is then mostly delivered by Psychologists or other mental health professionals. GPs can also provide referrals to Psychiatrists.

- **Psychiatrist support** – Most people seeking help for mental health won’t need to visit a Psychiatrist. Psychiatrists can provide specific diagnoses and are ideally placed to prescribe and monitor medications and ongoing management of complex mental health conditions. Therapy is then mostly delivered by Psychologists or other mental health professionals. GPs can provide referrals to Psychiatrists.

Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources

- **Rural Aid – Mental Health and Wellbeing services**

<https://www.ruralaid.org.au/counsellors/>

Rural Aid has experienced counsellors based in rural towns across the country – offering free, confidential support to farmers and their families. This can be a good starting point, especially if people have concerns about going to Psychologists.

- **Rural Financial Counselling Service**

<https://rfcsnetwork.com.au/>

Financial stress can be closely linked to stress and wellbeing and often people will benefit from financial and personal counselling and support. The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides free and independent financial counselling to eligible farmers, fishers, foresters, and related small businesses who are in, or at risk of, financial hardship.

- **Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)**

<https://www.ramhp.com.au/>

RAMHP has 20 Coordinators employed by Local Health Districts across regional, rural, and remote NSW. They provide health promotion and educational activities in their local communities and link individuals with appropriate services.

- **Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636**

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Beyond Blue provides 24/7 counselling and support services through a number of modalities. While this service is not primarily intended for people in crisis, it does offer general counselling and support services, along with access to support resources and programs.

- **Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS) – Mental Health & Wellbeing services**

Queensland <https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/qld/what-we-do/mental-health/>

NSW <https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/nswact/how-we-help/mental-health/>

The RFDS also offers mental health and wellbeing services that might be helpful in your community.

- **Red Cross Australia**

<https://www.redcross.org.au/services/>

Red Cross works within communities across Australia and provides services that include mental health. Visit their website to learn more about services and programs available in your community or online.

- **MensLine Australia – 1300 789 978**

<https://mensline.org.au/>

The MensLine 24/7 telephone and online counselling service offers support for Australian men anywhere, anytime.

Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources

- Open Arms – Veterans and families counselling**
<https://www.openarms.gov.au/>
 Open Arms provide 24-hour free crisis support (phone) plus helpful resources.
- Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800**
<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>
 Kids Helpline provides free online and telephone counselling for young people aged 5–25 years.
- Rural Minds (Rural and Remote Mental Health)**
<https://rrmh.com.au/our-programs/rural-minds/>
 Rural Minds provides individual and group programs addressing mental health challenges faced by people in rural, pastoral, and agricultural communities.
- Lifeline**
<https://www.lifeline.org.au>
 Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Resources and useful information, advice, and support is also available to help you guide someone in seeking mental health support.
- 13YARN**
<https://www.13yarn.org.au>
 Australian Indigenous-led crisis helpline providing 24/7 telephone support for First Nations Australians.
- WellMob**
<https://wellmob.org.au/>
 Mental health, social, and cultural wellbeing online resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- ifarmwell**
<https://ifarmwell.com.au/>
 ifarmwell is a free online toolkit to help farmers cope effectively with stressful situations in their everyday lives. Practical coping techniques, resources, and links to other services are provided.

Starting Point: Mental health support services and resources

Digital Mental Health Resources

Digital mental health services offer free or low-cost online and phone support to Australians in need. These services are important for those who might not have sought (or could not access) local professional mental health support already, are in a crisis, or live in rural areas.

The following are good starting points for finding a directory of helpful digital mental health resources. Many of the treatment programs available online can be completed without therapist support as a self-help option before seeking further professional support. There are also services available online that involve guidance from clinicians and trained counsellors.

- **E-Mental Health in Practice (eMHPrac)**

<https://www.emhprac.org.au/>

eMHPrac provides a range of resources including brochures, factsheets, videos, webinars, modules, and the Guide to Digital Mental Health Resources (<https://www.emhprac.org.au/resource/a-guide-to-digital-mental-health-resources/>). An online library is also available to explore and learn about digital mental health resources and how to use them.

- **Head to Health**

<https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>

The Australian government's Head to Health website provide easy access to digital mental health services, information, and support.

- **Mindspot**

<https://www.mindspot.org.au/>

The Mindspot website provides free, online, personalised mental health care. Mindspot supports Australian adults experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, OCD, PTSD, and chronic pain. All of the online services are confidential and provide optional access to qualified therapists.

- **This Way Up**

<https://thiswayup.org.au/>

THIS WAY UP is a trusted Australian provider of evidence-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programs that deliver online treatments for anxiety disorders and related mental health conditions. Programs are designed to teach you proven psychological skills to transform your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours so you can make a positive change in your life.

- **Mental Health Online**

<https://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au>

Mental Health Online provides comprehensive and effective online services, programs, and resources free of charge. For anyone experiencing mental distress, this service can help with understanding and addressing mental health needs through self-assessment, self-help online professional support.

MODULE 2

Physical Health

Maintain health and stay active

- ☐ How to help someone acknowledge physical health concerns
- ☐ Encouraging someone to stay active
- ☐ Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active



How to help someone acknowledge health concerns

Physical health and wellbeing is much more than good health. It is the direct result of lifestyle choices that include diet, physical activity, hygiene, adequate sleep, and relaxation. Maintaining a healthy balance and taking care of your body will allow you to get the most out of daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress.



RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.



Australians live in **rural and remote** areas which are **diverse** in location and communities.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. www.aihw.gov.au

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has found that outer regional, rural, and remote areas have higher reported rates of **coronary heart diseases, lung cancer or COPD, diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure.**

Health risk factors such as smoking, being overweight, poor diet, high blood pressure, excessive alcohol consumption, illicit drug use, and physical inactivity can influence health outcomes and the likelihood of developing disease or health disorders.



Coronary heart disease is the **leading cause** of disease and health concern in rural and remote Australia.



Type-2 diabetes

are the **2nd leading** physical health concerns **in** outer rural and remote Australia.



Lung cancer or COPD

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease



Chronic Back Pain

Australians living within regional, rural, or remote areas are **23% more likely** to experience.

How to help someone acknowledge health concerns

Why someone may not want to seek medical advice

Many people experience anxiety when thinking about having to engage with the healthcare system. When supporting someone to seek medical advice, it is important to understand their personal barrier. The following are a few potential reasons.

- Scared to seek medical care or tests in case of bad results
- Not wanting to worry anyone else such as family
- Fear of looking weak and not in control
- Feeling overwhelmed in seeking medical advice
- Worried about availability of local healthcare service
- Concerned about needing to use technology such as telehealth
- Not knowing the early signs of physical health conditions



Encouraging someone to chat with a healthcare professional

It is important to encourage people to see a healthcare professional when it is required, but also to remember that people are more likely to seek help when it is their own decision. So, helping people to recognise the need to seek help, and helping them to find that help can be more useful. Remember that the person with the physical health concern needs to feel that they are in control and taking responsibility for themselves.

Providing options in healthcare information services and resources to someone will often help them gain confidence in seeking advice. Visit the section **“Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active”** to view a range of helpful starting points.

Encouraging someone to stay active

Wellbeing benefits of staying active

Most people know that exercising is good for their health, but just this thought may not motivate them to do it regularly. There are many reasons why people may not consider exercising, including a lack of time, energy, or interest.



SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

Benefits of staying active

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your physical and mental health. Physical health risks such as smoking, poor diet and obesity, high blood pressure, alcohol consumption, and illicit drug use can also be reduced through regular physical activity. Being physically active can:

- help manage weight
- reduce the risk of disease
- improve brain health
- strengthen bones and muscles
- improve coordination and movement skills
- reduce the risk of falls and injury
- improve sleep
- reduce stress
- encourage cooperation and teamwork
- better self-esteem and confidence
- create opportunities for socialising and meeting new people
- improve anxiety and depression
- improve ability to do everyday activities with increased energy, concentration, and focus



CASE STUDY

Meet Sam

Read through Sam's story. Do you think staying active will help him with his current situation?

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked. **How could you help?**



Encouraging someone to stay active

Helping someone stay active

Lead by example

One of the simplest ways is to be a good role in your own physical activity. Showing someone that you don't need to be perfect – just keep moving.

Be active together

Think about the times you meet with someone. Can you add in a short walk while chatting?

Link an interest area with exercise

Do you know someone's interests and values? Do they like photography, or building things? Is there a charity event they would be interested in helping with? Think of something they enjoy that could include physical activity.



How to stay active and be safe

When encouraging someone to start including physical activity in their routine, make sure to consider their safety and only become involved in an exercise that does not cause injury.

- Choose types of physical activity that are appropriate for a person's current fitness level and health goals. Ensure it is a safe activity for them
- Gradually increase physical activity slowly over time. Don't rush in and burn out
- Protect yourself and others with appropriate gear if the physical activity requires it (such as a bike riding helmet or walking shoes)
- **If someone has a chronic condition or disability, make sure they first seek advice from a health professional before they start any new physical activity**

Encouraging someone to stay active

What activities are in your local area?

Think about community, sporting, or volunteer groups in your town and region? Does your local council have an events page or community directory?



What activities would be an excellent option for keeping someone physically active? As mentioned on the previous page – link a person's interests and values with a local activity.



Below are some ideas of what may be available near you OR what could be started in your local area.

Also visit the section **"Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active"** to discover other options and ideas.



