Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidebook

For New Zealand Law Students
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The information and articles contained in this Guide Book have been compiled by the New Zealand Law Students’ Association and its contributors based on current medical knowledge as at the date of publication. The content has been checked and approved by a qualified mental health professional. This publication is intended to be a general guide and should not be a replacement for individual medical advice if required. The New Zealand Law Students’ Association and its contributors accept no responsibility for any consequences arising directly or indirectly from reliance upon the information contained in this publication.

For an electronic version of this Guide Book and further resources, please visit www.nzlsa.co.nz

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The New Zealand Mental Health Foundation
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Kia ora koutou and welcome to the New Zealand Law Students’ Association (NZLSA) Wellness Guide. Whether you’re holding a hard copy in your hands or have scouted this out online it is extremely gratifying to know you’re taking time to learn more about your wellbeing, both physical and mental.

As law students we are constantly stressed and under pressure. Whether it be surviving the ‘great cull’ of students from first year to second year or trying to work your way onto the right side of the grade bell curve, earning a law degree is not easy. It requires grit, determination, and a real desire to succeed. It almost doesn't need to be said but maintaining those characteristics can really wear you down.

It is now well settled that as lawyers and law students, we are predisposed to mental illnesses. The competitiveness of law school and the adversarial nature of the legal system, means that unfortunately, stress stays with us throughout our legal careers.

But it is not all doom and gloom. Conversations are being had about the importance of resilience and the need to ask for help, which were not being had even five years ago. Organisations such as ours are beginning to produce guides such as this, designed to make students and young lawyers take a second look at their well-being. So often in the legal profession we spend our time focusing on the needs of our lecturers, tutors and clients that we forget to focus on our own. Like physical health, mental health is a constant and integral part of our wellbeing. Our wellness is holistic and comes from finding a sweet spot in the balance of the different areas of our lives.

To this end, each of us has or should have personal tools we use to deal with stress. For example, when we start to feel stressed and overwhelmed, we take off to yoga or the gym for a workout and some ‘me time’. In particular the absence of phone, email, and Facebook, as well as the concentration on breathing helps us to relax and refresh. The purpose of the NZLSA Wellness Guide is to help you, the reader, develop your own personal tools to deal with stress when it arises.

We are therefore pleased to commend this guide to all New Zealand law students and young lawyers. The hints and tips contained in these pages may not help you towards becoming an ‘A grade’ law student or a fierce advocate upon graduation, but they may help you build resilience and guard yourself from the challenges that a legal career can bring. We hope you find this guide useful and share it with anyone who might benefit, law student or not!

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In New Zealand, a number of mental health disorders are prevalent. If you have been struggling with mental health issues, have a look at the following conditions and symptoms. If you think you should see a professional, there are a number of services listed in the back of this book. If you think you just need a little pick me up, have a flick through the rest of the book for some stress tips.

**Depression**

Law school is a stressful environment, that can lead to bad feelings. Usually these feelings can fade away over time, particularly as students become better at managing stress. But depression is more than just a bad mood; it is a serious illness that can affect your everyday life. When feelings of sadness become intense and persistent, preventing everyday life, it is likely to be a depressive illness. Depression has serious effects on physical and mental health, and can make it difficult for a person to communicate with others or to do day-to-day tasks.

**Eating Disorders**

Eating disorders are characterised by persistent eating behaviours that negatively impact your health. The causes of eating disorders vary significantly, but can generally be attributed to long-term unhappiness and low self-esteem. It is important to realise that eating disorders do not discriminate; they can affect anyone regardless of background, body type, and gender.

There are two types of eating disorder. Both involve worrying about your weight and eating. Anorexia nervosa has symptoms including:

- Eating less, and obsessing over exercise.
- Being unwilling or unable to stop losing weight, even when you are at a healthy weight.
- Using tablets and other medications to lose weight.

Meanwhile bulimia nervosa is characterised by:

- Binge eating.
- Forcing yourself to vomit, or using laxatives.

Eating disorders can be tackled with the help of a clinic or therapist, so it is best to reach out. They can help to adopt coping techniques, and design wellbeing plans.
Generalised anxiety occurs when someone is anxious about a number of things that stress and scare them. It is also known as a ‘flight or fight’ response. This mechanism makes your body respond when you see a threat - whether it be a lion, or an upcoming test. However, if this fear becomes out of proportion to the threat and stays around after the threat has passed, you may be experiencing anxiety.

A panic disorder is diagnosed when the level of anxiety a person experiences is out of proportion to their situation. It is a subset of anxiety that manifests itself in panic attacks. These attacks can occur when there is no threat or danger at all. The exact cause of a panic disorder is unclear, but major stressors in life or traumatic events can lead to it.

TREATMENT TYPES

Psychotherapy is the most common treatment for the conditions described above. It can be used by itself, or with medication. Psychotherapy involves speaking with a licensed and trained medical professional, who helps to work through factors that can trigger poor mental health.

There are different approaches to therapy, which cause different benefits. It is best to discuss the process with your GP or a mental health care professional to investigate whether therapy could be an option for you.
It is a well-known fact that legal study is physically, mentally and emotionally challenging and comprehensive coursework, intense examination pressure and tough competition for clerkships and graduate positions create a stressful and challenging environment. This may be why law students experience higher rates of physical illness such as heart disease and psychological illness such as depression, anxiety and substance abuse. This issue isn’t unique to New Zealand alone, studies have shown that after just one year of legal study, 50% of law students surveyed in the United States (who had no prior history of mental health issues) met the criteria for depression or another psychological condition. These findings are consistent with the results of a 2013 study conducted by the NZLSA into law student mental health wellbeing; a study that culminated in the first edition of this guidebook.

Many of the psychological conditions that plague law students can be traced back to the stressful and competitive environment of law school. In a 2015 study undertaken by the NZLSA, 91% of law student respondents rated their stress and anxiety levels as ‘high’ or ‘very high’ during busy periods such as assignment due dates and examination periods. In the 2013 study undertaken by the NZLSA referred to above, the most common factors identified by New Zealand law students to contribute to their stress levels were:

- high expectations for top grades (89% of students);
- competitive pressure for clerkship and graduate positions (70% of students);
- course workload (63% of students);
- the time demands of study (56% of students); and
- the pressure of their peers (51% of students).

Clearly, a number of these factors such as the course workload, time demands of study and competitiveness for jobs are intrinsic to a profession like law and beyond our sphere of control. However, the way in which we respond to these pressures, our expectations for ourselves and the pressure we place ourselves under are all within our control. With this in mind, there has been a recent push, driven by the NZLSA and New Zealand university law student societies, towards the promotion of the importance of mental health and to provide law students with tools and techniques to improve their resilience and mental strength. This guidebook is one such example.

