

THE MINDFUL COLOURING BOOK

by
 **headspace**

Add a little
COLOUR TO YOUR DAY
PUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN THE PICTURE

headspace day is a national day of support for the mental health and wellbeing of all young Australians.

This year, we are using mindful colouring to bring our 7 tips to life in communities all over Australia, and we are encouraging people to share the small things they do to support their mental health.

Take part on **headspace** day by sharing your favourite tip for a healthy headspace or illustration on social media using #headspaceday.

Seven tips that add a little colour to your day

Young minds are curious, creative, adaptable and resourceful. Young people see the world through a different lens, and work hard to make the world better.

But life has its challenges. There are times when things are tough. Especially when you're dealing with problems with family, exam stress, bullying, relationship worries... the list goes on. This happens to all of us and affects us all in different ways.

If there's one thing we all know at **headspace**, it's that young people are resilient. Every young person has a different way of coping. Some chat to close friends, others need advice from a trusted clinician, others enjoy hobbies or exercise. It comes down to the individual.

Sometimes, it's about knowing where to start or being reminded of what you can do to manage your mental health and wellbeing. So **headspace** worked with young people from across Australia to develop 7 tips for a healthy headspace.

In this booklet you'll find illustrations and information on everyday things you can do to maintain your mental health and wellbeing and add a little colour to your day.

- 1 **Get into life** and do stuff that's important to you
- 2 **Learn** new ways to handle tough times
- 3 **Build** close and connected relationships
- 4 **Eat** well
- 5 **Stay** active
- 6 **Get** enough sleep
- 7 **Cut back** on alcohol and other drugs

The illustrations were created by artists – Georgia Perry, Daniel Gray and Rachael Sarra (Goreng Goreng) – all from diverse backgrounds, including LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

Here's a little book just for you

Put pen to paper & add a little colour to your day. There are no rules, colour in between the lines, outside the lines, spend a few minutes or hours on end.

We hope that as you mindfully colour, you'll be encouraged to consider ways that you can integrate the seven tips for mental health and wellbeing into your life.

Get into life and do stuff that's important to you

Keep doing the stuff you love to do and the things that are important to you. It can help keep the fun in your life, give you a sense of accomplishment and purpose, boost your confidence and help you connect with others. Some of these things, such as skating, fishing or playing the guitar, might just be for fun, but other things like work or study can give you new skills and might help give you meaning.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Think back about what you used to enjoy when you were younger and give that activity or hobby another go.
- Idea #2:** Register for a free talk or event so you can find out more information about something you may enjoy without needing to commit.
- Idea #3:** Schedule time for fun. Each week, put time in your diary for the things you love to do. Notice what happens when you spend time doing the things that are important to you.
- Idea #4:** Set small goals – what's a small task you can do everyday, like a 15-minute walk or calling a friend instead of texting. It can be anything, the important thing here is to follow through.



FIND YOUR PASSION

Learn new ways to handle tough times

There are many different strategies that can help you to manage difficult thoughts and feelings. Things like meditation, taking a digital detox, listening to music, spending time outdoors or writing things down, are just a few ways that can help you handle challenging times.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Try to notice what your natural coping responses are. It might be taking time out, talking with friends or just trying not to think about it. Once you've identified what it is you naturally do, consider whether it's working for you.
- Idea #2:** Do some research. You could try articles or factsheets online, or listen to podcasts or watch videos. Try to stick to known mental health organisations. Trial a couple of different methods and activities to find what works for you. Some will, and some won't. That's all good for learning what works for you.
- Idea #3:** Download a mindfulness app and give it a go once a day. Breathing practices can relax your body and help manage thoughts and feelings. Controlling your breathing can help you slow down and adjust your reactions.
- Idea #4:** Share your coping strategies with your family and friends so they can support and encourage you when things are tough.
- Idea #5:** Speak to a healthcare professional to get some support in finding what might work for you. Sometimes it can be hard to make the change you want to. A health professional can help you to achieve your goals.



