

Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

LETSS STAY GROUNDED TOGETHER

ISSUE 3

New
DOUBLE ISSUE

FLIP FOR CARERS
EDITION

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Delicious
(yet simple)
recipes from our
very own Peer
Workers...

SUSHI FOR ANXIETY?

Acceptance and
Commitment Therapy
tips and tricks! Find
out how picturing
sushi can be helpful for
anxiety...

LETSS REVIEW

Read reviews
from our Peer
Workers about
podcasts, apps,
books, and more!

Links to
Wellbeing



A message from LETSS

Brrrrr... it has certainly been a chilly winter, but we're now feeling the warmer spring weather! Whilst the seasons are reliably changing around us, some of us are still feeling stuck in the unreliable experience that has been 2020.

For many, this uncertainty has been a challenge. It's been hard to get back to the activities that help keep us well and its been tough to manage the rollercoaster ride of ambiguity. This experience has some of us feeling flat or feel more on edge at times. We get it! That is why the LETSS team have done some brainstorming and come up with some things that can help keep us all well and feel grounded during this time.

As always, we thank you for your support and we hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

(Extra) Warmly,

-The LETSS team



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Links to Wellbeing is a consortium commissioned by the Adelaide PHN and run in partnership between Neami National, Mind Australia, Skylight Mental Health and Uniting Care Wesley Bowden.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

(PMR)

If you have not been recommended this before – you are in for (hopefully) a delightful surprise! PMR aims to support you to relax the body by actually tensing your muscles, to begin with.

With PMR you aim to work through each part of the body, starting with tensing your fists...

- Tense your fists for 5 seconds, release them, and do this two more times
- Next, move on to tensing your arms by folding your arms at the elbow, towards your shoulders, then release them back down, repeat two more times
- Next, tense your shoulders up to your ears, repeat twice again
- Next, move on to clenching your feet, repeat this twice again
- Next, tense your leg muscles, repeat this two more times
- Finish with three big breathes, in and out

By the end of this you are hopefully feeling more relaxed, if not you can go through this process over and over until you feel more relaxed. This is a great activity that you can complete anywhere – at your work, out with friends, lying in bed late at night (a key location for myself, personally). Try it out and see how you feel... we are hoping you will be feeling more relaxed.



Unwanted thoughts/feelings?

Coping Strategies to get you through

At some point or another, we have all thought if only I could get rid of this condition then I would finally be able to lead a meaningful life! Or, if only, I could stop feeling this way then I would be able to feel happy. Unfortunately, life can be tricky and not as straight forward as we would like. So sometimes experiencing those unwanted thoughts and feelings can be inevitable. However, perhaps there is a way to feel happy and lead a meaningful life, whilst still experiencing unwanted thoughts and feelings.

However perhaps there is a way to feel happy and lead a meaningful life whilst still experiencing unwanted thoughts and feelings...

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a mindfulness-based cognitive behavioural therapy.

According to Russ Harris, world-renowned trainer of ACT, the goal of ACT is to commit to living a rich and meaningful life, whilst also accepting that sometimes those unwanted thoughts and feelings are inevitable.

Put simply, it is okay to feel and acknowledge that you are experiencing things you may not want to.

However, rather than fighting those thoughts and feelings, and the pain that comes with it, you can make peace with what you are experiencing by using acceptance strategies. In this article, we will specifically discuss using ACT metaphors as an acceptance strategy.

ACT metaphors can be a fun, engaging, and practical tool to use when you are experiencing unwanted thoughts and feelings. Of course, it is not a quick fix solution (it takes practice and patience) and it may not help everyone. However, there are many people who do find ACT metaphors a useful tool to feel better. Let's discuss a couple.

The Sushi Train

The Sushi Train is often a fun and visually appealing ACT metaphor to use for people who struggle with anxiety or depressive symptoms which can cause intrusive thoughts.

To begin with, imagine you have arrived at a Sushi Train restaurant. The waiter comes, greets you, leads you and sits you down at a table. Beside you, is a conveyor belt that goes round and round, carrying an array of bright and colourful plates.