While there is no overnight cure for improving mental health amongst law students, resources like this guidebook serve to initiate a dialogue into the importance of mental health amongst law students and the need to prioritise this. While it is a step in the right direction, there is a need for a concerted and coordinated effort from law schools, employers and regulatory bodies if we want to ensure there is more support for law students and a greater focus on the importance of mental health amongst students and practitioners. We encourage you to support this effort and continue the dialogue as we seek to break down the stigma associated with mental illness and provide to students the support networks and resources they need to function as happy and healthy individuals.
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Resilience is the capacity of a system to tolerate disturbance without collapsing, to withstand shocks, to rebuild itself when necessary, and improve itself when possible. It is our ability to bounce back, to navigate life’s stresses and to work through challenges.

We cannot control the environment around us, but we can control how we respond to that environment. But the good news is that resilience is not an inherent trait, it can be learned and it can be developed by anyone.

A key aspect of resilience is being self-aware. ‘What stresses me? What triggers me? What things do I do in life to make me feel good? Make me happy?’ If we know what stresses us, and what nourishes us, we can better manage life’s ups and downs, both professionally and personally.

Discovering those triggers means being proactive. It can involve self-reflection, journaling, coursework and mentoring among other things.

The more replete we are from an emotional, physical, cognitive and relational perspective, the better we are able to deal with any challenges present in our environment. If we feel resourced, we’re probably going to respond to challenges quite differently than if we’re feeling tired, angry and anxious.

Building resilience can feel hard when you are overwhelmed with challenges on all fronts: home, work, relationships, etc. However, by taking a series of small steps you can start to build your resilience and recharge your batteries, so that things begin to feel easier.

RESILIENCE – WHAT & WHY?

Understand that there are two types of stress: good stress and bad stress. These are both an unavoidable part of life. Stress can be a motivator and help us identify new opportunities, but unfortunately high levels of stress can cause feelings of being overwhelmed, anxiousness and physical discomfort.

As law students you have been taught to look critically, look for flaws in arguments and are surrounding by conflict on a regular occurrence. This way of thinking coupled with pressures of meeting deadlines and helping clients leads to high levels of stress within the profession. It is imperative to recognise that you are not the only individual dealing with stress and that asking for help is a big first step.

It is important to identify the common symptoms of stress:

**COMMON EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIOURAL, AND COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS**

- Headaches
- Back Pain
- Neck Pain
- Chest Pain or Discomfort
- Other Pain or Discomfort
- Problems with Digestion
- Nausea
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Numbness or Tingling

- Irritability
- Crying
- Frustration
- Anger
- Impatience
- Emotional Fatigue
- Burnout
- Decreased Productivity
- Concentration Problems
- Memory Problems
- Confusion
COPING WITH STRESS

The College of Law New Zealand

There is no easy one step guide to managing stress, but there are a range of strategies to help identify and mitigate its impact. With emotional resources, support and cognitive processes you can turn stressful situations into positive outcomes.

• Build positive relationships – have people you can connect with, and have honest open conversations with supportive people who can listen and help you identify positive solutions and steps.
• Be aware of your thought patterns – start by recognising small positives in your life daily. To avoid negative thoughts you can use the below techniques:
• Avoid coming to general conclusions based on little evidence
• Focus on the positives and don’t ignore information that contradicts the negative connotations of the situation
• Avoid the tendency to take an extreme view of something as good or bad
• Don’t take responsibility for other actions or opinions of you that you have no control over (this is especially important when dealing with clients, remember you didn’t cause their issue, you are there to help them deal with it)
• Recognise that feelings aren’t fact
• Avoid making assumptions about others’ thoughts and feelings without evidence
• Self-awareness – recognise what causes you stress and what feeds your emotional wellbeing
• Understand change – be aware that you cannot control everything but you can control the impact change has on you, recognise change can be positive and lead to better decisions. Testing and exploring the change rather than making snap judgments can help you understand the change, the impact on you and how you need to adapt.
• Set goals – little goals that are achievable and realistic can help you feel more in control and help move you in the direction you want to go.
• Mental breaks – use breathing exercises, spend five minutes stretching and reflect of positive elements of the day.
• Take action – face issues rather than burying your feelings and hoping they will go away.
• Maintain perspective – look beyond the current issue and concentrate on the things in your control; how does it fit in with everything else going on? Is it really a smaller issue? How does it impact the long term?
• Daily habits count – sleeping and eating well, alongside regular exercise help keep stress levels low. Spend regular time outdoors. Book in time to check in on your mental health.
• Make informed decisions – look at all the evidence and use your problem solving skills to debunk an issue. You can also deconstruct and reconstruct issues so they are manageable.

Studying and entering the legal profession can be daunting. Remember why you started law in the first place, look at what drives you and where you want to be. If the situation isn’t working, look at alternative ways to achieve your goals. Once a decision has been made it doesn’t have to last forever.
5 Ways to Wellbeing

The New Zealand Mental Health Foundation

1 Give

YOUR TIME. YOUR WORDS. YOUR PRESENCE

Giving is more than just the sharing of material things with others. It is about cultivating a spirit of generosity and promoting active participation in social and community life. Volunteering and community involvement has been strongly linked with positive feelings and functioning. Helping others, sharing one’s skills and resources, and behaviours that promote a sense of purpose and team orientation have been found to help increase self-worth and produce a positive emotional effect. Giving is important for all age groups. It helps develop strong social cognition in children, a sense of purpose and self-worth in adults and particularly older people who have left the workforce and have time to offer.

2 Be Active

DO WHAT YOU CAN – ENJOY WHAT YOU DO – MOVE YOUR MOOD.

Research shows a strong correlation between physical activity and increased wellbeing, as well as lower rates of depression and anxiety. It is now viewed as essential for people of all ages and has been shown to slow age related cognitive decline. Evidence suggests that physical activity can increase self-belief, the ability to cope with difficult situations and provide a sense of mastery. It can also have the benefit of encouraging social interactions. Physical activity does not need to be particularly energetic to be of benefit. Moderate exertion three to five times a week can significantly reduce symptoms of depression, but improvements can also be seen from single bouts of exercise of less than 10 minutes.

3 Keep Learning

EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES – SEE OPPORTUNITIES – SURPRISE YOURSELF.

Learning, remaining curious and setting goals is important for all ages. For children, it leads to positive cognitive and social development, while for adults it can lead to improvements in self-esteem, social interaction and a more active and involved life. It has also been shown to be effective in preventing depression in later years. Adult learning in particular includes elements of goal-setting, which is strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing. This is particularly true when goals are self-generated, positively focused and align with personal values. Learning is more than just an activity for formal education. It can include any approaches to maintaining curiosity and an enquiring mind.
Ways to Wellbeing


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4. Take Notice

Appreciate the little things – Savour the moment.

