



NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
**FARMER  
HEALTH**

# **Managing Stress for Fishers: From deckhands to skippers to the office**

## Notes:

This book has been re-printed with permission for use in the Stay Afloat Program.

The Stay Afloat program is a National Mental Health Pilot program for the seafood industry running between 2020 and 2022. It is funded by the Federal Government Department of Health and managed by Seafood Industry Australia in collaboration with Women In Seafood Australasia.

For more information contact us via [www.stayafloat.com.au](http://www.stayafloat.com.au)



### Contact the authors:

**National Centre for Farmer Helath**  
Western District Health Service  
McKellar House  
Tyers Street  
Hamilton Victoria 3300

**03 5551 8533**  
[ncfh@wdhs.net](mailto:ncfh@wdhs.net)  
[www.farmerhealth.org.au](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au)

Find us on



Apollo Bay Coop, Vic



All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the National Centre for Farmer Health.

Resource information was current as at 04/06/2019. Every effort has been made to ensure information is correct, however, it may be subject to change.

Updated in 2019 by: **National Centre for Farmer Health**  
PO Box 283  
Hamilton Victoria 3300  
Australia  
[www.farmerhealth.org.au](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au)

ISBN:

Front cover photo: Kirsten Abernethy, Vic

Back cover photo: Apollo Bay Coop, Vic

Artwork/Design: Samantha Kaspers,  
National Centre for Farmer Health



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic

***“I’ve been commercial fishing in a remote area since 1971. I’ve taken part in most fisheries in most years and fishing has gone from basic boats and gear to very sophisticated boats with the latest electronic gear. In that time there has been a steady increase of pressure on the fishery. I have seen this pressure create stress on several commercial fishermen, particularly the younger generation, increased operating costs, government restrictions, red tape and poor fish returns”***

Fisher from Western Australia



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic



## DIFFICULT TIMES: STRESS FOR FISHERS

This resource has been adapted from a publication by the National Centre for Farmer Health and the Agricultural Health and Safety Network in Canada for which we are very grateful and includes input from fishers and health professionals in Australia. The development of this publication is funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation 'Sustainable Fishing Families' project FRDC 2016-400—developed by NCFH and Deakin University.

This is a resource for all people who work in the business of fishing—from deckhands to skippers to office staff.



## THE NEED:

While fishers are very willing to volunteer and help others, they are often less willing to ask for help themselves. The tendency is not to openly talk about problems or ask for support until things are absolutely desperate.

### A Way...

This resource is a way of enabling fishing families to understand stress, its impact, and learn skills to help balance stress when fishing in difficult times.

## THE SITUATION:

Fishers face tremendous pressure because they work in a highly uncertain environment. They face pressures while at sea fishing, and on shore they may struggle to have the fishing business support itself. Many fishers today also face pressures that go beyond the job and the risks 'they signed up for'. Uncertainty around policy changes about fisheries access and fishing operations have the capacity to control and change what fishers can and cannot do, which can result in livelihood insecurity.

Many factors that influence a fishing business's viability are out of a fisher's control. Often what we cannot control causes us to feel the most stress:

Factors affecting fishers stress (things that we can or cannot control):

- The weather
- Large debt
- Long and unsociable work hours
- Mechanical breakdowns
- Variation in catch
- Health of the fish stock
- Crew dynamics
- Fluctuations in market price
- Biosecurity risks
- Dangers of working at sea
- Complicated paperwork
- Red tape
- Uncertainty and changing fisheries policy and regulation
- Perceived lack of fairness in policy changes
- Livelihood insecurity
- Negative public perceptions
- Conflict with other marine stakeholders e.g. recreational fishers, oil and gas companies.

Stress for fishers continues as the fishing industry changes—some fisheries are contracting and closing, while others thrive and grow. Some are witnessing the marine environment change e.g. with human development, land-based pollution, oil and gas exploration and climate-related shifts. Others are seeing their access to resources change with a range of competing interests. Fishers have been experiencing significant changes for decades and there is a culture of self-reliance among the industry. While this may make fishers resilient, it may also mean they are less likely to prioritise their health and look for positive ways to alleviate stress.

## STRESS:

- Stress is the human response to any change that is perceived as a challenge or threat.
- Changes that cause worry, frustration and upheaval, and seem beyond our control can cause stress.
- Attitudes, perceptions and meanings that people assign to events determine a large part of their stress levels.

