



navigating **DEPRESSION**

40 cards for building resilience,
mental health and wellbeing

Digital booklet



**Innovative
Resources**

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**A GUIDE
FOR USING
THE CARDS**



navigating
DEPRESSION



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Innovative Resources acknowledges the Jaara people of Dja Dja Wurrung country, the traditional custodians of the land upon which our premises are located and where our resources are developed and published. We pay our respects to the elders—past, present and future—for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and other First Nations peoples. We must remember that underneath this earth, upon which we so firmly stand, this is, and always will be, the traditional land of First Nations peoples.

FOREWORD

Navigating Depression is a wonderful resource for therapists and counsellors to use and for their patients and clients to enjoy. With great creativity and skill, the authors and illustrator have woven together a set of materials that can be used to prompt reflection and help to bring forth the natural wisdom and resources of the heart and mind.

As they explain, the cards can be used individually or in groups, with adults, children or young people, as a game or in therapy and counselling. They are wonderfully adaptable, and can stimulate story and drama, build co-operation, and start life-giving conversations that may have stalled years ago.

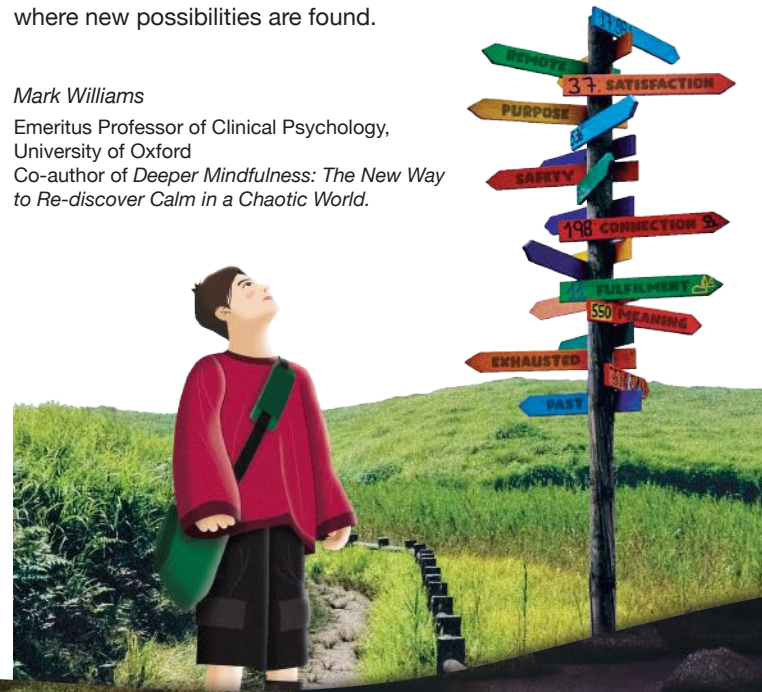
Depression and the mental health challenges that surround it, can so easily overwhelm mind and body, until it feels as if there is no alternative but despair. Hopelessness seems like the truth of things. We feel a failure or unloved. Research shows that we can't easily talk ourselves out of this state. But we can learn, little by little, to see that the negative things we say to ourselves are not the final word. There is a bigger truth - that there exists a place to stand from which we can see this darkness from another perspective. If we have the courage to look closely at what is happening, we see that what looked unchanging does in fact change from moment to moment in unexpected ways. Sometimes it's subtle, sometimes more obvious. It can take a lot of patience. Yet in the moment where we glimpse the possibility of change, there is sown the seed of a new hope. We gradually discover that we don't need to take our negative thoughts so personally; that we are stronger than

we think; and have within ourselves more resources, more wisdom and more kindness than we knew.

The work that Kate and Sharon, Sue and Karen have done in offering these resources will be a huge help in identifying those hopeful moments, and building on them to create a new life. May they be, for all who use them, a place where new possibilities are found.

Mark Williams

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology,
University of Oxford
Co-author of *Deeper Mindfulness: The New Way
to Re-discover Calm in a Chaotic World.*



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INTRODUCTION— STARTING THE JOURNEY

Welcome to *Navigating Depression*, a resource for supporting people to find a path through the challenging terrain of depression.

This booklet provides practical tips and ideas for how to use *Navigating Depression* as part of a broader toolkit for treating depression. Drawing on the metaphor of the journey, the cards are designed to help people describe their thoughts and feelings, reflect on past experiences and build resilience.

Each card includes practical, evidence-based, experiential exercises that can support people develop ways of working skilfully and kindly with low mood or emotional distress. They have been designed to encourage people to bring a sense of curiosity to their experiences and the things that have brought them to this point in their lives. The cards also invite people to notice their strengths and capacities, increasing the likelihood that they will be able to create a hopeful and meaningful plan for the future.

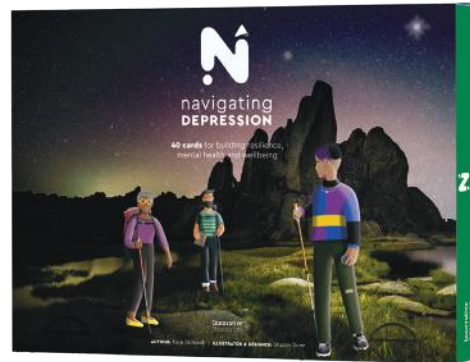
Before delving into the cards, let's spend a bit of time understanding depression and how it impacts people.

Signposts—what do we mean by the term 'depression'?

Depression is a serious mood disorder characterised by an ongoing, persistent sense of sadness and loss of hope. It can also manifest in physical symptoms.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) indicates that certain criteria must be met for a person to be diagnosed with depression.

<https://www.psychom.net/depression-definition-dsm-5-diagnostic-criteria/>



In summary, a person must experience five or more of the following symptoms over a period of at least two weeks, (but usually longer):

- feeling depressed most of the day
- loss of interest in most regular activities
- significant weight loss or gain
- sleeping a lot or not being able to sleep
- slowed thinking or movement
- fatigue or low energy most days
- feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- loss of concentration or indecisiveness
- recurring thoughts of death or suicide.

www.healthline.com/health/depression#types

In order for someone to be diagnosed with depression, they need to be experiencing significant distress and their mood must be impacting on their ability to function as they normally would.

While people focus mostly on clinical depression or major depressive disorder, there are several other common types of depression, including:

- dysthymic disorder or persistent depressive disorder (PDD)
- antenatal and postnatal depression
- seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- psychotic depression
- bipolar disorder
- cyclothymic disorder
- premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD)
- recurrent depressive disorder
- atypical depression.

www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression/types-of-depression
and www.uniquemindcare.com/7-common-types-of-depression/

Symptoms of depression

Symptoms of depression can range from mild to severely debilitating. Mild depression may be treatable with therapy and lifestyle changes, whereas moderate to severe depression may require medication or hospitalisation.

Depression can manifest in a range of ways and can affect the way people think, feel and behave. A person's thoughts may become very negative and self-critical. For example, they may tell themselves that they are worthless, useless or unlovable. They may feel sad, frustrated, irritated, overwhelmed or lost and they might stop going out, disconnect from friends and family, seem distant and distracted or stop doing things they

used to enjoy. Some people experiencing depression may also self-harm or become suicidal.