Developing skills that increase awareness of what is immediately happening – both physically and mentally, within and around us – can improve wellbeing. Even short courses teaching simple techniques can enhance wellbeing for several years. Considerable research has been done on mindfulness, which has been shown to have positive effects that include heightened self-knowledge. It suggests that an open awareness is particularly valuable for choosing behaviours that are consistent with one's needs, values and interests. Alignment to one's values is also an effective way to ensure that behaviour change becomes embedded over time. Specific approaches that have been shown to enhance wellbeing include gratitude, forgiveness, reflection and the development of meaning.

5. Connect

Talk and listen – Be there – Feel connected.

Feeling close to other people and valued by them is a fundamental human need. Across all ages, relationships and participation in a social life are critical for mental wellbeing and effective buffers against mental disorder. Strong social relationships are supportive, encouraging, and meaningful, and a wider social network is also important for feelings of connectedness and self-worth. The key message of Connect is that giving time and space to both strengthen and broaden social networks is important for wellbeing. The wellbeing of individuals is bound up in the wellbeing of their communities, so actions that focus solely on individual, inward-looking benefits will not be as effective as those that stress the importance of fostering relationships with others.
In the competitive and stressful environment of a law degree, disappointment is inevitable. But how you respond is not. It may be tough, but learning how to grow from your disappointments will not only make you a better lawyer, but a better person.

Use it as a learning experience

Make sure you get feedback on where you went wrong. Chances are, you’ll learn something really valuable. You’ll also come to understand why you were disappointed, which will lessen the blow. Once you understand any mistakes you made, you can motivate yourself and ensure that you don’t do the same thing in the future.

Consider your successes

If you’re in law school, chances are that you’ve done well academically in the past. While this can exacerbate the disappointment you feel when you don’t do well, it’s important to reflect that in the scheme of things, you do have other successes. One bad grade may not affect your result for the course, and probably won’t hurt your GPA too much. And there are so many firms, and career opportunities to choose from - so not getting that one internship won’t hurt you in the long run.

Remember that it happens to everyone

It’s a tired cliche that many inspirational historical figures did badly in school - people like Winston Churchill and Einstein are examples that are regularly mentioned. But it really does happen to everyone. Your bad grades do not define you, as they haven’t defined these people. Not getting that internship could push you in the right direction to eventually getting your dream job. All you can do is try, try again.
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DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT

1. Study
FINDING MOTIVATION

Studying law can be tough, particularly when it seems like you’ve got endless things to do and no motivation to start them. Never fear, this is completely natural, we all go through stages where we feel like we just can’t be bothered. If you are in a bit of a slump, try the following techniques, they have worked for us.
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**STOP AND APPRECIATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR**

Mid-semester, deep in the depths of winter, it can feel like you've achieved very little, particularly when all that lies before you are essay due dates and examinations. We suggest that you look at studying law a little like climbing your own personal mountain (it can feel just as difficult). Instead of looking at how much you have left to claim, take a break, appreciate how far you've come and enjoy the view. Deciding to study law is an achievement in and of itself, it takes commitment and persistence. You're doing well.

**LOOK AT THE BIGGER PICTURE**

Deep in the trenches of study, it can be easy to lose sight of the bigger picture and your long term goals. This is particularly so if you're stuck studying a compulsory paper in a field of law you have no interest in. At times like these, it is important to keep your goals at the forefront of your mind's eye. Break these goals down into smaller, more achievable steps and tick them off as you go – that way you will always feel like you're moving forward. Remember, we all had to do Property Law.

**GET SOME STRESS RELIEF**

Stress does many things to us, one of which is to affect our motivation. Have you ever felt so nervous about how much you need to do that you spend your day watching movies in bed? That's stress. 'Active relaxing' can be a great way to combat stress – get outside with friends, go for a walk, play frisbee – any physical exercise will do wonders for both your stress and motivation. It may feel like you don't have time for exercise but trust us, you do.

**DO WHAT IT IS YOU WANT, NOT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE WANT FOR YOU**

It can be easy to get caught up in what it is we think we should (or shouldn't) be doing rather than what it is we actually want to do. If you're constantly doing things to please others or maintain appearances, it can be incredibly difficult to find the motivation to do something for yourself for a change. Make sure you have a firm grasp of what it is that you want. While it is important to listen to the advice of others, don't let anyone decide what courses you should be studying, what jobs you should (or shouldn't) be applying for or what extra-curricular activities you should be doing. Do what you are passionate about and interested in and back yourself to make the right decision (or learn from a mistake).

**BOUNCE BACK FROM DISAPPOINTMENT**

Law school can be a stressful environment where every assignment and exam makes it feel like your future is on the line. This environment can make it particularly difficult to bounce back from disappointment – particularly if you have surrounded yourself with successful people. Just remember this fun fact, Walt Disney was once fired from a newspaper where he worked for 'lacking creativity' and J. K. Rowling was rejected by a dozen publishers before someone took a gamble on a story about a young wizard named Harry. There are opportunities to succeed all around you every day, you won't see them if your head is always down.

**BRIBE YOURSELF**

If all else fails, bribe yourself. If you get an A on that essay, treat yourself to that clothing item you've wanted, if you finish all your readings tonight, why not grab dessert with a friend. It's incredibly important to take time out and appreciate your successes, big and small. Go on, treat yourself, you deserve it.
PRODUCTIVITY BOOSTING APPS

Eliminate distractions, de-stress your life, keep track of deadlines and study smart with these handy apps:

**Any.do**: If you keep your life in check with lists then Any.do is the app for you. Millions of people worldwide use Any.do to capture ideas, make checklists, keep track of anything and everything they need to do. Whether you are making a shopping list, keeping track of your daily errands, dividing the flat chores or keeping track of your full social calendar, Any.do will help you to manage it all. Even better, Any.do syncs with all of your devices allowing you to access your lists anywhere. Download it now and you'll be Any.do-ing it all in no time. [http://www.any.do/](http://www.any.do/)

**Self-control (Apple) and StayFocusd (PC)**: Are you finding it difficult to free yourself from the shackles of social media? Is your burgeoning social life distracting you from the principles of contract law? Well Self-control and StayFocusd are the apps for you. Both apps allow you to ‘blacklist’ certain websites and set a timer, blocking your access for a period of distraction-free study. Exiting the app, restarting your computer or even reinstalling the app won’t reverse it, until the timer runs out, you’re locked out. While there are many similar apps around, these are the best and, better yet, they are free! [https://selfcontrolapp.com/](https://selfcontrolapp.com/) - [http://www.stayfocusd.com/](http://www.stayfocusd.com/)

