

What is Help-seeking?

Help-seeking is the process of finding and receiving support from others.

We all experience tough times, but sometimes we can't solve our problems by ourselves. Going through a difficult situation alone can be stressful, confusing and exhausting. At these times, seeking assistance from family, friends and or others can really help.

Potential barriers to help-seeking

Asking for help can be difficult, particularly when we're stressed or confused. Sometimes we don't even realise that we need help. Some of the reasons you might not seek help include:

- thinking a problem will go away on its own
- feeling afraid or embarrassed to ask for help
- thinking that no one will want to help
- thinking that no one understands
- not knowing where to go to find help
- a lack of support services in your area
- thinking that professionals will judge you
- thinking that getting help will be expensive or time-consuming.

However, getting support during difficult times can help you to find strategies to get through the situation. Often, it's easier than you thought and another perspective can be really beneficial.

How can help-seeking improve wellbeing?

Help-seeking can have many benefits. Getting support during tough times can help you to:

- Feel less stressed and relieved through sharing your feelings
- Find solutions and ways to cope
- Gain perspective
- Reduce your sense of isolation and loneliness
- Build stronger relationships with family and friends
- Prevent problems from getting worse or leading to more serious issues
- Assist others when they need it.

Where can I find help?

It's often a good idea to get help from a range of sources. Don't be afraid to try different types of support until you find what works best for you.

Family and friends – family and friends know you and often understand your situation. They can provide emotional and practical support, advice and referrals to other sources of help.

Your doctor – your GP can help with physical health problems, as well as mental health and stress. They can also refer you to other health professionals, support groups and useful resources.

Telephone helplines – like Lifeline, provide support. They can also refer you to other forms of assistance.

Internet – the internet is full of useful information and advice, including links to local professionals and resources.

Books, magazines and other resources – there are written resources on physical/mental health, relationship problems and other personal issues. Visit your local bookstore, library or community centre.

Experts or professionals – there are professionals who can help with almost any problem - e.g. psychologists, psychiatrists, financial advisers, alcohol/drug counsellors, legal professionals, religious ministers, career advisers, etc. You may need a referral from your GP to visit some of these professionals. Some may provide low or no cost services.



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Find out more

Call Lifeline – **13 11 14** if you or someone you know needs crisis support. Visit www.lifeline.org.au to find a range of self-help resources and information.

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