Depression is often accompanied by physical symptoms like excessive tiredness, headaches, nausea or weight changes.

While everyone experiences these things from time to time, when they are persistent and ongoing, they may be symptomatic of depression.

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression/signs-and-symptoms>

Depression, for some people, is a one-off experience. Others may experience periodic recurrences across their lifetime.

What causes depression?

While there is still a lot that isn't known about what causes depression, current theories suggest that depression can result from the combination of psychological, social and biological factors. It is important to remember that the causes and effects are complex.

A range of interconnected (biopsychosocial) factors can become significant triggers for depression and often include a combination of current life stressors and long-term issues. For example, the loss of a loved one, trauma, being in an abusive relationship, chronic illness, long-term unemployment, social isolation, extended periods of stress, relationship breakdowns and difficult transitions, can all be triggers for depression in some people. Drug and alcohol misuse can also cause, or result from, depression.

www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression/what-causes-depression



Social triggers for depression may include experiences of poverty, discrimination, stigma or exclusion. People living in marginalised and minority groups often have higher rates of depression.

Existential crises such as climate change, global pandemics, wars, loss of habitat and species, and humanitarian disasters can also place enormous stress on people and lead to a loss of hope, which can trigger depressive episodes in some people.

In terms of biological factors, a family history of clinical depression can also mean people may have an increased chance of having depression. Incidents of depression also increase with age and women are almost twice as likely to experience depression as men. Certain medications can also increase the risk of depression.

<https://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/causes-depression>

While depression has been linked to levels of certain chemicals in the brain, like serotonin and noradrenaline, it is too simplistic to say that depression results from a neurological 'chemical imbalance'. Antidepressants do target brain chemistry, but we have millions of different chemicals circulating through our bodies at any given time, so it is not as simple as having too little or too much of specific chemicals.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/what-causes-depression>

There is also a strong link between depression and anxiety. For example, the chance of having depression is much higher when an anxiety disorder already exists. Nearly half of those

with major depression also suffer from severe and persistent anxiety. People who are depressed often feel anxious and worried. Depression can also co-exist as a secondary diagnosis (comorbid) resulting from suffering caused by other mental health conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or an eating disorder.

Navigating Depression can be used to explore the various potential causes of depression as the cards include a range of open-ended questions and sentence starters that invite people to reflect on their experiences and history.

Depression in different cultures, generations and identities

It is worthwhile noting that depression is understood differently in different cultures. In some cultures, there is a stigma attached to having a mental health issue. In other cultures, the symptoms of mental health are interpreted in different ways.

Treatments for depression may also vary and it is important to be respectful and inclusive of different cultural approaches. For example, First Nations peoples may use a combination of contemporary psychological therapies plus traditional methods of treating mental health/illness. Both of these approaches can be valid and valuable. Ignoring or disparaging a person's culture can undermine the whole treatment process so taking the time to understand a person's culture is not only respectful, it is also important for supporting the therapeutic process.

Different generations may also have particular ideas about mental health, ideas that have been shaped by their history or social context. Being mindful of, and listening for, people's values and beliefs about mental health can help us to understand potential blocks to change.

When talking to people about their experience of depression, it is valuable to name and explore how socio-cultural forms of exclusion may be contributing factors.

The *Navigating Depression* cards have been designed to be inclusive of people from a range of different backgrounds. They include characters of various ages, genders and cultural backgrounds.

There are four suits in *Navigating Depression*. The first two suits include a range of simple questions and sentence starters inviting people to reflect on their experiences and beliefs without judgement. These cards can be used to open conversations about how culture, religion, society, family or other factors may have influenced a person's ideas about mental illness and health.



Mapping the territory—a few statistics

Here are a few statistics from the World Health Organisation (WHO) to help give an overview of the impact of depression worldwide:

- Globally, more than 264 million people of all ages suffer from depression.
- Depression is a leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the overall global burden of disease.
- Depression has the third highest burden of all diseases globally. Burden of disease refers to the total impact of a disease measured by financial cost, mortality, morbidity and other indicators. It is often expressed as number of years of life lost due to ill-health, disability or early death.
- The World Health Organisation estimates that depression will be the number one health concern in both the developed and developing nations by 2030.

www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression

The Black Dog Institute of Australia reports:

- One in five (20%) Australians aged 16-85 experience a mental illness in any year. The most common mental illnesses are depression, anxiety and substance use disorders.
- Almost half (45%) of all Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

People who have experienced oppression, marginalisation, violence or exclusion as a result of their race, gender, sexuality, culture, religion, disability are also at higher risk of experiencing depression. For example:

- In a 2021 Australian study, 60.5% of LGBTIQ people aged 18 and over reported having been diagnosed with depression in their lifetime, which is six times higher than the general population.
- Data from the latest Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (AATSIHS) found that nearly one in three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults have experienced high levels of psychological distress (which includes feelings of depression).
www.beyondblue.org.au
- An estimated 36% of people with severe or profound disability self-reported that they had mood (affective) disorders such as depression, compared with 32% of people with other forms of disability, and 8.7% of people without disability (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019d).
www.aihw.gov.au

Given that depression is such a common mental health issue, the *Navigating Depression* cards are a useful tool in any setting where mental health is being discussed. They can be used not only to describe the experience of depression but also to talk about potential risk factors and warning signs, and to assist people to build a repertoire of effective prevention strategies.



Recurrent depression

While some people will only experience depression once, then recover fully, others experience recurrences of depression over their lifetime. Having previously experienced depression can make people more vulnerable to further episodes. When people have a period of low mood, they may jump straight to the assumption that the 'black dog' of depression is tapping them on the shoulder again, signalling a relapse. They may have a 'here we go again' feeling of spiralling downwards. This 'prediction' can feel overwhelmingly compelling, causing people to ruminate and obsess on trying to solve the problem of their unhappiness.

This may lead people to organise their life in such a way that they avoid anything that might put them at risk of experiencing distress. Paradoxically, this can lead to an increased sense of isolation and a general reticence to engage in life fully, which may further increase depressive feelings. It can be the very attempts to get rid of these unwanted feelings that can lead people to get stuck in ever-deepening cycles of unhappiness.

Rumination, when someone thinks the same thoughts over and over again, is a hallmark of depression and a major risk factor for relapse. The person may fall into old habits of unhelpful thought patterns, which may include feelings of shame or blame, overgeneralisations and predictions that this will go on forever. They may get caught in loops of incessant thinking focussed on efforts to solve the problem of sadness, of what needs to be changed, or how things could or should be different. When rumination becomes habitual, it can have

a significant impact on mental health. Rumination plays a big part in many mental illnesses, including anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders and eating disorders.

The *Navigating Depression* cards have been designed specifically to have conversations about triggers, recognising the warning signs of recurrence, and understanding the important role of avoidance and rumination. They can also be used to help people develop positive and proactive strategies to head depression off at the pass.