**Alarmy**: Lovingly described by millions of users as “the world’s most annoying alarm app”, Alarmy is a sure fire way to get you up in the morning. It works like your normal phone alarm, only instead of swiping to dismiss the alarm, Alarmy makes it a little more challenging with a number of different ways to dismiss the alarm. There’s photo mode (you have to get up and take a picture in a certain place i.e. your bathroom), shake mode (you must shake your phone to dismiss the alarm) and problem mode (you must solve a math equation), amongst others. Whether you’re up early for work, play, exercise or study, Alarmy is sure to get you up out of bed. It isn’t number 1 in its category in over 80 countries for nothing. Find it on the Google play store (for free) or iTunes (US$2.99).
**TrackTime:** We have all gotten to the end of a day and wondered where all our time went. Well TrackTime is the solution to this mystery. This handy app tracks everything you do on your computer and generates an ‘attention audit’ of sorts for you to review how you have spent your day. Not only this, it will present your computer activity in a delightfully rainbow-coloured timeline for your viewing pleasure. At the very least, this app is sure to wake you up as to how much time you spend on Facebook, Youtube and Stuff. Sorry PC pals, this one is only available for Mac.

**FocusBooster:** This handy app operates on the principles of the ‘Pomodoro Technique’. It’s all about focussing your full attention on one task for 25 minutes and then rewarding yourself with a 5-minute break. FocusBooster allows you to list everything you need to achieve and the app will keep track of time for you as you work through your list. This app combines the features of a to-do list with a time-management coach, we love it! https://www.focusboosterapp.com/

**Quizlet:** The go-to app for revision cards, if you are not using it already, you need to start. Quizlet has a number of handy features, from the basic revision card templates to games and challenges to help you learn. With the ability to sync across multiple devices, you will have no excuses not to study anywhere, any time. Pro tip: save yourself some time by searching quizlet by your course code or subject area – if you are lucky someone will have already done majority of the work by making a publicly available set. Just make you sure they are accurate and up to date. https://quizlet.com/

**FocusWriter:** Got a few essays to churn out? Maybe a dissertation that’s short a few words? Well FocusWriter will have you powering through it all in no time. If you need to write large amounts and want to do so in a distraction-free setting, this is the app for you. FocusWriter recreates your classic word processor environment but blocks out all distractions and menus (date, time, dock etc). It presents you with a simple grey background to type on but still has all the usual word document features such as spell-check and word count etc. Better yet, you can even set satisfying typewriter sounds for every keystroke.
While (some) procrastination is a healthy part of the study process, too much can affect your grades and place you under unnecessary pressure later on. If you find that you’re procrastinating too much, have a read of the following tips.

Get started

Getting started is often the hardest part of any piece of work. It is easy to overcomplicate and overestimate the difficulty of work, making it seem harder than it needs to be. When it comes to actually completing the work, this perceived difficulty can be a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts because your stalling means you end up short on time and the work becomes as hard as you expected it to be. Sometimes you just need to bite the bullet and get started.

Swallow the frog

Similar to the above is the concept of ‘swallowing the frog’. American writer Mark Twain once said “if you eat a live frog every morning, nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day”.

As Twain suggests, try and complete your hardest task on your to-do list first thing in the morning. Not only will this get it off your plate and stop you worrying about it all day, the sense of achievement will drive you the rest of the day. You might even discover that the task wasn’t actually as hard as you thought it would be.

Break it down

In the lead up to examinations, it can be disheartening and often a little frightening to think about the number of cases and legal principles you need to learn. However, if you break these down into sections or topics and focus on ticking these off one at a time, it will be much more manageable. Not only will this help you to appreciate how much it is you do know, it will get much needed and encouraging sense of achievement from ticking off these smaller sections.
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STOP PROCRASTINATION

Stop your perfectionism

Law students are notorious for being perfectionists, for refusing to hand in anything that is any less than perfect. While attention to detail is important and diligence is admirable, a line must be drawn. Rather than reword that paragraph again, consider whether your time would be better spent working on another topic or even sleeping or exercising. Stop sweating the small stuff, it doesn't need to be perfect.

Be accountable

Plan your day in advance, make it clear how many words you want to write or which topics you want to revise and (most importantly) hold yourself to account. Make hay while the sun shines, set goals and work hard towards achieving them. While there will always be times when life gets in the way, setting goals and gauging your performance against them will cut your procrastination dramatically. If you really want to be held to account, share your goals with friends or family and ask them to check up on you regularly.
“We’re all Mad here” - *Alice in Wonderland*

Artwork by Anna Foley, UoA Law Student
STRESS FREE EXAM STUDY

Study, in and of itself, can be a stressful process, it is the nature of the beast. This is only made worse if you are in a stressful environment or surrounded by distracting people. If you are looking to find some inner peace while hitting the books, follow these tips

1. AVOID STRESSFUL PEOPLE

We all know someone who is constantly in crisis mode, whether they need to be or not. It can be mentally and emotionally draining to be around these people, especially when you are working hard to keep your own life in check. While it is important to be there to support those around you, there is a point where you need to prioritise your own health and mental wellbeing. If this requires you to avoid stressful people for a while, so be it. There is no way you can help yourself or others if you are mentally, emotionally and physically drained from carrying everyone’s burdens for them.

2. DISCOVER HOW YOU STUDY BEST

Everyone studies differently, whether that’s by reading, writing, drawing, talking or any other way. Learn what works for you and choose your environment accordingly. Perhaps most importantly, find out when you study best. If you are best when you are fresh in the morning it might be worth grabbing an early night and catching the sunrise but if you work better while burning the midnight oil and there is nobody awake to distract you, sleep in. Experiment with what works for you and structure your day accordingly. Make sure those around you know if you need some distraction-free quiet time.

3. ORGANISE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Do not underestimate the impact that your environment can have on both your mood and your ability to concentrate. Everyone is different, find out what works for you. If you prefer absolute silence, it might be worth investing in some ear plugs. If you need some background music or noise, Spotify has a number of ‘focus’ playlists (try ‘Deep Focus’). If you’re toughing it out at home in the depths of winter, get cozy with a warm blanket and a nice candle. Whatever it is that takes you to your happy place, find it and use it.

