

ACT

Take action

Do you have trouble switching off? Y N

Are you worried all the time? Y N

Do you constantly feel sad or down? Y N

Have you lost interest in things you used to enjoy? Y N

If you answered yes to any of these questions your next step is to think about taking action.

- Talk to your doctor or health professional
- Call WVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service about counselling and their group programs on **1800 011 046**
- For more information call DVA on **133 254**

FLY OFF THE HANDLE?

We all react emotionally to difficult situations. But overreacting to traffic, noisy children, war movies and crowds could be a sign of depression or anxiety.

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MAINTAIN

Keeping your mind at ease

Looking after your mental health can be simpler than you think. Start by:

- Choosing a healthy diet, regular exercise and low-risk drinking
- Accepting that its normal to react emotionally to difficulties – don't be too hard on yourself for feeling down
- Connecting with your community: your local council, church, club or neighbourhood centre will be a source of ideas
- Nourishing your mind with interests and hobbies and meeting new friends at the same time
- Talking to your mates or family – don't bottle it up

USE IT OR LOSE IT

Exercise your body and mind to help you cope better with life's ups and downs. From just doing the crossword to taking up a new activity, there are many ways to engage your mind and to get involved with others.

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PUT YOUR MIND AT EASE

RECOGNISE > ACT > MAINTAIN



www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

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Department of Veterans' Affairs

About one in five Australians experience a mental health problem at least once in their lives. And it's no different for the veteran and defence force communities.

Deployment, coming home from a war or peacekeeping zone or returning to civilian life may have an effect on mental health and wellbeing.

Some have not experienced mental health problems. Others have sought help and recovered. But there are some who continue to experience difficulties.

These problems can be identified early, managed and treated.

This brochure can help you or someone you know recognise signs of mental health problems and act to improve and maintain health and wellbeing.

RECOGNISE

Early signs

Spotting these signs may help you recognise issues and tackle them early:

- Trouble sleeping?
- Loneliness or tiredness?
- Can't switch off?
- Avoiding crowds?
- Irritable?
- Persistent headaches?
- Drink too much?
- Too many sickies?
- Can't tolerate noise?
- Feel cut off?



These signs may range from mild to severe. They could signal potential mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, alcohol misuse, panic disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder, among others.

If any of these significantly affect your day-to-day life, you may need to take further action, such as talking to your doctor.

ACT

Putting your mind at ease

Good physical and mental health will help you to deal better with both good and bad times, now and in the future. Start by choosing a balanced diet, regular exercise, low-risk drinking and not smoking – smart choices for your body and mind which will help you to:

- Feel healthier
- Get on better with your family, friends and workmates
- Perform better in your daily activities
- Get more out of life
- Lose weight

HIT THE BOTTLE?

It's tempting to relax with a few too many drinks and cigarettes. But there are much healthier ways to cope with life's pressures – such as gentle exercise or spending time with family and friends. Ask your doctor or WVCS about healthy ways to relax.



GET WITH THE STRENGTH

Good nutrition for the mind and body means you'll have reserves to draw on to help cope with life's ups and downs.

