

## Make a difference



### Donate

make a donation online.



### Fundrasie

join an event, start your own or get your workplace involved!



### Volunteer

become a trained presenter or assist at our events.



### Share

let's empower everyone to look after their mental health.

## Where to find help?

If you or someone you know is experiencing extreme distress and needs urgent assistance call **000** or Lifeline on **13 11 14** or go to a hospital emergency department.

You can also book an appointment with your doctor who can refer you to more specialised health professionals if required.

For information, fact sheets, self-help tools, and self-tests, visit our website at [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)



**Black Dog**  
Institute

# Mental Health check-in

# About Black Dog Institute

Black Dog Institute is a research led, solution and program driven organisation committed to the understanding, prevention and treatment of mental illness and the reduction of suicide rates in our community.

Driven by science, compassion and action, we transform our research and knowledge into easily accessible, practical programs and services across the broader community.

# How to help someone

**1. Ask:** be supportive and ask, "are you OK?"

**2. Listen:** take what they say seriously, let them know you care.

**3. Respect:** recognise and respect their point of view. Let them know help is available.

**4. Encourage:** suggest they talk to a GP, friend or relative.

**5. Follow up:** make a time to check in on them.

**6. Take care of yourself:** helping someone can be demanding.

# Symptoms of Depression

- > Feeling sad or angry
- > Changes in sleep patterns
- > Low motivation to do things that matter
- > Feeling pessimistic or hopeless
- > Changes in appetite or weight
- > Not able to enjoy life
- > Poor concentration and memory
- > Increased alcohol or drug use

**We all experience periods of feeling down, but if you find any of these symptoms last longer than 2 weeks, it's best to talk to your GP**

# The 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 technique



## **What are 5 things you can see?**

Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.



## **What are 4 things you can feel?**

Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture and qualities.



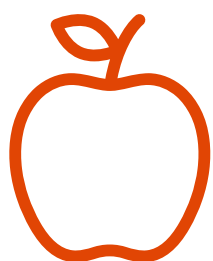
## **What are 3 things you can hear?**

Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.



## **What are 2 things you can smell?**

Try to notice smells in the air around you, like a recently cooked meal, coffee or unlit candle. You may also look around for something that has a scent, like a piece of fruit or perfume



## **What is 1 thing you can taste?**

Grab a snack and focus your attention closely on the flavours.



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# Tackling mental illness together

1 in 2 Australians experience mental illness in their lifetime

## How depression and mental illness affects your life

- Lowered self esteem
- Sustained state of sadness
- Feeling low or numb
- Poor concentration & memory
- Less able to control emotions
- Negative self talk
- Change in sleep & low energy levels
- Poor communication

*Please seek professional help if you are experiencing these symptoms for 2 weeks or more.*

## Asking for help

If you feel like something's wrong, never be afraid to ask for help.

Start by seeing your doctor who will provide an assessment that includes a general check-up to address both your physical and mental health.

They may refer you to a psychiatrist, suggest counselling, or refer you to psychological services and sessions with an exercise physiologist and claim a Medicare rebate.

## Additional resources

For more information visit [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)

We also recommend checking out:

- R U OK – [www.ruok.org.au](http://www.ruok.org.au)
- Kids Helpline – [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
- Headspace – [www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

If you are in a crisis, call **Lifeline on 13 11 14**.



# Your Personal Mental Health Check-In

## Feelings

on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely), how stressed, anxious or down are you feeling?

## Body

Notice any tension in your body like tight shoulders, chest, or jaw. You might experience dryness of the mouth, difficulty breathing, and a racing heart

## Sleep

Are you constantly struggling to get to sleep, waking in the night earlier than usual, or finding it difficult to get back to sleep?

## Thoughts

Are you always worrying about the worst-case scenarios? Focusing on 'what if' scenarios is not useful and it's best to try and limit this as much as possible

## Reactions & Behaviour

If you're frequently snapping at those you love, finding it extremely difficult to focus, or always depending on things like alcohol or food to cope, its time to prioritise your mental wellbeing.

## Check-in buddy

Choose a check in buddy. This may be your partner, housemate or even a friend or colleague you're keeping in touch with via video messaging. Be honest about how you are coping.

**If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, contact the following crisis services:**

Emergency 000

Lifeline 13 11 14



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