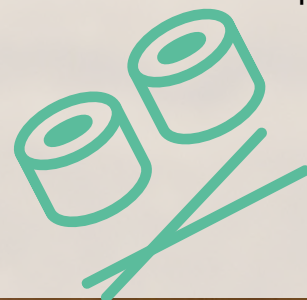
However, upon a much closer look, you notice that this is no ordinary Sushi Train restaurant because instead of sushi on the plates, the plates carry different 'thoughts' or 'feelings'

As you watch the plates go by you can see they carry negative thoughts. For instance, some thoughts include things such as "I am not good enough", "I will never stop feeling sad", and "there is no one to help me".

As you sit in the chair, you watch the plates go by and you are well-aware that they exist. However, rather than picking up the plate you simply watch the plate carrying the negative thought pass you by. Whilst acknowledging that the thought is there, you are actively choosing not to pick it up and believe/think this is true.

Although you can acknowledge a certain thought exists, it doesn't mean that you have to accept the thought as being true.

This metaphor is often useful to practice to remember that although you can acknowledge that a certain thought exists, it doesn't mean that you have to accept that the thought as being true. Rather, sit tight and let that thought come and then pass on.



The Struggle Switch

The struggle switch metaphor is commonly used to help people who experience anxiety and often used to demonstrate how our other thoughts and feelings can amplify our anxiety.

To begin, imagine that you are feeling anxious. As you do, a switch is turned ON in your brain that makes you want to struggle against your anxiety in order to get rid of it. This struggle may include having thoughts such as "I don't like feeling like this!", "How did I get rid of this now!", "Why am I feeling like this when everything is going well!".

Now, as well as having anxiety, we are also now experiencing added anxiety about having anxiety. We might even begin to get angry or frustrated about our anxiety, or perhaps even sadness and guilt. We notice the anxiety gets more intense the more we struggle against it and the struggling is causing us to feel even worse!

However, now imagine what would happen if when you started feeling anxious instead of struggling against that anxiety, you switch that struggle switch to OFF. By turning that struggle switch OFF it means that we have decided we are not going to invest any more of our time, resources, and energy in struggling against feeling anxious because it makes it worse.

So although we might still be feeling anxious, we are going to invest our time and energy instead into doing the things we enjoy and give our life meaning such as spending time with friends and family, listening to music, or being around nature. The anxiety might get more intense or less intense as the time passes, however it's now not being impacted or leading to further unwanted thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Experiencing life without experiencing anxiety may not always be possible. However, when our anxiety does play up and we turn that struggle switch to OFF, it can be much easier to cope with the anxiety rather than when the struggle switch is ON.

By now, hopefully you would be able to detect the common trends in each of these metaphors. Each of these ACT metaphors aims to teach people to experience, accept and cope with the unwanted thoughts, feelings and emotions that are often inevitable. However, through acceptance, it is possible to experience something unwanted, and yet still be able to focus on having a meaningful and happy life.

If you would like to learn more about Acceptance and Commitment therapy you can visit the website here: www.actmindfully.com.au.



Challenging Anxious Thoughts Worksheet

When we are experiencing distressing thoughts, it can cause us to feel anxious. However, just because we are feeling anxious and experiencing a distressing thought, it does not always mean that it reflects the reality of the situation and it does not always mean the thought is true. That is why it can be helpful to reflect and find evidence for and against the thought, to gain a more balanced and realistic perspective. To do so, it can be helpful to answer the following questions

What is the anxious thought that I am having?

What has triggered this anxious thought?

How often have I had an anxious thought like this one?



When I have had anxious thought like this one in the past, has it ever become a reality?

What is the evidence for this thought?

What is the evidence against this thought?

What would I tell a friend if they were having the same thought?

What would a friend tell me if I told them I was having this thought?

What could I do to cope or handle the situation if it did happen?

LETSS Garden

I love gardening, but I especially love my indoor plants! I find looking after them so therapeutic – the weekly watering, keeping their glossy leaves clean, and feeding them at the change of season... For some, caring for an indoor plant might seem daunting but it does not need to be! Here is my top 5 indoor plant list...

Mother-in-Law's Tongue (Sanseveria) – This plant is so hardy it practically thrives on neglect! Water only when the dirt is completely dry and they will grow in most indoor positions.



Peace Lily – The Peace Lily comes with its own way of telling you when it needs watering – it droops! This one has pretty white flowers too, but be careful to put it out of reach of your cat as they are toxic to cats.

