

Self-Care Hub

Breathe

The NDIS process can be a long and difficult process. It can be a confusing and overwhelming time. To take care of yourself, think about how you can best keep yourself physically and emotionally strong when applying. There are many activities and strategies you can use and what works is individual - it can range from eating well, sleeping enough, practicing relaxation, such as breathing or yoga, exercising and allocating time for fun activities in your life. Think about what has kept you well in the past and be aware of what has made you feel stressed or unwell in the past. Ask yourself the question - what keeps me happy, healthy and safe? You may want to consider:



Take a Break - Check in with Your Body



Make a Self-Soothing Kit



Explore Meditation and Mindfulness



Join a Forum - Talk to Peers about our Experience

How are you feeling?



[Anxious](#)



[Angry](#)



[Hopeful](#)



[Depressed](#)



[Confused](#)

It's ok to feel anxious...this process can be stressful. Consider exploring mindfulness and other techniques to help you cope with feelings of stress or distress which the NDIS process may bring up for you. There are many resources that may support you:

[Explore meditation](#)

[Explore mindfulness](#)

It's ok to feel anger or disappointment sometimes. You might feel frustration at the process, anger if your NDIS application is rejected, or you feel your needs haven't been heard through the application and planning process. Remind yourself what you feel in your body when getting angry (such as clenching your jaw), so that you can be prepared with how to respond. Sometimes it can be useful to take a step out of the room, have a

drink of water or go to the bathroom and splash some cool water on your face. When your body is feeling calmer, you will find it easier to communicate assertively, and not aggressively.

Depending on why you feel this way, there are a few things that may be useful for you now:

[Meditation](#)

[Anger management techniques](#)

[5 Ways to handle Anger](#)

[Look at what other supports are available](#)

[Consider whether you need to make a complaint](#)

Good to hear you're feeling hopeful! Now is a good time to add some extra things to your habits of self-care.

Explore for yourself - what self-care goals do you have, that you can start working on today?

Explore your hopes and dreams - you can do this using the reimagine.today workbook.

[Download the Workbook](#)

Consider - is now a good time to take the next step with your NDIS plan?

Sorry to hear you're feeling down. Think about reaching out and talking to someone you trust. Some links you might also find useful right now:

[Information](#)

[Supports](#)

We understand this process can be overwhelming and confusing! Have you thought about talking it through with someone you trust?

You might also want to take it step by step with the support of our workbook.

[Download the Workbook](#)

Advice from NDIS participants

You can find the transcript of this video here: [Transcript-Advice](#)

Advice from your peers

- Be kind to yourself. Wherever possible, structure your day in a way that minimises your stress. If you know that a medical appointment means the rest of the day is unproductive or uncomfortable for you, plan to give yourself time before hand to prepare for the appointment and time afterwards to do something which comforts you.
- Have an advocate, carer, peer or support worker, who you trust and who understands what you want,

support you through the application and planning processes. They can assist you with gathering evidence and filling out paperwork, if you are anxious or stressed about that.

- Bring a support person or advocate to your access and planning meetings to help explain your situation and the support you want. A support person or advocate can make sure the planner understands your aspirations and goals. Speak to them before the meeting and tell them what you want them to do or say. You may want them to be there for moral support and stay silent. Or you may want them to prompt you if you forget something or lose track of what you were saying. Or you may want them to speak for you. It's best to decide this before the meeting so you can prepare together so they know your wishes.
- Ask someone to sit with you and go through all the information and help explain NDIS language and details.
- Talk to peer networks and others who have applied for the NDIS. Find out how the processes worked for them. This will help you prepare for the application process, as well as help you with tips that worked for them. It can be very reassuring to talk to people who have been there, and who understand what you are going through and what you may expect in future.
- If it's easier and less taxing for you to write than to speak, write down as much as possible and show this to the National Disability Insurance Agency staff or Local Area Coordinator.
- Arrange to have catch-ups with a friend, family member, peer, support worker, counsellor or psychologist to debrief.
- Getting a good night's sleep is important. Here are some websites with tips that you may find useful: <https://mensline.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MLA-Self-Care-Toolkit-Better-Sleeping.pdf>

Getting peer support

Getting peer support is important in self-care. Peer support occurs when people provide knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help to each other. Peer support can be found through contacting the organisations that work directly with people with lived experience of a mental health condition that are [listed here](#).

Other NDIS and mental health peer support is available on Facebook. If you do not use Facebook or other social media maybe one of your goals could be to learn how. Facebook is one way to learn new things and make new friends.

Safe storytelling

Remember that you are the expert of your own life. Your lived experience makes you the expert in what supports you need to keep yourself well, and what can support you on your recovery journey.

As part of applying for the NDIS, you will need to share personal information about your circumstances and what services you think would improve your life. You may need to tell your story many times to different people - your GP, your Local Area Coordinator or a National Disability Insurance Agency planner, as well as the person you have chosen to support your decision-making. This may occur at each stage of accessing the NDIS (when making an access request and in the planning process).

Completing the reimagine.today workbook (or App) may reduce the need for you to tell your story over many times during access and planning. You can share your workbook with people who want to know more about you.

You may need to talk about how your mental health affects your day-to-day life, how it impacts you on a personal level, as well as identify what your support needs are on your best days and on your worst days. You may need to think back to when you have not been doing well and repeatedly have to explain that experience,



which may have been very difficult or even traumatic for you.

Sometimes you may need or want to go over the details of what you experienced. Some of the people you will talk to will be under time pressure, or seem to not listen or understand your story. If retelling painful or traumatic events of your life, this can be an overwhelming experience. This is why safe storytelling, and having strategies in place to manage the risk of telling your story in an unsafe way are important.

This important resource is available to help you learn more about telling your story safely: “Speaking Our Minds: A guide to how we use our stories” www.ourconsumerplace.com.au

Having a good GP

Having regular contact with your GP or other service providers can help you look after yourself. If you do not have one you could talk to your GP about creating a Mental Health Care Plan, which can help provide ongoing mental health treatment and care, including access to a psychologist. For more information about Mental Health Care Plans please visit the below website: www.health.gov.au

Other Useful Resources

[Mindfulness](#)

[Behavioural Activation fun and achievement](#)

[Wellways -Spirituality](#)

[Watching Thoughts](#)

[Think mental health - Recovery](#)

[Tolerating Distress](#)

[Grounding Exercises](#)

[Healthy Mind - Easy read Mental Health tool](#)