Some common myths about depression

Even now, when we have access to wonderful resources and information about depression, certain myths persist. Here are a few:

Myth: *You aren't sick, you are just sad – snap out of it.*

Fact: Depression is a real illness and requires treatment. People with depression aren't able to snap out of it any more that someone with a broken arm can magically heal their bones.

Sadness is a normal healthy emotion that can help people process grief, loss and other difficult experiences. However, when sadness goes on for prolonged periods and impacts on people's capacity to function, it may become depression.

Myth: *Depression is always triggered by a difficult or sad situation.*

Fact: While trauma and loss can trigger depressive episodes, sometimes depression occurs even when things are going well in a person's life. Sometimes, depression has no clear trigger.

Myth: *Antidepressants cure depression.*

Fact: Antidepressants, like any medication, can be used as one of many tools to help treat depression. They work well for some people and not for others. Sometimes people need to try many different antidepressants to find one that is helpful. Often, they need to be combined with other therapeutic tools and lifestyle changes.

Myth: *Depression is genetic.*

Fact: While some people who have close family members with depression may have an increased risk of experiencing depression, researchers are still unclear about how strong the genetic component is. And like so many other illnesses—diabetes, heart disease and cancer, for example—while depression may have a genetic component, there are a lot of preventative strategies you can use to reduce your risk. Just because family members have it, it doesn't mean you will too.

Myth: *Depression is a sign of weakness.*

Fact: Like any other illness, depression can be triggered by a range of factors and often has biological, social and psychological components. It has nothing to do with a person's character.

Often people experiencing depression have internalised some or all of these myths. The *Navigating Depression* cards are perfect for talking about a person's beliefs about depression. They can also be used to discuss the beliefs, attitudes and approaches of family and friends to mental health and explore what is helpful and what isn't. As the cards include gentle, evocative illustrations, they are a great conversation-starting tool for people to use to talk to family and friends about what they are going through.

Taking a toll—the impact of depression

Depression can affect every aspect of a person's life, from their capacity to work (and the types of work they can do) to their relationships.

It can also have a significant impact on their physical health, causing things like weight fluctuations, increased risk of dying after heart attack, insomnia, weakened immune system, impaired ability to remember or make decisions, increased sensitivity to pain, fatigue and lowered sex drive.

www.healthline.com/health/depression/effects-on-body

Sometimes people carry shame or guilt about the impact that their depression is having on those around them—their partner, family, colleagues and friends. It can be helpful and empowering for people to understand that depression is an illness. Building knowledge and understanding (psychoeducation) about depression can help alleviate some of those feelings, for the person and their supports.

Treatments for depression

Seeking effective help to manage depression may involve the need for medical, as well as psychosocial, supports and interventions. The family doctor is a first port-of-call for many people experiencing depression. Increasingly, general practitioners are skilled at identifying depression and linking people to appropriate supports.

Depression involves both biological changes in the way the brain works as well as psychological changes, so it is often useful to combine medical treatments for treating depression (which act on the brain) with psychological approaches (which teach new ways to deal with thoughts and feelings).

Although antidepressants generally work well in reducing depression, they are not a permanent cure—their effects continue only as long as a person keeps taking the pills. As a result, many people prefer to use other ways to help prevent depression or recurrences of depression as medication doesn't tend to reduce the possibility of relapse.

(Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression, Second Edition, Book by J. Mark G. Williams, John D. Teasdale, and Zindel Segal)

There is a large and growing body of evidence that supports the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of lifestyle-based mental health care in the prevention and management of mental health issues. The new paradigm for understanding the relevance of lifestyle in both the causes and treatment of mood disorders is considered somewhat revolutionary in mental health and expands our traditional understanding of primary risk factors.

The recent 2020 Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) clinical practice guidelines for mood disorders represents a significant milestone in this process. These guidelines recommend that dietary, exercise and sleep improvement, alongside reducing or stopping smoking, alcohol and other substance-use, should form the foundation of mood disorder management, describing them as 'essentially non-negotiable'

(Malhi et al., 2021) <https://www.ranzcp.org>.

Several of the cards in *Navigating Depression* invite reflection on lifestyle factors that may impact on mood and suggest strategies for making lifestyle changes. The cards can also be used to discuss different treatment strategies.



Tools for the journey— different therapeutic approaches

Every person is different and responds to different treatments, strategies and approaches. As such, the *Navigating Depression* cards include a range of techniques for opening up conversations. They draw heavily on several evidence-based approaches and interventions including mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), behavioural therapy (BT), cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), compassion-focussed therapy (CFT), solution-focused therapy, narrative therapy, neuroscience, mindfulness, psychoeducation, positive psychology interventions (PPI), somatic therapies, nature therapy and ideas drawn from the post-traumatic growth field.

The cards also include a range of reflective, tactile, interactive, creative, mindful and physical prompts for naming and managing depressive symptoms.

Finding a new path—depression and recovery

When you're depressed, it can feel like you'll never get out from under that dark shadow. However, we have learned a lot about what helps people recover from an episode of depression and stay well. Even the most severe depression is treatable.

Being able to effectively navigate the varied terrains of life requires us to know our vulnerabilities and work skilfully and kindly with them. We are best prepared if we understand ourselves—our history, our triggers, our early warning signs—and work proactively to attend to our needs sooner rather than later.

Using the metaphor of the journey (see page 16 for more on this), this resource can be used to support people develop a set of skills to help them move through the experience of depression and into recovery. These skills include:

- the ability to be self-reflective and self-aware
- being proactive about noticing and addressing early warning signs
- creating healthy, protective habits
- being able to recognise when to seek support.

The cards can also be used to explore what recovery actually looks like. Creating a future picture of where you would like to be can be a powerful motivator for change.

Recovery will look different for different people. Use the cards to explore what life will be like when the depression is gone or is reduced. What will the person be doing more of? What will they be doing less of? What will other people notice about them? What new skills or resources do they have? Who is in their support crew?



How can the *Navigating Depression* cards help?

The *Navigating Depression* cards can help people:

Increase awareness that they are not alone.

People experiencing depression can feel very isolated. The cards can help people understand that depression is a common experience.

Increase empathy. Depression can lead people to be self-critical. Self-compassion comes through understanding and knowledge.

Gain perspective. As the cards are non-pathologising, they can support people to see that their depression is only one part of who they are, not all of who they are. While this strength-based, solution-focused resource doesn't shy away from naming the difficult experience of depression, its main function is to normalise what people are feeling and support them to find a way forward.

Build their emotional literacy and wellbeing toolkit.

By reflecting on the what, when, how and why of depression, it is hoped that people will leave any conversation where they have used these cards with a range of tools and insights that can help them navigate other challenges in their life.

Explore the gifts and learnings that may come from depression. The cards invite people to explore what they have learned about themselves during their experience of depression. What insights have they gained? How might they have grown?



PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CARD SET

Navigating Depression is designed to help facilitate conversations where people can speak honestly about what it's like to live with depression. This resource has been specifically created to help people find a path through challenging times by encouraging them to reflect on their experiences, increase their emotional literacy and build self-awareness. The end goal is to enable people to develop better strategies and tools to skillfully navigate their way through the terrain of distress, chronic unhappiness and depression.

In essence, this resource enables people living with depression to develop a roadmap for their life that is meaningful, purposeful and fulfilling.

The power of conversations

One of the first big steps in healing is to acknowledge and name the problem. There is something powerful about being able to accurately name something—it becomes more accessible and communicable; something that can be witnessed, examined, and 'externalised'. This can help create more space between the problem and the person so that the person can increase their sense of perspective.

Having conversations about depression can be challenging and uncomfortable. Sometimes family and friends avoid these conversations, fearing how the person experiencing depression may react. They may worry that they will make the situation worse. The *Navigating Depression* cards are designed to encourage and support respectful and constructive conversations about building resilience, mental health and wellbeing.

The metaphor of the journey

Navigating Depression uses the metaphor of travel or living life as a 'journey'. Metaphors are particularly useful when it comes to the difficult task of expressing feelings. Finding the right words to describe how we feel is seldom easy—especially when we humans so often feel many things at once.

The cards include images of travel, hiking, backpacking, dealing with weather and environmental obstacles. Describing emotions by comparing them to weather (gloomy, cold and miserable, under a black cloud) or travelling through a landscape (stuck in quicksand, surrounded by darkness, in a deep hole, going in circles, lost and directionless, walking through mud) enables people to externalise their feelings and allows them to talk about their experiences in more nuanced and concrete ways.

You might also draw on the metaphor of travel to talk about how to move through the territory of depression. You might ask things like: Can you get there on your own two feet or do you need help? What are the best tools for the steep inclines or the stormy times? What do you need in your backpack to survive this difficult patch? What if you took a bird's eye view? Metaphors are often more sensorial and grounded. You might invite people to reflect on what they see, hear, smell or taste.

Using the metaphor of the journey can be a great way to invite people to think more broadly about their experiences. It encourages people to picture life as an adventure with ups

and downs, peaks and troughs. This can create a space for reflection and conversations about the idea that they are in the middle of the journey, not at the end—when life is feeling oppressive, this can be helpful.

The words on the cards

Each of the 40 cards has a word or a few words on the front and either two questions, sentence starters, a strategy or a reflective exercise on the back.

In some situations, you may choose to only use the front of the cards. The questions, sentence starters and strategies on the back of the cards are additional prompts that can be used if needed, but you may find the conversation develops more naturally if you don't use the backs of the cards.

Each person will interpret the words or images in a slightly different way. They may also choose a card based on the picture rather than the word—this is completely fine. The words are simply there as prompts for a conversation—how the conversation unfolds should be led by the person. There is no 'right' way to interpret or engage with the cards.

The four suits

Navigating Depression is designed to represent the stages of a journey. It has been divided into four suits, which are indicated by different coloured text on the back of the cards (suit one=green, suit two=blue, suit three=orange, suit four=purple).

You can work through the suits consecutively, as if you were on a journey (the cards are numbered on the back) or you can work through a particular suit, depending on where people are on their journey with depression. Or you can ignore the suits and just spread the cards out for people to interact with however they choose.

Suit One: Entering the Territory

The five cards in Entering the Territory are designed to invite people to 'take stock' by reflecting on their life, particularly where they are at the moment and how they got there. What were the triggers that led them to their current position? Is this a well-worn path? Where is it heading?

In this suit, people are also invited to reflect on whether they feel they are heading in the right direction and how they might change course.

Use this suit to explore what people have tried so far to overcome their depression, who and what has helped, what blocks have they experienced, what habits or lifestyle choices have helped or hindered.

Reflecting on what has brought them to this point in time can help to highlight their strengths and resources. It can also create opportunities for insight and encourage people to notice and explore what has worked for them so far. This knowledge can help prevent relapse and future episodes of depression.

Suit Two: Mapping the Terrain

This second suit includes 14 cards that ‘name’ the symptoms or experience of depression. It includes words like sad, numb, scared, dread, stuck, angry, exhausted, obsessing and struggling. It also includes a ‘moments of light’ card that encourages people to notice exceptions—moments when the depression was absent or less prominent.

Each card has two sentence starters on the back. For example, on the back of the Exhausted card, the sentence starters are: ‘When I’m weighed down I notice that ...’ and, ‘I feel more energised when ...’.

The first sentence starter on each card invites people to describe the symptom, while the second sentence starter encourages them to reflect on what might be helpful to alleviate or reduce that symptom.

Suit Three: Tools for the Journey

There are 16 cards in this suit, each with a focus on supporting people to build a toolkit of strategies and resources to help with their journey through depression. The suit covers topics like Cultivating Calm, Observing Thoughts, Recharging, Getting Active, Nurturing Relationships, Seeking Help, Being Brave, Building Hope and Creating Helpful Habits.

There is a simple strategy or activity on the back of each card. These have been designed to be done immediately in the session or group. They have been carefully selected to represent a range of different therapeutic approaches and learning styles, so if the first strategy doesn’t appeal to the

person, encourage them to try some of the other cards in the suit. This suit has an emphasis on experiential learning; trying things out and applying new approaches.

Exploring different approaches and techniques for managing depression gives people an opportunity to expand and consolidate their coping repertoire to help them orient their way through the highs and lows.

Suit Four: Looking back, moving forward

This suit includes five cards that focus on supporting the person to consolidate their knowledge, skills and actions, and anything else that helps them alleviate the symptoms of depression and protect against future recurrence. In this suit, people are invited to reflect on their journey so far and consider, knowing what they now know, where they want to go next.

On the front of the cards, you will find the topics: Learning from Experience, Breaking the Cycle, Celebrating the Good, Finding Meaning and Moving Forward. On the back of the cards, there is a reflective exercise accompanied by a few questions. These questions are designed to support people to build a plan that is uniquely matched to their circumstances, personality, needs and journey.

About the illustrations

These hand-crafted cards have been created by designer and illustrator, Sharon Dunn.

The cards include images from different environments—city and country, natural and constructed. They also depict different types of weather, times of day and modes of transport.

Sharon has also created a group of five engaging and diverse characters who are travelling through these varied and sometimes challenging environments and experiences.

In suit two, you will notice that the characters are small against their backdrops, gently emphasising how the experience of depression can feel isolating and all-encompassing at times. In suit three, the characters are oversized, creating a sense that depression can leave people feeling exposed and vulnerable, and can take up a lot of space in a person's life. Use these visual cues to have conversations about how depression impacts on a person's sense of their place in the world.

While the cards explore the topic of depression, they are far from being depressing. They are meant to feel gentle, hopeful and inspiring, while also respectfully depicting the experience of depression.

As these cards are so evocative, people may choose to ignore the words on the cards and instead focus on the images. Encourage people to engage with the cards in whatever way feels natural for them.

Who are the cards for?

Navigating Depression is designed to be used by anyone in any setting, to open up conversations about emotions, mental health or managing challenges.