- Community garden
- Bushwalking group
- Mountain bike trails
- Sports club or activity
- Men's Shed or similar
- Morning walking group
- Fitness challenge
- Yoga or Pilate classes
- Landcare volunteer
- Local swimming pool
- Dog exercise park
- Camping



What activities are best for me?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Look for activities that you enjoy and that fit your lifestyle. Answering the questions in this activity may help you explain to other people the type of activities that would be best for you. **Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.**



Encouraging someone to stay active



What activities are best for me?

Look for activities that you enjoy and that fit your lifestyle. Answering the questions below may help you explain to other people the type of activities that would be best for you.

Do you prefer being active by yourself or with others?

Joining a group or team can help keep you motivated – but some people prefer to exercise alone.

Your response

Do you enjoy being outdoors or do you feel safer indoors?

Do you like being outside or do you avoid heat, cold or other weather conditions? Or are you uncomfortable with being alone outdoors?

Your response

Do you prefer being active in the morning, midday, or evening?

The better you plan your activity times to match your energy levels and your daily schedule, the more likely you are to keep up your healthy activity habits.

Your response

Do you prefer activities that also involve some mental challenge?

Are you interested in team sports or activities requiring high concentration and focus – or are you wanting to rest your brain and just let your body exercise (such as walking)?

Your response

Do you like to compete with others or exercise alone?

Everyone is different. Do you enjoy competing with others or prefer no competition to worry about?

Your response

Encouraging someone to stay active

Remember to consider physical health issues


Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2019 highlighted that 55% of outer regional and remote area Australians were not involved in sufficient physical activity.

Regular physical activity is a great way to keep a person focused on their health and can assist in reducing habits involving smoking, poor diet, alcohol consumption, or illicit drug use.

This page provides statistics for a number of these habits that are impacting on the health of regional, rural, and remote Australia.

Visit the section “**Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active**” to discover helpful websites that provide using tips and contact information for anyone seeking to increase their physical health.



24.4% 

of outer regional and remote area Australians consumed alcohol at levels that put them at risk of life-time harm.

2019 Australian Bureau of Statistics. www.abs.gov.au



70%

of outer regional and remote area Australians exceeded a healthy weight range.

2019 Australian Bureau of Statistics. www.abs.gov.au



19.6%

of remote area Australians smoked tobacco daily, compared to 9.7% in major cities.

2020 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. www.aihw.gov.au

Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active

Where to start looking

Remember that your role in supporting someone is to be a good listener, understand their concerns, identify where there could be barriers, but most importantly – understand that you are not there to provide treatment, but to help connect to professional services.



CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



Listed below is a selection of support services and resources that can encourage and help someone with their physical health. Many of these services and resources also relate to mental health. **Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!**

- Local General Practitioner (GP)** – Always connect with them first.
 GPs can do a chronic disease management plan which provides Medicare benefits for physiotherapist or exercise physiologist services that can help in managing health conditions and increasing activity.
- Australian Government – Physical activity and exercise guidelines**
<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise>
 Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines outline how much physical activity someone should do, the importance of reducing the time spent sitting or lying down, and how much sleep people require. Needs vary depending on age.
- Heart Foundation Australia**
<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/>
 Search for ideas, tips, and regular physical activities to help your heart health and overall physical as well as mental wellbeing.

Starting Point: Physical health support services and resources for staying active

- **Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling – Physical activity resources**

<https://www.openarms.gov.au/living-well/exercise>

Open Arms provide 24-hour free crisis support (phone) plus helpful resources for mental and physical health.



- **Royal Flying Doctors Service – Health promotion and Primary Health Care services** Queensland

<https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/qld/what-we-do/health-promotion/>

NSW <https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/nswact/how-we-help/primary-healthcare/>

- **Alcohol and Drug Foundation**

<https://adf.org.au/>

The Australian Alcohol and Drug Foundation website provides a Path2Health portal aimed at providing up-to-date and credible resources to assist you in supporting others impacted by alcohol or other drug use. Resources include local services available and the importance of physical activity.

- **Nutrition Australia**

<https://nutritionaustralia.org/>

Nutrition Australia is a non-government, non-profit, community-based organisation with divisions throughout Australia. Free resources are available on their website that provide guides and tips for encouraging healthy food choices, understanding nutritional knowledge, and how to manage chronic physical conditions such as obesity, type-2 diabetes, and heart disease.

- **Health Direct**

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/>

Health Direct is a government-funded services that provides quality, approved health information, advice, and resources to help you or someone you know look after their health. A comprehensive directory of physical health conditions, issues, and symptoms are provided.

- **Lung Foundation Australia**

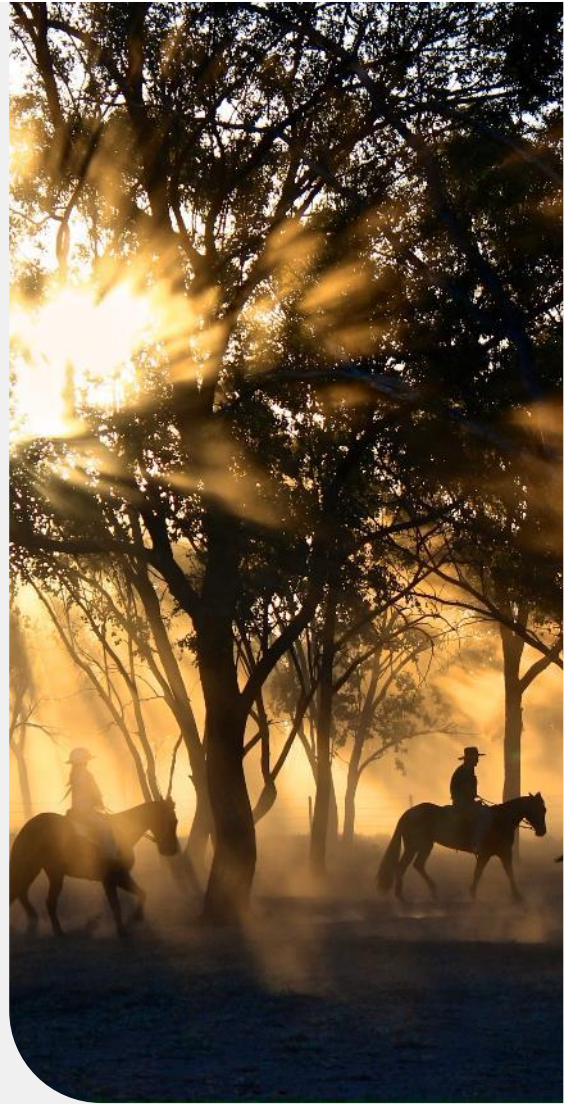
<https://lungfoundation.com.au/>

Lung Foundation Australia is an Australian charity and leading peak body that funds life-changing research and delivers support services that give hope to people living with lung disease or lung cancer. Their website provides free advice and resources to help understand health conditions such as lung cancer and how to support those impacted both in their physical and mental health.

MODULE 3

Social Connection

Encouraging and building community



- ❑ Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing
- ❑ Developing meaningful social connections – all ages
- ❑ Starting Point: Services and resources that encourage community social connection



Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing

Social connection is all about the feeling of belonging to a social group, family, or community. Establishing connections with others is crucial for a person's mental and physical health. Feeling connected, valued, and respected by others provides you with a sense of support, security, happiness, and a purpose.



RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.



The opposite – Social isolation and loneliness

Social isolation is when a person has few social relationships and limited contact with others. A sense of **loneliness** occurs when a person feels distressed by their lack of meaningful connection to others.

Social isolation and loneliness is increasing within Australia, with Australian government statistics now stating a third of Australians experience a sense of loneliness.



1^{IN}3

Australians feel lonely

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. www.aihw.gov.au

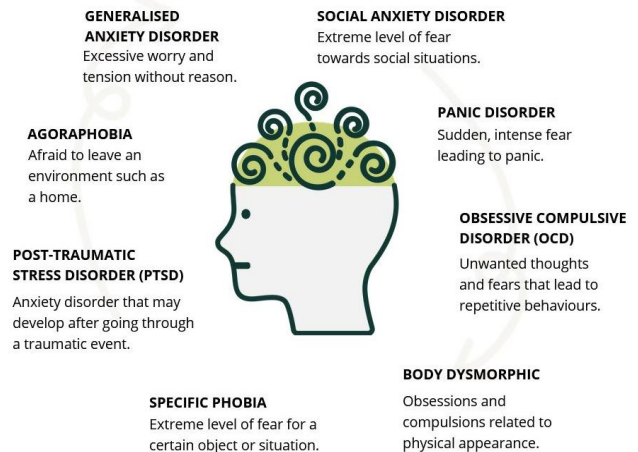
Social isolation and **loneliness** are among the many factors that can impact on a person's wellbeing. A person with ongoing loneliness is more likely to experience **chronic disease**, **social anxiety**, or **depression**.

Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing

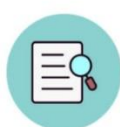
RECAP: Anxiety and social isolation

In **Module 1** we looked at **Mental Health** and how anxiety can cause someone to isolate from their local community.

Anxiety disorders can impact on someone's ability to connect with others. Remember that anxiety can improve over time, but if someone continues to experience an **anxiety disorder**, then they should be encouraged to first seek professional mental health support.



Re-visit the **Signs of Anxiety** section of Module 1 to review what can trigger anxiety and how best to support someone who is experiencing it.



CASE STUDY

Meet Dave

Dave is a well-known local farmer who recently experienced severe hail damage. His friends at the nearby town have noticed that he has stopped attending regular events.

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

How could you help?



What could be the reason behind someone isolating themselves?

Think about your local town. Do you recognise any of the following as a reason for someone isolating themselves from your community?