## Not all stress is bad:

When we are excited about an event in our lives, we feel anticipation. Anticipation helps us get mentally and physically ready for a task. This energising stress is called eustress. Eustress keeps us fishing when there is a long stretch of good weather, or when we are trying to get quota caught by the end of the season.

## Distress:

Distress occurs when we suffer from increased amounts of stress for a long period of time. Distress can threaten our physical and mental health. Experiencing ongoing distress for months or years leaves our bodies all geared up with no place to go. High levels of adrenalin and other stress chemicals such as cortisol—existing for short-term response to challenges—are harmful when they continue with no relief. The results are broad ranging and can include elevated blood pressure, heart disease, a weakened immune system and negative affects on our mental wellbeing.

Give yourself credit for the tough times that you have survived.

## EFFECTS OF STRESS:

Stress overload changes the way we think. We can get tunnel vision and have difficulty exploring options. We become threat focussed. We can become more irritable and suspicious and misinterpret social interactions, thinking people are criticising or making fun of us. We have difficulty handling anger.

**Keep in mind stress can:**

**Occur suddenly with no warning:**

- Boat engines break down

**Build rapidly:**

- One thing after another goes wrong in a day
- One of the crew doesn't show up for work, something goes wrong with the fishing gear, the electronic reporting system goes down, the mobile phone keeps ringing...

**Snowball:**

- Over weeks and months
- Poor cash flow, high debt, and personal worries escalate
- A bad run of weather, poor market prices when you do go out, pressure to catch quota for your owners

**Consequences of “too much stress” for a fishing family can widely vary from tension in family relationships:**

- To poor business decisions
- To injury or death from a fishing accident

## BALANCE

is the key to effectively dealing with stress and we all need to find our own  
BALANCE.

## SIGNS OF STRESS:

Signs of stress can show in the form of physical, emotional and behavioural changes depending on the person and situation.

Check the symptoms of stress you are presently experiencing.

### Physical

- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Stomach problems (constipation or diarrhoea)
- ☐ Chest pain
- ☐ Rapidly beating heart/ change in blood pressure
- ☐ Grinding/clenched teeth
- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Change in sexual interest
- ☐ Procrastination
- ☐ Impulsive buying/gambling

### Emotional

- ☐ Increased angry blow ups
- ☐ Frustration
- ☐ Impatience
- ☐ Difficulty controlling emotions
- ☐ Low self-esteem
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Thoughts of taking your own life
- ☐ Short tempered
- ☐ Neglecting your existing health conditions

### Behavioural

- ☐ Overeating/neglect diet
- ☐ Increased smoking/ alcohol drinking
- ☐ Change in sleeping habits
- ☐ Difficulty relaxing; restlessness/lack of concentration
- ☐ Withdrawn from others
- ☐ Trouble adapting to changing circumstances
- ☐ Forgetfulness
- ☐ Sarcastic arguments

Everyone views stressful situations differently and has different coping skills. No two people respond exactly the same way to a given situation. Understanding ourselves and our reactions to stress, allows us to learn.

Just as people differ in the way they perceive and react to stress, people differ in how well they manage stress.

## DEALING WITH STRESS:

People vary in their ability to handle stress. Stress is often dependent on a number of factors including personal experience, individual skills, support and environment. Consequently, what one person may experience as stress, another may view as challenging.

There are many stressors that are out of fishers control. Fishers who are **aware** of stressors know some are out of their control, and they **accept** that. These fishers then concentrate on directing their energy towards problem solving and **cop**ing with stressors that are within their control. Fishers demonstrate control with **actions** - controlling tempers, keeping on top of their financial situation, hiring crew who have demonstrated their reliability, and **practising** safe productive fishing skills.

Often, stress can lead to more stress, and there is a connection between stress and the way we think, feel, and react to stressors. Whilst many things in fishing may be outside our control, there are ways we can learn to respond to them better. The way we relate to our stressors can go a long way to predicting whether we manage them, or they manage us.

Learning to cope successfully with a particular stressor is like developing any skill. Once we learn, we can make it easier for next time.

## HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH STRESS?

### Awareness

- Yes No** Can you name three recent situations that have caused stress in your life?
- Yes No** Can you list three signs (physical, emotional or behavioural) that you suffer when you are under stress?