Devil's Ivy (Pothos) - Comes in many colours and thrives in low light, which makes it perfect for darker rooms. Very low maintenance watering needs and vigorous growth!



Monstera Deliciosa – My favourite of all indoor plants! Similar to the Mother-in-Law's tongue, this plant can go for long periods without water and has fast growth of huge, beautiful, glossy green leaves. For best results, they are happy in filtered sun through a window.

Heart-leaf Philodendron – These gorgeous trailing plants are so hardy. A weekly water and a little sun will see your heart leaves growing like crazy!



-Nicole, Peer Worker

Nutrition Tips:

Reduce Stress, Improve Mood & Stay Well

Science shows us that eating a healthy, balanced diet and giving our bodies nutritious food improves our overall wellbeing. Did you know it can also help to reduce our stress levels? Here are some nourishing tips that can help us reduce stress, improve mood and stay well!

DRINKING WATER AND HERBAL TEAS

- Increases energy levels
- Balances hormones that cause stress
- Improves sleep
- Flushes toxins out of the body
- Helps your body function better during the day
- The soothing effects of teas (like green tea or chamomile tea) help promote unwinding
- Some herbal teas also contain antioxidants which help to relieve symptoms of stress

PROBIOTICS

- Found in foods like pickles, yoghurt and kombucha
- Live and thrive in your gut
- Play an active role in improving wellbeing
- Support the function of other vitamins and minerals which work to improve mood and reduce stress

WHOLEGRAINS

- Found in foods like popcorn, brown rice and oats
- Help to balance the hormone serotonin (Serotonin then helps to improve mood and regulate emotions)

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS

- Found in foods like avocado, lean fish, nuts
- Reduce the production of stress hormones
- Support the body to manage symptoms of stress

VITAMIN C

- Found in foods like oranges, capsicum, tomato
- Boosts the immune system to protect the body from illness
- Vitamin C also plays a role in balancing cortisol (a stress hormone).

ANTIOXIDANTS

- Found in foods like dark chocolate and berries
- Reduce the hormone cortisol (associated with stress)
- Help balance the 'fight-or-flight' response (the body's natural reaction to stress)

LETSS REVIEW

Welcome to LETSS review!
Reviews of books, apps, podcasts, and more!

Eleanor Oliphant is a book driven by themes, not plot. The storyline is simple: Eleanor lives a simple life of regimented order. During a rare outing, Eleanor sees a band perform live and develops a crush on the lead singer. From that moment, Eleanor devotes every waking moment trying to transform herself so that the singer will return her love. The driving force of the novel, however, is the unlikely friendship Eleanor develops with Raymond; the kind, gentle and unassuming IT guy. Little by little, inch by inch, Eleanor is awakened to the splendour of human connection, which she had never even realised she missed:

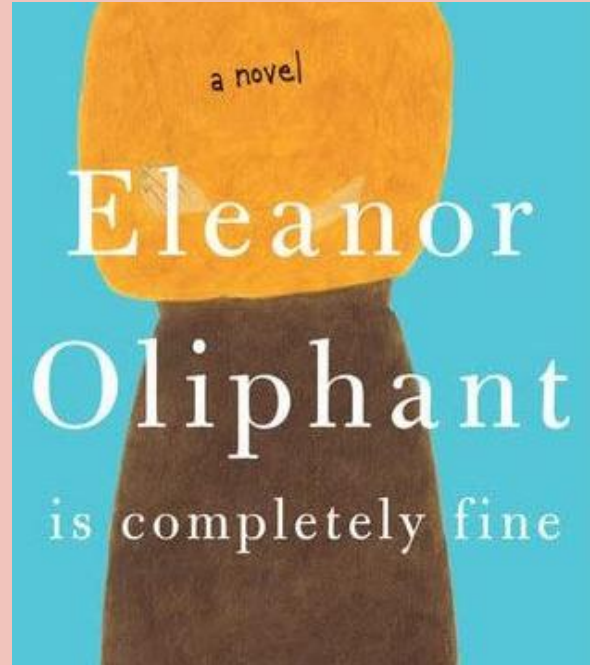
"I felt the heat where his hand had been; it was only a moment, but it left a warm imprint, almost as though it might be visible. A human hand was exactly the right weight, exactly the right temperature for touching another person, I realized." (p.146)

At times, Eleanor may come across as pretentious; she is extremely judgemental of her peers:

