

# Taking care of your mental health with Xero + Beyond Blue



## Understanding the problem

Running a small business is a highly emotional experience – from the joy of starting up, to the pleasure and pain of working with family and friends, and the often relentless day to day pressures.

As a trusted advisor to small businesses, you may find that you become their go-to person in times of need. Or, you too might be feeling the strain.

You're not alone. In fact, it's estimated that 45 percent of Australians will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime, the most common being anxiety and depression.

Although they can be as debilitating as a serious physical illness, less than half of those experiencing these conditions seek help.

We think it's time this [changed](#).



## Recognising the symptoms

How do you know if a client, employee, someone close to you or, indeed, you yourself are feeling anxious or depressed? While the signs can be tricky to spot, [here](#) are some possible symptoms:

**The physical:** Tired and rundown, sick all the time, churning gut.

**The psychological:** Excessive fear, feeling overwhelmed, guilty and frustrated.

**The behavioural:** Avoiding friends and family, not partaking in the usual activities, unable to concentrate.

If you think that you or someone you know may be experiencing anxiety or depression, [this simple checklist](#) is a quick, easy and confidential way to gain more insight.



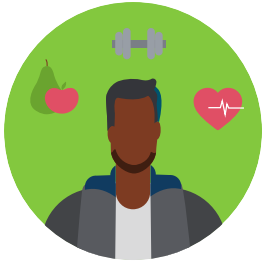
## Learning how to respond

There are a number of simple, effective steps you can take to ensure your clients gain the support they need:

- 1 Increase awareness: Have information on mental health conditions readily available in your workplace (e.g. keep [pamphlets](#) on your desk).
- 2 Start the conversation: Fight the stigma surrounding mental health by encouraging open, honest [conversations](#) with your clients.
- 3 Encourage them to seek help: Advise clients with mental health conditions to seek treatment and support early. Even if their situation feels unmanageable, [talking to a professional](#) will help ease the burden.

Source: Beyond Blue

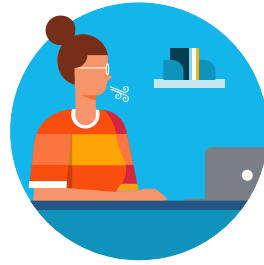




## Looking after your own mental health

No matter how busy you find yourself, your mental health should always remain a priority. Keep these simple checks front of mind:

- 1 Keep reasonable working hours: Long hours have been linked with excessive fatigue, burnout, irritability and stress. Follow this [guide](#) to learn how to [foster a healthy and happy workplace](#).
- 2 Maintain a healthy lifestyle: From eating a balanced diet to keeping active, a healthy lifestyle is key to both your mental and physical wellbeing.
- 3 Connect with your community: Nothing beats talking to others who've shared similar experiences. Find your community on the Xero Partners [Facebook page](#).
- 4 Ask for help when you need it: There are times when we all find it difficult to cope with anxiety and stress. No matter how big or small your concerns, it always helps to speak to a [professional](#).



## Try this stress-busting relaxation technique

Try this soothing on-the-spot exercise whenever you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed:

- 1 Sit up straight with your legs uncrossed, check your posture, and place your hands on your thighs.
- 2 Next, close your eyes. Inhale deeply through your nose into your abdomen for a long count of five seconds (your chest should only move a little).
- 3 Hold for a long count of two seconds, then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a long count of five.
- 4 Repeat for 10 to 15 cycles.



## Discover the calming power of meditation

Meditation can help relax the mind and body and also manage some of the symptoms of anxiety and depression. It's a lot easier than you might think:

- 1 Sit comfortably in a quiet spot. If you like, go ahead and close your eyes.
- 2 Breathe in deeply through your nose.
- 3 As you exhale, say the word 'One' silently to yourself. You might like to focus on the sound you make exhaling. Or, if your eyes are open, focus on an object, exploring its colours and textures.
- 4 Spend at least 10 minutes repeating this simple meditation, staying focused throughout.

### On to something?

You can find more [calming exercises](#) here.

If you're in need of further help, please call the [Beyond Blue Support Service](#) on 1300 22 4636.

Source: *Beyond Blue*

