

Calm body & mind



Move your body

Movement can support mood, energy and overall wellbeing.

- * Walk between study sessions.
- * Stretch, dance or move to your favourite music.
- * Try an activity you enjoy – swimming, running, cycling, yoga or sport.
- * Exercise with a friend.
- * Get outside for fresh air, sunlight and nature.
- * Take a 10-minute movement break when you feel stuck or overwhelmed.

Remember:

Something is better than nothing.

Here are some simple ways to support your wellbeing during stressful times

University life can be busy. Balancing study, work, relationships and everyday life can sometimes feel overwhelming.

Stress is a normal part of life, but too much can leave us feeling tense, exhausted or overwhelmed.

Small, regular actions can help your body and mind reset.



Self-care

Fill your cup, not just your calendar

- * Make time for yourself – even 10 minutes counts.
- * Connect with friends, family, community and nature.
- * Make time for things you genuinely enjoy.
- * Practise self-acceptance, compassion and kindness towards yourself.
- * Focus on what you can control and set healthy boundaries – it's okay to say "no" or "maybe another time."
- * Ask for help when you need it.

Try this:

What is one small thing I could do today that might help me feel a little better?



Sleep

Most adults need around 7–9 hours of sleep. Good sleep supports mood, concentration, memory and energy.

- * Keep sleep and wake times reasonably consistent.
- * Get natural light during the day.
- * Create a relaxing wind-down routine before bed.
- * Reduce screens and stimulating activities before bedtime.
- * Keep your bedroom comfortable, dark and cool.
- * If your mind is racing, write down your thoughts or tomorrow's to-do list.

Try this:

Create a 30-minute "landing zone" before bed – dim the lights, put your phone away and do something calming.



Nourishment

Eating regularly and staying hydrated can support energy, concentration and wellbeing.

- * Eat a variety of vegetables and fruit.
- * Include wholegrains, high-fibre foods and protein where possible.
- * Drink water regularly and try not to skip meals when you're busy.
- * Enjoy foods you like – avoid an "all or nothing" approach.
- * Be mindful of excess caffeine and alcohol, particularly around bedtime.

Student tip:

Keep easy options available for busy days, such as fruit, yoghurt, nuts, eggs, sandwiches or leftovers.

Breathe

When we're stressed, breathing can become faster and shallower. Slow, comfortable breathing can help you settle.

Belly breathing · for calm

Breathe slowly through your nose, allowing your belly to gently expand. Slowly breathe out. Continue for 1–2 minutes.

Longer exhale · for winding down

Inhale 4 → Exhale 6
Repeat gently for 1–2 minutes.

There is no perfect breathing pattern. Choose what feels comfortable for you.

Mindfulness

Come back to the present moment

Try 5–4–3–2–1 Grounding:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Gently notice each sensation and bring your attention back to the present moment.

5-minute reset

Feeling overwhelmed? Take five minutes to:

- 1 **BREATHE** – Slow your breathing.
- 2 **MOVE** – Stretch or walk.
- 3 **NOTICE** – Focus on what you can see, hear and feel.
- 4 **NOURISH** – Have some water or a snack.
- 5 **CHOOSE** – Ask: “What’s the next small thing I need to do?”

Small steps count.

Explore more

Beyond Blue — Relaxation & Breathing Exercises

Guided breathing, mindfulness, visualisation and relaxation exercises.
beyondblue.org.au

Smiling Mind

Free mindfulness resources and guided practices, including formal and everyday mindfulness.
smilingmind.com.au

Sleep Health Foundation

Evidence-based information and practical tips for improving sleep habits and sleep health.
sleephealthfoundation.org.au

Yoga with Adriene

Free yoga and movement practices suitable for different levels and needs.
youtube.com/@yogawithadriene

Nutrition Australia

Practical information about healthy eating, nutrition and fibre.
nutritionaustralia.org

When you need extra support

You don't have to manage things on your own. If you're experiencing challenges with your mental health or wellbeing, support is available. SCU offers a range of support services, including counselling and 24/7 mental health and crisis support.



SCU counselling

For more information about our SCU counselling service, please visit:

Appointments - Southern Cross University

Scan the code, or call 1800 72 4357 (Option 3)



24/7 crisis support

For mental health support 24/7 and crisis support:

After-hours and crisis support – Southern Cross University

Scan the code for after-hours and crisis contacts