

You are not alone -  
local stories & local support

"I lost all my self-worth.  
I thought my mates  
would think I was a loser  
if I told them what was  
really going on. Finally  
I told one of my mates.  
How wrong I'd been.  
It turns out he too had  
suffered depression a  
couple of years back. He  
understood. He helped  
steer me back in the right  
direction to get help."

Bruce, Wagga Wagga

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Emergency 000

## 24 HOUR COUNSELLING SERVICES

Lifeline	131 114
Mental Health Line	1800 011 511
Mens Line	1300 789 978
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467
Poisons Information	131 126

## SEE YOUR GP

Ask for a check up to talk about your health.  
Your GP can make a referral for you to see a  
psychologist.

Your GP can get you into the **Better Access  
to Mental Health Care** program which will  
give you Medicare rebates for consultations  
with psychiatrists, psychologists, social  
workers and occupational therapists.

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## LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING GUIDE

Mental Health is as important  
as physical health.  
You can help yourself and  
help others.

Riverina Bluebell  
provides local  
information about  
local services &  
support

Riverina Bluebell is a Wagga Wagga based, not-for-profit,  
community organisation formed in 2007 to provide  
information to connect people suffering from depression,  
and their carers, with support and resources in the Riverina.

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**DON'T ENDURE MENTAL HELL**  
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## LOCAL SUPPORT & SERVICES

Riverina Bluebell's online Mental Health Guide offers local information developed to assist people to take the first step to get help for themselves, a friend or a loved one.

The Guide gives you local numbers for a wide range of local support services:

Psychiatrists  
Psychologists  
Social Workers  
Counselling Services  
Support & Recovery Services  
Carer Support Services  
Employment Services  
Training



## ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

A mental illness is a health problem that significantly affects how a person feels, thinks, behaves and interacts with other people. It can cause a great deal of suffering to those experiencing these symptoms, as well as their families and friends.

Mental illnesses are of different types and degrees of severity. Some of the major types are depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, personality disorders and eating disorders.



### WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Because feelings of depression are so common, it is important to understand the difference between unhappiness and sadness in daily life and the symptoms of a depressive disorder.

Depressive disorders are a group of illnesses characterised by excessive or long-term depressed moods and loss of interest in activities that used to be enjoyable. They are serious and distressing illnesses with real risks to the person's life and well-being. Professional assessment and treatment is necessary. Fortunately, treatment of depression is usually very effective.



### SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- Moodiness that is out of character
- Increased irritation and frustrations
- Finding it hard to take minor criticisms
- Spending less time with family and friends
- Loss of interest in food, sex, exercise or other pleasurable activities.

## TAKE ACTION!

**1. CONNECT...** With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

**2. BE ACTIVE...** Go for a walk or a run. Step outside. Cycle, Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy, one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

**3. TAKE NOTICE...** Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are on a train, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

**4. KEEP LEARNING...** Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun to do.

**5. GIVE...** Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and you will create connections with people around you.