

# let's talk about it: mental health

## worksheet

### Activity 1 – What is mental health?

How would you describe mental health?

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

### Activity 2 – What stops us talking about mental health?

Fill your answers in below:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

## The Mental Health Continuum



## Activity 3 – Sasha’s Story

Fill your answers in below:

1. What was going on for Sasha in the video?

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2. Where might she be sitting on the continuum?

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3. What were some of the strategies she used to manage?

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## Activity 4 – Stress Bucket

What happens when your bucket overflows?

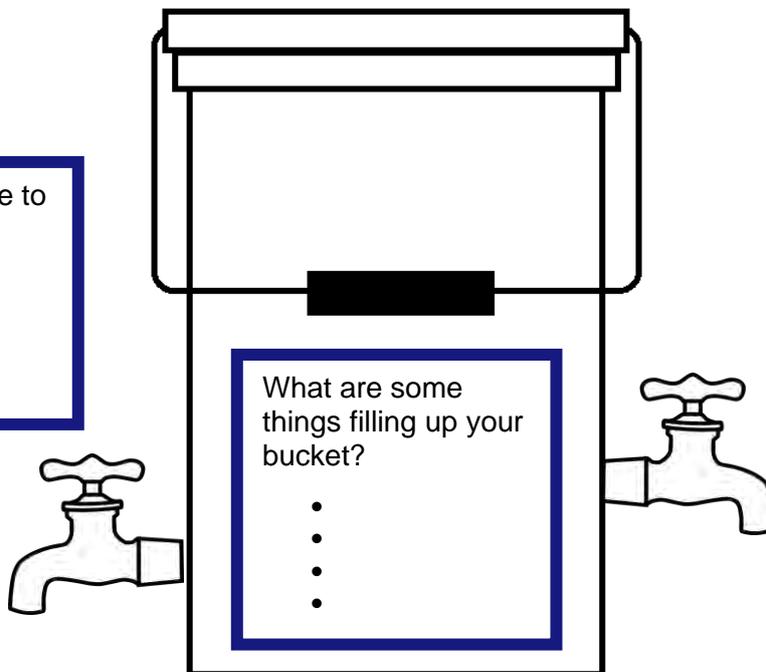
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What taps could you use to let the water out?

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What are some things filling up your bucket?

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## Activity 5 – Adding to your taps

Identify a small step you would like to add as a tap to your stress bucket. Think about when and how often you will use this tap

 <p>Get into life</p>	<p>Complete an act of kindness - compliment someone, offer to help someone or volunteer.</p>	<p>Take 5 minutes to read something fun - a chapter of a book, a comic or manga</p>	<p>Find screen free time each day. For example, when walking, take in the nature around you and leave your phone at home!</p>	<p>Download a mindful colouring sheet from the internet and take some time out just to colour, with no distractions.</p>	<p>Use art, music, photography or journaling to express yourself when going through a tough time.</p>	<p>When going through a tough time, feeling motivated to even do the things we love can feel difficult. Try and find 5minutes each day doing the stuff you love. If you're still enjoying it after 5 minutes, keep going!</p>
 <p>Coping skills for tough times</p>	<p>Develop some positive affirmations. Say them out loud, use them as your smartphone background or stick them up in your room.</p> <p><u>For example:</u> 'This is tough, but so am I', 'This is hard, but I can do hard things', 'All of my feelings are okay – it's okay to be sad, angry or scared' or 'I can't do this....yet!'</p>	<p>Hold onto your stability rocks - routines or ritual that add structure to your life when it feels like things are spinning out of control e.g. doing some form of exercise every morning, or reaching out to a friend daily</p>	<p>Replace unhelpful thoughts that put you down with helpful ones that build you up. If you notice these thoughts popping up, challenge them by asking yourself 'What would I say to my friend if they were thinking this way?'</p>	<p>If you feel anxious, try this activity which uses your senses to keep you grounded in the present moment:</p> <p>5 things you can see around you</p> <p>4 things you can touch around you</p> <p>3 things you can hear around you</p> <p>2 things you can smell around you</p> <p>1 thing you can taste</p>	<p>Write down 3 things you are grateful for or make you happy daily. These can be small things like your morning coffee. Look over this list when you feel down.</p>	<p>Be kind to yourself by completing the following every day: 'I am.... /I have.../I can....' Try and find at least two things for each sentence.</p> <p>Replace thoughts like 'I should be..' with these kinder ones.</p>
 <p>Create Connections</p>	<p>Sharing a funny meme, GIF, cute animal video or you tube video with a friend can help you laugh and feel connected and supported.</p>	<p>Talk with someone you trust about how you really feel. Use an 'emotion wheel' from the internet to help name all your feelings.</p>	<p>Play is important for staying mentally healthy. Devoting time to just having fun can recharge your battery, revitalise your social networks, and reduce stress and anxiety. Try a jigsaw, board game or quiz with a friend or family member.</p>	<p>Call, text or e mail a different person each day, telling them why you're grateful for them.</p>	<p>Finding a safe online community can help you feel connected and meet new people. Jump onto e-headspace for these.</p>	<p>Set some small goals each day with a friend and help keep each other accountable and feel a sense of achievement</p>