4. GET ACTIVE

Countless studies have shown the benefit of exercise on our health and wellbeing but also our concentration and productivity. When the pressure comes on, it can be easy to think that you just do not have the time for exercise. However, if you make exercise a priority and find the time, you will find that not only are you more relaxed, but you’re also more productive. It can be as easy as kicking a ball around with friends, walking to university instead of driving or reading a book while walking on a treadmill. Any exercise is good exercise.
emotionally and physically drained others if you are mentally, is no way you can help yourself or people for a while, so be it. There requires you to avoid stressful and mental wellbeing. If this need to prioritise your own health you, there is a point where you there to support those around check. While it is important to be hard to keep your own life in especially when you are working to be around these people, mentally and emotionally draining they need to be or not. It can be constantly in crisis mode, whether We all know someone who is

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2. Discover how you

3. Organise your

4. Prepare for university who want to catch up or go out with you on the weekends. While it is important to make time to socialise, relax and catch up with friends, sometimes you need to prioritise your study and say no. Don’t feel guilty about saying no or jealous that you’re missing out, there will be plenty more opportunities to catch up and go out in future. Even better, you will feel great on Sunday morning.

5. Prepare for TOMORROW, TODAY Get organised, allocate your time and plan ahead what it is you need to achieve by when. Before you finish for the day, plan what you would like to achieve tomorrow so that when you wake up you can get straight into it. That way, you won’t have any excuse not to get into it straight away and with the time you save you can sleep in a little longer. Do your future self a favour and get organised early, they will thank you for it.

6. BE PREPARED TO SAY “NO” One of the most challenging aspects of the study experience is having the discipline to stay at home or go to the library to work when all of your friends are going out. This can be particularly so if you have friends who aren’t at

7. ALLOCATE EXTRA TIME There is nothing more stressful than feeling like you’re behind on your study. When you’re allocating time, be realistic, or even generous with your expectations. You may even come out the other side with time left over!

8. CLEAR YOUR DISTRACTIONS As difficult as it may be, sometimes you just have to turn the social media off. While it can be tough at first, not knowing what everyone is doing, constantly, once you get past this stage you will know a freedom you never thought possible. You will be truly amazed by how much you can accomplish without the distractions we have become so accustomed to. If you are finding it truly difficult to stay off Facebook, try the website-blocking apps Self-control or StayFocusd (discussed earlier).
A sure-fire way to increase your efficiency while decreasing your stress is to get organised. If you are struggling to keep your life in check, follow these tips and you will be an organisational pro in no time.

Use lists and prioritise

Lists are an important organisational tool; they make it clear what you need to accomplish and provide you with much needed instant gratification as you tick tasks off. Even better, they make sure you don't forget anything which is important if you are particularly busy. Pro tip: number each task by priority and tackle the most important or hard tasks first.

Plan your time

Plan ahead, structure your day and set yourself clear targets of what you want you achieve by when or how long you will spend on a particular task. This will help you stay on task and ward off procrastination. Make sure you include some breaks; nobody can work non-stop all day.

Understand how you work best

Experiment and discover how it is you study best and structure your day accordingly. If you find that you are more focussed and engaged in the mornings, grab an early night and start early. If you accomplish more in the wee hours when there are less distractions, go with that. Do what works for you – just make sure you are getting enough sleep in either case.

Minimise distractions

We are hardly reinventing the wheel when we say that minimising distractions will help you to achieve more. While it is important to keep an active social calendar, if constant notifications, tweets, snaps and messages are distracting you from your work, it might be time to detox. If staying off Facebook is testing your self-restraint a little too much, try website blocking apps like 'Self-control' or 'StayFocusd' (see earlier).

Be proactive.

Carpe diem, seize that day. If you plan to achieve something today, get it done. Any list or time plan is only as good as your ability to stick to it. At the end of the day review what you have done and what you haven't. If something is distracting you or impacting on your study, make a change. Be proactive, be the change you want to see in your study habits.
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Sleep is incredibly important to both our health and wellbeing but also to our ability to process and retain information. That being said, sometimes an all-nighter is unavoidable. While we do not endorse regularly forgoing sleep, the following are some tips that will at least make burning the midnight oil a little more endurable.

**CONSIDER WHETHER YOU NEED TO:** Sleep is healthy and it keeps you sharp between the ears. Before you commit to working through the night, stop and ask yourself whether that piece of work has to be completed tonight or whether it can wait until tomorrow. Only pull an all-nighter if you genuinely have to.

**BANK SOME SLEEP:** While you cannot always predict that you will have to pull an all-nighter, if you do know in advance that you’ll be burning the candle, make sure you bank plenty of sleep in the lead up. Not only will this help to keep you sharp in the wee hours, it will help you recover and function the next day.

**SNACK SMART:** Foods high in carbohydrates (e.g. chips, bread, pizza, pies) cause your body to release serotonin, making you sleepy and lethargic. Foods that are high in protein (e.g. jerky, nuts, hummus, yoghurt) will keep you full and give you sustained energy. Try and avoid lollies and chocolate which will give you an inevitable energy crash.
CONSUME (SOME) CAFFEINE: We all know caffeine is an obvious go-to for an all-nighter but it needs to be consumed in moderation. Too much caffeine will leave you restless, irritable and nauseous. As your body develops a tolerance to the effects of caffeine, try and avoid it in the lead-up to your all-nighter. Also, make sure you are supplementing your coffee with plenty of water.

GET MOVING: Try and take short breaks every 45-60 minutes to walk around. This will get your blood pumping and give your eyes a rest. This shouldn't be too difficult if you're drinking plenty of water.

LET THERE BE LIGHT: Darkness helps your body to produce melatonin (the sleep hormone). Make sure you are in a well-lit area - this will keep you awake and save your eyes because you won't have to turn the screen brightness up as much.

PLAN: Plan in advance the steps you need to complete in order to finish your work. Make sure you keep your end goal firmly in sight and tick off the tasks as you complete them.

Save administrative tasks such as footnoting, formatting etc for the wee hours when your mind is fatigued. Tell yourself it will be worth it in the end (it will).

Good luck!
We all know how important and healthy sleep is, but sometimes it can feel like you simply don't have enough time to sleep. This is particularly so around exam time where sleep becomes a trade-off to extra study time, a trade we all inevitably make. The following are the reasons why you should prioritise sleep, even when you are feeling the pressure spend all of your time revising.

**IT BOOSTS YOUR MEMORY**

Countless studies have shown the importance of sleep for our ability to process, retain and recall information. While you sleep, your body rests and your memory is strengthened as your brains connect the dots between events and emotions you have experienced throughout the day. If you are regularly depriving yourself of sleep you will feel sluggish and unmotivated and find it difficult to concentrate. Making sure you get enough sleep, whether that be 6 hours or 10 (we all need different amounts) is important for your memory, health and wellbeing.

