



POP PSYCHOLOGY

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Practicing From:
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*Please send all
correspondence
to email address*

GETTING STARTED

In our sessions together, you'll learn some skills and strategies to help you cope with your feelings to start making improvements in your life. While we are starting to learn these ideas, here are some suggestions of things you can try that help for a lot of people.

You might find it useful to experiment with some of these ideas and keep a list of the ones you've found helpful so you can refer back to them when you need to.

Things you can do on your own

Think about another time where you might have faced a similarly stressful time in your life and what you did to cope. Can you do the same things now?

Some examples of activities other people find helpful:

- Doing some of your favourite activities, like drawing, writing, or craft
- Listening to music that can change your mood
- Bouncing on the trampoline, tackling some pillows, or running around the outside of the house to "let off steam"
- Having a warm bath, blow bubbles and watch them settle on the top of the water
- Sitting outside and see if you can find any shapes in the clouds
- Watching a favourite DVD, television program or video
- Writing or journaling, getting those thoughts and feelings out
- Talk to someone that you trust about what you are thinking and feeling

There are a range of relaxation techniques that people find useful to reduce feelings of being overwhelmed. Some examples of relaxation techniques are:

- **Body scans.** Also known as 'progressive muscle relaxation'. Lie down or recline in a chair. Taking slow breaths, beginning with your feet tense the muscles for 10 seconds and then release for 15 seconds. Work your way up the different muscle groupings of your body.
- **Breathing exercises.** Find a comfortable position, and either close your eyes or focus on something in the room. Begin by taking a slow breath in through your nose, hold that breath, and then slowly release the breath out through your mouth. You may find it easier to concentrate on this by counting up to 3 or more slowly at each stage.
- **Using imagery.** Spend some time thinking of a place, real or imaginary, where you would feel safe, relaxed and comfortable.
- **Take care of your physical health.** Looking after yourself by eating well, keeping to a regular daily routine, trying to get good quality sleep and keeping active can all make an immense difference to how you feel.



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Things you can do with others

- Talking to an adult who you feel safe with and trust can help get all the feelings out
- Ask other people for ideas about how they would think, feel or act in your situation. How would they go about solving your problem?
- Choose people you can spend time with doing things you would normally enjoy
- Ask if your school have special staff who can help you with emotional or practical help, usually this is people like a guidance officer, classroom teacher, special education teacher, house leader, or chaplain.
- Ask you parents or teachers to help you find groups for kids who need a bit of extra support, often they have free or cheap fun activities that you can join.

OUT OF HOURS SUPPORT

Your psychologist cannot be available around the clock, If you need **IMMEDIATE** advice and support please call...

- Advice for Children: Kids Help Line – 1800 55 1800
- Advice for Parents: ParentLine – 1300 30 1300

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Kids Help Line: www.kidshelpline.com.au
- Smiling Mind: www.smilingmind.com.au
- Raising Children Network: www.raisingchildren.net.au
- Youth Beyond Blue: www.youthbeyondblue.com

FINDING A PSYCHOLOGIST

Like any new relationship, it can take a while to build trust and rapport with a new person. If you feel that you want to explore other therapists, the Australian Psychologist Society has a useful tool where you can search registered psychologists by location and speciality.

- **APS** www.psychology.org.au/findapsychologist/default.aspx

MEDICARE REBATES

A Mental Health Care Plan must be developed by a medical professional in order for rebates for psychology services to be claimed through medicare. For more information on the claiming rules, visit **Medicare** on www.medicareaustralia.org.au