- Loss of job or few job opportunities
- Extreme weather and natural disasters
- Long-term unemployment
- Personal or community traumatic events
- Hiding physical health issues
- Family problems or death of a loved one
- End of a close relationship
- Financial stress
- Being bullied, discriminated, or harassed

Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing

How to encourage someone to connect with others

Social connection is a personal thing, and it is different for each person. There are many things you can do, as a friend or family member to help someone to 'step out' and connect in a meaningful way with others in their community.

Below are a few suggestions for you to encourage someone to build on their social connection.

- Spend more quality time with family and friends
- Join a group, club, or class related to an interest or hobby
- Volunteer with an organisation or local event
- Express gratitude to others and thank them
- Get to know their neighbours. A simple hello
- Substitute a phone call or text message for an online video chat or meet in person
- Talk to their doctor or a health professional if feeling lonely or if there are major changes or stresses in their life



Meet Kira

What could Kira do to build new connections in her local town?

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked. **How could you help?**

Stay Connected

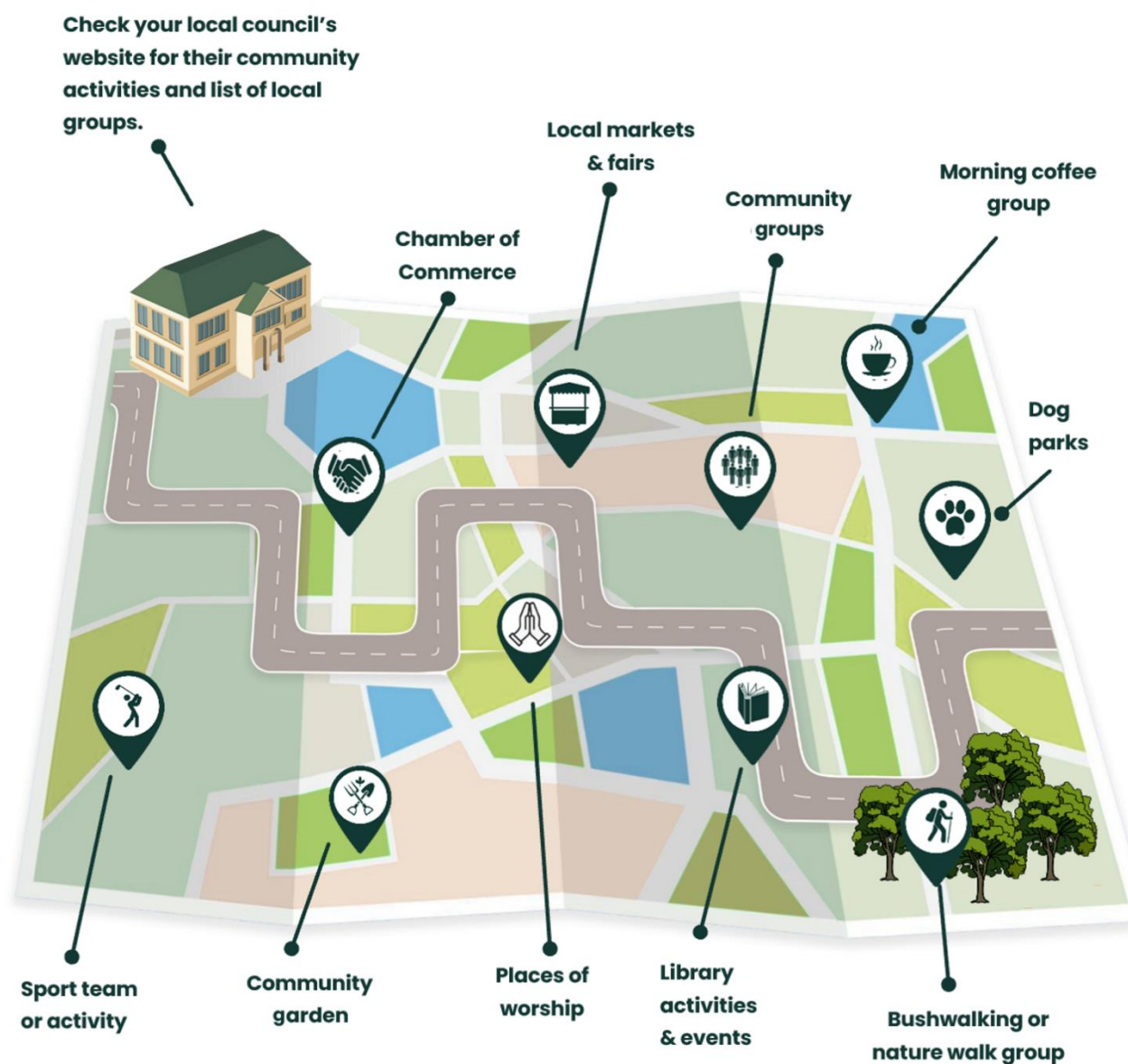
HOW TO CREATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Visit the appendix to find this tip sheet. A4 sized and ready to print.

Importance of social connection to overall wellbeing

How does your local community connect?

Have a look at the different community connection examples provided below. Do you recognise many of these in your local town and region? What do you see in your town that is not illustrated here? What would you like to see in your town and community?



Developing meaningful social connections – all ages

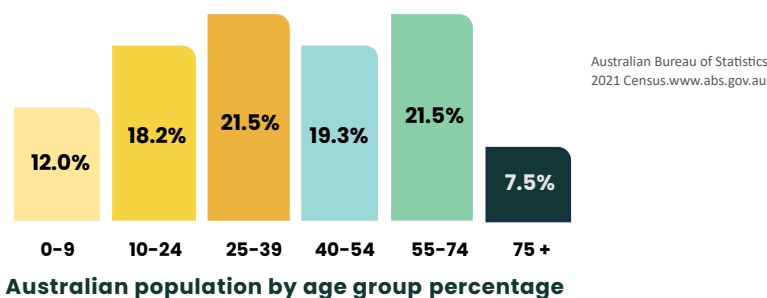
Social connection is all about the feeling of belonging to a group, family, or community. It may be a simple idea, but its impacts on health are profound.

Meaningful connections with others in your community are those that are significant and involve mutual respect, interests, trust, and a feeling of being valued. These connections can provide support, understanding, sharing of knowledge, and a sense of belonging.



SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.



Compared to Australia overall, regional Australia has a similar percentage of children (under 18) but a higher number of adults aged 60 or older.



Age diversity in your community

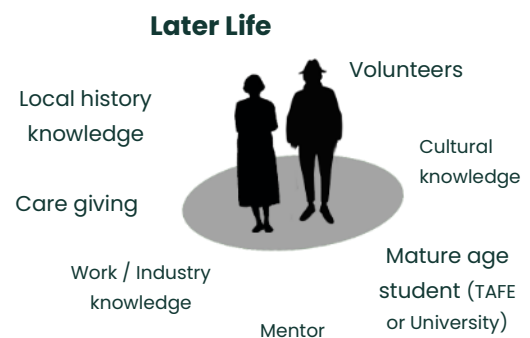
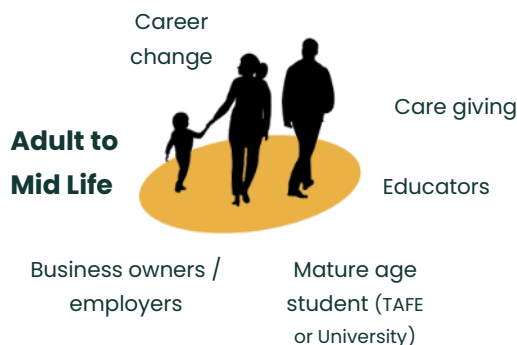
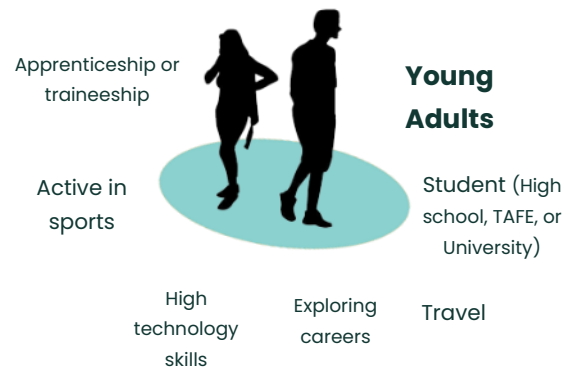
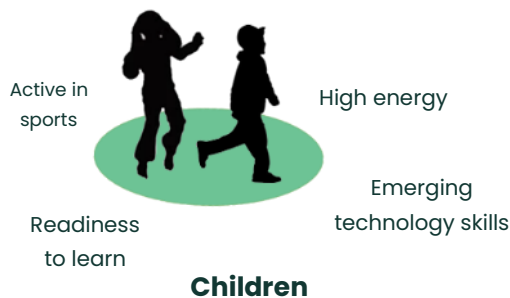
The value of age-diverse communities is in bringing together people with abilities, skills, knowledge, and networks that are valuable to everyone across all age groups.

These communities can offer better decision-making, open doors to opportunities, and improved wellbeing all around – but only if individual members of a community are willing to listen, to collaborate, and be respectful.

Developing meaningful social connections – all ages

The value in your community – across the age groups

Think about the skills, experience, ideas, knowledge, and networks that can be provided by everyone in your community. Let's have a look at a few possible examples from across all age groups. What could you add? What is similar across age groups? How can each group help out the others?



ACTIVITY

Who do I know?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Think about the people you know in your local town and community. Who do you know from different age groups?

Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.



Developing meaningful social connections – all ages



Think about the people you know in your local town and community. Who do you know from different age groups? What have you learnt from them or provided help to them with? What do you think you could learn from them or provide support to?

Think about the following questions when adding details for each person.

- How do you know them?
- What are they interested in or involved in?
- What interest do you share (or you think you may share)?
- Do you feel comfortable contacting them or do you know someone that can help?



1

Name & details:

2

Name & details:

3

Name & details:

4

Name & details:

Developing meaningful social connections – all ages

The power of intergenerational connections

Finding ways for members of the community to interact and improve one another's lives is crucial given the growth in social isolation and loneliness. Younger and older community members can develop deep friendships, mentoring relationships, and a strong **sense of personal meaning**. The sharing of life lessons and gaining new skills from one another can promote overall wellbeing, including opportunities for employment (paid or volunteer) as well as improving physical and mental health.



CASE STUDY

Meet Tyson

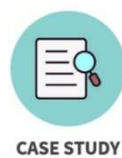
Tyson is a high school student as well as a carer for a parent. He is proudly First Nation but does not have any extended family living nearby to talk to or seek advice. He has recently been offered an apprenticeship in horticulture but is unsure how to balance this with school and caring responsibilities. How could he find support within his local community?

Visit the Appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

How could you help?



How could Tyson and Angelo help each other?



CASE STUDY

Meet Angelo

Angelo was a business leader in town. Soon after retiring, his wife sadly passed away. Angelo has since become isolated in his home and rarely leaves it. His adult children are overseas, and Angelo feels like no one remembers him anymore.

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked.

How could you help?



How would you introduce Tyson and Angelo?

How would you encourage them to connect?

Starting Point: Services that encourage social connection

Where to start looking

Encouraging someone to connect with others involves patience, being a good listener, and consideration of supportive and relatable opportunities available in the community.



CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.



USEFUL LINKS

A selection of support services and resources that can encourage and help social connection within your community are listed below. Some of these services are also related to mental health.

Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!

- **Local General Practitioner (GP)** – Encourage someone to connect with their GP to discuss physical and mental health concerns.
- **Ending Loneliness**
<https://endingloneliness.com.au/>
 This national network of organisations work together to address Australia's growing problem of loneliness. Resources and links to participating organisations are available from this network's website.
- **Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal**
<https://frrr.org.au/>
 The FRRR is an Australian not-for-profit organisation that connects common purposes and funding from government, business, and philanthropy with local needs of rural people and places. Visit the FRRR website to look at previous projects that may provide an idea for your community. Funding applications are open to rural and regional organisations.
- **National Seniors Australia**
<https://nationalseniors.com.au/members/our-community>
 National Seniors Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation that advocates for Australian seniors and provides social connection opportunities for members from local branches and online.

Starting Point: Services that encourage social connection

- **Australian Rural Leadership Foundation**

<https://rural-leaders.org.au/>

The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation provides leadership programs tailored to rural, regional, and remote Australia. Their leadership programs and services support people in all stages of their leadership journey. From community volunteers to primary producers, artists, and managers, they focus on providing a learning experience in line with the diversity found in rural, regional, and remote Australia.



- **Rotary Australia**

<https://www.rotaryfoundationaustralia.org.au/>

Rotary Foundation Australia connects generous corporations, philanthropies and individuals with Rotary projects that make a significant difference for Australian communities. Visit their website for resources and ideas for your local community. Is there a Rotary group in your region?

- **Lions Australia**

<https://lionsclubs.org.au/>

As a "Community Service" organisation, Lions Australia has clubs throughout all Australian states and territories. Each club is aligned with the needs of its local community. Visit their website to find a club near you.

- **Landcare Australia**

<https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>

Landcare is a grassroots movement of individuals, groups, and organisations across Australia with a shared vision to protect, enhance or restore the natural environment in their local community through sustainable land management and conservation activities.

Visit their website to find a local volunteer group or learn how to start a new group in your community.



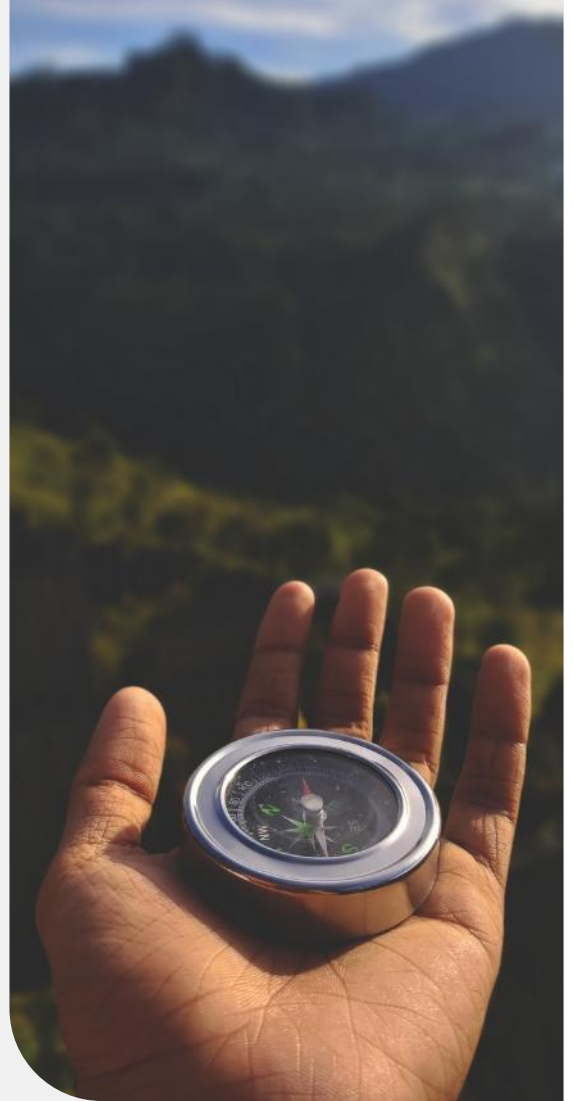
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MODULE 4

Work & Wellbeing

Building opportunities

- Understanding the relationship between work and wellbeing
- Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude
- Job search strategies and identifying opportunities
- Starting Point: Education and employment services and resources



Understanding the relationship between work and wellbeing

Economic or financial wellbeing includes what we earn through work and how we spend it. It is about how we maintain and improve our standard of living. Working is a big part of our lives and it has a significant impact on our self-belief and on our mental and physical health, as well as social connection and wellbeing.



RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

What is work?

Work is usually seen as the **employment** or **business** activities we do to make money – but it is more than that. **Paid work** involves full-time, part-time, casual contract employment or business. Work also involves all of the **unpaid hours** you do such as any volunteering, community service, household chores, and family duties.

Doing work you enjoy and that provides satisfaction can bring **personal meaning as well as a financial income**. Work can build on your confidence and self-esteem; however, any work-related problems can impact on physical and mental health.

Work can be also help someone who is rehabilitating from a physical or mental health condition. In promoting recovery, work can provide an easing back into community participation, personal independence, and a pathway to improving overall quality of life.



Understanding the relationship between work and wellbeing

What work can mean to a person, their wellbeing, and to their community

Here are a few examples. Think about a few people who are in your town and local community. What does work mean for them? What does work mean for you?



Work is one of those things that you need to do to survive.

No one can live without work. It's a significant part of the community and who I am as a business owner.



I'm 14 and just started working Saturday mornings at the local café. My parents said I needed to start getting work experience. I'm in the kitchen but the boss is going to help me start training to be a coffee barista.



I run the family farm. I'm fourth generation. It's my responsibility to continue the family tradition and preserve our respected history.



I'm retired now but volunteer at the school in the student reading program. Glad to know I can help out. I was unsure how I would fit in at first, but I'm really enjoying myself and giving back.



of regional Australians reported they were involved in **voluntary work** (Census 2021)

This was a greater proportion than Australia overall.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 - www.abs.gov.au



Working at the local supermarket gives me a wage but also the chance to chat with my workmates and the customers. It's better than being stuck in an office desk job.

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

Identifying your values, interests, skills abilities, and attitudes allow you to understand what influences your education, career, and life decision making.



Where are you right now?

Whether seeking work (paid or volunteer), currently working, or just thinking about a career change but not sure where to start – first think about who you are, what you are interested in, and what you can offer.



RECOGNISE

Listen, understand and identify what a person is needing.

Questions to ask someone who is seeking work or a change in work.



- 1 What has made you stop and look at your life?
- 2 What do you like to do?
- 3 What don't you like to do?
- 4 What do you want to do?
- 5 What can you offer to an employer?

When you understand who you are, it makes it a lot easier to show others.

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

Work and Values

Values are personal beliefs, viewpoints, attitudes, and your outlook on life. They are created from your family background, the way you were brought up, and your own experiences. **Values influence the decisions you make** in your personal and work life. Your values in regard to work are the beliefs you have about **what is important** in your work and what makes it **meaningful to you**. Your values guide you when investigating potential opportunities in paid or volunteer work.

Once you realise what you value, you will know what motivates you to do your best.

Here are a few work value examples

Challenge

Having problems to solve

Teamwork

Working with others

Routine

Regular tasks and work patterns

Creativity

Thinking up new ideas and ways of doing things

Quiet

Prefer working alone

Money

Good salary is most important

Communication

Enjoy talking with all sorts of people

Respect

You respect the opinion of others and expect the same

How can I help someone recognise their values?