"I have often noticed that people who routinely wear sportswear are the least likely sort to participate in athletic activity." (p.78)

And at other times, downright rude (though hilarious to read):

"No thank you," I said. "I don't want to accept a drink from you, because then I would be obliged to purchase one for you in return, and I'm afraid I'm simply not interested in spending two drinks' worth of time with you." (p. 150)



I must confess, as I read more about the character of Eleanor, I found myself trying to better understand her through the lens of various mental health diagnoses. At first, I thought perhaps Eleanor's social isolation was caused by social anxiety. However, it soon became apparent that this was not the case; Eleanor appeared calm and self-possessed around other people (and she certainly wasn't afraid to speak her mind!). Next, I considered that perhaps Eleanor's various social quirks were a reflection of her being on the autism spectrum. Soon enough, I realised that Eleanor's eccentricities are not the result of underlying mental illness. As author Gail Honeyman explains,

"Eleanor isn't anywhere on the spectrum. She is the product of nurture, not nature; traumatic events in her childhood have shaped her"

Jenna, Peer Worker

APPS



Title: Calm
Cost: Free trial mode
Helps with: Sleep and meditation

I've been having trouble sleeping and have been using this app to calm my mind and it's working! Well, mostly. Sometimes it doesn't put me to sleep but I still get to listen to some nice music. Sam Smith and Moby feature too.

Amanda, Peer Worker



Title: Yoga
Cost: Free trial mode
Helps with: Relaxation and exercise

I discovered this app after having some difficulty unwinding following a shift or at the end of the day. I love that it has a huge assortment of yoga - from both a beginners to immediate level. It's amazing how even a 10-15 minute session helps me feel more relaxed and optimistic afterwards!

Ana, Peer Worker

PODCASTS



Kind World is a heart-warming/feel-good kinda podcast, each episode follows a single act of kindness and explores how this has impacted someone's life. The episodes are engaging, short and easy to follow.

Olga, Peer Worker



Positive Data Log

A positive data log can help you to rebalance your thinking. Write down all the things that are positive in your life at the moment. When you are thinking negatively or unhelpfully, it can be helpful to read through your positive data log to help to balance your thoughts.

Date	Positive Data
10 th May	<i>I spoke with my brother on the phone today. I ate a healthy salad for lunch.</i>



Stress Kit

Life can often be stressful – there's not too much we can do to avoid that. What we can do is be prepared for when these stressful periods inevitably come. It's handy to have a 'stress kit' ready to go – this kit can include having people you can turn to for a chat, activities you can do and places you can go to help manage these difficult periods.

When I'm stressed here are.....

People I can talk to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Places I can go:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Activities I can do:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Services I can contact:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Self-Care Calendar

Fill in this blank calendar with self-care ideas. You deserve to look after yourself every day of the month!

*Check out Issue 1 for a list of self-care ideas!



Links to
Wellbeing

SUN	MON	TUE

WED	THU	FRI	SAT

Alma's Crumbed Parmesan Chicken

Ingredients:

- 2 sliced chicken breasts
- ½ cup natural yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Pepper to taste
- Garlic powder
- Grated parmesan
- Breadcrumbs

Method:

1. Place the chicken, yoghurt, mustard, lemon juice and pepper into a bowl and cover thoroughly
 2. In another bowl, mix the parmesan, garlic, and breadcrumbs
 3. Roll the coated chicken pieces in the crumb mixture
 4. Bake at 180c for half an hour, or until golden brown
- Serve with salad and enjoy!

Kate's Roasted Vegetable Frittata Muffins

Ingredients:

3 cups assorted roasted vegetables (pumpkin, mushroom, capsicum and eggplant)

1 cup of rice or almond milk

1 cup of quinoa, cooked, half white and half black

6 large organic eggs

¼ cup parsley, chopped

Salt and ground black pepper to taste

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 170 C (325 to 350F)
2. Whisk together the eggs and milk
3. Combine the roasted vegetables with the basil and parsley. Pour the milk mixture into the vegetables and season with salt and pepper.
4. Stir the mixture until it is well blended. Pour the mixture into muffin pans and bake in the hot oven for about 30 minutes.

LETSS Keep Connected!

LETSS is a free non-crisis mental health support service for people in the Adelaide Metropolitan Region.

