



SMHFA ONLINE REFRESHER COURSE DISTRESS PROTOCOL FOR PARTICIPANTS

WE ARE SO PLEASED YOU ARE ATTENDING ONE OF OUR BLENDED ONLINE MHFA COURSES.

This is a difficult and stressful time, in Australia and around the world. Months of bushfires and physical distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19 have created anxiety, loneliness, and financial stress. Periods of prolonged stress and uncertainty can increase the risk of mental health problems.

Someone who is already feeling very anxious or unhappy might find that the course upsets them a little. It is best to do an MHFA course when you're feeling well, but even someone who is feeling great might be upset by thinking about some of these difficult topics. This might be because of a situation in their life right now, or something that has happened in the past, or for no clear reason at all.

The good news:

It doesn't happen very often.

Even when someone feels upset, they usually start to feel better in a few minutes. Within a few hours, those feelings will probably have faded away completely.

People generally say they are glad they did the course anyway.

BEFORE YOU ATTEND THE VIDEO CONFERENCING SESSIONS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR:

Let them know what you're doing so they are ready if you need some support.

If you find your mood becoming affected by the material you can use quick, positive coping strategies such as:

- relaxing and tensing your muscles
- letting your thoughts wander to pleasant topics for a few moments
- noticing your thoughts, your surroundings, and the way your body feels.

If you decide you need to stop the session, please tell your instructor. Use the private chat feature. They will want to follow up with you. It's important to us that you are well supported, so we hope you will be happy for them to get in touch by phone or email.

Reaching out to a helpline or a health professional can be helpful. A GP visit via telehealth, with a referral to a psychologist providing telehealth support, can also be an excellent next step.



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WHICH EMERGENCY NUMBERS?

Lifeline	13 11 14
Suicide Call-back Service	1300 659 467
Kids Helpline (for young people 5-25)	1800 55 1800
Headspace (for young people 12-25)	1800 650 890