ACTIVITY

What are my values?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Read through the large list of values and identify which ones most relate to you. How do these values influence your work and life decisions?

Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.



Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude



ACTIVITY

What are my values?

1

Go through the list below and identify the values that most relate to you. Then move onto Step 2 (next page).

Values	Definition	Yes	No
Challenge	you enjoy being challenged and having new problems to solve		
Communication	you enjoy talking with all sorts of people		
Confidence	you tackle new tasks without hesitation		
Creativity	you enjoy thinking up new ideas and ways of doing things		
Freedom	you like to do things in your own way		
Friendship	you like to be with people who are friendly and understanding		
Helping others	you like to do things that help other people		
Independence	you like to do things without interference from others		
Leadership	you like to be in charge when you do things		
Learning	you like to have new things to learn		
Money	earning a good salary is important to you		
Organisation	you are an organised and tidy person		
Peace & Quiet	you like working without pressure, setting your own deadlines		
Precision	you like to work with care and concentration		
Pressure	you like to work to meet strict deadlines		
Recognition	you want your efforts to be recognised by others		
Respect	you respect the rights and property of others		
Responsibility	you accept responsibility for your own actions and don't blame others		
Risk-taking	you enjoy taking risks		
Routine	you like to have regular tasks and work patterns		
Security	you want a job that you know will last		
Status	you like to be respected by others because of your position		
Teamwork	you like to work cooperatively and be part of a team		
Variety	you enjoy having lots of different things to do		

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude



ACTIVITY

What are my values?

2

Use your completed list (Step 1) and write down your top 5 values. Discuss your top 5 list with someone or self-reflect. Think of examples where you put these values into action.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

3

Now choose your top 2 values.

1.

2.

4

Why did you choose these two values?

Provide examples or activities of how you'd like to put these values into action in the short and long-term future. *(You don't have to name a specific job or business).*

VALUE 1:

Short term action / activity

Long term action / activity

VALUE 2:

Short term action / activity

Long term action / activity

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

Your Occupational Interests

Interests are what you like to do at work. You can choose a career based on your interests. You know the things that you enjoy doing and what you don't. When thinking about the work that you do or would like to do – have you thought about **what types of work suits you best?**

Which of the following **occupational interests** or **vocational personality types** do you recognise as best describing you? Can be more than one!



Holland, J. (1997). *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Vocational Personalities and Work Environments* (Third Edition) Florida, ISBN 0-911907-27-0.



ACTIVITY

What are my career interests?

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Visit the appendix section to find this activity sheet or visit

<https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip> for a free online test.



Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

Your Skills and Abilities

Your skills are what you have learned to do well. You will have skills that were learnt for work specific situations and other key skills that you can use in almost any kind of work.

Transferable skills are those that can be used in any form of work and will be continually used throughout your life.

Here are a few examples of skills and abilities that are transferable.

Collaboration

You can perform better in teams by understanding how to support and value others, manage difficult interactions, and maintain positive relationships with others.

Communication

Verbal and writing skills.
Share information that is easy to understand as well as effectively listen to and understand others.

Creativity

Have the ability to develop, express and apply ideas in new and unique ways – providing innovative solutions to tackling challenges.

Digital Technology

Using digital technology and tools to find, manage, apply, create, and share information. This skill provides the ability to create documents, use software applications, make secure online purchases or payments, and use social media.

Problem Solving

This skill is your ability to identify, analyse, and propose solutions, make decisions, and learn from experiences. As you learn from experiences you will strengthen your ability to problem solve and be able to quickly **adapt to change**.



ACTIVITY

My transferable skills

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Read through the list of skills that are transferrable across many areas of work. Identify how you have gained each of these skills, and why a potential employer would be interested.

Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.



Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

My Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are very valuable because they are what you can use in any form of work (paid or volunteer).



ACTIVITY

Read through each listed transferable skill and think about where you have used it as well as why you believe an employer would like you to have it. Are there any that you believe you need to focus on improving?

Transferable Skill	Example of where you have demonstrated this	Why would an employer want you to have this transferable skill?
COLLABORATION Successfully interacting and getting along with others such as co-workers, customers, clients, or family. You can perform better in teams by understanding how to support and value others, manage difficult interactions, and maintain positive relationships with others.		
COMMUNICATION Verbal and writing skills. Share information that is easy to understand as well as effectively listen to and understand others.		
CREATIVITY Have the ability to develop, express and apply ideas in new and unique ways – providing innovative solutions to tackling challenges.		

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude

Transferable Skill	Example of where you have demonstrated this	Why would an employer want you to have this skill?
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY Using digital technology and tools to find, manage, apply, create, and share information. This skill provides the ability to create documents, use software applications, make secure online purchases or payments, and use social media.		
LEADERSHIP Verbal and writing skills. Share information that is easy to understand as well as effectively listen to and understand others.		
PROBLEM SOLVING This skill is all about your ability to identify, analyse, and propose solutions, make decisions, and learn from experiences. As you learn from experiences you will strengthen your ability to problem solve and be able to quickly adapt to change .		
ALSO.... think about your ADAPTABILITY Being able to change your actions in managing a situation, being open to new ideas, planning towards goals, and believing in yourself.		

This is not a complete list of all transferable skills.

Have a look at any job ads and read what they are seeking in a potential employee. What transferable skills do you recognise? Use this activity sheet to regularly think about where you have used a transferable skill and why an employer would be keen to know you have it.

Knowing who you are. Your values, interests, skills, abilities, and attitude



Your Attitude – How adaptable are you?

Work attitude is the feeling you have towards the different aspects of the environment you have at work. How you feel about your work often affects your behaviour in the workplace.

Taking control of your personal and work life in a positive way is all about being **adaptable**. Being adaptable is often seen as a transferable skill but it is also an attitude. Adaptability is about being able to change your actions in managing a situation, being open to new ideas, planning towards goals, and believing in yourself.

Being adaptable is necessary when faced with any change in your personal or work life. Think back to the personal values, interests, skills, and abilities that you have identified in yourself. Now read the following four questions and use these as a reminder of what you can do to **continue to grow in both your work and wellbeing**.

- ☐ How aware am I of future challenges or trends?
- ☐ How proactive am I in planning and working towards my goals?
- ☐ What opportunities or further learning can I explore?
- ☐ What can I do to build on my confidence?



CASE STUDY

Meet Tina

Tina needs to learn how to use a mobile phone, a laptop, and access the internet for government and bank services. Digital skills were not something Tina thought she would ever need and is now struggling with what to do. How can she adapt to the situation?

Visit the Appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked. **How could you help?**



Job search strategies and identifying opportunities

The key to successful job searching and finding opportunities is to understand who you are, what you offer, and be adaptable. Remember to consider what type of work suits who you are and what will be a good fit between you and an employer.



SUPPORT

Provide ongoing support as a friend and community peer.

What type of work suits you best?

Seeking a job opportunity, planning a career, or expanding your business can be tough in an ever-changing job market. It's not just the job itself but also the working hours, workplace environment, pay and other opportunities. It is important to think about what sort of environment you work best in and whether you have other commitments or responsibilities that could impact on what working hours and time of day you are available.

Where can you search for and find work opportunities?

- Job websites
- Company and organisation websites
- Employment or labour hire agencies
- Networking (who do you know?)
- Family and friends
- Professional and trade associations
- Events (community or professional)
- Newspaper or online new sites
- Noticeboards
(examples: shop window, community board at library or shopping centre)

Job search strategies and identifying opportunities

Why social connections are important

Think about who you know. Whether it is an informal chat at a community function, meeting someone at a neighbour's barbeque, or saying hello to someone at a business event – every person you meet is someone who can learn about who you are and what you can do. The more people who know what you are interested in and the skills that you have, provides the potential for more work opportunities to become available to you. Remember that you can also help others with similar introductions.

Widening your network of contacts can open doors to new opportunities for business and jobs, as well as provide knowledge about what is happening in the workforce and community. Your networks can keep you informed of new job openings, provide introductions to more people, and also help if you need a referral.

Remember that many jobs and business opportunities do not get advertised – you find out from the business and community members that you know.

Here are a few examples of who you could include in your list of connections and professional network:

- Members of an industry association you belong to (or would like to)
- People you meet at an event, expo, or conference
- Professionals you connect with online via LinkedIn
- Recruiters or business owners that you meet
- Former or new work colleagues
- Volunteers you meet at community events
- Members of local online community groups
- Your family, friends, and neighbours



CASE STUDY

Meet Abraham

Read through Abraham's story.

He is seeking new work opportunities but is not confident in highlighting his skills to employers.

Visit the appendix section to find this case study. Think about the questions asked. **How could you help?**



ACTIVITY

Opportunity mapping

Share this activity with someone or try it yourself.

Think about the job or business opportunities that you are aware of and also interested in. How do you know about them? **Have a look at the activity on the next page or visit the appendix section for a printable sheet.**



Job search strategies and identifying opportunities

Opportunity Mapping

Think about who you know. Every person you meet is someone who can learn about who you are and what you can do. Widening your network of contacts can open doors to new opportunities for business or employment, as well as provide knowledge about what is happening in the workforce and community.



ACTIVITY

Think about the following questions and answer within the provided spaces below:

- What is an area of interest, a job, or business idea that you have?
- Who do you know (or would like to know) that could help provide connections, opportunities, or further information?
- How and where can you connect?