### Acceptance

- Yes No** Can you maintain a positive or neutral attitude when dealing with the “little things” in life?
- Yes No** Can you change the way you view stressful situations to be more constructive in how you react?

### Coping

- Yes No** Do you know and use relaxation techniques like deep breathing and meditation?
- Yes No** Do you ever use exercise to get rid of stressed feelings?

### Action

- Yes No** Do you make a list and prioritise tasks to keep yourself from feeling overwhelmed by all there is to do?
- Yes No** When conflict arises can you express your feelings and communicate them to others effectively?

**Yes total** \_\_\_\_\_ **No total** \_\_\_\_\_

- YES** Any effort made to improve your ability to recognise and deal with stress will help promote balance in your life.
- Less than 7**
- YES** You are on the right track! Share your ability to balance fishing stress through difficult times with friends, family and community members. Be aware there can be a big difference between knowing what to do and doing it.
- 7 or more**



## AWARENESS: Fishing Stress Inventory

Fishing has ongoing situations that cause stress. Common fishing stressors are finances, daily hassles, and lack of control over the weather, heavy work overloads, and conflict in relationships.

Complete the following inventory to identify your stressors (both onshore and at sea).

1=low stress - 5=high stress.

1	Not able to get out fishing due to poor weather	1 2 3 4 5
2	High debt	1 2 3 4 5
3	Negative media representation and poor public image of fishing	1 2 3 4 5
4	Low or variable market prices	1 2 3 4 5
5	Equipment or machinery breakdown at a critical time	1 2 3 4 5
6	Illness during the fishing season or at critical fishing times	1 2 3 4 5
7	Rising fishing expenses	1 2 3 4 5
8	Changes in government policy and regulations	1 2 3 4 5
9	Worries about biosecurity in fishing	1 2 3 4 5
10	Other fishers' behaviour	1 2 3 4 5
11	Insufficient regular cash flow to meet financial obligations or for daily needs	1 2 3 4 5
12	Variation in catches	1 2 3 4 5
13	Physical danger of fishing	1 2 3 4 5
14	Amount of government red tape	1 2 3 4 5
15	Uncertainty of fish stocks	1 2 3 4 5
16	Concerns about the continued financial viability of the fishing business	1 2 3 4 5
17	Discussions/negotiations with fisheries managers	1 2 3 4 5
18	Interaction with the recreational fishing sector	1 2 3 4 5
19	Environmental changes	1 2 3 4 5
20	Fishing-related accident	1 2 3 4 5
21	Difficulties with crew	1 2 3 4 5

## Fishing Stress Inventory (Continued)

22	Learning new fish reporting systems or new technology	1 2 3 4 5
23	Dealing with processors/wholesalers/market people	1 2 3 4 5
24	Long work hours	1 2 3 4 5
25	Time away at sea causing stress on relationships	1 2 3 4 5
26	Alcohol and drug use on the boat	1 2 3 4 5
27	Having the responsibility to pay all the bills	1 2 3 4 5
28	Not having enough time off	1 2 3 4 5
29	Feeling isolated in the community	1 2 3 4 5
30	Worrying about keeping the fishing business in the family (succession)	1 2 3 4 5
31	Death of a family member or friend	1 2 3 4 5
32	Problems balancing fishing and time with family	1 2 3 4 5
33	Divorce, separation or relationship problems	1 2 3 4 5
34	Conflict with family	1 2 3 4 5
35	Other recent events which have had an impact on your life	1 2 3 4 5



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic



## INVENTORY SCORE:

### Putting your SCORE in perspective:

#### If the majority of your scores are 4 or 5:

- It is important to devote immediate attention to stress management. Give yourself credit for the tough times you have survived. Long term stress depletes your internal resources. It is common to identify with these fishing stressors in your operation. Remember there are people who will listen and help brainstorm ways to cope. For help, please refer to the back pages of this resource book for local contacts. There is no shame in talking to someone about your concerns.

#### If the majority of your scores are 3:

- Focus on your stress management strengths. Continue to expand your coping skills. Set goals that allow you to take control of what is controllable in your fishing business. The skills you are using and those you will develop can help you to deal with uncontrollable situations that arise.

#### If the majority of your scores are 1 and 2:

- You have stress coping skills. Share your skills with others. Fishing will continue to challenge you, so continue to communicate, prioritise daily tasks and support your family, friends, workers and community in difficult times.

