



Building on your Mental Health Care Plan

Pre-psychology appointment actions for progress

— *Let's get started...* —

MENTAL HEALTH ACTION toolkit



**WHAT CAN YOU DO
BETWEEN ORGANISING
YOUR MHCP AND THE
WAIT TO SEE A
PSYCHOLOGY PROVIDER?**





ACTIONS FOR PROGRESS

10 STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF MENTAL WELLNESS

EDUCATE YOURSELF

1

Take the time to learn more about your specific mental health condition, including symptoms and risks associated with it. By understanding the ins and outs of your health, you're more likely to engage in therapy and recognise triggers; helping you identify when you might need to seek support.



ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

2

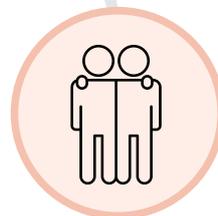
Regular physical activity has evidence-based mental health benefits including improved mood and reduced stress. Engage in activities that you enjoy and that contribute to your overall well-being, such as walking, jogging, swimming or yoga.



SEEK SUPPORT

3

Reach out to trusted friends and family who can provide understanding and empathy during tough times. Share your needs with those around you, letting them know how they can be of help. Building a reliable support network is essential for your long-term health and mental well-being.



PRACTICE RELAXATION

4

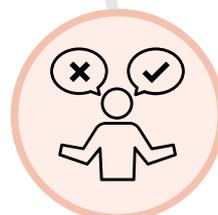
Explore and practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, or guided imagery. These techniques can help reduce anxiety, promote relaxation, and provide a sense of calm during challenging times.



MONITOR YOUR THOUGHTS

5

Pay attention to your thought patterns and be aware of any negative or distressing thoughts. Practice self-compassion and challenge negative thinking by reframing it into more positive and realistic perspectives.





ACTIONS FOR PROGRESS

10 STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF MENTAL WELLNESS

DEVELOP A CRISIS PLAN

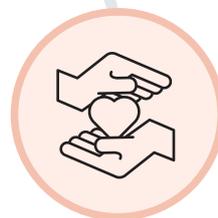
Create a crisis plan that outlines a set of actions and strategies to follow in case of a mental health crisis or if thoughts of suicide were to arise. This plan should include emergency contacts, helpline numbers, and steps to ensure your safety.



6

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Prioritise self-care activities that support your mental well-being. Engage in behaviours that promote relaxation, stress reduction, and emotional stability. This can include exercise, meditation, engaging in fun hobbies, and making an active effort to include moments of joy in your routine.



7

SET PERSONAL GOALS

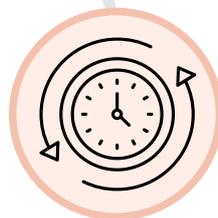
Take the initiative to set your own goals. While your GP or psychologist may have medical goals, it's essential for you to identify your own. These goals can serve as a source of motivation, provide a sense of accomplishment and act as positive reinforcement when achieved.



8

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

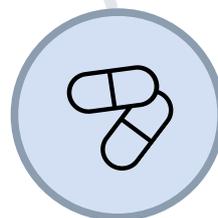
A daily routine that includes regular sleep, exercise, nutritious meals, and engagement in meaningful activity is important for mental well-being. By maintaining consistency and structure in your routine, you're more likely to experience stability and regain a sense of control.



9

MAINTAIN A MEDICATION REGIME

If you have been prescribed medication as part of your mental health treatment plan, ensure that you take it as prescribed and follow the instructions provided by your GP/Psychiatrist. If you're experiencing any side effects or have any concerns, feed it back to your clinician.



10



**LET'S TALK THERAPY...
WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY
AND WHAT ARE SOME
TIPS TO GET YOU
THROUGH THAT FIRST
APPOINTMENT?**





LET'S TALK THERAPY

GET TO KNOW THREE COMMON PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES THAT MAY BE USED TO TREAT DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

here are some common psychological therapies

CBT

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

CBT is a widely recognised and extensively researched therapy for depression and anxiety. It focuses on identifying and challenging negative thought patterns and beliefs that contribute to distressing emotions and behaviours. CBT aims to develop coping strategies and promote healthier thinking and behaviours.

there are many different kinds of therapy

ACT

ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT THERAPY

ACT combines mindfulness and acceptance techniques with behavioural change strategies. It helps individuals to accept their thoughts and feelings rather than trying to suppress or control them. ACT aims to enhance psychological flexibility and encourage individuals to commit to values-driven actions.

...talk it through with your psychology provider

IPT

INTERPERSONAL THERAPY

IPT focuses on addressing interpersonal issues that contribute to depression and anxiety. It aims to improve communication and problem-solving skills, explore and resolve relationship conflicts, and address social role transitions and grief.



FIRST APPOINTMENT TIPS

SOME TIPS TO REDUCE THE OVERWHELM, BUILD CONFIDENCE & GET YOU THROUGH THAT FIRST PSYCHOLOGY APPOINTMENT

- ✓ Prepare in advance and write down any concerns or questions
- ✓ Arrive early so as not to feel rushed or stressed
- ✓ Bring relevant paperwork
- ✓ Try to be as open and honest as possible
- ✓ Be an active participant, take notes and ask questions
- ✓ Try to keep an open mind and trust the process
- ✓ Think about your goals in advance and express them
- ✓ Communicate your preferences if there's a therapeutic approach you are interested in
- ✓ Feel comfortable to take a break if needed
- ✓ Try your best to follow through with recommended exercises and assignments, and if you don't think you can, be upfront
- ✓ Try to view constructive feedback as an opportunity for growth rather than judgement
- ✓ It's ok to set some initial boundaries if it's uncomfortable to discuss a particular topic
- ✓ Understand that the first appointment is a lot of information gathering... about your background and life circumstances. This is an important step in understanding why you may think, feel and behave the way you do. It can take time for you to notice improvement, patience is key.