1

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

2

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

3

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

4

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

Job search strategies and identifying opportunities

Opportunity Mapping

5

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

6

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

Extra notes

Here are a few examples of who you could include in your list of connections

- Members of an industry association you belong to (or would like to)
- People you meet at an event, expo, or conference
- Professionals you connect with online via LinkedIn
- Recruiters or business owners that you meet
- Former or new work colleagues
- Volunteers you meet at community events
- Members of local online community groups
- Your family, friends, and neighbours

Remember that many jobs and business opportunities do not get advertised – you find out from the business and community members that you know.

Starting Point: Employment and financial services and resources

Where to start looking



A selection of education and employment support services and resources is provided below. **Remember to look at the services provided via your local council as well as state and federal governments too!**



CONNECT

Assist in learning about available qualified and appropriate support.

▪ Your Career

<https://www.yourcareer.gov.au/>

The Australian Government's home of career information. Search Industries and occupations to find a career that's right for you and what you can do to get there.

▪ MyFuture

<https://myfuture.edu.au/>

This site is a government-funded resource designed for use by all ages. It provides unbiased career information that assists with career planning that includes self-awareness, opportunity awareness, career decision learning, and work transitions.

▪ Training.com.au

<https://www.training.com.au/ed/career-quiz/>

Training.com.au is an online platform dedicated to providing a comprehensive directory of courses and training opportunities in Australia. It also has an online career quiz that is helpful for linking your skills and interests to training and career pathways.



▪ Career Development Association Australia (CDAA)

<https://www.cdaa.org.au/>

The CDAA is a professional community of career development practitioners and partners. Career development resources are available online as well as a "Find a Career Practitioner" search application that can help you connect with a qualified career counsellor in your local area or online.

Starting Point: Education and employment services and resources

- **Australian Rural Leadership Foundation**

<https://rural-leaders.org.au/>

The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation provides leadership programs tailored to rural, regional, and remote Australia. Their leadership programs and services support people in all stages of their leadership journey. From community volunteers to primary producers, artists, and managers, they focus on providing a learning experience in line with the diversity found in rural, regional, and remote Australia.

- **Rural Financial Counselling Service**

<https://rfcsnetwork.com.au/>

Financial stress can be closely linked to business- or work-related impacts on wellbeing. The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides free and independent financial counselling to eligible farmers, fishers, foresters, and related small businesses who are in, or at risk of, financial hardship.

- **Career Harvest**

<https://www.careerharvest.com.au/>

Career Harvest provides occupational advice and career pathway information for anyone seeking a rewarding career in agriculture, forestry, or fisheries.

- **Australian Government – Support for businesses**

<https://business.gov.au/>

Information, grants, services, and support from across government to help your business succeed. A searchable list of business advisers and experts relevant to your business interests and location. You can chat to a business adviser or expert online, over the phone or face-to-face – some mobile advisers can even visit your business.

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Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
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APPENDIX

Case Studies



Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – “How can I help?” for helpful tips to consider.

CASE STUDY

Meet Dave

Independent farmer impacted by recent storms

Dave is a vegetable producer and fourth-generation farmer. The farm property is well known within his town because of its historical value and busy farm gate shop.

At 55, Dave is not married and does not have children. However, he is always seen as a leader to his extended family and friends. He is very independent and will sort out any problems himself.

Recent storms have delivered severe hail damage to Dave's farm and many others across the region. In the weeks since the storm damage, Dave has only been seen in town a couple of times. He has not attended any of his usual Chamber of Commerce and Rotary meetings, as well as missed the past couple of Sunday services at his church. A few days ago, he also did not attend a free rural financial service event held for all storm impacted farmers.



You are a friend as well as a member of Dave's church and Rotary group.

Dave's unusual absence from recent meetings has been noticed by yourself and others. You want to check to make sure he is ok.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Dave? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Dave from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Dave is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Dave to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

The person in this case study is fictitious but the scenario is based on real life examples.

CASE STUDY

Meet Sally

Single mum who moved from the city

As a single mum of 2 teenagers, Sally moved to your rural town from Melbourne. Having experienced an extended COVID lockdown and newly divorced – Sally decided to relocate with her children to a rural community and begin the next chapter in her life.

Since settling into town 12 months ago, Sally has worked as a barista at a popular café. Always friendly with customers, Sally has become well-known and liked by many of the customers. Always with a smile, Sally is open to chat with people, but also guarded about her personal life.

The café is short staffed, and Sally has taken on extra hours to help her employer, as well as build up her finances. The longer shifts have been noted by many grateful customers, however, it has also impacted on her availability to attend school events.



You are the local hairdresser and Sally is one of your regular clients.

At her last appointment Sally broke down in tears during a quiet moment when you were with another customer. You want to check on Sally to make sure she is okay.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Sally? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Sally from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Sally is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Sally to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

The person in this case study is fictitious but the scenario is based on real life examples.



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SQNSW
Innovation Hub
The SQNSW Innovation Hub receives funding from
the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

CASE STUDY

Meet Angelo

Recently widowed after 45 years of marriage

Angelo has lived in his small regional town for over 40 years as the local baker. After arriving from Sydney with his wife and young children, he started his business and soon became well connected within the community. With plans to travel together in retirement, Angelo had to postpone retiring and keep working until he finally sold his business. At 70 years of age, he was able to step away from work. However, not long after retiring, his wife became ill and passed away. He has now been widowed for over a year and his adult children are living overseas.

After his wife's funeral, he instantly became more reclusive and retreated from his social networks. He has been quite agitated whenever someone from town attempts to visit him. He has also recently begun to lock the front gate of his property during the daytime.



You know Angelo as both your previous baker and a past business leader.

You recently bumped into him during one of his rare visits to the post office. He has always been friendly but when you asked how he was, he abruptly replied – “It doesn’t take long to be forgotten by everyone”.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Angelo? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Angelo from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Angelo is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Angelo to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – “How can I help?” for helpful tips to consider.

The person in this case study is fictitious but the scenario is based on real life examples.



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CASE STUDY

Meet Tyson

Young adult carer seeking cultural connection and career guidance

Tyson is 15 and just about to start his senior years at high school. He is the eldest of three brothers in a sole parent family and has recently become the unofficial head of the house due to his mother's chronic illness.

With a strong interest in the environment and biology, Tyson has had one of his teachers encourage him to keep pursuing this. Recently an apprenticeship with a local horticulturist has been offered to him via an industry program within his school. Tyson really wants to take this apprenticeship; however, he is feeling torn about his family responsibilities.

As First Nation, Tyson is also currently feeling disconnected as he does not have any extended family living nearby. He is keen to strengthen his cultural connection but overwhelmed with where to start and who to talk to.



You know Tyson from your local neighbourhood.

During recent short neighbourly chats, you became aware of Tyson's current situation and concerns.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Tyson? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Tyson from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to help Tyson?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Tyson to connect with?

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CASE STUDY

Meet Tina

Needing to understand and use digital technology

Tina is 58 and does not have home internet or a mobile phone. Digital technology has not been something that Tina has had to use in any of her work so far, and not been something that interested her. With many government services changing to an online payment system, Tina has had to start thinking about how to use a computer or mobile phone to access these services.

The recent closure of her local bank in town has added to the immediate need for Tina to begin the process of buying, setting up, and understanding how to use this technology. Money is tight, and Tina is very worried about the cost and her overall usage as justification.

Tina is feeling very anxious about how to get organised with her digital technology.



You are one of Tina's friends.

The recent change to more online services within your town has impacted many members of the community. You realise that Tina is feeling overwhelmed but also that she hasn't reached out for help yet.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Tina? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Tina from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Tina is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Tina to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

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CASE STUDY

Meet Sam

Ex-defence force and a recent town resident

Sam is 45 years old and recently retired from the Australian Defence Force after 20 years in the infantry. He is a new resident in town and just begun working casual hours at the local supermarket.

The reason for moving to town is because Sam's wife started work as a local primary school teacher. Though he is happy for his wife, Sam is worried. Sam is aware that he has stopped his daily exercise routine and is also now constantly fighting the urge to lock himself away from the community.

Applying for packing work at the supermarket took more mental energy than Sam wants to admit. The work has given him something to focus on, but he is not feeling confident in applying for any further work or to seek out other opportunities.



You are a work colleague of Sam's at the supermarket.

Currently working with Sam on a couple of night shifts each week, you have learnt about his previous Army background. It takes effort to engage Sam in conversation and you recognise that though he smiles, he is withdrawn.

How could you help? | What to consider

- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Sam? Signs of stress?
- What barriers could be preventing Sam from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Sam is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Sam to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

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CASE STUDY

Meet Abraham

Farm worker with hidden tech skills

Abraham and his family arrived in Australia 4 years ago on a humanitarian visa. Recently settling in your town, Abraham and his wife are currently employed as farm workers. They have been very appreciative of the support and welcome they have received from their employer.

To financially support his wife and young children, Abraham is keen to explore opportunities that align with his experience and qualifications in Computer Science. Before fleeing their home country, Abraham had worked as a computer programmer and university tutor. He is not sure if he needs to seek further recognition of his skills and qualifications – or if local employers would even be interested in him.

He knows he has experience, skills, and knowledge that would be an asset for local businesses.



You are a neighbour of Abraham and his family.

Abraham's past work experience and skills has only been briefly mentioned to you by his wife. She stated that Abraham is very nervous about contacting employers. You want to help encourage Abraham to explore work opportunities, but also be respectful of his privacy.

How could you help? | What to consider

- What barriers could be preventing Abraham from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your strategy to respectfully support Abraham in seeking work opportunities?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Abraham to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

The person in this case study is fictitious but the scenario is based on real life examples.

