

# Mental Health in a Rural Setting

“There is no health without  
mental health.”

Dr Robert Favaloro



# Regular everyday people suffer mental health problems.

More than 4 in 10 Australians aged 16-85 yrs had a mental disorder in their lifetime.

One in six had had suicidal thoughts or behaviour.  
(John Brogden)

# A few facts re Mental Health ( MH )

Rates about the same in rural as urban areas but the support services differ

- Less support as one goes rural and worse as one gets more remote
- Rates of self-harm and suicide increase with remoteness.
- But- better 'life satisfaction' and feelings of wellbeing in rural areas
- This culture of 'self reliance' can make people reluctant to seek help

## More Statistics-

One national study found - Almost half of all young women ( 16-24 yrs old ) in Australia suffer an anxiety, depression or substance abuse disorder last financial year. Males - 30%

The level of distress on young people , especially anxiety, was puzzling experts around the world. It pre-dated Covid.

They questioned social media - it can drive a focus on body image . Also global concerns were a factor.

Teen Pt - Beautiful pts

# Youth and Mental Health

After shift workers, teens are the most sleep deprived people in the world.

Alcohol responsible for killing the most teens of any drug - ( binges )

Best chance if- eat a good diet ( eat together ).

- exercise

- have supportive adults and close friends ( a 'fan' leads to resilience )

Hobby, sport—Confidence and problem solving —resilience.

# Depression

One in Seven Australian adults use antidepressants daily.

Depression is now called the leading cause of ill health worldwide ( WHO ) but it only afflicted a tiny percentage of the population 100 years ago.

Hugh Mackay describes an explosion of loneliness over the past 50 years.



# Signs- someone might be struggling

- Mood changes
  - Nervousness
  - Trouble concentrating
  - Loss of interest
  - Feeling hopeless
  - Disinterest in the future
  - Social withdrawal
  - Unusual pains
  - Appetite and sleeping changes
  - Change in drugs or alcohol use
- (Dr W )



# Suicide

8 per day in Australia- 6 are men

Reasons- Shame, Relationships, Careers, Money, Addiction, Self-worth

- More women attempt.
- Women are better balanced across their life. For many men, if our career fails, our life fails..
- A most irrational act - but it's preventable.
- Asking "are you feeling suicidal?"- 000 and don't leave them.

# Self care tips

- Eat a healthy diet
- Have good sleep patterns
- Keep physically active ( 'Active Farmers' )
- Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbors
  
- Practise mindfulness
- Hobbies, Thankfulness, Alcohol

My experience with the drought!



A large crowd of people is gathered in a stadium, celebrating the Richmond 2017 Toyota AFL Premiers. The crowd is dense and fills the stands. In the foreground, a banner reads "RICHMOND 2017 TOYOTA AFL PREMIERS CONGRATULATIONS!". The stadium is filled with people, and the atmosphere appears to be one of excitement and celebration. The text "Fitness assists with Mental Health" is overlaid on the top half of the image.

# Fitness assists with Mental Health

Group fitness is not only a fun and social activity to get into, it's also an ideal tonic for mental health.

-The Muster 6/2021

# RUOK

You don't need to be an expert to reach out - just a good mate.

OK to ask- your conversation could change a life.

Listening to someone - letting them vent - can make all the difference

Professional support can be a relief for someone needing help

Check in after a few days - following up is very important

(open questions best)

We can't have too  
much-



We want our community to be  
happier, healthier and more  
connected.

-Volunteering a great start.



# Some of my rules

Honesty

Like yourself the way you are

Avoid Avoiding

Fear Nothing

We're here to give more than get

Envy no one

Be Thankful

Judge no one

Pleasures don't give happiness

Kids all need a fan club

Avoid keeping grudges

Be the change you want to see