



While you're waiting for your appointment with one of our teams...

This brochure outlines some strategies you could try while waiting for your counselling session.

We also have some great self-help information available in the waiting area and on our website: www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/counselling/anu-counselling-centre/mental-health-resources

Or check out these external online resources for information and self-help: <https://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/getting-help-at-anu/anu-counselling/contacts-and-community>

Please refer [Useful Mental Health Contacts](#) for mental health support.

If you need to speak to someone **right now or urgently**, the **ANU Wellbeing and Support Line** is a phone service for all current students who are experiencing situational stress, emotional difficulties and mental health concerns. The service can also be used to provide debriefing support and assistance for student leaders. The ANU Wellbeing and Support Line works with ANU Counselling but is operational 24 hours a day.

CALL

1300 050 327

TEXT

0488 884 170

Ways to look after yourself during a stressful time

1. Managing distress

- Remember times when you have felt different to now.
- Experience feelings as waves that come and go.
- Remember to breathe.
- Try not to criticise or blame yourself.
- Reassure yourself that you can tolerate feeling your emotions and that you will get through this.
- Consider consequences before taking action.
- Where possible, avoid major life decisions while you are very distressed.
- Meditation or relaxation practices may be useful (especially if they are familiar).

2. Establishing a routine.

- Aim for balanced eating, sleeping and exercise even during a crisis.
- Avoid excessive mood-altering drugs including alcohol and caffeine.
- Limit your exposure to distressing situations. This may include monitoring what programs you watch, what music you listen to and who you spend time with.
- Plan activities that help you feel competent or successful, and activities that help you relax.

3. Problem Solving

- Define the problem you are facing.
- Work out what options are available.
- Weigh these options against each other (consider a list of advantages and disadvantages).
- Seek out extra information as needed.
- Strategically think through what steps you'd need to take in order to carry out your preferred option(s).
- Remind yourself of other times you have solved problems successfully.

4. Relationships

- Let friends and family (or your residential support staff if you are on campus) know if you need support, especially if you are not feeling safe.
- Don't assume that other people can't cope with you or won't be interested in your wellbeing.
- As far as possible, choose to be with people who are positive and care about you.
- You may be irritable – try not to push people who care away.
- Say no to unwanted demands as much as possible.
- Reach out to crisis services if you need urgent help

5. Managing issues with assessment

- Consider speaking directly to your tutor or lecturer to let them know there is an issue.
- You could also request an appointment through your academic college to negotiate special arrangements with your sub-dean
- It is often helpful to access supporting documentation in cases where you need to negotiate with the university (e.g. for a deferred exam, special consideration, or late withdrawal). If appropriate, think about obtaining a medical certificate or other evidence of your situation. *Please note that an ongoing relationship with ANU counselling centre may be a requirement for supporting documentation from us.*

Additional resource: Russ Harris provides 10 steps for any dilemma which may be helpful:
https://www.actmindfully.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/10_Steps_For_Any_Dilemma.pdf

Acknowledgements to Monash University's brochure "While you're waiting for a counselling appointment"