HOW MIGHT YOU FEEL

IT'S IMPORTANT TO SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND UNDERSTAND YOU MAY EXPERIENCE A VARIETY OF FEELINGS

AFTER YOUR FIRST THERAPY SESSION YOU MAY FEEL...

- Motivated
- Vulnerable
- Supported
- Clarity - with a clear path moving forward
- Exposed
- Exhausted
- Like a weight has been lifted
- Validated

REMEMBER, PROGRESS IS NOT LINEAR



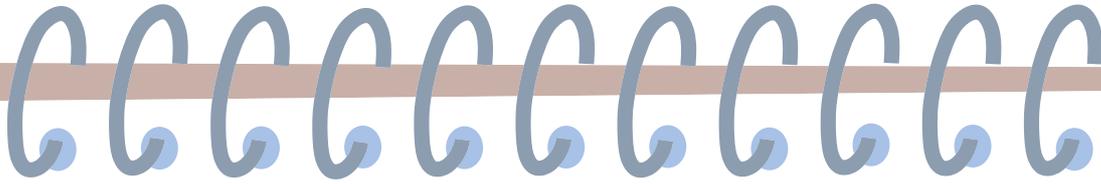
**WHO CAN YOU REACH
OUT TO IF THINGS GO
UNEXPECTEDLY PEAR-
SHAPED AND YOU FIND
YOURSELF IN NEED OF
SUPPORT?**





CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES

24/7 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A BIT OF TROUBLE AND NEED A HAND



LIFELINE 13 11 14

24/7 TELEPHONE CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICE. TALK TO A TRAINED CRISIS SUPPORT WORKER TO ACCESS SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE. (ONLINE COUNSELLING AVAILABLE)

BEYOND BLUE

1300 224 636

24/7 TELEPHONE CRISIS COUNSELLING FOR PEOPLE GOING THROUGH A TOUGH TIME... THERE TO OFFER SUPPORT, ADVICE, AND DIRECTIONAL GUIDANCE. (ONLINE AND EMAIL COUNSELLING AVAILABLE)

SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE

1300 659 467

24/7 TELEPHONE CRISIS SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF SUICIDE, CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE AT RISK, BEREAVED BY SUICIDE OR EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. (ONLINE AND VIDEO COUNSELLING AVAILABLE)



**REMEMBER...
IF THERE'S AN
IMMEDIATE RISK OF
HARM TO YOURSELF OR
OTHERS, PLEASE CALL**

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www.thecloudgp.com.au

Check out our FREE support directory on the website



**MOTIVATED TO GET A
HEAD START AND TURN
THINGS AROUND NOW?
... CHECK OUT OUR NEW
PROGRAM**





First Steps to Overcoming Depression and Anxiety

Head to www.thecloudgp.com.au

CONSULT ONE THE MEDICAL WORKUP



Here's what you'll learn

- The difference between a rough time and Depression and Anxiety so you know when to seek help.
- How to overcome the guilt, blame and overwhelm so you can confidently engage in psychology treatment
- Practical lifestyle improvements through diet, exercise, and sleep hygiene to help you boost energy and feel better
- The role of antidepressant medication in treatment; the pros, the cons, and common myths... so you feel safe knowing you have options.

CONSULT TWO BUILD YOUR SKILLS



Here's what you'll learn

- **Problem Solving Therapy:** psychology to help tackle specific conundrums with logic and clear process so you ditch the overwhelm and gain clarity
- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy:** how to identify and challenge unhelpful thought patterns allowing you to overcome self-doubt and build confidence
- **Mindfulness:** practical exercises to help ground you in the present moment so you can stop the negative spiralling and 'what if' thoughts that keep you up at night.

CONSULT THREE SUPPORT & SUICIDE SAFETY



Here's what you'll learn

- How to build social connection and your sense of community at work and home, so you don't feel alone
- Education and tips for family and friends, encouraging non-judgemental practical mental health support
- Suicide safety through development of a clear and concise action plan. Peace of mind for yourself and loved ones that you have a plan if you were to ever experience thoughts of ending your life

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First Steps to Overcoming Depression and Anxiety

ENROL NOW

Hi there,

So, you're thinking of reaching out for mental health support...

Woohoo! I'm here cheering you on!



Why? Because I get it. I know this is exhausting, and I know how hard you've tried to fix this yourself. I might be biased, but helping my patients get back to **living their best life ever** is the most rewarding part of medicine and being a GP.

If you'd like me to guide you, help you build a strong foundation for long-term mental wellness (like I have for so many of my patients), then jump on our website and sign up to **First Steps to Overcoming Depression and Anxiety**. You don't need a referral or a diagnosis; we are here to simply give you the head start you deserve. We're here to make it easy: **self-directed, online, from the comfort of your living room, and done in a few days**. How easy is that?!



Practical



Evidence-based



Achievable

The key to getting you better is keeping you informed and engaged; that's how we stop the self-doubt and overwhelm from creeping back. The catch? **You have to take action now**; twiddling thumbs never solved life's problems.

I look forward to being a part of this big step you're taking to improve your relationship with your partner, increase productivity at work, be the better parent, and the fun friend who **feels happy and ready to enjoy life**... because that's what it is all about. You can do this, I'm here to guide you through it.

Dr Shiromi

MBBS. FRACGP

To get started, visit our website at www.thecloudgp.com.au