



## COVID 19 WELLBEING

# tool kit



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### WHAT IS HALT?

■ HALT is a national grass-roots suicide prevention charity. We hold 'Save Your Bacon' brekkies and other events across Australia to remind tradies that they are valued by their community and to raise awareness of mental health. We encourage people to help out their mates if they are struggling and we educate people on how and where they can get support if they need it.

During the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions you can find HALT online where we are offering live online events as well as posting informative and uplifting videos to help tradies that might be struggling during these difficult and challenging times.



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instagram.com/haltaustralia/



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facebook.com/hopeassistancelocaltradies

### WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

■ Mental health is our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act and determines the kinds of choices we make in our lives. When you are mentally healthy you are able to live a fulfilling and purposeful life and you are able to cope with life's inevitable ups and downs.

There are all kinds of things in our lives that can have an impact on our mental health including our relationships, work life, finances, physical health, social connections, alcohol and other drugs and much more.

The stigma around talking about mental health is slowly shifting as more people are being educated and accept that mental health is a part of everybody's lives.

Increasingly people are learning that it is OK to ask for help when we need it, whether that means talking to a friend or reaching out to one of the local or national support services that are available.

### WHAT IF I'M STRUGGLING?

■ If you are struggling and feel you may need some support to get through, it is important to reach out. There is nothing shameful about feeling you are unable to cope.

Amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic and ever-changing circumstances around work, schools and health, many people may be experiencing additional stresses and could be struggling to cope.

Even if you don't feel like there is a family member or friend that you can talk to there are plenty of people out there that can help out or direct you to someone that can. A list of many of these services can be found at the end of this tool kit. If you feel that you need support that can't be found here feel free to get in touch with HALT and we will point you in the right direction.



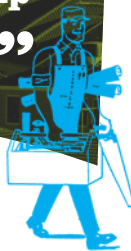
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## WHAT IF SOMEONE I KNOW NEEDS SUPPORT?

■ If you notice that a mate or family member could be struggling, or they come to you for help, don't turn them away. Listen. Try to put yourself in their shoes. Acknowledge them. Be a good mate. Have the tough conversation, even if right now that means having a conversation over the phone or over an online video platform like Zoom.



**“These are tough times for the tradie community but know there are support services available to help get us all through this.”**



## HOW TO TELL IF A MATE IS STRUGGLING

■ People react to life's challenges in different ways. Generally, look out for changes in a mate's behaviour. For example, you may see changes in their personal hygiene, eating habits, sleeping habits, or an increase in alcohol or other drug use. You may have noticed that they have lost interest in their work or their hobbies or just seem generally flat. But whatever you notice don't ignore it. Be proactive and talk to your mate about it.

## WHAT IS A "TOUGH CONVERSATION"?

- Take that first step and have a conversation if you notice that a mate is struggling – you never know, it could save a life.
- It's important to find a private time to chat to and ensure you won't be interrupted. Be sure to listen.
- You don't need to solve your mate's problems, just be there for them and listen to what's going on for them.
- The following is meant to act as a guide only and outlines some of the ways you could engage with your mate about their mental health and get them the help they need.

### STEP 1

*Find a private place or moment to talk where you won't be disturbed. Keep it casual.*



### STEP 2

*Say something to your mate along the lines of: "hey how are you doing?" or "I've noticed you might have been struggling a bit lately...are you doing ok?"*

### STEP 3

*Listen. You don't need to solve your mate's problems. The truth is you probably can't. Just listen and be present for them. Try not to say "she'll be right mate" or "just get over it" as this will likely shut down the conversation and your mate may not get the help they need.*

### STEP 4

*If you think your mate may be having suicidal thoughts ask them. Try to avoid questions like: "you're not thinking about doing something stupid are you?" Don't try to convince the person that suicide is wrong, or tell them how much they would hurt their family if they died. Such judgemental approaches could shut down communication and the opportunity for the person to get support.*

### STEP 5

*Tell your mate that you care and want to help. Ask them how they would like to be supported and if there is anything you can do to help.*

### STEP 6

*If your mate is willing to get help, make them a double appointment with the GP – this will allow plenty of time for the appointment so that they won't feel rushed. At the moment many GPs and clinics are offering online consultations. If you can, be with them while they have the appointment. If you can't due to COVID-19 regulations then make sure you give them a call to check in with them afterward. The GP will be able to get your mate on a mental health care plan where they will have access counselling and other services.*



## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH

■ There are lots of things you can do to take care of our own mental health and what that looks like will be different for everyone. Here are some ideas that might help guide you:



### Stay physically active and eat well...

- Taking care of your physical health will have a positive effect on your mental health.
- Go for a walk or run, do yoga, jump on your skateboard or bike, get out in the garden.
- Do what feels right for you.



