

Anxiety and depression

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Beat the blues by building on key beliefs

In this connected world, more people than ever feel isolated, anxious and depressed. However, there are ways to gather the support we need.

An epidemic of anxiety and depression has grown as the connections we have with each other and the community weaken. As the demands of modern life build, anxiety and other forms of mental illness creep into more and more lives. Clinical psychologist and researcher Lyn Worsley, director of The Resilience Centre in Epping, has done extensive research in the area. She is the author of books *The Resilience Doughnut - The Secret Of Strong Kids* and *The Resilience Doughnut - The Secret Of Strong Adults*. Resilience plays a core role in the treatment of anxiety, depression and other



We're less connected in society and with our families and community. Photo: Fotolla

mental illnesses, Worsley says. In developed economies, anxiety and depression have grown as individuals have become more isolated. "What's happened over the past 50 years or so is that we're less connected in society and with our families and community," she says. "As a result, we're more vulnerable to mental illnesses such as anxiety." Everyone is anxious from time to time, but for some the feeling is frequent and all-consuming. It can result in panic attacks so severe victims mistake them for a heart attack. Worsley has developed a model, the Resilience Doughnut, to treat anxiety and depression. She says people can be taught to

recognise their triggers, and to build and reconnect with support networks that can help them cope. The inner circle of Worsley's doughnut model represents a person's three key beliefs about him or herself: awareness of their support circle (who I have); how they view themselves (who I am); and the degree of confidence they have in their abilities (what I can do). People who have strong positive beliefs in each of these areas are more likely to be resilient. The doughnut's outer ring represents seven external factors: ■ The "parent factor" - whether equal amounts of control and warmth were or are

given by parents. (For an adult, this might be the "partner factor".) ■ The "skill factor" - whether a person can work at something and feel competent. ■ The "family and identity factor" - the sense of belonging and acceptance within the immediate or extended family. ■ The "education factor" - the sense of being accepted within a school culture. ■ The "peer factor" - the connection a person feels with peers. ■ The "community factor" - active involvement in community groups. ■ The "money factor" - a healthy balance between giving to society and taking responsibly from it. "Having just three of those seven factors will give connections that give a person inner strength and resilience," Worsley says. "By focusing on the factors that a person has, and building those up, we can help treat a person's anxiety or depression." The Resilience Centre began 19 years ago and can help people overcome problems they fear are insurmountable. "When people are feeling disconnected from their world, we work with them to form greater connections and support networks and build up those external factors that exist," Worsley says. "This will help them face their difficulties and overcome their anxiety." "We adopt a solution-based approach, where we don't necessarily ask why a person feels anxious, but we look at the circumstance where a person doesn't feel anxious and apply those factors more broadly across their lives to help them feel more connected and resilient and develop their inner strength."

The Resilience Centre

Learning Resources

On the Resilience Centre website you can access learning resources which feature stories of hope, ideas to help build your mental health, and tips to help you to flourish through the adversities in your life.

Information
Topical articles and a glossary of psychological terms.

The Resilience Blog
Regular posts on popular and interesting topics written by the Resilience Centre's team of Psychologists.

Resilience Radio
Bite sized podcasts on interesting topics and personal stories.

All of the articles, information, blog posts and podcasts are free resources open to the public.

Book in today

The Resilience Centre offers the following paid services.

Face To Face Therapy
Peruse through the list of practitioners to find someone with expertise in the areas relevant to your needs.

Hot Topics
These informal evening seminars for the general community, are presented by experienced psychologists. They provide psychological insights into a variety of challenging life issues.

Group Programs
The Resilience Centre offers group programs which help you to develop strategies for, and maintain optimism through, difficult periods.

Online Programs
These seminars are videoed and recorded Group Programs and Hot Topics which are made available to attend online.

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