

Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

LETSS KEEP CALM TOGETHER

IN THIS ISSUE ...

Myths about
Borderline
Personality
Disorder

Your very own
Mindfulness
Journal

Tips for
managing
stress

**Links to
Wellbeing**



A MESSAGE FROM LETSS



Welcome to your second issue of The Peer Workers Guide to Staying Well!

Wow - what a strange and unprecedented few months we have all had! From the LETSS team, we would like to commend our callers for how they have coped during these challenging times and we would like to say a HUGE thank you for everyone who has reached out for support during this period.

Despite the hurdles, we felt that it was a time when people really came together to support one another and help keep themselves and others safe. We have heard many wonderful stories of people reaching out to check in and provide support to one another, whether that be a family member, a friend, or neighbour. We feel that this whole situation has demonstrated how united we are as a whole. Whatever gets thrown our way we can do it, as long as we stick together!

That is why in this issue we have thought that we would continue to focus on the importance of maintaining meaningful connections whilst also taking a moment to just to breathe and reflect. So LETSS keep calm together!

Warmly,

The LETSS Team

THE PEER WORKERS GUIDE TO STAYING WELL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

04. Jenna's Tomato Soup

**06. Myths about
Borderline Personality
Disorder**

08. Self-care Word
Search

**09. Stress Management
Tips**

10. Liz's Pancakes

12. STOPP Strategy

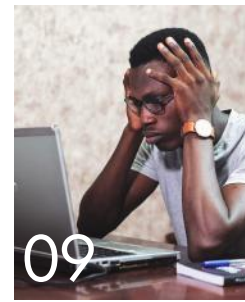
13. Relationship Building
Worksheet

**16. Informal
Mindfulness Script**

18. Feeling in Control
Worksheet

**19. Stress: The
Relationship Between
your Brain and Body
Worksheet**

21. Mindfulness Journal



Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

1800 013 755

Webchat: letss.org.au

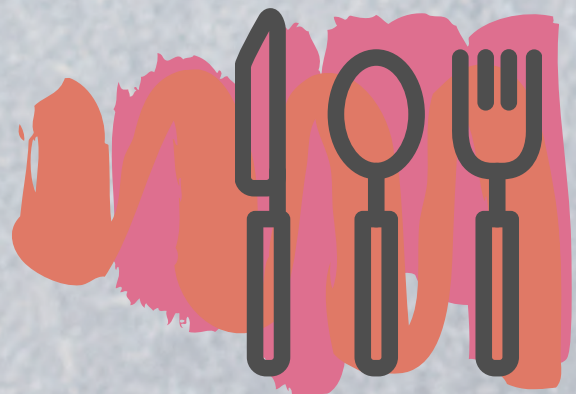
Jenna's 2 & 5 Tomato Soup

Soups are a great way to get your 2 & 5 in a day!

They're freezer-friendly, AND they're extremely versatile.

NOTES:

This recipe was given to me by Mum when I moved out of home (she clearly had concerns that I'd otherwise have the stereotypical student diet of two-minute noodles)! Packed to the brim with veggies, and full of flavour (the secret ingredient: a dash of curry powder), this is comfort food at its best. Not a fan of broccoli? No worries! Swap it for a cup of veggies of your choice. Enjoy! :)



INGREDIENTS:

- 4 X 420g tins of tomato soup (approx. 1600g)
- 3 middle bacon rashers, cubed
- 3 onions, diced
- 3 Tomatoes
- 1/2 Broccoli
- 2-3 teaspoons of curry powder
- 1/4 Cauliflower
- 3 Zucchini

METHOD:

1. Empty the tins of tomato soup into a large saucepan. Fill two of the empty cans with fresh water and add to the mix.

2. Dice up the tomatoes and add to saucepan. Add 2-3 teaspoons of curry powder. Gently heat the soup.

3. Meanwhile, fry up the bacon and onion until browned.

4. Chop the remaining veggies into bite-sized pieces. Add to the soup, along with the bacon mix.

5. Simmer until all the veggies are cooked (nice and soft).

6. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with bread if desired.



