

Press Release

Mental health in retirement: what you can do to stay healthy and happy

Retirement can be exciting – coming to the end of your working career with a calendar now open for relaxation and enjoyment is a time many people look forward to during younger years.

But the prospect of retirement can also be daunting. Some new retirees worry that their days will have less purpose now that they're not at work, that they'll be bored, or that they'll miss the social connection they had with their co-workers or clients. These concerns are just as legitimate as the excitement of winding up work.

Below are some pointers for maintaining mental wellness during retirement and information on why it's important to proactively look after yourself during this time.

1. Focus on your physical health: During retirement, you might find there is more time to improve taking care of your body. This is good news because your physical health and your mental wellbeing are connected. The Federal Government's Head to Health website shows how exercising, eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep and even drinking enough water can all affect our mood and energy levels. Has it been a while since you tried a new sport or type of physical activity? How often do you attempt a new recipe? Just because you're getting on in decades doesn't mean you can't try new things. Joining Probus can provide you with an opportunity to access new friends and ideas with people who enjoy the same things as you do.

2. Explore what gives you purpose: Having purpose is really important for mental wellbeing. It gives you a reason to get up in the morning and makes your days feel meaningful. There are a lot of ways to feel you have purpose. Just because you're not going to your day job any more does not mean you can't have purpose in your life. You may feel like you have purpose when you're engaging in 'purposeful activities'. Purposeful activities help you feel like you're contributing something to the world, whether that contribution is just for you, your family, friends, community or the broader population. What counts as a purposeful activity will be different for everyone.

Finding your purpose can be fun! If you're not sure what gives you purpose now that you're not at work, try something new and see how it makes you feel. If you're a member of a social group like Probus, you'll find that new ideas and activities within your Club may inspire you to find a new purpose and enjoy life.

3. Connect with the outside world: Connection with others, including your family and friends, a Probus Club, with pets, or with nature, is a vital part of the human experience. Developing healthy relationships with others can decrease levels of anxiety and depression and improve self-esteem. When you retire from work, you might feel like you've lost a lot of connection all at once. Finding ways to connect with others beyond work can be an effective way to promote your mental wellbeing.

4. Consider your sense of safety: Feeling safe, stable and secure is really important for your mental wellbeing. This can include feeling safe at home, in your neighbourhood, feeling financially secure and feeling supported within your close relationships and your community. When you feel safe, it is easier to relax and feel free to live your life as you want. Talk to other retirees about what they've done to make their lives safe and secure.

5. Seek support: Mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression can affect anyone at any time. It's important to know that these conditions are health conditions, like catching a cold, it is not a weakness or character flaw. The good news is they can be managed and treated by health professionals. If you've been feeling sad, worried, stressed, angry, numb or just 'not yourself' for two weeks or more, or if you would like extra support managing your mental wellbeing, speak to your GP about how you're feeling. Sometimes just telling someone about how you're feeling is the first step towards feeling better.

You can find out more about **The Probus CLUB OF FLAGSTAFF HILL (Men)** by calling Chris Barber on 0410 567265.

Other Probus Clubs in this area include **Happy Valley (Combined)** call Craig Munro 0407270884 and **Flagstaff Hill (Ladies)** call Ruth Alexander on 8270 5880

Visit www.probussouthpacific.org to find out where your nearest Probus Club is.

For more information, please contact Probus South Pacific (Australia) **1300 630 488** or (New Zealand) **0800 1477 6287**



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