Call us or webchat

7 days a week from 5:00pm - 11.30pm

Information | Navigation | Support



1800 013 755



@LetssAus



/LETSSAus



letss.org.au

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Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

LETSS APPRECIATE YOU

CARERS EDITION

New

DOUBLE ISSUE

FLIP FOR MORE !

LOVING KINDNESS SCRIPT

**Check out our Loving
Kindness Meditation
Script**

MINDFUL COLOURING

**Relax and unwind
with our mindful
colouring sheets**

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

**Are you taking
time to take care of
yourself?**

**Links to
Wellbeing**

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**ARE YOU TAKING TIME TO
LOOK AFTER YOURSELF TOO?** **5**



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A thank you from the LETSS team

There are many wonderful things about being a carer. For one, knowing that you have helped someone and are also helping to improve their quality of life. We can all appreciate how amazing carers are and will continue to be!

Although everyone knows how incredible carers are, it is often easy to forget that caring is no easy feat. It can be challenging and incredibly physically and emotionally taxing. Carers will often ignore their own needs and wellbeing, and 63.6% of carers in SA, report that they live with a disability too (Carers SA Factsheet - Unpaid Carers in South Australia 2015).

That is why we wanted to dedicate an issue to all the wonderful carers out there. We hope you enjoy this booklet and get a chance to take a moment to yourself, read, and relax (and if reading feels like too much, why not indulge in some of our relaxing colouring pages).

Finally, from LETSS, we wanted to say thank you for all that you do and WE APPRECIATE YOU!

Warmly,

The LETSS Team



Thank you

A photograph of a young man with dark hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt over a white t-shirt, smiling as he tends to a green plant in a garden. The background is slightly blurred, showing other plants and a wooden structure.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Are you surrounded by people who need your help? Do you feel unable to say "no", or experience guilt for even thinking about taking time out just for you? I wonder if you ever tell little white lies, in order to make others feel better... maybe to help them believe you're not as tired as you really are. These can all be signs that you care for others at the expense of caring for yourself.

Something people often tell me when they call LETSS is that they are supporting their friend, family member, or work colleague through a hard time – and are trying to hide the fact that they are having a hard time of their own. "I don't really think about me", they say. "I don't have needs".

These beautiful, generous, caring people feel bad for even imagining having needs of their own. "It wouldn't be fair of me to leave her alone", one caller whispered, when I suggested they indulge themselves with a nap, or warm bath - just for half an hour. "I always try to help...but I don't think anyone would do it for me" another caller cried softly.

Why does this happen? How does taking just 30 minutes to engage in a self-care activity become considered a wrong thing to do? What happened to that healthy place in-between caring for someone else, and completely sacrificing yourself?

Caring for others does not mean that you need to make their pain your own pain; or that you have to fix their problems. In between 'selfish' and 'selfless' is a workable (and much more comfortable) place called self-full. A self-full action is one of self-care, AKA: The self-initiated practice of taking deliberate action to preserve or improve one's own health and wellbeing.

When we think about all the areas of our health and wellbeing that require care, it can be useful to use the 'SPECCS' model. SPECCS stands for "Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, Cultural, and Spiritual". These are all areas of our lives that require attention if we are to stay connected, fit, calm, motivated, stimulated, grounded and growing. Caring for ourselves in all these areas is an important, healthy behaviour which allows us to replenish our resources rather than letting them drain away - which would leave us burnt out.

Taking time to quietly read a book, nap, go for a walk, or watch a movie that you like - is as healthy and important - as brushing your teeth. It does not make you self-absorbed, selfish, or uncaring at all.

In fact, caring for yourself is also part of caring for others. How can that be? Well, studies have shown that maintaining self-care and wellbeing makes us more productive; strengthens our immune system (making us more resistant to illness); increases our self-esteem, and promotes self-awareness.

And the side-effect of all those things is that they make us better helpers, who relate better to others and have a better capacity for compassion! It might be difficult to find time to do any self-care, at first. You might need to set boundaries upon your time; which can be challenging if someone is accustomed to you always being available.

If you find that the person you are caring for is unable or unwilling to respect your new boundaries, and contests your self-care (such as by sulking or laying down a guilt trip), you may wish to seek support around ways to navigate your communications with them. Whilst many carers think seeing a counsellor is for the person who has a mental illness, seeing a counsellor can also be helpful for the carer. A counsellor can help you unpack some of the challenges you are facing and explore ways to better communicate with their loved one and setting new boundaries (if needed).

