

Anxiety, stress, worry, low mood and depression are common experiences but are distressing. The good news is that most people can learn to manage their symptoms.

Treatment involves gently confronting difficulties and habits that have been around for a while, sometimes decades. This requires courage and determination. Please be gentle with yourself as you learn to manage your symptoms and remember to recognise and celebrate each success. We hope the MindSpot Clinic can help you on your journey.

If you aren't ready to begin treatment with us or with another Clinic, then we hope the following messages will help. These are things that thousands of our patients have told us have helped them on their path to managing their symptoms.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the MindSpot Clinic:

Email: [contact@mindspot.org.au](mailto:contact@mindspot.org.au)

Phone: **1800 61 44 34**

Warm regards,

**The MindSpot Clinic Team**

### 1. Have confidence that things can improve

Anxiety, stress, worry and low mood are normal human emotions. However, if they happen too often, are severe or start to impact our lives, then it is important to act. The good news is that thousands of Australians get better with treatment, even people who have had symptoms for decades.

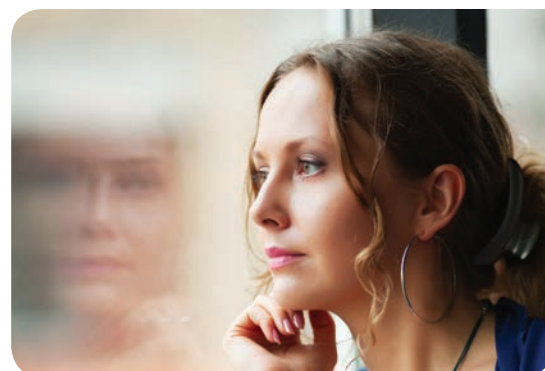
### 2. Treat yourself with respect

Most people who experience anxiety, stress, worry, depression or low mood are also dealing with difficult situations in their lives. We know that anxiety and low mood can change the way we think about ourselves. Because of this most people find it helpful to remember to treat themselves like they would treat others – with respect, tolerance and kindness. So, please be gentle and patient with your own efforts, encourage yourself and learn to be your own coach and supporter.



### 3. Keep yourself safe

It is common for people to have thoughts of ending their own life. If you feel at risk then please make a plan to stay safe, including talking to others about how you feel. If you use non-prescribed drugs, it is a good idea to try to stop or cut-down. A GP or another health professional can help you. Things can improve with time and effective treatment. When times are tough or you are at risk, please take steps to stay safe.



### 4. Don't let negative thoughts sabotage you

Thoughts like, "I can't do this" and "I am not good enough", are distressing and stop people doing things that can help. We know that anxiety and low mood trigger these destructive thoughts. Such thoughts are also often unrealistic, biased and don't reflect what we have achieved in the past or what we will achieve in the future. Remember, our thoughts are not always true or helpful. Challenge negative thoughts by asking yourself what a friend would say if you told them about those thoughts.

### 5. Do the things you enjoy and that are good for you

When things are tough we often stop doing the things we enjoy. This can mean we get less pleasure out of life, which makes us feel worse. Please do something each day which you used to like doing and which will give you pleasure. It might be as simple as listening to a favourite song, going for a short walk or talking to an old friend. Get back into the habit of having things to look forward to each day.

## 6. Talk to one person a day

People sometimes find themselves isolated and lonely. Unfortunately, it can become harder to talk to people the less you do it. Make a point each day to greet a colleague, call a friend or ask someone about their day. Talking to others is a great way to feel connected and involved and gives a sense of belonging. Don't wait for people to talk to you, rather make their day by talking to them.



## 7. Tackle one thing at a time

We often feel overwhelmed by all the things we have to do and do not know where to start. A helpful hint is to write down all the things we need to do. Then, pick an easy thing and do it. Then, tick it off your list. Success helps to build confidence and momentum to tackle the bigger things. And, when possible, ask a friend or someone else to help. People often want to help, but are waiting to be asked.

## 8. Check your physical health

Our physical health affects our emotional wellbeing – often more than we know. These things can help:

1. Visit your GP to get a physical check-up
2. Plan to eat 3 healthy meals and drink plenty of water
3. Go for a 15 minute walk
4. Go to bed early



## 9. Accept that recovery takes time and effort

Symptoms don't usually go away by themselves. Feeling better often involves making a conscious decision to change, and then making that change happen. This may require changing unhelpful habits and building healthy ones. This takes effort, courage and some time. People rarely feel better immediately. It is important that you understand that it may take two or more weeks of effort before you start to see improvements. Having support from a good therapist or a good friend can really help.

## 10. Do the opposite of your symptoms

Symptoms of anxiety, stress, worry, low mood and depression often lead us to do things that are helpful in the short-term, but not in the long term. This is why it is important to learn to do the opposite of the symptoms. We teach people in our courses to start to do the opposite of their symptoms. **Here are some examples:**

1. If you find yourself saying negative things about yourself, learn to ask whether that thought is true or helpful
2. If your symptoms make you want to stop doing things that help your mood, then pick one thing you enjoy and do it each day
3. If fear stops you from doing things, then make a plan to overcome the fear by using gradual and careful steps that build your courage and confidence

**PLEASE NOTE:** The MindSpot Clinic is not a crisis service. If you require urgent assistance please call Lifeline on **13 11 14**, or in a emergency, call the emergency services on **000**.

### Want to know more?

Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions:

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Phone: **1800 61 44 34**

Our Partners:



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