MYTHS ABOUT BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER



"Treating BPD can often be difficult given the stigma"

Myth 1: People who have BPD are attention-seeking and manipulative

People who have BPD are often viewed as being manipulative or attention-seeking. However, this is often not the case or intention.

When someone is intentionally manipulative, the person deliberately seeks to exploit someone else to gain what they want. However, a person with BPD tends to experience highly overwhelming emotions, which often results in their actions being lead by these intense emotions.

Therefore, whilst their actions may seem calculated or attention-seeking, this behaviour exhibited by people with BPD is often fuelled by their intense emotions, not by an intentional rationale.

Myth 2: BPD is a rare mental health condition that only affects women

In fact, BPD is estimated to affect 1-4% of the population! Whilst that may not seem like a large percentage, that is more than schizophrenia and bipolar disorder combined! Although BPD is more commonly diagnosed in females compared to males, men can also be diagnosed with BPD. In fact, around 25% of diagnoses have been found to be in males.

Myth 3: BPD is caused by childhood trauma

Although childhood trauma has been suggested to be one of the possible causes of BPD, it is important to acknowledge that this is not always the case. Research has shown that aside from childhood trauma, there are various factors that may cause someone to develop or be at risk of developing BPD. Such factors include biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. In some cases, someone with BPD may have experienced a combination of these factors.

Myth 4: BPD is the same as bipolar disorder

Whilst BPD and bipolar disorder share some similarities, they are two different conditions. Having bipolar disorder can cause a person to experience episodic periods in which they may have extreme mood swings or periods of depression. These shifts often include altering levels of energy and activity. A person with BPD usually experiences chronic suicidality and self-harming behaviours. Although they are different conditions, some people do experience both BPD and bipolar disorder.

People who have BPD are often viewed as being manipulative or attention-seeking. However, this is often not the case or intention.

Myth 5: Once diagnosed, BPD is untreatable

Treating BPD can often be difficult given the stigma and discrimination that people with BPD sometimes face when trying to seek appropriate support and treatment. However, there are treatment options and a range of psychological therapies that have been shown to be effective for treating BPD. One of the most popular and effective therapies for people with BPD is Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). DBT is used to help people who have difficulty regulating emotions and also experience chronic suicidality.

At LETSS, we recognise that people with BPD often face discrimination and stigma because of their mental health condition. At LETSS, we are here to listen, support, and understand people with BPD, and their carers. If you would like some afterhours support please call LETSS at 1800 013 755 or webchat at www.letss.org.au.



Self-Care Word Search

Got a spare half hour? Feel welcome to complete this word search based on self-care.

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

SELF
COMPASSION
EXERCISE
BALANCE
JOURNALLING
KINDNESS
PERSPECTIVE
REFLECTION
RELAXING
SUPPORT
ACCEPTANCE
HOBBIES
SPIRITUALITY
COMMITMENT
MINDFULNESS
CONNECTION
BOUNDARIES
ACTIVITIES
CREATIVITY



Stress Management Tips

Talk to someone

When you are feeling stressed and overwhelmed it's important to reach out and talk to someone. Although it might not necessary resolve the issue, talking about stressors has been shown to release hormones in the body that help to reduce stress.



Get back to basics

When we are feeling stressed it's easy to forget about our basic needs. Take a moment to fulfill those needs such as making time to eat nutritious meals, exercising, sleeping, and other forms of self-care.



Keep perspective

When we are feeling stressed, our problems may often seem more frightening or bigger than they actually are. Take a deep breath and try look at things from a bigger perspective. Will this matter in a week? A month? In a few years?



Do something nice for yourself

Despite the stressors in our life personal time is important. Set some time to relax and do something you enjoy. This can be even something small like enjoying a cup of coffee in the sun or calling up a friend for a chat.



Make a plan

Having too many tasks to do can quickly lead to stress and feeling overwhelmed. Try to break it into manageable chunks, and completing the quicker tasks first. Some people find it helpful to write a list and check it off as they go.