FEED
YOUR
MIND



Build close and connected relationships

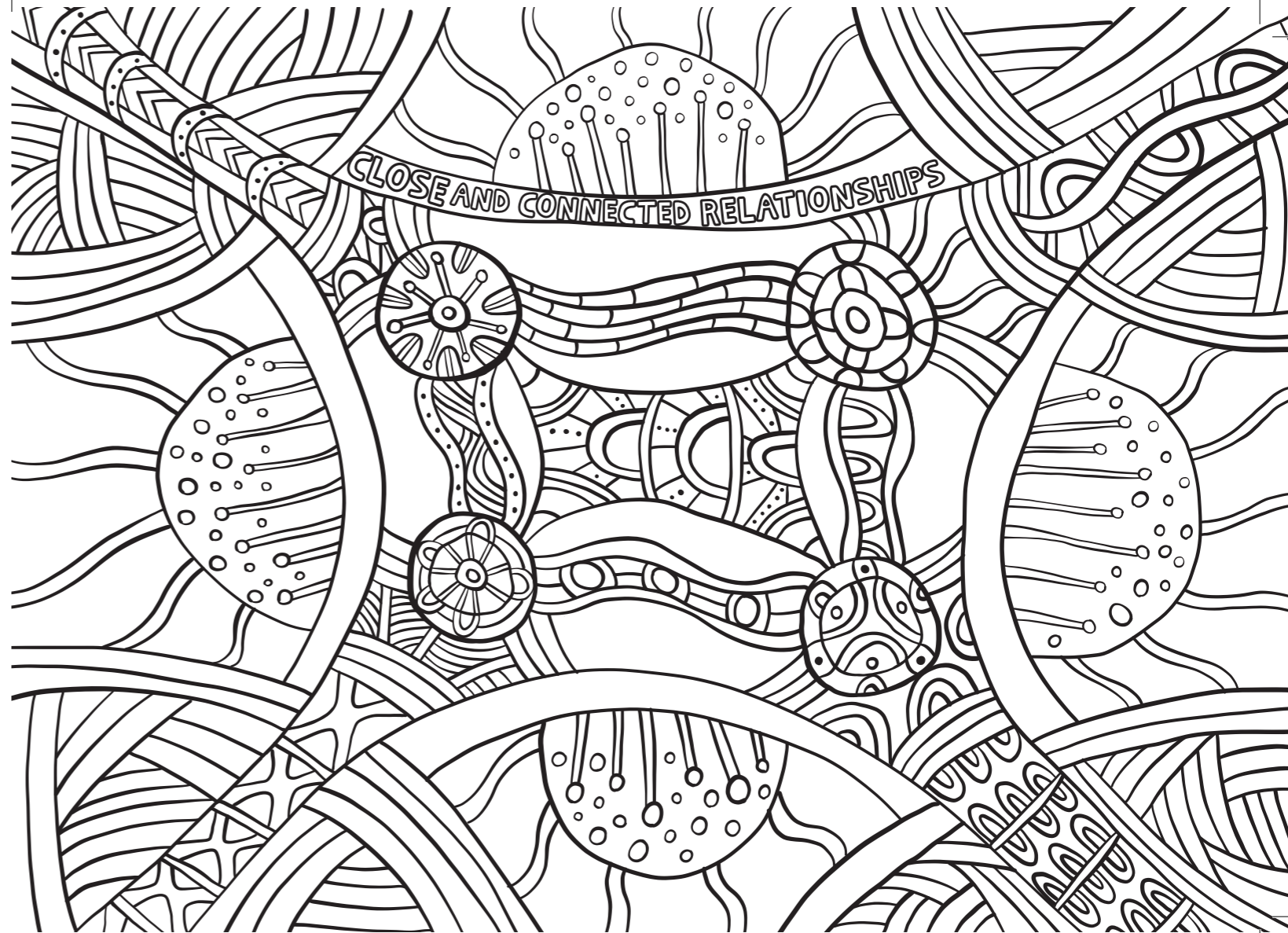
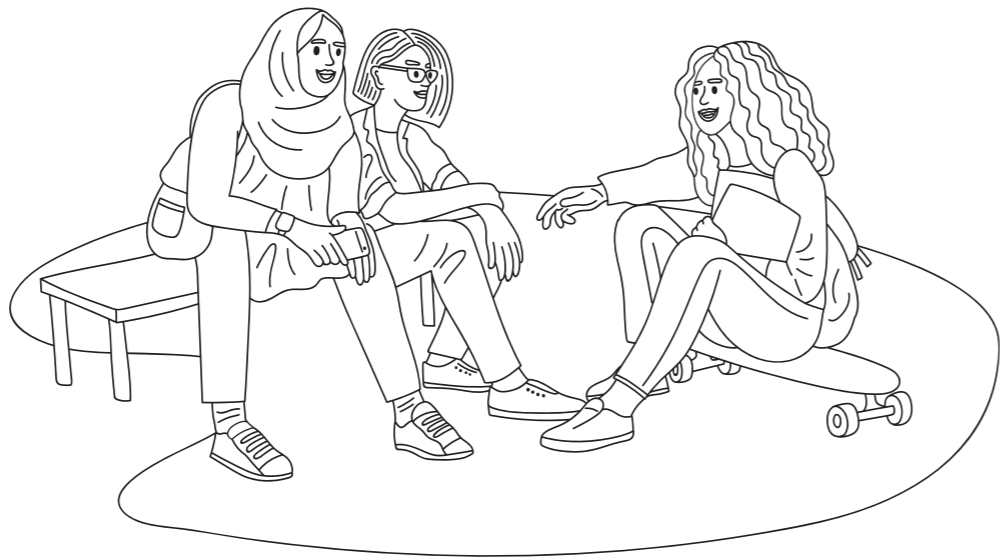
Feeling connected to others is an essential part of being human. Spending time with friends, family and people in your community can really strengthen your mental health and wellbeing.