**IT INCREASES YOUR AWARENESS AND ENABLES RATIONAL DECISION MAKING**

Have you ever had to make a quick or important decision while sleep deprived? It is far from easy. Those who are sleep deprived are less likely to make rational decisions, something that can have life-threatening consequences (there is a reason why they run those TV ads about not driving when tired). While the temptations is to sacrifice sleep for more study in the lead up to exams, this is actually the time when you need sleep the most – the short term study gains from missing sleep may well hurt your academic performance in the long run.

**IT HELPS MANAGE YOUR APPETITE**

When you are sleep deprived, the hormones that regulate your appetite are disrupted, increasing your desire for food while substantially slowing your metabolism. Furthermore, when you are sleepy your body craves foods that are high in calories and energy such as fats, carbohydrates and sugar while decreasing your desire for exercise. All of this is bad for both your health and waistline.

**IT KEEPS YOU HEALTHY AND MAKES YOU LOOK MORE YOUTHFUL**

A lack of sleep increases the levels of inflammation in your cardiovascular system, raising your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. This can lead to an increased risk of heart attacks, diabetes and strokes, particularly so if you have a poor diet. A lack of sleep also places your body under stress which can lead to degeneration of cells, making you look tired and aged. Sleep enables your cells to regenerate and your body to relax.

**IT FIGHTS SICKNESS**

A lack of sleep can be detrimental to your immune system, making you more prone to sickness, infections and illnesses. Inadequate sleep will deprive your body of the energy it needs to fight sicknesses such as the common cold and flu. Even worse, when you're sick, your body can take longer to create enough antibodies to fight diseases, meaning it takes you longer to recover. Invest the time in sleep now and you'll spend less time off study due to sickness in the future.
FEED YOUR BRAIN

11 FOODS TO BOOST BRAINPOWER

Nutrition plays a huge part in both our health and mental wellbeing – a healthy diet promotes a healthy mind. Nutrition is equally important when it comes to study; a balanced, healthy diet improves your ability to focus, retain information and reason effectively. Next time you’re in for the study long-haul, give yourself the edge with these study superfoods.

1 WHOLEGRAINS: The ability to focus and concentrate comes from a steady supply of quality energy in the form of glucose from our blood to our brain. Wholegrains have a low-Glycaemic Index (GI) which means they release glucose slowly into the blood, keeping you alert and avoiding ‘crashes’. Opt for ‘brown’ wholegrain cereals, grainy bread with seeds, brown rice and wholemeal pasta.

2 OILY FISH: Essential fatty acids (EFAs) are important for maintaining healthy brain function and for heart and joint health. Unfortunately, our body can’t produce EFAs so we have to get them from our diet alone. The most effective EFA, omega-3 fats, occur naturally in oily fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel and tuna. If you’re vegetarian, try linseed, soya beans, pumpkin seeds and walnuts.

3 BLUEBERRIES: Blueberries are not just delicious but also a ‘superfood’. Studies in the US have shown that a compound called anthocyanins in blueberries may be effective in warding off short-term memory loss making this a crucial snack for last-minute study.

4 ONIONS: Onions have long been revered in Eastern culture for their ability to improve brain function, memory and focus. Better yet, the compounds in onions, athocyanin and quercetin, have been shown to prevent Alzheimer’s disease.

5 PUMPKIN SEEDS: Pumpkin seeds are rich in zinc, a valuable mineral which is vital for enhancing memory and cognitive function. Better yet, pumpkin seeds are full of stress-busting magnesium, B vitamins and tryptophan, the precursor to the positive mood inducing serotonin.

6 CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES: Cruciferious veges (for those who don’t know… are a family of vegetables which include broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussel sprouts and bok choy. These veges are high in compounds called glucosinolates, a compound which is important for memory retention. These veges are even better for you raw!

7 DARK CHOCOLATE: Rejoice, dark chocolate is renowned for its benefits which include increased blood flow to the brain, increased alertness and clarity, all of which improve your memory. The darker the chocolate, the more benefits you’ll receive.

8 NUTS: Nuts like almonds, pistachios (yum) and walnuts contain high levels of essential fatty acids which help your brain to perform at its optimal. Even better, nuts are
high in iron and HELP DELIVER OXYGEN TO THE BRAIN which increases both your alertness and ability to retain information. Since nuts are high in unsaturated fat (the good fat) and calories, they make an ideal study snack by giving you the boost of energy you need.

YOGHURT: yoghurt contains billions of good probiotics, that is, good bacteria which help aid your digestive system. When good bacteria are in charge of your stomach, you will feel good, have more energy and digest food better. While yoghurt itself won’t boost your brain power, it will HELP YOUR BODY TO BREAK DOWN YOUR BRAIN-BOOSTING FOOD MORE EFFICIENTLY.

TURMERIC: turmeric, a common ingredient in many curry recipes, is a powerful anti-oxidant that has been widely recognised to help everything from fatigue to neurological diseases and (reports have shown) cancer. Several studies have shown the neuroprotective qualities of turmeric which help to prevent a wide range of neurological disorders such as narcolepsy, Alzheimers and brain tumours.

COFFEE: the caffeine in coffee causes neurotransmitters like norepinephrine and dopamine to increase, leading to enhanced firing of neurons. In short, COFFEE IMPROVES ASPECTS OF BRAIN FUNCTION SUCH AS MEMORY, MOOD, ENERGY LEVELS, COGNITIVE FUNCTION AND VIGILANCE. As with anything, moderation is key, too much coffee can lead to insomnia, nervousness, digestive issues and irritability.
When you’re ‘burnt out’ you are exhausted emotionally, physically and mentally. This usually happens as a result of overcommitment, and long term strain. Law degrees are long and arduous, and when you team that with a second degree, you can find yourself studying for an excess of five years. Even on a daily basis, with seemingly never-ending essays, take home tests and exam preparation, it’s easy to get burnt out. But there are some equally easy ways to make sure you remain motivated, and stay sane for another year of law school.

**Change it up.**
Simple things like changing where you sit in the library, visiting a new coffee shop, or catching up with someone that you haven’t seen in a while can make a huge difference to your perspective. New experiences can energise you, and prevent you from burning out.

**Spend time with ‘non-law’ friends.**
Your law friends are great, there’s no denying it. They give you their notes when you’ve been away from class, help you think tank your way through take home tests, and are always up to complain over coffee about how evil your lecturers are. But you are more than just your law degree, and sometimes it spending time with friends who think a tort is a type of dessert is the best way to remind yourself of that.

**Make yourself a priority.**
While it’s true that helping others is a great way of relieving stress, it’s also very easy to take it too far. Make sure that you set aside time to look after yourself, whether by treating yourself to your favourite food, reading a book, or catching up with friends. Setting aside study to do this is a great idea every once in a while too!