 <p>Eat well</p>	<p>Try a nutritious snack each day - carrot sticks, nuts, an apple – whatever you like!</p>	<p>Have a meal with no processed foods.</p>	<p>Plan your breakfast the night before and eat a proper breakfast each day.</p>	<p>Food and mood: we know that some foods are key for a healthy mind. Make a small change each day that is easy to stick to, like a new colourful fruit or vegetable, or a new food high in fibre e.g. wholegrain cereals and bread, beans, and nuts</p>	<p>Find a different way to introduce fresh food into your meals e.g. making a fruit and vegetable smoothie each day</p>	<p>Buy yourself a fun drink bottle to encourage yourself to drink water. Good hydration supports clear thinking and concentration</p>
 <p>Stay active</p>	<p>Take your dog for a walk. If you already do this, add another block each day.</p>	<p>Dance every day! Create a new dance routine to your favourite song.</p>	<p>Choose one exercise - like squats or push ups and increase your repetitions by 5 each day.</p>	<p>Find a good body scan or body stretch activity online and stretch your body. This can help to release any tension that builds up from stress.</p>	<p>Exercising during the day helps make you tired at night. Take a break from study to stay active whether it's kicking a ball, doing a yoga class or just going for a walk. Smart small and make sure it's something you enjoy!</p>	<p>Build a new playlist and listen to a new song each day.</p>
 <p>Sleep well</p>	<p>It's best to try and keep your bed for sleep. Working, watching TV or being online in bed can cause your brain to associate bed with being alert and awake.</p>	<p>Aim to get to bed and wake up around the same time each day, including on the weekend. This helps your body to get into a routine. Set an alarm to help you do this!</p>	<p>Go to bed 30 minutes earlier for a week and try and increase this by 5 minutes each week.</p>	<p>Turn off your devices at least 1 hour before bedtime. Screen lights can stop your brain producing the sleep chemical melatonin, which is important for sleep quality.</p>	<p>If you find it hard to wind down before bed, try a mindfulness activity from the app, Smiling Mind</p>	<p>Avoid caffeine at least 6 hours before you go to bed, and avoid napping during the day if you can</p>
 <p>Find ways to keep calm</p>	<p>Focused Breathing in through the nose and out through your mouth (as if breathing through a straw). Place a hand over your diaphragm - you should feel your hand move if you're doing it right. Focus on breathing in slowly for 4 seconds, holding your breath for 2 seconds and breathing out slowly for 6 seconds for blocks of 10 – 20.</p>	<p>Write down your thoughts Thoughts come into our heads for many reasons. By accepting they're not facts, thoughts lose their power to upset us. Try writing them down and reading them back as if written by someone else. This may help you to see that your thoughts aren't you, just thoughts.</p>	<p>Focus on what you can control. When you feel overwhelmed, make a list of the things <u>you can't</u> control and a list of all the things <u>you can</u> control e.g. your actions, how you think about a situation, how much effort you put in, asking for help and how you manage your feelings.</p>	<p>Worry Time. Write down your worries and save them for a specific 'worry time' for you to address, so that they don't spill into your day. The Niggle Wellbeing App (Kids Helpline) is great for this!</p>	<p>Progressive muscle relaxation. This involves tensing and relaxing specific groups of muscles from your feet all the way to your head, while focussing on your feelings of tension and relaxation.</p>	<p>Reduce your social media exposure. It can be helpful to take a break from the 24-hour news cycle, especially during COVID-19. Charge your phone outside of your bedroom and give yourself some screen free time daily.</p>
 <p>Cut back on alcohol and other drugs</p>	<p>If an urge comes up around alcohol/ other drugs, try to sit with it. Recognise: "OK, this urge usually happens before I drink or use drugs, but this time I'm not going to act on it." This becomes easier with practice.</p>	<p>Reduce or cut out alcohol and other drugs by organising things for early the next morning.</p>	<p>If using alcohol and other drugs is impacting your life, try beginning with a short break (try a few days, then a week, then a month). This will help you reset and see the impact it's having.</p>	<p>Try to limit how much caffeine you have, including coffee, energy drinks and soft drinks, especially after lunchtime on any given day.</p>		

## 7 tips for a healthy headspace



For more information go to: [headspace.org.au/tips/](https://headspace.org.au/tips/)

## national supports



[headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)