And, if because of the sheer number of tasks you have, you just genuinely do not get a minute to yourself, you may need to seek some support in the form of another person to take on your caring role while you do the things you need to do for your wellbeing. If you are unsure where to go to for help, LETSS may be a good place to start!

At a bare minimum, you need time to eat, wash, sleep, and maintain your daily activities.

At a bare minimum, you need time to eat, wash, sleep, and maintain your daily activities. You should also get at least some time for non-work, non-essential things such as reading, exercise, art, or whatever you enjoy. Self-care looks different for different people.

If you are stuck for ideas about what you might do for some self-care - or it's been that long since you self-cared that you've forgotten what you like - there are heaps of ideas online. There was also a very cool list of "50 Self Care Activities To Do At Home" in our first "LETSS Peer Workers Guide to Staying Well" which came out earlier this year - if you haven't received a copy and would like to, just let us know!

-Peer worker, Alma



Supporting Your Loved Ones

Supporting a loved one with a mental illness can be difficult and often at times we may feel at loss at what to do. This article will discuss a few simple ways of what you can do to support someone you care for with a mental illness.

For you as as carer

You may think your loved one is being unenthusiastic, negative and trying to bring the mood down.

For your loved one

Your loved one may no longer find pleasure in everyday things. They may feel dulled and flat.

Tips on how to support

Validate your loved one's feelings on how difficult it must be to feel that way. Remind them that they may find enjoyment in activities once again, if they do their best to keep active.

Your loved one is not talking to you and you may feel rejected and hurt and like you cannot get through to them.

Your loved one may find it difficult to communicate, because their feelings are confusing and painful and they lack energy.

Let your loved one know that you are available to talk when they are ready. Make use of silence in the conversation because it may take them a little while to feel confident to speak.

For you as a carer

Your loved one is not getting out of bed, and you wonder why they are being so lazy and self-indulgent.



For your loved one

Your loved one feels as though their energy has disappeared and one of the hardest tasks may be getting out of bed.



Tips on how to support

Support them to find a meaningful activity/task that may help them get out of bed. Some days the thought of having a nice hot chocolate might be enough to encourage someone out of bed. Other days it may take a bit more creative thinking to help them find something to motivate them.

Your loved one has a tendency to be focused on themselves and their problems and you may see this as selfish.



Your loved one may feel hopeless, guilty and unworthy. Your loved one might be grieving over the life they have lost (or never had).



Help your loved one find a practical step to take towards living by their values and increasing their sense of hope e.g. going for a walk, or joining a group.



For you as as carer

You may be wondering what your loved one has to be depressed about, their life seems fine.

For your loved one

Your loved one is experiencing a medical condition that has caused them to feel this way. They need support to get through this, just like someone would need support to manage their diabetes.

Tips on how to support

Encourage your loved one to speak to a doctor about how they are feeling. Offer to drive them to the appointments and encourage them to write down what they might say in preparation for the appointment.

If you feel like you need some support or information, please call LETSS on 1800 013 755. Our peer workers have experience with a mental health condition as a consumer or a carer and we are here to help you through your journey.





LETSS LISTEN

@LETSS:
Lived Experience
Telephone
Support Service

LETSS now has a Spotify account! Connect with us on Spotify and enjoy a range of playlists curated by our very own peer workers, created to listen to based on how you're feeling. Here's a sneak peek of some of our playlists!



**LETSS
FEEL
GOOD**



**MENTAL
HEALTH
PODCASTS**



**LETSS
FOCUS**



**LETSS
FEEL CALM**

LETSS SHOUT OUT

A big part of LETSS is helping our callers navigate around the mental health system and find valuable supports. That is why we wanted to dedicate a section to some of the wonderful (and free) services that we refer our callers to which they might find helpful.

MULTIPLE SOLUTIONS

Multiple Solutions assists people with injury, illness, or disability to find and keep a job. Multiple Solutions believe that all people who experience a disadvantage should have the quality of life that they aspire to, they offer support to both participants and employers with no cost to either.