**Learn to say no.**
While it’s tempting, you can’t say yes to everything. If you know that helping someone, or participating in something, will push you too hard, it will benefit both of you if you say no. You prevent letting them down, and also burning out yourself.
1. It improves your memory
Regular exercise reduces both insulin resistance and inflammation, stimulating the release of growth factors – chemicals which affect the health of brain cells and the growth of new blood vessels in the brain. Furthermore, exercise improves sleep quality while reducing stress and anxiety, both common causes of cognitive impairment. In short, Exercise improves the ability of your brain to process, retain and recall information.

2. It reduces the risk of disease
The health benefits of regular exercise are well publicised, and rightly so. Regular exercise boosts your body’s production of high-density lipoprotein (good cholesterol) and reduces unhealthy triglycerides. This dual-effect dramatically decreases the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Exercise also helps to prevent: strokes, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, depression and certain types of cancer (amongst many others).

3. It boosts your energy
Regular exercise improves muscle strength and boosts endurance. This enables the body to deliver oxygen and nutrients more efficiently and effectively. The stronger your heart and lungs, the better your cardiovascular system will be and the more endurance you will have.

4. It lifts your mood
Exercise releases endorphins which help to improve your mood and mental wellbeing. Better yet, it also causes your body to release serotonin, a substance which improves your mood and alleviates symptoms of depression. If you feel like a challenge, set yourself fitness goals to work towards. Celebrate every time you achieve one of your goals or set a new personal best, this will help to keep you motivated.

5. It reduces stress
Exercise is one of the best forms of stress relief because the endorphins which lift your mood post-workout are also great for destressing you. Next time you're stressed
or worried about your university work, use that energy to motivate you to get active. By the time you get back to work you’ll have a clear mind and a greater focus allowing you to get more done.

6. It sharpens your focus

Studies have shown that exercise can help you to concentrate by raising your focus for two to three hours afterwards. Not only that, exercise will help you to sleep better, improving your concentration in the long-run. Long-term, regular exercise has been shown to prevent brain ageing and to ward off diseases such as Alzheimer’s.

7. It can be social

Exercise can be both social and fun. Joining a sports team is a great way to make new friends or spend time with old friends. Why not go for a walk with a friend rather than meeting for coffee (or better yet, get takeaway coffee to have on the go). You could even start a new fitness programme or challenge with friends, you’ll be able to support one another and keep each other focussed and committed.

8. It controls weight

Exercise (along with a healthy diet) is crucial to preventing excess weight gain. Physical activity burns calories, the more strenuous the exercise, the more calories you burn. If you burn more calories than you take in, you will lose weight, simple. Increasing your daily exercise doesn’t have to be marathon-length runs or relentless gym sessions, it can be as simple as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or walking to uni rather than driving.

9. It boosts your immune system

Regular physical activity helps your body to fight off illness by strengthening your immune system. This means you’re less likely to be struck down with colds and flus and lose valuable study time.
Exercise
Motivation

We all know that exercise is good for us and we should do it as often as possible. However, knowing and doing are two very different things. Sticking to an exercise routine is hard work, particularly when you are bogged down with study. To help you stick to your routine, here are 7 tips for staying motivated to exercise.

1 START WITH FRIENDS:
   Make plans to exercise with friends and stick to them. Not only will this make the exercise so much more enjoyable, having someone else to encourage you (and keep you accountable) will keep you on track towards your fitness goals.

2 GET INSPIRED:
   Pumped-up music, inspirational videos, famous quotes, do whatever it is that gets you in the mood to exercise. Here is a start courtesy of Francis of Assisi: “Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible”

3 JOIN A TEAM:
   Joining a team means commitment, commitment keeps you on track. Whether it’s a competitive rugby team, a social basketball team or a walking club, having other people relying on you being there will make it harder for you to find excuses. Even better, teams are fun!

4 FACTOR IT INTO YOUR DAY:
   If you’ve already planned and set the time aside, you’ll be much more likely to actually get out and exercise than doing it on an ‘if and when I have time’ basis. Why not go for a walk or run during that late afternoon period when you are feeling tired and sluggish – it will revitalise you for an evening on the books.

5 SET GOALS AND TRACK YOUR PROGRESS:
   Setting goals that are realistic, measurable and achievable is crucial to staying motivated. Keep track of your progress as you work towards achieving these goals. Not only will this give you immense satisfaction as you achieve these milestones, it encourages you to focus on how far you have come instead of how much you have to go. If you really want to be accountable, tell friends/family about your goals and get them to check in with your progress.

6 EXERCISE BASED ON HOW YOU FEEL:
   You do not have to lift huge amounts of weight at the gym or run marathon-like distances every time. Any exercise is good exercise, particularly if you’re busy. If you are having one of those days where you just cannot be bothered exercising, don’t. We all have those days. If you accept early on that there will be hurdles and stumbles along the day, you’ll be better prepared to deal with them.

7 REWARD YOURSELF:
   When you finally achieve a goal make sure you celebrate your achievement and reward yourself. Being able to have a few extra treats is definitely a benefit of exercising more. While you do not want to derail your progress with one huge blowout, little treats along the way will help to keep your spirits up.
HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

It's tough, we know: Asking for help can be one of the most difficult things to do if you are struggling with your mental health. It requires you to admit that you're vulnerable, that you need help and support. In a highly stressful and competitive field like legal study or practice, this can be particularly difficult, nobody wants to be perceived to be 'weak' or 'helpless'. What you need to understand is that asking for help shows anything but weakness and helplessness and it doesn't need to be that hard. The support of friends, loved ones, colleagues or mental health professionals can make all the difference when you're coping with depression and mental health issues.

reaching out
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Depression is real and it’s serious: depression is psychological illness

**“Harden up and stop feeling sorry for yourself.”**

Depression can make anyone feel weak and helpless. “Hardening up” and putting on a brave face is not dealing with depression. Nobody should have to hide depression.

What you should say: “I KNOW YOU CAN GET THROUGH THIS, I BELIEVE IN YOU. YOU’RE A STRONG PERSON AND I WILL BE WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.”

**“Come out with us, we’ll have some drinks, you’ll forget all about it.”**

A night out is not a cure for depression. Depression isn’t just a bad day, it’s a hundred bad days, all at once, with seemingly no way out.

What you should say: “I WOULD LOVE TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH YOU, I’M MORE THAN WILLING TO BE YOUR SHOULDER TO LEAN ON. MAYBE WE SHOULD

**“Grab coffee and catch up?”**

Although exercise can help to prevent mental health issues, it’s not a magical cure. Someone

What you should say: “I NEED A WALKING BUDDY. WILL YOU WALK WITH ME?”