The cards can be used by counsellors, psychologists, social workers, teachers and trainers, and other professionals working in the human services and education sectors. They are primarily aimed at adults and young people.

They can be used in one-on-one settings with a counsellor or social worker and a client, or in group settings like classrooms, universities, or professional development for social workers. They can also be used by individuals wanting to reflect on their experiences and expand their toolkit of skills and strategies for managing life stressors.

Use the cards to normalise the experience of depression or to talk more broadly about suffering, dealing with traumatic or stressful life events or to support people to skillfully manage change.



THUMBNAILS OF THE CARDS

>> SUIT ONE: ENTERING THE TERRITORY



1. WHERE AM I?

What's happening around me?
What's happening inside me?



2. HOW DID I GET HERE?

What has brought me to this moment?
Has what I've been doing helped?



3. HAVE I BEEN HERE BEFORE?

What's familiar about this territory?
Is this a well-worn path?



4. WHERE AM I HEADED?

If I keep moving in this direction, where will I end up?
Where do I want to go?

>> SUIT TWO: MAPPING THE TERRAIN



5. CAN I CHANGE DIRECTION?

What other paths could I choose?
What would help me change course?



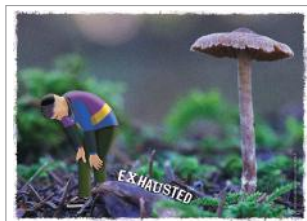
6. SAD

I know I'm down when ...
It's okay to feel sad sometimes because...



7. NUMB

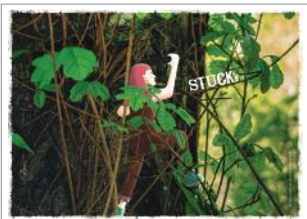
When I'm feeling flat, I no longer enjoy...
I start to feel more alive when ...



8. EXHAUSTED

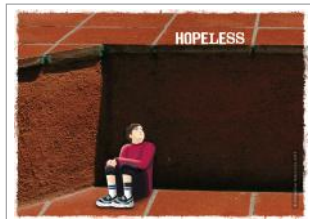
When I'm weighed down I notice that ...
I feel more energised when ...

» SUIT TWO: MAPPING THE TERRAIN



9. STUCK

I feel trapped when ...
I find it easier to get moving if...



10. HOPELESS

I know despair has the upper-hand when ...
Some things that help me feel more hopeful are ...



11. SCARED

The things I'm most afraid of are ...
I soothe my fear by ...



12. ANGRY

I lose my temper when ...
Some things that help me cool down include ...



13. DREAD

When I'm imagining the worst, I ...
I can challenge negative thoughts by ...



14. LOST

I know I've lost direction when...
I can find my way by...



15. STRUGGLING

Things feel unbearable when ...
When I let go of the struggle, even for a moment, I notice ...



16. OBSESSING

Over-thinking leaves me feeling ...
I can create a clearing in my mind by ...

» SUIT TWO: MAPPING THE TERRAIN



17. LONELY

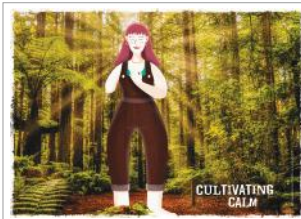
I feel isolated when ...
I connect with people by ...



18. INNER-CRITIC

My harsh inner voice
tells me ...
I could be kinder to myself
by ...

» SUIT THREE: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



20. CULTIVATING CALM

Imagine you are an old tree.
Stand, grow tall and feel the
ground beneath your feet.
Notice how calm and centred
you are.

Take a long breath in, then
release it slowly. Repeat this
several times.

Hold onto this grounded
feeling of calm as you move
out of the exercise.



21. BEING PRESENT

Bring your awareness to what
you are experiencing right
now. What are you seeing
and hearing?

Scan your body. What do
you notice? Describe
each sensation.

Observe how your mind
wanders into the past or
future. Gently bring your
attention back to this moment,
right here and now.



19. MOMENTS OF LIGHT

Even in the darkness, things
feel brighter when ...

I am uplifted by ...

» SUIT THREE: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



22. OBSERVING THOUGHTS

Find a comfortable place to sit, close your eyes and take three slow, deep breaths.

Observe your thoughts as they arise in your mind. Notice which thoughts feel most familiar. Which ones are helpful? Which ones feel harmful?

Now, step back from your thoughts. Let them drift by, like clouds in the sky.



23. ACCEPTING FEELINGS

Rather than avoiding challenging feelings, practice gently being with them.

Place one hand on your belly and one on your chest. Take a few slow, deep breaths.

Acknowledge any feelings by saying out loud 3 times:
'I feel...[insert feeling]
I allow myself to feel...
I accept that I feel...
I make peace with feeling... '



24. OFFERING KINDNESS

Bring to mind someone experiencing struggle or suffering. Imagine saying to them, 'You deserve to feel safe, healthy and happy'. What do you notice?

Now bring that same feeling of compassion and support towards yourself, letting it fill you up. Notice how it feels to be on your own side.



25. RECHARGING

Create a list of all the activities that nourish, rejuvenate or inspire you, like spending time with family or friends, outdoor activities, being creative, exercising, cooking, playing with your pet, travelling, spending time in nature, volunteering, relaxing or doing things you're passionate about.

Make a plan to do some of these activities this week.

» SUIT THREE: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



26. GETTING ACTIVE

Getting active is one of the most effective antidepressants.

Brainstorm a list of fun, simple and achievable physical activities you enjoy or would like to try. Choose 1-2 activities you will do this week.

If you find it hard to stay motivated, think about who could help. A friend or family member? A group?



27. PURSUING PURPOSE

List the following headings: family, partner, friends, work, learning, health, hobbies, creativity, spirituality, community.

On a scale of one to ten, rate how important each of these things is to you. Now rate how much time you actually give to each of these. What do you notice?

How can you do more of the things that matter?



28. GROWING STRENGTHS

Growing strengths and personal qualities builds resilience.

Imagine you want to cultivate gratitude. Bring to mind all the things you feel grateful for. Grow these feelings by lingering in them. The more you enrich and absorb the experience of gratitude, the stronger it will become.

Choose a strength or quality you would like to grow.



29. TAKING CHARGE

Depression can leave us feeling like we have no control over our life. Taking small actions or making decisions each day can help us feel more empowered.

Make a list of 3 small actions you can do today. Celebrate by ticking them off your list as you do them.

Notice the feeling of satisfaction you get from doing what you set out to do.

» SUIT THREE: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



30. BEING BRAVE

Changing your body posture can help you feel more courageous?

Think of people or movie characters who are brave. How do they hold their bodies? Stand up and copy their posture. What do you notice?

Now picture your body posture when you are feeling down. What do you notice?

When you want to feel brave, start by changing your posture.

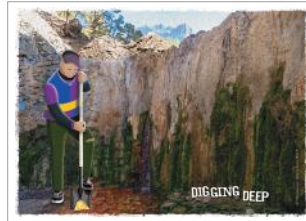


31. NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

Life is not a solo journey and we know that positive relationships help lift mood.