Liz's Pancakes

NOTES:

I'm not very confident in the kitchen, however, my Mum shared her pancake recipe with me and I actually like making them. A really easy option for a filling and comforting meal.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups of self raising flour
- 1/2 cup of caster sugar
- 1/2 tsp of bicarb soda
- 1 1/2 cups of milk
- 1 tsp of white vinegar



METHOD:

1. Sift flour, sugar and bicarb soda into a large bowl.
2. Make a well in the middle of the dry mix.
3. Add eggs, milk and vinegar to well.
4. Combine and stir until smooth.
5. Leave to stand in the fridge for 30 mins before cooking.





STOPP Strategy

STOPP is a strategy commonly used to help people cope with intense emotions in the heat of the moment. The STOPP strategy incorporates aspects of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, and also mindfulness. The great thing about the STOPP strategy is that it is discrete and can be used anywhere.

S

Stop!

- Just pause and stop what you are doing

T

Take a deep breath

- Take moment to notice your breathing as you breathe in and out

O

Observe

- What thoughts are you currently having?
- What has caught your attention?
- What are you reacting to?

P

Pull back

- What is the bigger picture in this situation?
- Am I mistaking my thought for opinion rather than fact?
- What might be a more reasonable explanation?
- What would a trusted friend or family member say to me?

P

Practice what works

- What is the best thing to do right now for this situation?
- What can I do that will be appropriate and effective?
- What is a course of action I can do that fits in with my values?



Relationship Building Worksheet

Sometimes, in our relationships whether it be a family member, friend, or partner, we get so caught up in our own life and problems that we forget to appreciate those close to us! That is why sometimes it's great to take a few minutes to learn more about the ones you love and remind yourself of some of the reasons why you appreciate and love them! Fill in the boxes below.

I am grateful for them because...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My favourite memories with this person include...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

They show their love towards me by...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The qualities that I like about them include...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Relationship Building Worksheet

**We would like to
travel together to:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Some of our goals for
the future include:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Our strengths
together are...**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Some things that we
could work on are...**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Relationship Building Worksheet

**The things we have in
common include...**

1.

2.

3.

**The places we enjoy
going together
include...**

1.

2.

3.

**We have a good time
together when we...**

1.

2.

3.

**The things that make
them happy include...**

1.

2.

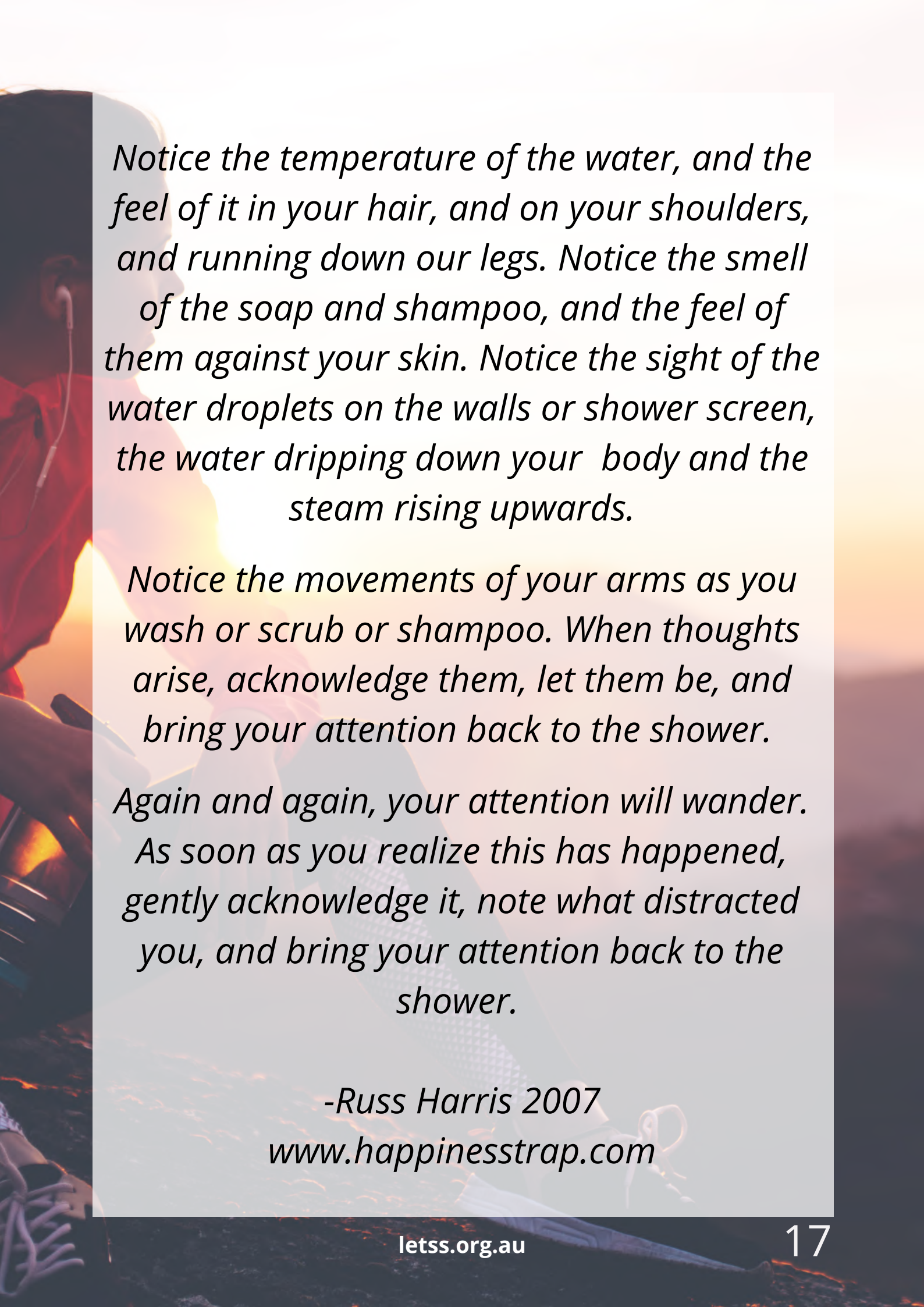
3.