### Connect with your mates and family...

- Try to reach out to your mates and hang out online or have chats over the phone.
- Spend quality time with your family.
- Having mates is good for your mental health and wellbeing and while we may be physically needing to distance from one another it doesn't mean we need to be socially isolated.



### Volunteer or give to your community...

- If you have some spare time and you are fit and healthy you could volunteer at a local community organisation.
- Giving to others can have an overwhelmingly positive effect on your mental health and wellbeing.

“Support services, like doctors, psychologists, Beyond Blue and Lifeline are there for you to access, please reach out if you are struggling, don't let the pressure build.”



### Keep your brain active...

- Learn a new skill or explore a new hobby.
- Listen to a podcast about a topic of interest perhaps or read a book you've been meaning to get on to.
- Learning new things can help to boost your self-confidence, provide you with new coping skills and knowledge and even help to give more meaning and purpose in your life.



### Stop and take notice...

- Take the time to slow down, be aware of your surroundings and pay attention to your thoughts and feelings.
- Some pathways that may be helpful for you to connect with yourself and the present moment can be yoga or meditation or taking a walk in nature, or just going outside and feeling the sun or the breeze on your skin.
- Slowing down can help you to learn self-awareness, reduce negative thoughts and maintain a level of calmness.

## WHERE CAN PEOPLE GET HELP?



### LOCAL GP

Most GPs are currently offering online consultations and services during the COVID-19 lockdown. Your GP will write up a mental health care plan and provide you with a referral for appropriate counselling or other mental health services. If you have a mental health care plan, you will be entitled to a Medicare rebate for up to 10 appointments per year. Many therapists and counsellors are also offer online or phone counselling services.

### HELP-LINES

#### Lifeline – Anonymous 24 Hour Crisis Support

Phone: 13 11 14  
Text: (6pm-12am) 0477 13 11 14  
Web: [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

#### Mensline – Anonymous 24 hour Crisis Support for Men

Phone: 1300 789 978  
Web: [mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

#### Suicide Call Back Service – 24 hour Anonymous Phone and Online Counselling

Phone: 1300 659 467  
Web: [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

#### Beyond Blue Corona Virus Mental Wellbeing Support Service – 24 hour counselling

Phone: 1800 512 348  
Web: [coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au](http://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au)

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### HEADSPACE – Connecting Young People and their Carers with Local Support

Phone: 9027 0100  
Web: [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

#### Kids HelpLine – a 24 hour Helpline for 5-25 year olds and their Carers

Phone: 1800 55 1800  
Web: [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

### LGBTQI COMMUNITIES

#### Q-Life - A National Service that aims to Support LGBTQI Communities

Phone: 1800 184 527  
Webchat: [www qlife.org.au/resources/chat](http://www qlife.org.au/resources/chat)

#### Queer Space

Phone: 9663 6733  
Web: [www.queerspace.org.au](http://www.queerspace.org.au)

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

#### Anglicare Victoria

Phone: 1300 111 278  
Web: [anglicare.org.au](http://anglicare.org.au)

#### Rural Financial Counselling Service

Phone: 1800 686 175  
Web: [www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service)

#### National Debt Helpline

Phone: 1800 007 007  
Web: [ndh.org.au](http://ndh.org.au)

#### Salvation Army Financial Assistance

Phone: 13 72 58  
Web: <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/financial-assistance/>

### INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

#### Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service

Phone: 9411 9411  
Web: [www.vaccho.org.au/om/our-membership/members](http://www.vaccho.org.au/om/our-membership/members)

#### Djirra – Indigenous Support Service

Phone: 1800 105 303  
Web: [djirra.org.au](http://djirra.org.au)

#### Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)

Phone: 1800 064 865

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

#### Orange Door

Phone: 1800 015 188  
Web: [orangedoor.vic.gov.au](http://orangedoor.vic.gov.au)

### RELATIONSHIP SERVICES

#### Relationships Victoria

Phone: 1800 050 321  
Web: <https://www.familyrelationships.gov.au>

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY – IF YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE IS IN IMMINENT DANGER, PLEASE CALL 000 OR IF YOU ARE CONCERNED FOR SOMEONE'S SAFETY YOU CAN CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE STATION WHO CAN PERFORM A WELFARE CHECK**

**For information about COVID-19 symptoms, testing and other vital information, please call the DHHS Corona virus hotline 1800 675 398 or visit their website:**

[www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus)