Make a list of the people or groups who encourage and support you. What's one simple thing you could do to show them your appreciation?

Who would you like to connect with more? Choose a person or group you will contact this week.



32. DIGGING DEEP

Getting where you want to go often takes grit, passion and perseverance.

Look back at the times you accomplished something that took effort and sustained commitment. What strengths or mindsets did you draw upon to help you stay focussed? What else did you do? How could you do more of this now?

Do more of what works. You've got this!



33. CREATING HELPFUL HABITS

Habits and routines can support or undermine us.

Write a list of your habits and routines. Which ones are helpful? Which ones would you like to change?

Are there any new habits you would like to add?

Choose a change to make this week. Notice what happens.

» SUIT THREE: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



34. SEEKING HELP

Asking for help can be hard, but having support and encouragement can make all the difference.

Create a list of five people, services or groups that could offer you support right now.

Describe how you would contact them and what you would say. What would you like from them?



35. BUILDING HOPE

Hope is something you can grow by reminding yourself of the good things you have accomplished in your life.

Make a list of things you are proud of.

What strengths and personal qualities did you draw on to help you achieve these things? Who or what else helped?

Put this list up somewhere you will see it often.

» SUIT FOUR: LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD



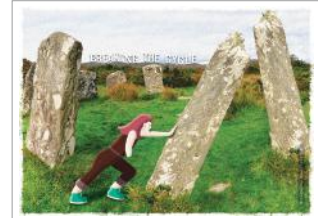
36. LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Life is full of lessons and learning opportunities.

Let's pause to take stock and reflect on your journey so far.

Looking back on your life, what are some of the biggest challenges you've overcome?

What did you learn that could help you in the future?



37. BREAKING THE CYCLE

We gain knowledge and insight by surviving tough times.

Reflecting on your past experiences, what things typically trigger a downward spiral in your mood?

For each trigger or warning sign, what strategy or resource could you use to help restore your wellbeing? Who could help you do this?

» SUIT FOUR: LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD



38. CELEBRATING THE GOOD

By acknowledging and celebrating life's highlights, we can build appreciation for ourselves and our experiences.

Think about some of your peak experiences, relive them in your imagination and let your memories fill you up.

Do you regularly acknowledge the good things in your life?
How could you celebrate more?



39. FINDING MEANING

Living a life of meaning and purpose can come from clarifying your personal values and putting these into action.

What things truly matter to you? What sort of person do you want to be? How do you want to grow and contribute?

How can you put your deepest values into action?



40. MOVING FORWARD...

Take a moment to reflect on where you want to be a year from now.

Imagine you are there now. How do you feel? What are you thinking and doing? What do the people around you notice about you?

Create a picture of this future (draw it, write it, make a collage, use photos).

Place it somewhere you will see it every day to inspire you!

CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR CONVERSATIONS

As most social workers, counsellors and teachers know, simple tools can be surprisingly powerful. This is something to take into careful consideration when using *Navigating Depression* since this resource is designed to encourage reflection and conversation about people's experiences, attitudes and emotions. These topics go to the heart of our identity, our relationships and the values, beliefs and stories that shape us.

Talking about depression can touch on buried thoughts and feelings that are very sensitive and painful so such conversations should be entered into carefully. The person themselves should always be able to determine what they want to discuss and when is the most appropriate time. Be respectful by not making assumptions, inferences or drawing conclusions – let the person lead the conversation.



Remember, whenever you are using any card set with people, ask yourself:

- Am I familiar enough with the cards?
- Is this the right time? Have we got enough time?
- How will I ensure that people feel as safe and supported as possible if powerful emotions surface?
- How will I ensure that people from diverse backgrounds or with different gender identities feel as respected as possible?
- How will we manage privacy and confidentiality?
- What will I do if I am triggered by the cards or conversation?
- What is my 'Plan B'?
- How will I follow up with people after the conversation?

It is important that the person feels they can engage with the cards voluntarily and articulate their own meaning. It may be useful to sit in silence for a while, giving valuable time for the person to reflect on the significance of the picture and words before they speak.

IF YOU BELIEVE A PERSON IS UNSAFE OR IS EXPERIENCING SUICIDAL THOUGHTS, GET SUPPORT FOR THEM IMMEDIATELY. SEE EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT SERVICES AT THE END OF THIS BOOKLET.

IDEAS FOR USING THE CARDS

This section of the booklet contains lots of ideas for using the cards. These ideas are not 'instructions'; they are suggestions for activities you may wish to use. Please adapt these ideas to your style as a practitioner or facilitator, and more importantly, to the needs of those using the cards.

Some of the activities presented in this section may not be appropriate for particular people, circumstances or settings. Always be guided by your own discernment and practice experience, and that of respected and experienced colleagues. With a small tweak from you (or a complete re-vamp) an activity may work so much better than implementing it exactly as presented in this booklet.

In addition, it is part of 'reflective practice' and the ongoing professional and personal development of any practitioner to be open to the feedback given by participants during or after the activities. Their comments will help you adjust the activities for next time.

When should I introduce the cards?

A resource introduced at the right time can be powerful. It can support people to describe their situation very quickly and it can open up fresh insights and ways forward in a relatively short space of time.

It is always important to listen to the person as they share their story or give their point of view. If introducing a card set might interrupt that flow, then it is best not to introduce it at that point. Always be guided by the person sitting in front of you and your own sense of what is happening for them in the moment.

The more you experiment with using the cards, perhaps in simple, small ways to begin with, the more confident you will become with the various activities, and the more tuned in you are likely to become about the time and place to introduce a tool.

As mentioned earlier, it is respectful to seek the person's or group's permission to introduce the resource. It is important to make it genuinely possible for them to say no from the start, or to bail out of using the cards at any point.

It is often advisable to establish a connection and get to know the person's situation a little first before introducing a card set in a one-on-one situation. Moments when the conversation seems to be stuck or stalled can be great opportunities to introduce a card set.

If you think you would like to have a conversation with someone using the cards, you might prepare a couple of potential activities you could introduce if the right opportunity arises. Trust your own judgement about whether to try them or not.

If you do decide to introduce the cards into the conversation, let people know that it is ok not to have a response to a particular card. Simply invite them to choose another card.

There are an endless variety of activities you can built around the cards. All of these will fall into two broad methods: 'Deliberate selection' or 'Random choice'.

Deliberate selection

This method involves spreading the cards out on a table or other flat surface and inviting an individual (or group) to look them over and make a selection based on a question or other prompt. Some activities may involve picking more than one card—or even a series of cards.

The cards can also be displayed on a wall, window or noticeboard. Spreading the cards out on the floor is another possibility. People can get a bird's eye view of the cards, walk around them or follow a line or meandering path of cards.

Activities that involve movement such as walking or shuffling cards can open up different pathways to learning, particularly for those who favour a kinaesthetic learning style.

Random choice

Activities using random choice bring a quality of serendipity into the room. It is amazing how meaningful and poignant random selections can be for people. Time and again people see synchronicity and significance in 'their' cards. Random choice activities can also open up unexpected learning and fresh insight because people interact with cards they may not have chosen deliberately.