Informal Mindfulness Exercise

Life can get busy - we understand that! Often we feel as if we don't have time to sit down and practice our mindfulness skills. Why not incorporate it into your daily routine instead? This mindfulness script from Russ Harris helps to make being mindful a normal part of your day - we can all make time for that!

Pick an activity that constitutes part of your daily morning routine, such as brushing your teeth, shaving, or having a shower. When you do it, totally focus on what you are doing: the body movements, the taste, the touch, the smell, the sight, the sound etc.

For example, when you're in the shower, notice the sounds of the water as it sprays out of the nozzle, and as it hits your body as it gurgles down the hole.

A person is shown in profile, showering. Water is spraying from a showerhead onto their hair. The background is a soft, warm glow, likely from a window or light fixture. The person is wearing a red top. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Notice the temperature of the water, and the feel of it in your hair, and on your shoulders, and running down our legs. Notice the smell of the soap and shampoo, and the feel of them against your skin. Notice the sight of the water droplets on the walls or shower screen, the water dripping down your body and the steam rising upwards.

Notice the movements of your arms as you wash or scrub or shampoo. When thoughts arise, acknowledge them, let them be, and bring your attention back to the shower.

Again and again, your attention will wander. As soon as you realize this has happened, gently acknowledge it, note what distracted you, and bring your attention back to the shower.

*-Russ Harris 2007
www.happinesstrap.com*



Feeling in Control

It can be overwhelming when there is a lot going on in the world. During these times it can be helpful to focus on what we can control in our day to day lives. Writing down what is in and out of our control can help create a clear divide in what we can influence.

Outside of my control...
(e.g., the weather, what's on TV, other people's actions)

Within my control...
(e.g., increasing
resilience, looking after
my well being, eating
nutritious meals)



Stress: The Relationship Between Your Brain and Body

Your body is made up many different systems. Each time you are feeling stressed or anxious, this can activate these systems. Pro-longed periods of stress can cause these systems to experience the negative effects.

