



MHF Newsletter

MHF Vision: Creating Hope, People First, Better Mental Health

Features

Page 2: What is stress?

Page 3: On the spot, Recipe

Page 4: In the garden

Page 5: NAIDOC word search

Page 6: Stress busters, Dates for your diary, MHF services

Page 7: Good grief

Update your details

Participants and members:
Have you changed your phone number or moved to a new address? We need to know - contact MHF to update your details.

Contact MHF

02 6282 6658 (main)

02 6282 6674 (fax)

info@mhf.org.au

Visit us: 11/70 MacLaurin
Cresecent, Chifley, ACT, 2606

www.mhf.org.au (web)

MHFACT (Facebook)

MHF is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme Service Provider since June 2014 (PRN 4050001762).

Accredited for Mental Health Standards 2010.

From the Executive Officer:

STRESS... and how MHF can help....

While for most people some stress is not a bad thing (yes, too much is not a good thing!), for individuals who have a mental illness, even a little stress can be an issue. For example, stress can increase anxiety, depression, have an impact on eating conditions, or affect a bi-polar condition or any other mental illness.

When this happens, MHF can support their participants in a variety of ways.

Our Outreach program supports individuals with mental illness in implementing strategies to help them cope with their extra stress to live a "normal" life.

Generally, a participant's doctor or counsellor may have helped the participant to learn some stress coping strategies. MHF Support Workers are there to assist the participant in implementing the identified strategies.

This may be doing something as simple as having a cup of coffee/tea and a chat; going for a walk; or taking them to an appointment with their doctor or counsellor.

For others, they may simply require a break from their routine (and the associated stress) and have a stay in one of the MHF Short-Term Respite Service (STAR) houses.

MHF also has a small library of books and other resources that may assist people in implementing their "Stress-Busting" strategies.

For more information about how MHF can support individuals with a lived experience of a mental illness to work through any extra stress, simply call the MHF Outreach Service on (02) 6242 7195 or the MHF STAR Service on (02) 6296 2291. Alternatively, go to the MHF website www.mhf.org.au to find out more.



Angie Ingram, MHF Executive Officer



What is Stress?

Stress is the body's way of responding to demand or pressures (Lifeline Australia). It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. In many cases stress is a healthy reaction. It helps us cope with life's challenges. However too much stress, or prolonged stress can affect our physical and mental health. Taking steps to cope with situations we find stressful is important so we can function and live productive lives.

Causes of stress can include:

- ✦ Interpersonal relationship problems
- ✦ Personal or family illness
- ✦ Conflict e.g. bullying or harassment
- ✦ Death of a relative or friend
- ✦ Work or study pressures
- ✦ Traumatic events
- ✦ Financial problems
- ✦ Concerns about life direction
- ✦ Job loss/insecurity
- ✦ Change
- ✦ Pressures from competing demands or a combination of the above

Signs you may be stressed:

- ✦ Lack of motivation
- ✦ Sleeplessness or over sleeping
- ✦ Moodiness
- ✦ Headaches
- ✦ Lack of concentration
- ✦ Feeling overwhelmed or anxious
- ✦ Reliance on alcohol or other substances to cope
- ✦ Increase eating, drinking or nervous habits
- ✦ Not coping with demands or responsibilities

What can be done about it?

1. Talk to someone. This helps release negative feelings
2. Visit your GP to check your physical health and general wellbeing
3. Exercise. This triggers a chemical response that releases positive feelings
4. Limit alcohol, caffeine and nicotine because they can increase anxiousness and sleeplessness
5. Take time out. Relaxing and doing activities you love can recharge your mind and body
6. Thinking positive thoughts is also important

(Source: Lifeline Australia)



On the spot



*Bijumon
Mathew*

1. *What is your position / role with MHF?*

Support coordinator

2. *How long have you worked with MHF?*

5 years

3. *What do you like best about working with MHF?*

The team

4. *You walk down the street and find a lottery ticket that ends up winning \$10 million. What would you do?*

Travel around the world

5. *What is the last song you listened to?*

O1 town road by Lil Nasx

6. *If animals could talk, which do you think would be the rudest and why?*

Cats are already bossy without a voice, imagine if they had one!

7. *What (outside of work) takes up too much of your time?*

Social media

Recipe of the month: Damien's damper

An all-round show-stopper, this one. Impress your mates with your bread-making skills, with little skill at all! Try playing around with any bush spice until you find your favourite. This is best cooked in a fire but an oven will do just as well.