CASE STUDY

Meet Kira

Feeling left behind after graduating high school

Kira graduated from high school last year. The past few months have been busy with helping out her parents on the family farm. She has been happy to have the break after finishing a very stressful year 12, however, she has also watched all her friends leave town for university or to travel.

Recently the farm has been impacted by severe weather damage that has added a high level of stress to her home life. Though she loves the farm and her family, Kira is beginning to feel trapped in a situation where she can't leave.

Looking after the grocery shopping for her family is when Kira mainly visits town nowadays. Fondly known by many locals, Kira has been unusually pessimistic when talking about herself and the town in general.



You are a close friend of Kira's family.

Recently you were able to have a quick chat with Kira when you saw each other at the local produce market. Kira avoided eye contact and replied she was ok when you asked how she was going.

How could you help? | What to consider

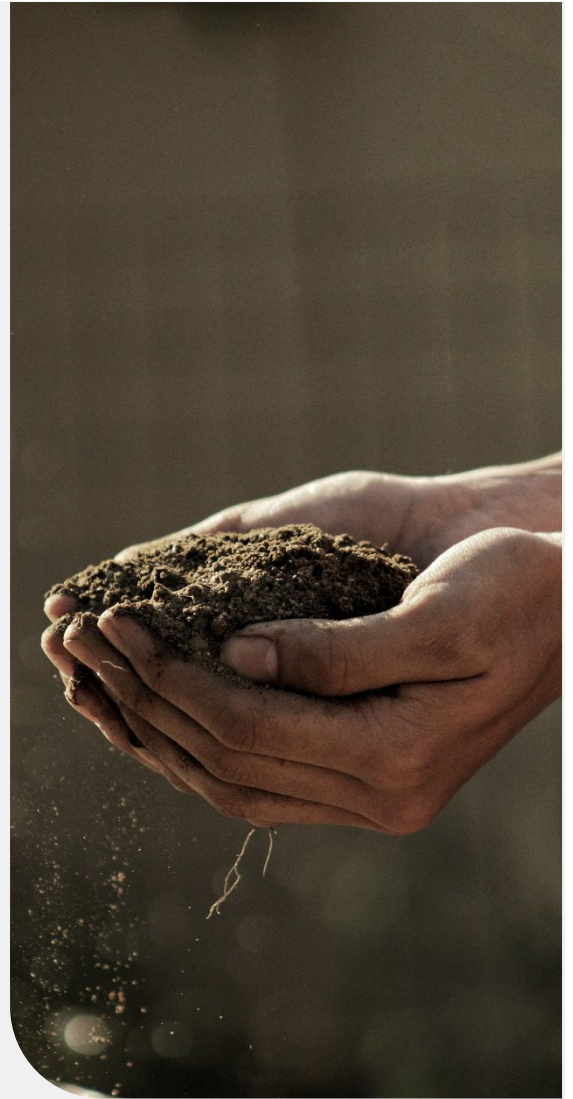
- Do you see any changes in behaviour from Kira? Signs of stress or anxiety?
- What barriers could be preventing Kira from seeking out help from others?
- What would be your initial strategy to find out if Kira is okay and how you can best help?
- What support service(s) or community activities would you encourage Kira to seek out?

Remember to refer to the SQNNSW Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

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APPENDIX

Activity Worksheets



Remember to refer to the SQNNWS Innovation Hub's Rural Wellbeing Toolkit – "How can I help?" for helpful tips to consider.

My Not-To-Do List



ACTIVITY

Begin to create your Not-To-Do List.

1. Write down what you feel you need to complete.
2. What unnecessary things can you remove?

Everything I feel I need to do



What can I remove from my list?

Actions or events that are out of my control

Actions or events that are the responsibility of someone else

Things that don't need to get done

ACTIVITY

What activities are best for me?



Look for activities that you enjoy and that fit your lifestyle. Answering the questions below may help you explain to other people the type of activities that would be best for you.

Do you prefer being active by yourself or with others?

Joining a group or team can help keep you motivated – but some people prefer to exercise alone.

Your response

Do you enjoy being outdoors or do you feel safer indoors?

Do you like being outside or do you avoid heat, cold or other weather conditions? Or are you uncomfortable with being alone outdoors?

Your response

Do you prefer being active in the morning, midday, or evening?

The better you plan your activity times to match your energy levels and your daily schedule, the more likely you are to keep up your healthy activity habits.

Your response

Do you prefer activities that also involve some mental challenge?

Are you interested in team sports or other activities requiring high concentration and focus – or are you wanting to rest your brain and just let your body exercise (such as walking).

Your response

Do you like to compete with others or exercise alone?

Everyone is different. Some people do better if they have someone to compete with - others do better when there's no competition to worry about.

Your response

Who do I know?



ACTIVITY

Think about the people you know in your local town and community. Who do you know from different age groups? What have you learnt from them or provided help to them with? What do you think you could learn from them or provide support to?

Think about the following questions when adding details for each person.

- How do you know them?
- What are they interested in or involved in?
- What interest do you share (or you think you may share)?
- Do you feel comfortable contacting them or do you know someone that can help?



1

Name & details:

2

Name & details:

3

Name & details:

4

Name & details:

ACTIVITY

What are my values?

Values are personal beliefs, viewpoints, attitudes, and your outlook on life. They come from your family background, the way you were brought up and your own experiences. Values influence the decisions you make both in your personal and work life.



ACTIVITY

1

Go through the list below and identify the values that most relate to you. Then move onto Activity 2.

Values	Definition	Yes	No
Challenge	you enjoy being challenged and having new problems to solve		
Communication	you enjoy talking with all sorts of people		
Confidence	you tackle new tasks without hesitation		
Creativity	you enjoy thinking up new ideas and ways of doing things		
Freedom	you like to do things in your own way		
Friendship	you like to be with people who are friendly and understanding		
Helping others	you like to do things that help other people		
Independence	you like to do things without interference from others		
Leadership	you like to be in charge when you do things		
Learning	you like to have new things to learn		
Money	earning a good salary is important to you		
Organisation	you are an organised and tidy person		
Peace & Quiet	you like working without pressure, setting your own deadlines		
Precision	you like to work with care and concentration		
Pressure	you like to work to meet strict deadlines		
Recognition	you want your efforts to be recognised by others		
Respect	you respect the rights and property of others		
Responsibility	you accept responsibility for your own actions and don't blame others		
Risk-taking	you enjoy taking risks		
Routine	you like to have regular tasks and work patterns		
Security	you want a job that you know will last		
Status	you like to be respected by others because of your position		
Teamwork	you like to work cooperatively and be part of a team		
Variety	you enjoy having lots of different things to do		

Identifying my values

2

Use your completed list and write down your top 5 values.
Discuss your top 5 list with someone or self-reflect. Think of examples where you put these values into action.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
----	----	----	----	----

3

Now choose your top 2 values.

1.	2.
----	----

4

Why did you choose these two values?
Provide examples or activities of how you'd like to put these values into action in the short and long-term future.
(You don't have to name a specific job or business).

VALUE 1:

Short term action / activity

Long term action / activity

VALUE 2:

Short term action / activity

Long term action / activity

What interests me?

Read through the large list of interests and identify which ones most relate to you. How do these interests influence your work and life decisions? What jobs do you think would link well with your interests? We also call this your vocational personality.



ACTIVITY

1

Read through each of the career interest areas. Tick each of the statements that describe you most. Don't overthink. Add up your score for each. What are your top 3 career interest areas? Do you agree?

These codes are not to lock you in and define yourself – but instead to help you understand the type of work you would most be interested in and enjoy.

REALISTIC (R)

- ☐ I like to work on cars
- ☐ I like to build things
- ☐ I like to take care of animals
- ☐ I like putting things together or assembling things
- ☐ I like to cook
- ☐ I am a practical person
- ☐ I like working outdoors

TOTAL: _____

INVESTIGATIVE (I)

- ☐ I like to do puzzles
- ☐ I like to do experiments
- ☐ I enjoy science
- ☐ I enjoy figuring out how things work
- ☐ I like to analyse things
- ☐ I like working with numbers or charts
- ☐ I am good at maths

TOTAL: _____

ARTISTIC (A)

- ☐ I am good at working independently
- ☐ I like to read about art and music
- ☐ I enjoy creative writing
- ☐ I am a creative person
- ☐ I like to play instruments or sing
- ☐ I like acting in plays
- ☐ I like to draw

TOTAL: _____

SOCIAL (S)

- ☐ I like to work in teams
- ☐ I like to teach or train people
- ☐ I like to help people solve their problems
- ☐ I am interested in healing people
- ☐ I enjoy learning about other cultures
- ☐ I like to get into discussions about issues
- ☐ I like helping people

TOTAL: _____

What interests me?

ENTERPRISING (E)

- ☐ I am ambitious and set goals for myself
- ☐ I like to try to influence or persuade people
- ☐ I like selling things
- ☐ I am quick to take on new responsibilities
- ☐ I would like to start my own business (or have)
- ☐ I like to lead
- ☐ I like to give speeches or talk publicly

TOTAL: _____

CONVENTIONAL (C)

- ☐ I like to organise things
- ☐ I like to have clear instructions to follow
- ☐ I don't mind working 8 hours a day doing office work
- ☐ I pay attention to details
- ☐ I like to do filing or typing
- ☐ I am good at keeping records of my work
- ☐ I would like to work in an office

TOTAL: _____

YOUR TOP 3 CAREER INTEREST AREAS



Holland Occupational Themes (RIASEC) Theory of founding career choices on personality types

This assessment is based on Dr. John Holland's Theory of Career Choice that is about how people and work environments can be classified into six different groups. Holland, J. L. (1959). A Theory of Vocational Choice. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 6, 35-45

My Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are very valuable because they are what you can use in any form of work (paid or volunteer).