Planning a catch-up with friends, joining a club or committee, or participating in a team sport or safe online community can help you feel connected and meet new people.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Focus on positive relationships that help you feel good about yourself, those where you support each other and where you feel you can be yourself.
- Idea #2:** Different relationships can bring different benefits, so try to keep a variety of people in your life, such as friends from work or school, teachers or family.
- Idea #3:** Go to birthdays, anniversaries and holiday get-togethers with friends and family.
- Idea #4:** Learn something new with a family member or friend (e.g. musical instrument, sport, hobby, art, building something).

SWAP SNAPS FOR CHATS



Eat well

When you think of improving your mental health, you may not always consider changing the food you eat. But there is a strong link between what we eat and how we feel. A poor diet can make you feel sluggish, low and increase symptoms of depression and anxiety. But staying hydrated and having a healthy diet with a variety of fruit, veggies, nuts and whole grains can actually improve mental health.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Make small changes that are easy to stick to. Start by swapping an unhealthy afternoon snack for a healthy one, like a piece of fruit or a handful of nuts.
- Idea #2:** Try going to the supermarket twice a week to ensure that you have healthy food at home. You are then less likely to be caught without healthy food at home when you are feeling tired or down. Notice how your thoughts and feelings influence what you eat.
- Idea #3:** Put time in the diary to do some food preparation each week – cut up the carrots and celery so they are ready for a quick snack or prepare small snack bags to take to school or work for the week.
- Idea #4:** Remember most things are OK in moderation so don't be too hard on yourself when you have a "treat" or something higher in fat/sugar.
- Idea #5:** Cook with a friend. Making it fun makes it much easier to stick to. You might choose to learn a new recipe each week.



Get enough sleep

Getting enough sleep is good for you brain and body. It improves your mood, sharpens your concentration and increases resilience. Reducing things that keep you from restful sleep – like noise or light that keeps you awake, or screen time like social media or video gaming – will improve your sleep.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Try reducing the amount of noise and light keeping you awake.
- Idea #2:** An hour before bed, switch your brain into rest mode by doing passive stuff, like reading rather than active stuff, like social media or video games.
- Idea #3:** Avoid or limit substances that can affect your sleep, such as caffeine and alcohol.
- Idea #4:** If you're waking up in the middle of the night, it can be easy to stress out. The most helpful thing to do is find a way to be restful while awake, such as meditation or reading.



Cut back on alcohol and other drugs

Alcohol and other drugs may feel like they help you to manage hard times in the short-term but remember they can interfere with your mental health and make you feel much worse in the long run. Curbing the amount of alcohol and other drugs that you use – or avoiding alcohol and drugs altogether – will help you manage your emotions better and improve your wellbeing.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** Write down how much you drink or use drugs each week, reflect on how this impacts your behaviour, including your sleeping and eating patterns. Think about how much money you are spending. Realising how much drugs or alcohol is part of your life will help you find ways to cut back.
- Idea #2:** Start with an alcohol or drug-free day and then build up to two days a week and so on. Starting slow can help you reset over the short and long-term. Be patient. Your first attempt at cutting down might not work how you planned.
- Idea #3:** Sign up to a challenge to help reduce your use (e.g. Febfast, Dry July, Hello Sunday Morning).
- Idea #4:** Find ways to socialise where alcohol or drugs aren't available, such as going for brunch, meeting friends for a game of touch footy or going to the movies.



Stay active

Staying active can help you to sleep better, manage stress and boost your mood. Find a way to keep active that you enjoy and incorporate this into your regular routine.

Make time to take a break from study or work to do some exercise, whether it be going to the gym, kicking a ball around with a friend or just going for a walk.

Ideas to get you started...

- Idea #1:** If you start by setting small goals you will be more likely to do them, and this will help you feel more motivated.
- Idea #2:** Do exercise that you enjoy as it will be a lot easier to stick to it if you're having fun. Being active shouldn't be a chore!
- Idea #3:** Plan ahead and make physical activity a part of your routine. Things like having your workout gear ready the night before, setting an alarm or arranging to meet a friend can help you stick to your goals.
- Idea #4:** Look for opportunities for incidental exercise. For example, get off the tram, bus or train 1 or 2 stops early or walk up stairs instead of using the lift.





Seek help

Emergency assistance

If any of the content in this book has brought up issues or thoughts for you, and you're in need of immediate support or medical assistance please contact one of these services:

Emergency services – 000

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

Support services

If you're aged 12–25 and going through a tough time, you can speak to headspace:

headspace centres –
headspace.org.au/centres

eheadspace.org.au – 1800 650 890

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. We work in partnership with young people, their communities, businesses and a range of health professionals to support youth wellbeing.

Inspired by young minds, we work together to make a brighter future accessible to all, ensuring young people feel acknowledged and safe, and have the tools to address their mental health issues.

We're online, in centres, on the phone and in schools, delivering services in a way that's suited to young people and their communities.

For more information about mental health tips and support visit **headspace.org.au**

Thank you to our artists: Georgia Perry, Daniel Gray and Gilimbaa artist Rachael Sarra (Goreng Goreng) for their inspiring illustrations.



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National Youth Mental Health Foundation

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