Ingredients:

- ✦ 2 tbsp macadamia or lemon myrtle infused oil
- ✦ 300–350 ml water
- ✦ 500 g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
- ✦ pinch of salt
- ✦ 2 tbsp roasted and ground wattleseed (or lemon myrtle, strawberry gum, bush tomato or saltbush)

Method:

1. If using the oven, preheat to 220°C.
2. Mix the oil and water in a jug. Sift the flour into a large bowl, and mix through the salt and wattleseed. Slowly pour in the oil and water, and mix to make a dough.
3. Turn out the dough onto a floured surface and knead until smooth.
4. Dust with flour, place on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 15–20 minutes, or ideally wrap in foil and cook on a fire in the ashes.
5. Damper is always best eaten hot with lashings of butter.

(Source: SBS, recipe by Rebecca Sullivan & Damien Coulthard)



In the garden: Aboriginal plant use

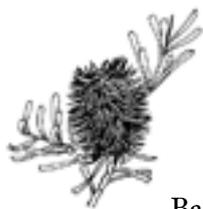
Australian Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for at least 40,000 years, and in all those long generations the land provided them with everything they needed for a healthy life. They also learned to manage their country in such ways that its resources renewed themselves and were not used up.

How did they do this? To quote Edward Curr, an early settler, they 'tilled their ground and cultivated their pastures with fire'. By controlled burning, they kept the bush open and allowed the growth of new seedlings in the ash-bed. Aborigines in Arnhem Land still do this. Many Australian plants will re-grow quickly after a fire; indeed some plants such as the grass-tree (*Xanthorrhoea* spp.) flower more prolifically after fire.

At least half of the food eaten by Aborigines came from plants, and it was the task of the women to collect them. Just as we eat root vegetables, greens, fruits and seeds, so did the Aborigines. Fruits, seeds and greens were only available during their appropriate seasons, but roots could usually be dug up all the year round, because the earth acted as a natural storage cupboard. Important foods were replanted. The regular digging-over of the soil, and the thinning out of clumps by collection of plants, together with burning to provide fertiliser, is not very different from what we do in our own gardens, and the whole country was in a way an Aboriginal garden.

Plants were used for many other things besides food. The long leaves of sedges, rushes and lilies were collected to make baskets and mats, and soaked and beaten to free the fibres to make string. The bark of trees made buckets, dishes and shields; River Red-gum bark was particularly good for making canoes, and old scarred 'canoe trees' can still be seen. Some rice-flower shrubs (*Pimelea* spp.) have such strong fibres on the outside of the stem that they have been called 'bushman's bootlace', and were used by the Aborigines to make fine nets in which to collect Bogong Moths to eat.

Medicines also came from plants native mints (*Mentha* spp.) were remedies for coughs and colds, and the gum from gum-trees, which is rich in tannin, was used for burns.



Banksia



Blackwood



Orange thorn

(Source: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/gardens/visiting/exploring/aboriginal-trail/> by Beth Gott)

Aboriginal plant use trail walk

You can discover the many ingenious ways Australian Aboriginal people used plants for food, fire, tools and more on a self-guided walk at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. It is an easy to moderate 1.2km loop track and takes 1 hour. Clones Ross Street, Acton. Open 8.30am-5pm everyday (except Christmas).

NAIDOC Week Word Search



WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words and phrases?

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------|---------------|
| Community | Respect | Connect | Deadly |
| Fun | Elders | Songlines | Celebrate |
| Our mob | Welcome | Family | Dance |
| Harold Thomas | Culture | Yarn | First Nations |
| Story | Country | Bernard Namok | |

C	O	N	N	E	C	T	C	U	L	T	U	R	E	H
O	D	G	J	S	O	N	G	L	I	N	E	S	P	A
U	H	B	D	I	M	O	R	N	C	L	I	S	H	R
N	A	R	Y	T	M	O	I	R	E	C	O	U	R	O
T	A	K	I	D	U	M	W	E	L	C	O	M	E	L
R	E	O	R	E	N	U	I	L	E	L	Y	P	S	D
Y	D	U	I	A	I	G	H	D	B	F	O	O	P	T
V	I	R	T	D	T	L	O	E	R	C	S	I	E	H
F	A	M	I	L	Y	L	H	R	A	T	T	O	C	O
U	M	O	B	Y	A	R	N	S	T	O	R	Y	T	M
N	R	B	A	A	D	A	N	C	E	H	M	V	X	A
W	E	L	F	I	R	S	T	N	A	T	I	O	N	S
J	I	B	E	R	N	A	R	D	N	A	M	O	K	S
Q	U	I	B	R	S	O	P	M	E	O	N	T	I	W

(Source: <https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/resources/datsima/involved/naidoc/naidoc-activity-pack.pdf>)

Six fun stress busters from Angie!