ACTIVITY

Read through each listed transferable skill and think about where you have used it as well as why you believe an employer would like you to have it. Are there any that you believe you need to focus on improving?

Transferable Skill	Example of where you have demonstrated this	Why would an employer want you to have this transferable skill?
<p>COLLABORATION</p> <p>Successfully interacting and getting along with others such as co-workers, customers, clients, or family.</p> <p>You can perform better in teams by understanding how to support and value others, manage difficult interactions, and maintain positive relationships with others.</p>		
<p>COMMUNICATION</p> <p>Verbal and writing skills.</p> <p>Share information that is easy to understand as well as effectively listen to and understand others.</p>		
<p>CREATIVITY</p> <p>Have the ability to develop, express and apply ideas in new and unique ways – providing innovative solutions to tackling challenges.</p>		

My Transferable Skills

Transferable Skill	Example of where you have demonstrated this	Why would an employer want you to have this skill?
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY Using digital technology and tools to find, manage, apply, create, and share information. This skill provides the ability to create documents, use software applications, make secure online purchases or payments, and use social media.		
LEADERSHIP Verbal and writing skills. Share information that is easy to understand as well as effectively listen to and understand others.		
PROBLEM SOLVING This skill is all about your ability to identify, analyse, and propose solutions, make decisions, and learn from experiences. As you learn from experiences you will strengthen your ability to problem solve and be able to quickly adapt to change .		
ALSO.... think about your ADAPTABILITY Being able to change your actions in managing a situation, being open to new ideas, planning towards goals, and believing in yourself.		

This is not a complete list of all transferable skills.

Have a look at any job ads and read what they are seeking in a potential employee. What transferable skills do you recognise? Use this activity sheet to regularly think about where you have used a transferable skill and why an employer would be keen to know you have it.

Opportunity Mapping

Think about who you know. Every person you meet is someone who can learn about who you are and what you can do. Widening your network of contacts can open doors to new opportunities for business or employment, as well as provide knowledge about what is happening in the workforce and community.



ACTIVITY

Think about the following questions and answer within the provided spaces below:

- What is an area of interest, a job, or business idea that you have?
- Who do you know (or would like to know) that could help provide connections, opportunities, or further information?
- How and where can you connect?

1

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

2

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

3

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

4

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

Opportunity mapping

5

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

6

Interest area, job, or business idea:

Who can you (or would like to) connect with?

How can you connect?

Extra notes

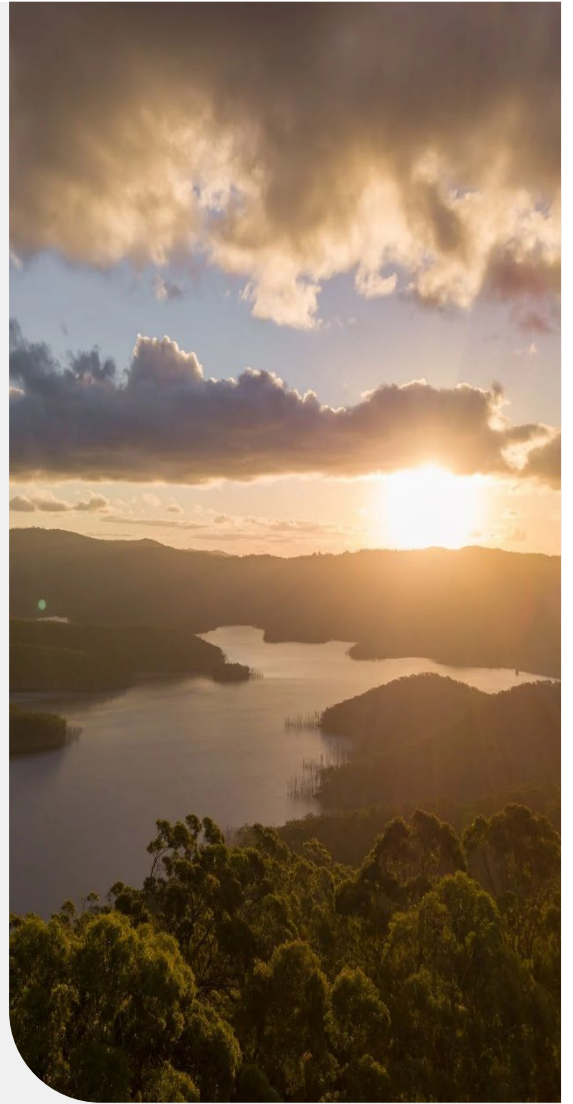
Here are a few examples of who you could include in your list of connections

- Members of an industry association you belong to (or would like to)
- People you meet at an event, expo, or conference
- Professionals you connect with online via LinkedIn
- Recruiters or business owners that you meet
- Former or new work colleagues
- Volunteers you meet at community events
- Members of local online community groups
- Your family, friends, and neighbours

Remember that many jobs and business opportunities do not get advertised – you find out from the business and community members that you know.

APPENDIX

Tip Sheets



Signs of **STRESS**



MENTAL

- WORRY & ANXIETY
- FEEL WORTHLESS
- SOCIAL WITHDRAWAL
- EMOTIONAL / TEARFUL
- IRRITABILITY OR ANGER
- FEELING OVERWHELMED
- PROCRASTINATE



PHYSICAL

- SHORTNESS OF BREATH
- MUSCULAR ACHES
- WEAKENED IMMUNITY
- INSOMNIA / SLEEP ISSUES
- HEART PALPITATIONS
- FREQUENT HEADACHES
- FEELING FATIGUED
- UPSET STOMACH

Stress is a natural physical and mental reaction to life experiences. Everyone expresses stress from time to time. Your body responds to stress by releasing hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates and ready your muscles to respond. This is a natural response.

While stress is usually referred to as a negative experience, not all stress is bad. Some stress can be helpful, motivating us to get a task finished, or spurring us to perform well.

However, if stress is ongoing or the stress response continues over a long period, it can impact negatively on our physical and mental health. The list shows different ways stress can impact on us.

Everyone experiences stress differently.

Triggers for **ANXIETY**



STRESS

When you are under pressure and feeling stressed.



CAFFEINE

Drinking too much caffeine can make you feel jittery and anxious.



THOUGHTS

Negative thoughts and beliefs about yourself.



CONFLICT

Feeling discomfort and dread about facing any conflict.



PERFORMING

Feeling nervous about speaking or performing in public.



ILLNESS

Dealing with an illness, or worried about becoming ill.



SOCIAL

Feeling worried about interacting with other people.



MEDICATION

Side effects from medication may cause negative feelings.

COPING with ANXIETY

Many people with anxiety need psychotherapy or medications to get it under control, however, lifestyle changes and coping strategies also can make a difference.

- Recognise your anxiety triggers.
- Stay connected to your family and friends.
- Don't isolate yourself. Ask for help if you need a helping hand with something.
- Quit smoking and cut back on caffeinated drinks and alcohol.
- Keep physically active, eat healthy foods, and regular sleep.
- Keep a journal of when you feel anxious.
- **Stick to your treatment plan if receiving professional health support.**

DEPRESSION

Symptoms

The **symptoms of depression will vary for each person** and can range from mild to severe. It can be a regular experience that becomes chronic (ongoing without stopping).

- Feelings of sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness.
- Angry outburst, irritability or frustration, even over small matters.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities.
- Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much.
- Changes in appetite or weight.
- Thoughts or attempts of self-harm.

Depression or ongoing anxiety requires treatment

Feeling continually dissatisfied, hopeless, or guilty can become overwhelming for a person and those close to them.

A person's General Practitioner (GP) is a good place to start the conversation about their mental health and be referred to a mental health professional (such as a psychologist).

Anxiety or depression are not signs of a person's weakness or a character flaw. It should not be ignored and does need professional mental health treatment.

CHECKING

IF SOMEONE IS OK

When you're worried about someone, the best thing you can do is observe, listen, and let them know you're there for them. Understanding the reasons why you are concerned is the first step.

OBSERVE

- Are you aware of the reasons why you are concerned for someone?
- Was it a fleeting observation you made or has there been ongoing signs?
- Are there other people who have similar concerns?

HAVE A CHAT

To encourage someone to starting opening up you can ask questions such as "How are you going?" and "You haven't seemed yourself lately. Is there anything you wanted to chat about?".

Remember to keep the mood relaxed and friendly, but also enough to highlight your genuine concern.

Don't try to solve their problem on your own.

Consider any available services or resources that you can encourage them to investigate. Let them know you are here for them.

SOCIAL Connection

Social connection is a personal thing, and it will look different for each person. There are many things you can do, as a friend or family member to help someone 'step out' and connect in a meaningful way with others in their community.

- Spend quality time with family and friends.
- Join a group, club, or class related to an interest or hobby.
- Volunteer with an organisation or local event.
- Express gratitude to others and thank them.
- Get to know the neighbours. A simple hello.
- Substitute a phone call or text message for meeting in person.
- Talk to a doctor or a health professional if feeling lonely or if there is stress occurring.

Meaningful Connections

Social connection is all about the feeling of belonging to a group, family, or community. It may be a simple idea, but its impacts on health are profound.

Meaningful connections with others in your community are those that are significant and involve mutual respect, interests, trust, and a feeling of being valued.

Social isolation and loneliness are among the many factors that can impact on a person's wellbeing.

Think about who you know in your local community that you could gently encourage to stay connected.



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