Here are some random choice ways of getting the activities started:

- Place all the cards in a bag or container and invite participant/s to pick a card from the 'lucky dip'. It is important to give people the option to put a card back and chose another if they wish. This helps to keep people safe because it allows the person to reject a card they may not want to speak about at that time.
- Put the deck of cards in front of the person and ask them to 'cut' the deck wherever feels right. Take the top card of the cut deck.
- Shuffle and deal out three random cards to the person or each person in the group.

If you are working with a group you may want to try one of the following:

- Place a card randomly on each person's seat before they enter the room.
- Form pairs. Each participant randomly selects a card for the other.

Once people have a card or cards, invite them to reflect on what the card means to them. Alternatively, use any of the many questions in the activities that follow.



Starting with a spread of all the cards

As a simple starting point for a deliberate selection activity, you may wish to spread all the cards out on a table, illustration side up, and invite the person or group to look them over. Then you can build the conversation with questions like:

- Pick a card that catches your attention or stands out for any reason.
- What drew your attention to this card?
- What does this card mean to you?
- Pick a card that represents something you think is really important. Why?
- Pick a card that represents something you have never thought about before.
- If you are comfortable, pick one or more cards that you can use to describe what you are experiencing at the moment.
- Do you think most people may have thoughts or feelings like this at times?
- Which cards stand out most for you today or at this time in your life? Why?
- Which card reflects a challenge that you are experiencing at the moment?
- Which cards reflect things you would like more of in your life?
- Which cards represent things you would like less of?

- Which card represents a goal of yours?
- Is there a card that represents something that was important to you once, but is less so now?
- Which cards would you like to focus on for the next couple of days/weeks/months?

Sorting the cards into suits

There are a number of ways you could work with the four suits in the *Navigating Depression* cards (the suits are colour-coded on the back—see page 15 for more information about the suits). Start by breaking the cards up into the four suits. You may wish to ask participants questions like:

- Can you choose a card from each suit that best sums up your experience with depression so far?
- Which card from suit one catches your attention? Describe the card. What does it mean to you?
- Choose five cards from suit two that best describe what you feel when depression has a hold on you.
- When you are experiencing each one, what thoughts do you have?
- Do you experience one of these more now than you used to?
- Do you experience any of these less than you used to?
- When you are in the midst of these feelings, what helps?
- Are there times when these feelings are absent or less prominent?

- Choose three cards from suit three that represent things you would like to learn more about.
- Choose three cards from suit three that represent skills that you already have.
- Which cards represent things that trigger or deepen your experience of depression? If you start to feel yourself slip into depression, which strategies in suit three could help?
- Can you choose two cards you think are complimentary?
- Choose two cards that represent next steps you would like to take.
- Randomly choose a card from each suit. Place them down in front of you. What do they mean to you? If they had a message for you, what could it be?

As the cards are numbered on the back, you can also use them sequentially, working through from card 1 to card 40. Here are a few suggestions of ways to do this:

- Spread the cards out on the floor or on a table from 1 to 40, or simply order them by suit. Walk along them from 1 to 40, allowing your gaze to fall on each card.
- Reflect on each card and allow your thoughts to arise spontaneously in response to the words or image. Pick the cards that feel most significant to you.
- Place these cards in front of you as if they are a journey mapping your experience of depression from the beginning to where you would like to be. What stands out? What have you learned so far? What are your next steps?

- Order the deck of cards from 1 to 40. Work through each card over a series of conversations. Answer each question, respond to each sentence starter, try out each strategy. Once you've done this, choose the cards that resonate or that you find most helpful and place them in a prominent place (on the fridge, on a window sill) as a reminder that this is a journey and you may be in the middle moving forward towards recovery.
- Use a large piece of paper to create a visual map of where you've been and where you would like to go next. Draw landmarks and features of your travels. Place each card on the map so that it corresponds to how you have felt along the way.
- Add an 'X' to mark where you would like to be. This is the 'treasure'. What do you hope to find in the treasure chest? What tools would help you find it? What strengths, skills, insight and experiences have you had so far that will help you get there?

Art therapy, creative writing and journalling

Art and creative writing are powerful narrative tools. Even when a story is fictionalised, much is revealed about the narrator. Stories and art can reveal our values, hopes, fears and dreams. They also open up possibilities for reframing or re-storying.

As the *Navigating Depression* cards are designed around the metaphor of the journey, they are perfect for using as a story-telling tool. Here are a few ideas for using the cards as a creative therapeutic tool:

- Each day for a week, pick a card (deliberately or randomly) to reflect upon or write about in your journal. You may wish to place an image of the card on your desk, travel with it in your bag, put it on your fridge, or share it with your family.
- Write a list of all the different ways you could interpret the card. Choose one or more of these interpretations and write about them.
- You may wish to create a collage, write a poem or letter using a card as inspiration.
- Pick one or more cards that are meaningful to you. Can you find quotes that relate to these cards?
- Do some character profiling: create a backstory for each of the characters on the cards. Which character is the most similar to you? Which character is the most different from you?
- Pick a card that includes more than one character. Imagine they are having a conversation while the scene in the card is taking place. Write the dialogue in your journal.
- Do they each have a valid point of view?
- Do you agree with what they are saying?
- Can they learn anything from each other?
- Create your own characters and draw them.
- Pick a card and describe the scene. What is happening? What is each character thinking?
- Is there another way to interpret the scene? Could something else be happening? Could they be thinking something else?
- How did the scene come about? How did all the characters come to be there?
- What is happening just outside the scene that we cannot see? Is someone else present?
- Write about what happens next.
- Pick three to six cards and use them to tell a story. Now pick another card and change the ending.
- If you are supporting someone with depression, create a card with a message and/or image you would like to send to them.
- Which card represents something you would like a loved one to say to you?
- Trace an image that resonates for you and add your own words
- Create your own card or cards

Goals, plans and next steps

Here are some questions you can use for supporting people to work on their goals, plans and next steps.

- Is there one card (or two or three) that represents something you would like to work towards? Why?
- What is one step you could take today?
- Who do you know who might help you take this step?
- How will you know when you have reached your goal?
- What will you notice?
- What might others notice?
- Thinking of something that is about to happen in your life, which three cards do you think will be of most value to keep in mind?
- Can you create your own card that represents a key goal in your life? What image will you choose? Will you draw characters or use other images?
- What do you think will be key milestones and steps along the way towards your goal?
- What do you imagine you will be doing, thinking and feeling when you achieve this goal?



IDEAS FOR SPECIFIC SETTINGS

The previous section outlined a wide range of ideas for using the cards. We hope that mental health practitioners, social workers, teachers, facilitators, trainers, counsellors, parents, people with depression and those with other mental health challenges will find these suggestions useful. As mentioned earlier, feel free to adapt or modify these activities to the needs of the people you are working alongside.

In addition, we would like to offer the following pointers and ideas related to specific settings.