1. Eat well
2. Sleep well
3. Exercise well
4. Drink a little
5. Have a bath
6. Colour or doodle

Dates for your diary

The MHF Towards Zero Emissions (TZE) project workshops still to happen:

- * July 23 - Fighting food waste
- * July 30 - Seasonal cooking & leftovers
- * August 6 - Re-psyched with Candice
- * August 13 - Chemical free cleaning
- * August 20 - TZE outcomes and awards

Other events:

- * October 10 - Mental health & wellbeing expo, 11am-2pm, Garema Place, Civic
- * October 18 - Mental health concert, 6.30pm for 7pm start, Nation's heart hall, Belconnen

MHF Services

The Mental Health Foundation ACT (MHF) is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider (Registration number: 4050001762), and can provide the following supports to NDIS participants from the ACT and NSW:

- * Accommodation/tenancy
- * Assistance - Life stage, transition
- * Assistance - Personal activities
- * Assistance - Travel/transport
- * Assistance with access/maintain employment
- * Behaviour support
- * Daily tasks/shared living
- * Development - life skills
- * Group/centre activities
- * Household tasks
- * NDIS plain management
- * Participate in the community
- * Personal activities

MHF provides these through:

- * Support coordination
- * Support work - residential and outreach
- * Residential short-term accommodation
- * Residential supported accommodation

(Listing is current as at July 2019)



Creating Hope, People First, Better Mental Health

“Good Grief”, written by Ms Sue Carbone (B.Ed)

Good grief is often expressed

But how can this become the outcome?

Consider the part that was personally played!

In what way did the people involved enable?

In what way did the people involved omit to do something?

Could there have been a better approach?

Given commitments elsewhere in other roles,

Was role conflict experienced?

Such a terrible shock was received

Loss of relationship is evident

Time is needed to grieve and deal with issues at hand

Remember that only an individual is responsible for their own actions

Whether guilt or false guilt is experienced

Forgiveness of self and others is needed

The “What Ifs” are part of working an issue through

Part of Kubla Ross’s five stages of grief

The expression of emotion is important

Usually it takes time to do this in private

But is sometimes expressed in public

Accepted and understood by those who care

By those who share life in the community

Conversations that take a toll

Coupled with the actions of others

In support

Emotional pain lessens later and less frequently

But the memories can be recalled easily

Remembering the good times that were shared

We’re told don't speak ill of the dead

Don't dwell on the past

Move forward only

But our past determines our future

Unless effort is made

Unless something is changed

To consider the issues at hand

Brings relevance for the individuals

Who judge,

self or others

As somewhat lacking

Take the place of the Lord Almighty

What prevents a love tank from emptying

When love is accepted & received

Respect for another blossoms

If a love gesture is received as sarcasm

There will be major emotional deficits

They will not be able to value and care for themselves





- ✓ **Do you (or someone you know) just need a break from your usual daily routines?**
- ✓ **Do you (or someone you know) feel depressed, anxious, or have periods of being mentally unwell?**
- ✓ **Enjoy a stay in one of MHF's Short-Term Accommodation Respite (STAR) Houses!**

At STAR...

- ✓ **YOU drive your life;**
- ✓ **YOU are supported in YOUR journey through our model of Care tailored especially to YOU; and**
- ✓ **The focus is on enabling YOU to reach your own recovery goals.**

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) *Short-Term Accommodation Respite* (STAR) Service is designed for people who are experiencing mental health concerns and need a break from their daily routines.

A short-term stay in one of MHF's well-appointed, private, and warm respite houses offers guests the opportunity to take time out from day-to-day responsibilities, regroup, learn, share and enjoy social interaction in a safe place.

Become a STAR now and enjoy one of our STAR facilities!

Contact MHF now

Phone...02 6296 2291

Email...respite@mhf.org.au