1800 053 154
multiplesolutions@ms.asn.au
multiplesolutions.com.au



GENDER CONNECT

COUNTRY SA PEER SUPPORT PHONE SERVICE

Do you live in Country SA and have questions about being or supporting those who identify as transgender, gender diverse or gender questioning? SHINE SA's Gender Connect Country SA is a FREE service that provides confidential support from peer workers with lived experience of gender diversity.

(08) 7099 5390
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
(closed on public holidays)

AFTER HOURS WALK IN

Links to Wellbeing now has an after-hours walk-in service at Noarlunga GP Plus. You can visit this service from 5pm–11pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Monday. You can meet with friendly and non-judgmental staff who can provide immediate support.

Links to Wellbeing

1800 013 755

08 8326 3591
linkstowellbeing.org.au

Self Compassion Journal



Try keeping a daily self-compassion journal for one week (or longer if you like.) In your journal, write down anything that you felt bad about, anything you judged yourself for, or any difficult experience that caused you pain. (For instance, perhaps you got angry at a car that pulled in front of you or perhaps you were short with your friend.) For each event, use mindfulness, a sense of common humanity, and kindness to process the event in a more self-compassionate way.

Mindfulness: This will mainly involve bringing awareness to the painful emotions that arose due to your self-judgment or difficult circumstances. Write about how you felt: sad, ashamed, frightened, stressed, and so on. As you write, try to be accepting and nonjudgmental of your experience, not belittling it nor making it overly dramatic. (For example, "I was frustrated because my friend was saying something I didn't want to hear. I got angry, over-reacted, and felt foolish afterwards.")

Common Humanity: Write down the ways in which your experience was connected to the larger human experience. This might include acknowledging that being human means being imperfect, and that all people have these sorts of painful experiences. ("Everyone over-reacts sometimes, it's only human.") You might also want to think about the various causes and conditions underlying the painful event. ("My frustration was exacerbated by the fact that I was already feeling bad about something. If I had been feeling better, my reaction probably would have been different.")

Self-Kindness: Write yourself some kind, understanding, words of comfort. Let yourself know that you care about yourself, adopting a gentle, reassuring tone. (It's okay. You messed up but it wasn't the end of the world. I understand how frustrated you were and you just lost it. Maybe you can try being extra patient and generous to all of your friends this week...")



Practising the three components of self-compassion with this writing exercise will help organize your thoughts and emotions while helping to encode them in your memory. If you keep a journal regularly, your self-compassion practise will become even stronger and translate more easily into daily life.

Adapted from self-compassion.org/exercise-6-self-compassion-journal/ by Kristen Neff

Situation	Mindfulness	Common Humanity	Self-kindness
Example <i>I saw an old lady struggling with bags and didn't stop to help her as I was running late.</i>	<i>I felt sad that I didn't help her. I also felt stressed that I was running late.</i>	<i>I'm sure that everyone doesn't do things they want to at times. Everyone gets caught up with being late at times.</i>	<i>Its ok, no one is perfect and helps others out all the time. Next time I see someone struggling, I will help them.</i>



Create your own wheat-bag

- Grab two pieces of non-flammable fabric and cut them to the same size.
- Place your two pieces of fabric face to face, with the wrong side of the fabric facing outwards and sew it together 1cm in from the sides – hand sew or machine sew is fine. Leave a hole of about 2cm on one of the sides.
- Turn it right side out and fill the bag roughly three-quarters full with rice or wheat.
- Hand sew the bag closed and you're done!

*Remember to heat the bag in the microwave with a cup of water in there too – this prevents the wheat/rice from drying out and becoming a fire risk.

Mandala



Mandalas are a symbol used in several spiritual traditions as an aid for mindfulness and meditation. They are said to represent wholeness and the infinite world.

Colour us in



Designs by Peer Worker Nicole

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Carers Word Search

A carers word search for all the wonderful carers out there!

