

Managing your mental health and wellbeing with the internet



Making the most of online therapy programs

1. **Register soon**
2. **Plan** to log on and do some of the program at a regular time of the day and week.
3. **Do the homework** the program recommends so the lessons “stick”.
4. **Revise** any downloadable sections.
5. **Keep track** of what does and doesn't work and discuss it with your health professional
6. **Stick it out** through to the end of the program, even if you are feeling better. There are often hidden gems right at the very end.

What is online therapy and who might it benefit?

Many people need help to manage the stressors in their life and the mental health problems that arise from them.

Not everyone needs to talk to a professional face to face. There are some excellent programs online that can help you learn skills to manage your stress and distress.

If you have an internet connection and the willingness to get involved, these programs can provide you with many ideas that will help you have the kind of life you want.

What kinds of programs are there?

Programs are mainly based on a form of therapy called cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). In each program you will see stories of people having similar problems to yourself and you will be able to get involved in interactive exercises to help you learn specific skills to manage your own issues.

How do I know these programs work?

Research results show that these programs work just as well as face to face therapy for many people experiencing stress or mild to moderate symptoms of anxiety and depression.

What will online therapy do for me?

Online therapy can:

- help you understand the impact of the way you think on your emotional health
- help you to learn important emotional management skills
- help you to manage stress and learn to relax
- help you to develop resistance to mental health problems.



Do I need to do the programs on my own?

Some programs are designed to be used independently while a few offer guidance as you move through the program. Your health professional can also help you with using these programs.

How much do these programs cost?

Most programs are free. The one exception is a suite of programs called THISWAYUP which is available as an app at a small cost.

I think I might be vulnerable to a mental health problem – will these programs help me?

Absolutely! The skills you learn in these programs have been shown to be effective in helping prevent mental health problems.

What programs are there for me to choose from?

In Australia we are lucky to have locally-developed evidence-based online programs. See the programs listed in this pamphlet for a summary.

If I do an online therapy program will I still be able to see a psychologist?

Doing an online program may be all you need, but it does not exclude you from face to face therapy in any way. Learning basic psychological skills online leaves more time for you and your therapist to discuss the more complex issues that may be troubling you.

How do I know which program to choose?

Your health practitioner should be able to advise you about which program is likely to suit your needs.

Given that most programs are free of charge there is no harm in trying several programs before settling on one that you feel you can use effectively.

Programs

THISWAYUP: a set of self-help programs available in a desktop form or as an app with specific programs for particular disorders.
<https://thiswayup.org.au>

Mental Health Online: a set of programs for specific anxiety disorders and depression.
<https://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au>

MoodGYM and e-couch: these are self-help programs designed for use by adolescents and adults respectively.
<https://moodgym.anu.edu.au>
<https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/welcome>

OnTrack: these self-help programs are designed for users with specific problems. You may find one of them useful for your particular situation.
<https://www.ontrack.org.au>

myCompass: a self-help program with a bit of a difference. It consists of modules that can be done in any order so you can complete whichever module is most relevant to your needs.
<https://www.mycompass.org.au>

MindSpot Virtual Clinic: a different kind of online program which offers personal phone or email support from a therapist at the clinic at Macquarie University.
<https://mindspot.org.au>

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Creating a mentally healthier world