

Men and Mental Wellbeing

Good physical and mental health is more than the absence of sickness in our lives.

Wellness is about adopting life-style practices that improve our chances of not getting sick or when illness occurs we are in a better place to manage it.

Mental health issues are more difficult to acknowledge and address than physical ailments but the symptoms and the impact on our lives are just as real.

Mental illness is often accompanied by stigma and misunderstanding which results in a person feeling more isolated and alone.



Just as we can take life style precautions to safeguard our physical health, we can also take steps to promote mental wellbeing.

Here are a few tips to think about:

- Develop and maintain strong supportive relationships – wife, partner, children and friends. We are social animals and the people in our lives are our most important asset. In order to look after that asset requires time and care. When we do the returns are many.
- Find someone you can talk to and who will listen. This someone maybe within the family or outside such as, your partner, a mate, work college or a professional. We all need someone to talk to when life gets tough. Two heads are better than one. For many men this might be the greatest challenge. In tough times we tend to isolate ourselves and try to go it alone.

- Broaden your interests and do things you enjoy. There is more to life than work. So much of a man's identity and sense of worth is link to his work and what he contributes to his family and society. Engaging in creative activities, hobbies and sport provide a greater dimension to our lives. Playfulness and humour are important contributors to health.
- There is an intimate link between physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. When is not functioning the rest of the system is affected. By taking care of our bodies, we take care of our minds. Think about your lifestyle. Eating well, exercising regularly, drinking in moderation, not smoking are proven strategies for health.



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- Look to develop new skills. We are all bombarded by pressures and stressors of one sort of another. Our management of these will be assisted by equipping ourselves with techniques such as stress and anger management and assertive and communication skills.
- Listen to what you are telling yourself. So often when under pressure our thinking turns negative – ruminating on the same thing over and over, blaming other, self pity, hopelessness, and revenge and certainly not wanting to take responsibility for our lives. These are important warning signs to take notice of.
- Be aware of what is happening within you and around you. Act sooner than later while

recognising that there are some things in our lives we can change and some things we can't.

- Develop the capacity to ask for help and not go it alone. Again this represents another challenge for men. Many of the messages we receive as we grow into manhood are about standing on your feet and solving your own problems. Some things we can manage alone, but there are some things we can't. Knowing the difference is another important skill.



The only service of its kind, Mensline Australia provides confidential telephone counselling, information and referral to specifically enable men to enhance their relationships and manage the challenges associated with disruptions to their family life or primary relationships.

Managed through Crisis Support Services Inc, Mensline Australia is a national service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the cost of a local call.

Mensline Australia was established in September 2001 as part of the Commonwealth Government's Men and Family Relationships initiative. Since then, the service has been overwhelmed by calls from men around the country wanting to talk about their relationships.

1300 78 99 78
www.menslineaus.org.au

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Line**
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crisis support services

Mensline Australia
is managed by Crisis Support Services