L X G N O R T S M O W J T T B
G E N E R O U S D Y W S T W F
O L I Z J M J X V A L U E D J
C O M P A S S I O N A T E I R
T M S V G X T S E L F L E S S
D T E K J N E L B A P A C U E
Q N L L K T I R Y O F H Z V O
M A F L X B G E Q X G G I D N
W T C U V F N O B K Z T D J U
I R A F Y Y I E I L R H R G Z
C O R F Q N R U L O L S I H W
Y P E L K T A C P C Y E N J L
X M U E O B C P A N P G W W I
Y I J S U Y U E D Q C T O T I
Q N O A M S T I K H M I M O W

Caring
Selfless
Compassionate
Strong
Capable
Self-full

Valued
Important
Wellbeing
Supportive
Generous
Self-care

Loving Kindness Mindful Meditation Script

Loving Kindness Meditation is a mindfulness-based meditation. Practising Loving Kindness Meditation (LKM) helps us cultivate the seeds of compassion, kindness, acceptance and love, for ourselves and all others. By directing caring feelings towards oneself and others the aim of LKM is to develop a state of unconditional kindness to all, including ourselves, as well as an appreciation of our oneness with others recognising that all beings including ourselves have the desire for happiness and peace.

Bring to mind a person or a pet for whom you are happy to see and have deep feelings of love.

Imagine or sense this person or pet, noticing the feelings you have for them arise in your body.

It may be a smile that spreads across your face it may be a warmth in your body.

Whatever it is, allow it to be felt.

Let go of this person or pet and continue to keep in awareness the feelings that have arisen.

Bring to mind now, and see if you can offer loving kindness to yourself, by letting these words become your words:-

May I be safe

May I be happy

May I be healthy

May I live in peace, no matter what I am given

May my heart be filled with love and kindness.

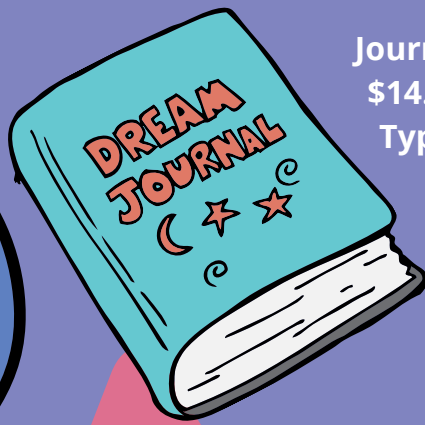
**Notice the feelings and sensations that arise and let them be.
Now try offering loving kindness to someone who supports you.**

Adapted from:

Jon Kabat-Zinn (n.d), Mindfulness meditation, CD series 3, retrieved from mindfulnesshamilton.ca/meditation-scripts
Sharpio, S., & Carlson, L. (2009). Mindfulness and Self-Care for CliniciansThe Art and Science of Mindfulness: Integrating Mindfulness into Psychology and the Helping Professions: American Psychological



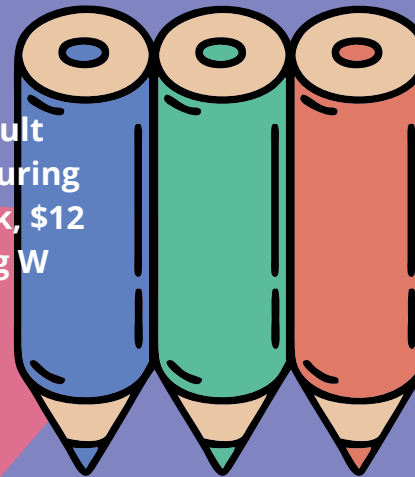
Facemask,
\$3.99
Priceline



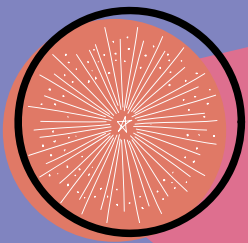
Journal,
\$14.99
Typo



Essential
Oil, \$19.99
Dusk



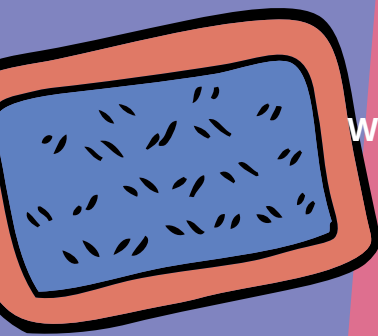
Adult
colouring
book, \$12
Big W



Bathbomb,
\$7.95
Lush

Self-care under \$20

*Relax and unwind without
breaking the bank*



Wheatbag,
\$11
Big W



Scented
Candle,
\$12
Kmart



Tea, \$12.00
T2



Mini
Massager,
\$12.95
JB Hi-Fi



Hot
chocolate,
\$7.50
Coles