**“Other people have it much worse than you do.”**

Someone else having problems does not make your problems disappear.

What you should say: “I’M SORRY TO HEAR THAT YOU’RE STRUGGLING. HOW CAN I HELP YOU?”

**“Life isn’t fair.”**

This is just downplaying the person’s issues and feelings. Yes, life may not be fair, but that won’t make them feel any better about their own situation.

What you should say: “I’M SO SORRY THIS HAS HAPPENED TO YOU BUT WE CAN AND WILL GET YOU THROUGH THIS.”

**“You just need to get active and get some exercise.”**

What you should say: “You don’t have to deal with this alone, I’m here for you every step of the way.”

“I know how you feel, I was depressed once.”

This will only make them feel like you’re downplaying their feelings and trivialising their struggle. No to person’s feelings are exactly the same and not everyone deals with depression in the same way. Remember, depression is more than a bad mood or a tough day.

What you should say instead: “I can only imagine what you must be going through, but I will try and understand as best I can.”

“What have you got to be depressed about?”

Depression isn’t always caused by a traumatic or sad event. Sometimes it just happens. This doesn’t make it any less serious, depression is not a competition.

What you should say: “I’M SORRY, I DIDN’T REALISE YOU WERE STRUGGLING, I’M HERE NOW, LET ME HELP.”

**“You’ll feel better tomorrow.”**

This isn’t fair and pressures a person who is already struggling every single day to find the light. Depression isn’t something that disappears overnight, it’s a constant struggle.

What you should say: “Just take it one day at a time, I’ll be here with you through them all if you need me.”

“What are you doing?”

What you should say: “I really miss you, what can I do to help?”

“Stop feeling sorry for yourself.”

There is a world of difference between feeling sorry for yourself and struggling with depression. People with depression can’t just stop, there’s no overnight cure, it’s a constant struggle.

What you should say: “I can see that you’re struggling and it worries me, what can I do?”

“What have you got to be depressed about?”

Depression isn’t always caused by a traumatic or sad event. Sometimes it just happens. This doesn’t make it any less serious, depression is not a competition.

What you should say: “I’M SORRY, I DIDN’T REALISE YOU WERE STRUGGLING, I’M HERE NOW, LET ME HELP.”

**“You’re being selfish.”**

The chances are that the person struggling with depression is already being incredibly hard on themselves. They don’t need you to cut them down as well. Remember, depression is not a choice, they aren’t choosing to do this.

What you should say: “I really miss you, what can I do to help?”

**“Life isn’t fair”**

This is just downplaying the person’s issues and feelings. Yes, life may not be fair, but that won’t make them feel any better about their own situation.

What you should say: “I’m so sorry this has happened to you but we can and will get you through this.”

**“You just need to get active and get some exercise.”**

Although exercise can help to prevent mental health issues, it’s not a magical cure. Someone
“YOU JUST HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT.”

Someone who struggles with depression is dealing with it, every single day. Saying this only undermines their efforts and can make them feel as if they aren’t good enough or should somehow be trying harder.

What you should say instead: “YOU DON’T HAVE TO DEAL WITH THIS ALONE, I’M HERE FOR YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.”

“I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, I WAS DEPRESSED ONCE.”

This will only make them feel like you’re downplaying their feelings and trivialising their struggle. No to person’s feelings are exactly the same and not everyone deals with depression in the same way. Remember, depression is more than a bad mood or a tough day.

What you should say instead: “I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT YOU MUST BE GOING THROUGH, BUT I WILL TRY AND UNDERSTAND AS BEST I CAN.”

“YOU’LL FEEL BETTER TOMORROW.”

This isn’t fair and pressures a person who is already struggling every single day to find the light.

Depression isn’t something that disappears overnight, it’s a constant struggle.

What you should say: “JUST TAKE IT ONE DAY AT A TIME, I’LL BE HERE WITH YOU THROUGH THEM ALL IF YOU NEED ME.”

“YOU’RE BEING SELFISH.”

The chances are that the person struggling with depression is already being incredibly hard on themselves. They don’t need you to cut them down as well. Remember, depression is not a choice, they aren’t choosing to do this.

What you should say: “I REALLY MISS YOU, WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?”

“STOP FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF”

There is a world of difference between feeling sorry for yourself and struggling with depression. People with depression can’t just stop, there’s no overnight cure, it’s a constant struggle.

What you should say: “I CAN SEE THAT YOU’RE STRUGGLING AND IT WORRIES ME, WHAT CAN I DO?”
Other Organisations and Services

National helplines:
- Youthline: 0800 376 633, www.youthline.co.nz
- The Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865
- www.mentalhealth.org.nz

Depression-specific:
- The Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757, www.depression.org.nz
- www.depression.org.nz
- www.keytolife.org.nz

Sexuality or Gender Identity:
- OUTLine NZ: 0800 688 5463
- www.ry.org.nz
- www.keytolife.org.nz

Specialist helplines:
- Are You OK (family violence): 0800 456 450
- Gambling helpline: 0800 654 655
- Anxiety: 0800 269 4389
- Shine (confidential domestic abuse helpline): 0508 744 633
- Quit Line (smoking): 0800 778 778
- Rape Crisis: 0800 883 300
- New Zealand Law Society (via Lifeline): 09 909 8750, email: face2face@lifeline.org.nz
- NZLS National Friends Panel: 04 472 7837, email: practisingwell@lawsociety.org.nz

Auckland University
University Health and Counselling
Level 3, Kate Edger Information Commons
2 Alfred Street, City Campus
Phone: (09) 923 7681 (day)
(09) 923 7681 (after hours)
Email: uhsinfo@auckland.ac.nz

Auckland University of Technology
City Campus  Health and Wellbeing Centre
WB219, level 2 in the Te Ara Poutama Building (WB)
55 Wellesley Street East
Phone: (09) 921 9992
Email: locumhcw@aut.ac.nz

University of Waikato
Student Counselling Service
Student Health Reception, Gate 1 Knighton Road
Hillcrest, Hamilton
Phone: (07) 838 4037
Email: student.service@waikato.ac.nz

Victoria University of Wellington
Victoria University of Wellington Health Services
PO Box 600, Wellington 6140
Phone: (04) 463 5310
Email: counselling-service@vuw.ac.nz

University of Canterbury
Campus Health Centre
UCSA Carpark, 90 Ilam Road
Ilam, Christchurch
Phone: (03) 364 2402
Email: counselling@canterbury.ac.nz

Otago University
Student Health Service
Cnr Walsh & Albany Streets
Dunedin
Phone: 0800 479 821
(03) 479 8212
Email: student-health@otago.ac.nz
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