

Support for Men During Difficult Times

Although we all go through difficult times in life, often men and women can experience and react to these situations differently.

Research shows that men are less likely to seek support when struggling and are less likely to disclose their current challenges to friends or family.

It is important to remember there are things we can do to get through tough times, and we don't have to go through it alone. Difficult times can be easier to manage with the right help and support.



Common Causes of Difficult Times

- Financial problems
- Problems at work
- Unemployment, including redundancy
- Relationship problems and breakdowns
- Separation from children/family or child custody/visitation issues
- Physical health problems
- Mental health problems
- Environmental events or natural disasters
- Death of loved ones
- Excessive alcohol or drug use
- Excessive gambling
- Bullying or harassment
- Dealing with sexuality issues
- Homelessness or housing difficulties
- Trauma or abuse
- Criminal or legal issues
- Problems with your small business
- Significant change in life circumstances

Common Signs of Stress

Different people show stress in different ways. You may notice the physical symptoms of stress before you recognise your emotional feelings about a situation. Some common signs of stress or strain may include:

- Physical symptoms, such as headaches, muscle aches/tension, weight loss or gain
- Feeling angry, aggressive or reckless
- Always feeling tired, lacking energy or motivation
- Increased nervousness, agitation, restlessness or fidgeting
- Feeling down, depressed, anxious, lonely or numb
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs or increased gambling
- Withdrawing or becoming distant from friends and family
- Having difficulty concentrating, focusing or being distracted

Ready to help 24/7.

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- Having difficulty sleeping or sleeping a lot
- Feeling helpless or out of control
- Losing interest in activities that you usually enjoy
- Feeling hopeless, guilty, like you're a "failure" or a burden to others
- Thoughts of harming yourself or others
- Feeling like nothing you do will fix the situation

Tips to Get You Through Tough Times

✦ Recognise when you aren't coping

Pay attention to your body, how you're feeling and any changes in your physical health, behaviour and emotions. If you're feeling overwhelmed or out of control, it's time to do something about it. Also, listen to concerns from family or friends about your wellbeing or behaviour.

✦ Be proactive

Sometimes, if you're feeling out of control or hopeless, it can help to be proactive and come up with some practical ways to manage your situation. You might want to build your skills through a course, develop a plan of action. Stay positive and focus on what you can do, rather than what is out of your control.

✦ Take care of yourself

Look after yourself by eating healthily, exercising regularly, doing activities that you enjoy and finding time to relax.

✦ Talk about it

Having someone listen to your problems can help to relieve stress, give you some perspective and allows you to let off steam and release negative emotions.

✦ Reduce use of alcohol and drugs

Alcohol and drugs, including caffeine and nicotine, can impair your judgement, leading to poor decisions and other risky behaviour. They can have a damaging effect on your relationships with your family and friends, and your work. They can also have a serious impact on your physical health and can lead to aggression, agitation and mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety or psychosis.

✦ Avoid excessive gambling or other high-risk activities

Excessive gambling and other risky activities can make your problems worse and can put both you and others in danger. Engaging in high-risk activities can also cause conflict in your personal relationships or create problems at work/school.

✦ Have a health check up

A visit to your GP for a general health checkup is a good idea during difficult times, even if you're not feeling 'sick'. Tell your doctor if you have been experiencing any physical ailments, such as headaches, aches and pains, difficulties sleeping or significant weight loss/gain. Also let them know if you've been experiencing any ongoing negative emotions, such as feeling angry, anxious, panicky or depressed.

✦ Stay connected

It is important to stay in touch with family and friends, particularly during tough times. Catching up with mates and loved ones, getting involved in your community, trying a new hobby or volunteering to help others can make you feel valued and helps you from feeling isolated and alone.

Local Places to go for Help

It takes courage and strength to ask for help. Seeking support from others can help you to get through tough times.

Lifeline Northern Beaches, Balgowlah: 9949 5522
Low cost face-to-face counselling & free financial counselling.
lifelinenb.org.au

Relationship Support

Family Relationship Advice Line: 1800 050 321
Telephone advice service for anyone affected by relationship, divorce or separation issues.
fral.org.au

Relationships Australia, Dee Why: 9981 9799
Relationship counselling, groups & mediation for parenting & relationship property matters.
relationshipsaustralia.org.au/locations/northern-beaches/

Legal Support

Law Access: 1300 888 529
Free telephone service providing legal information, referral and in some cases, legal advice.
legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Community Legal Centres
Independent, non-government organisations that provide free legal services to people & communities.
clcnsw.org.au

Gambling Support

Wesley Gambling Counselling, North Narrabeen: 1300 827 638
Support for gambling issues.
gamblingcounselling@wesleymission.org.au

Drug and Alcohol Support

Alcohol and Drug Information Service: 1800 250 015
24/7 telephone counselling and information service for drug addiction and related health problems.
yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au

Northern Beaches Drug and Alcohol Service, Brookvale: 9388 5333
Provides drug and alcohol assessment, withdrawal management, liaison and care planning.
nslhd.health.nsw.gov.au



Employment Support

Services Australia, Brookvale: 1800 132 594
Government payment & services.
servicesaustralia.gov.au

Financial Support

Community Northern Beaches, Manly: 9977 1066
Emergency relief for those experiencing disadvantage. Aid includes food parcels, clothing and toiletries.
cnb.org.au

St Vincent de Paul Centre, Brookvale: 9905 0424
Provide food parcels, clothing, furniture, utility vouchers, toiletries and financial assistance for paying transport and pharmaceutical expenses.
vinnies.org.au

Mental Health Support

Headstart
Mental health navigation tool for people experiencing mental health concerns.
headstart.org.au

NSW Mental Health Access Line: 1800 011 511
24/7 telephone assessment, referral & intake services for people at risk of self-harm or suicide.

Men's Line Australia: 1300 78 99 78
24/7 free telephone and online counselling service offering support for Australian men.

Generalist Support

Soldier On, Manly: 1300 620 380
Support organisation providing a range of services for veterans and their families.
soldieron.org.au

Lifeline NB Men's Group Directory
List of local men's groups
Lifelinenb.org.au/mens-groups/