Some of the symptoms of anxiety/stress can include:

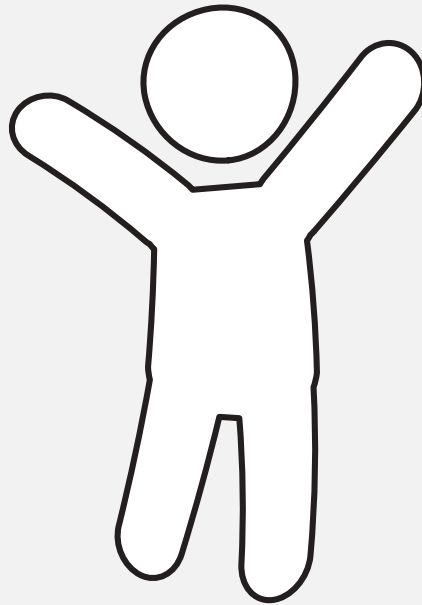
- Difficulty sleeping
- Racing thoughts
- Sore or tense muscles (especially in back and jaw)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Nausea, diarrhoea, or vomiting
- Trembling or feeling weak, light-headed, or unsteady
- Lump in the throat
- Tense muscles
- Sweating
- Headaches
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Difficulty focusing

Identifying the symptoms of our anxiety can help us understand our anxiety better. By knowing these signs, it can help allow us to recognise when we are starting to feel anxious and intervene before it escalates any further. In the worksheet on the following page, have a go at identifying some of the symptoms you typically experience in your body when you are feeling anxious.



When I am feeling anxious I think...

**When I am feeling anxious I feel it in...
(circle the areas of your body which feels the anxiety)**



Next time I realise I am starting to feel anxious, what is one thing I can try to stop it from escalating?

Mindfulness Journal

Mindfulness is about being in the present moment. Thoughts and feelings will come and go, but its about calmly acknowledging and letting them float by without judgement. By practicing mindfulness we can tune into how we are feeling and what we are sensing in the present moment, rather than worrying or thinking about the past or present.

One simple yet effective way of practicing mindfulness is by journalling. Not only is it an creative outlet for how we are feeling, but it also helps us check in with ourselves and reflect.

That is why the LETSS team have put together this Mindfulness Journal to help prompt and guide you. We hope you enjoy journalling and practicing mindfulness along the way!

Monday

DATE _____

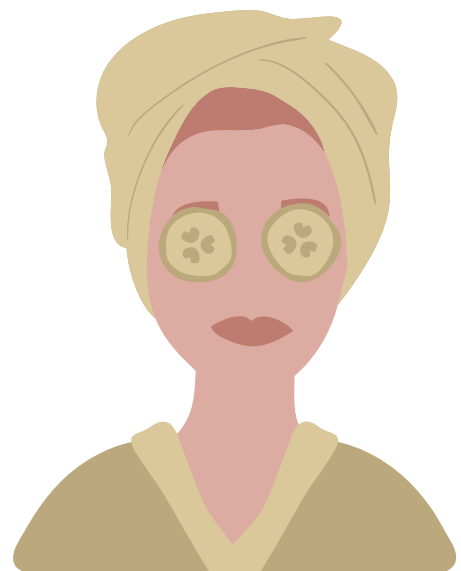
WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

What am I feeling grateful for today:

I am practicing self-care today by...



Tuesday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

Write what happened using the prompt below

Today I take a moment to sit somewhere comfortable and quiet. I sit quietly and calmly for a few moments. I observe my thoughts float through my mind. I don't judge them. I just notice and watch as they come and pass. What does observing my thoughts reveal to me about how I am feeling and what I am thinking?

What were three positive things about today?

What are you letting go of today?

Write your notes here:

Wednesday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

What are three things to look forward to?



**What feelings would I like to
invite into my day today?**

Thursday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

Who are three people that I can count on?

Write what happened using the prompt below:

Today, I spent some time talking or seeing someone I care about. Whilst I was engaging with them, I was fully present. This is how we spent this time together and this is how it made me feel.

Friday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

How did I look after my body today?



What is one thing I achieved today that I am proud of?

Saturday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

What is one thing that made today special?

What would my ideal day look like?

Write what happened using the prompts below:

Today I picked a routine or an activity to do. Whether it was chores like washing dishes or something soothing like having a cup of tea, I gave my full attention to the task at hand. I focused on every aspect of the task including how it makes me feel.

This is what I noticed...

Write your notes here:

Sunday

DATE _____

WEATHER _____

TIME _____

CURRENT MOOD _____

One thing that is going well right now?

What are my goals for the upcoming week?



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

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.