Family therapy

One of the reasons the cards were created was to provide opportunities for people with depression, their family and other support people, to have open and honest conversations about the experience and impact of depression. This might happen in a therapeutic setting or it might happen around the kitchen table at home.

It is important that the person with depression feels safe and supported during any conversation using the cards. Even if the person decides that a conversation with their family and support people would be helpful and positive, there are a few things to consider, including:

- Who would they like to include in the conversation?
- Will any siblings be present or just parents? Both parents?
- Are there other extended family members or friends they would like to invite?
- What do they hope to get out of the conversation?

- What they would like the conversation to focus on in particular?
- Are there any cards they would particularly like to use during the conversation?
- Are there any card they would like to leave out?

Schools

As mental health issues often emerge in the teenage years, this is an ideal resource for supporting conversations about mental health in schools. Use the cards to talk about different aspects of mental health, including things like:

- the impact of the media—including social media—on identity (including sexuality, gender or cultural identity)
- how negative self-talk can erode our sense of wellbeing
- the impacts of bullying
- strategies for staying mentally well
- how to support friends who are struggling with their mental health.

The cards can also be used in educating students about other mental health issues such as addiction and anxiety.

In school settings the cards can be a valuable tool:

- as part of the curriculum related to health and wellbeing, sociology and psychology
- in English classes as inspiration for creative writing, dialogues, character profiles (see page 33 for creative writing ideas)
- in art classes as inspiration for collages, paintings and drawings (see page 33 for art therapy)
- in sessions or workshops related to self-esteem and wellbeing
- in sessions with school counsellors and wellbeing staff
- in staff meetings or professional development sessions to help staff build their understanding of depression, its causes and impacts.

You could also leave a set on a table in a common area or library for students, staff or parents to ‘bump into’ informally.

It is important when using the cards in a school setting that activities don’t ‘out’ anyone—students or staff—as having depression. One way to increase the likelihood that this doesn’t happen is to focus the conversation on the broader issues rather than on individual experiences. It can also be useful to make mental health and wellbeing the focus of the conversation—depression can then be introduced as a type of mental health issue.

Tertiary training for social workers, psychologists, counsellors and teachers

In all likelihood, most social workers, psychologists, counsellors and teachers will end up working with people experiencing depression. Or they may well be living with depression themselves. It is important that professionals working in support roles with young people and adults have a good understanding of the risk factors and serious impacts of depression.

Navigating Depression can be used in tertiary educational settings as prompts to:

- dispel misconceptions and challenge myths
- explore risk factors, signs and symptoms
- explore treatment options
- support research
- discuss the impact of societal attitudes, social media, family dynamics and stereotypes on the young people and adults they may be working alongside, and consider how these factors may provide fertile ground for the development of mental health issues.

Self-care

While these cards have been designed to be used primarily with people who have depression, they can be used by anyone wanting to reflect on their mental health and general wellbeing.

While people may not have depression, they may have experienced extended periods of sadness or grief, negative or anxious thoughts, or have a loud and persistent internal critic. Many of us have experienced periods of low mood whether it be a patch of the blues, an addiction, or those seemingly inevitable times of uncertainty and vulnerability. The cards can be used to reflect on these things and consider alternate ways of managing challenging aspects of life.

Mental health is an important component of self-care. Use the cards yourself, in your team or in supervision to talk about how to recognise if you, or someone else, isn't travelling so well. What would you notice? What would help? The cards can also be used as prompts to develop an individual or team self-care plan.



ABOUT THE CREATORS

The lead author

Kate Skilbeck is a psychologist, training consultant and a certified mindfulness teacher. She has been practicing and teaching for over 30 years in the field of psychology and mindfulness-based interventions and has worked with hundreds of clients across a diverse range of presentations and populations.

Kate provides professional supervision for psychologists, social workers, mental health nurses and clinicians, counsellors, youth workers, school wellbeing staff, teachers, doctors, nurses, managers and CEOs. She also teaches the highly regarded 8-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program, and other programs, such as the Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression.

The illustrator/designer

Sharon Dunn has been a graphic designer for 25 years, a teacher of graphic design for 18 years and a musician and songwriter most of her life. As a passionate educator who has a strong interest in addressing mental health and social issues, she believes it is never too late to learn.

We also want to acknowledge Brent Seamer for his wonderful early design and conceptual work on this resource. Innovative Resources' in-house designer, Mat Jones, also made a significant contribution to the conceptual development of the cards.

The development team

Joining Kate in the development and writing of the cards and booklet were Sue King-Smith and Karen Bedford.

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Karen Bedford was the managing editor at Innovative Resources for many years. Karen has a background in writing for therapeutic purpose, resource creation, education, counselling psychology, coaching and group facilitation. She is the author of a book called, *The Uses of Sadness*.

The publisher

Innovative Resources is the publishing arm of Anglicare Victoria, a community services organisation providing child, youth and family services. We publish resources that enrich conversations about feelings, strengths, relationships, values and goals. Our resources are for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, ability or age. They are used by counsellors, educators, social workers, mentors, managers and parents. We also offer 'strengths approach' training and 'tools' workshops, both online and in-person.

www.innovativeresources.org

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For additional resources, please refer to www.innovativeresources.org or scan the QR code below.



EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

(in Australia)

For services outside of Australia, contact your nearest medical or health service provider, mental health support service or peak body.

| ORGANISATION | SERVICE PROVIDED | CONTACT DETAILS |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Beyond Blue | Works to address issues associated with depression, anxiety disorders and related mental disorders, and to reduce associated stigma. | www.beyondblue.org.au Phone: 1300 22 4636 Available 24/7. |
| Black Dog Institute | For information, research and resources. | www.blackdoginstitute.org.au |
| headspace | Provides free online and telephone support and counselling to young people aged 12—25, and their families and friends. | www.headspace.org.au Phone: 1800 650 890 |
| Lifeline | Provides all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to online, phone and face-to-face crisis support and suicide prevention services. | www.lifeline.org.au Phone: 13 11 14 Available 24/7. |
| Kids Helpline | Provides free, private and confidential phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. | www.kidshelpline.com.au Phone: 1800 55 1800 Available 24/7. |
| MensLine Australia | Offers free professional 24/7 telephone counselling support for men with concerns about mental health, anger management, family violence (using and experiencing), addiction, relationship, stress and wellbeing. | mensline.org.au 1300 789 978 |
| Suicide Call Back Service | A free nationwide service providing 24/7 phone and online counselling to people affected by suicide. | www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au 1300 659 467 |
| QLife | Provides anonymous and free LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships. | Qlife.org.au 1800 184 527 |

navigating DEPRESSION

Everyone experiences low mood or sadness from time to time, but when this mood persists, it might be time to seek support. The *Navigating Depression* cards have been designed to help people connect and share their experiences with others. Each of these 40 cards includes a hopeful and visually-engaging image, accompanied by a simple question, sentence starter or strategy.

'Navigating Depression uses the metaphor of living life as a journey. This metaphor provides a framework for people to share their stories, learn and find meaning as they chart their course through life.'

Author of the *Navigating Depression* cards, psychologist, Kate Skilbeck.



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