**Keep in mind that the average fisher is experiencing more stress than observed in other occupations; so even an “average” level of fishing stress may be too much!**



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic



## AWARENESS: WHAT CAN I CONTROL...

Stress cannot be cured but it can be handled. A fisher cannot control outside forces that affect the fishing business and family but a fisher can control how they handle stress.

### Events

- **Plan ahead.** Don't procrastinate. Replace worn equipment, parts and gear, and complete maintenance during down times and poor weather periods rather than just before or while at sea.
- **Use your time efficiently.** Set priorities and work at tasks accordingly. Remember there are only so many things that you can do in a day or on a fishing trip.
- **Prior to the fishing season.** Ensure you have efficient and reliable help both at sea and onshore.
- **Learn to say NO to extra commitments.** There is only one you. Take care of yourself so you can fulfil present commitments.

### Attitudes

- Think before reacting to industry-wide challenges. A poorly considered response can exacerbate the problem. Plan your response and consult with others to have maximum impact.
- Concentrate on thinking and using your positive energy to solve a problem instead of worrying yourself sick about it.
- Give yourself and others credit for what has been accomplished instead of focusing on what hasn't been done.
- Set realistic goals. "My goal this season is to get new life jackets on my vessel for the crew." Having a major long term goal makes it easier to step back and reflect on how things are going. Setting daily priorities becomes more straight forward too.
- Make a plan for your day when you are not fishing. When you cannot get everything you want completed in a day, tackle what will give you the biggest return.
- Look at the big picture and count the good things that happen. "It's a good thing I noticed that noise the motor was making. Fixing it at sea would have been impossible."
- Leave a little time to deal with the unexpected.

## AWARENESS

Put the stressors that you identified in the Fishing Stress Inventory or any personally identified stressors in the appropriate boxes.

### Important/Controllable Stressors

i.e. Keeping up with vessel/gear maintenance.

**Unimportant/Controllable Stressors**

i.e. Who is going to make sure the jobs at home are done while I'm away at sea?

**Unimportant/Uncontrollable Stressors**

i.e. A negative comment on Facebook.

**Important/Uncontrollable Stressors**

i.e. The weather.

**ACCEPTANCE SKILLS:**

Acceptance skills can change your attitude toward controllable and uncontrollable stressors.

**Keep things in perspective. Ask yourself:**

- Has this happened before?
- What did I learn last time this happened?
- What's the worst possible outcome?
- Are my fears realistic?
- What else can I do?
- What do I tell a friend in this situation?
- A year from now, how important will this be?

**Use helpful self-talk - let go of the blame and guilt:**

- I did the best I could at the time.
- Things are hard, so I will focus hard.
- Someday we'll laugh about this.
- This is a learning experience.
- Focus on controlling what is controllable.
- Things take time.



**Keep a positive attitude:**

- With a positive attitude it is easier to live and work with others and find solutions.
- Be aware of the automatic assumptions you make in certain situations. Don't always assume the worst of situations or people.

**Develop a stress-resistant personality:**

- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- Build time for leisure activities.
- Get some exercise.
- Keep problems in perspective and look at them as challenges.
- Look for possibilities and get creative.
- Connect with a positive social network that is supportive.
- Share responsibilities and ask for help.

**Talk to someone you trust to help clear your head and focus on eliminating or reducing stress and anxiety:**

- Family, friends or a colleague.
- Consider seeking out a professional counsellor or confidential phone line program to help if you feel completely alone, overwhelmed and hopeless.
- There is no shame in asking for help to sort the problem.

**Someone to talk to is a phone call away.**

Look at the back of this booklet to see who is there to help in your area.

*"Fishery closures for no fault of our own make me angry and stress me out. It's knowing that others are suffering while not understanding why fishers are hated by some in the community. It affects work, love, attitudes, my children, friends, both my professional and personal life."*

Fisher from Queensland

**COPING SKILLS:**

Coping skills are ways in which an individual or their family uses personal, financial and community resources to help to handle the strain of stress. A positive attitude, willingness to explore resources, accepting and offering help, and being flexible in stressful situations are helpful ways to cope so one does not feel isolated and frustrated.

**Exercise**

Golf  
Riding a bike  
Tennis  
Walking  
Going for a run  
Going for a surf or swim

**Diversions**

Playing cards with friends  
Recreational fishing  
Checking a local attraction  
Having a BBQ  
Phoning the funniest person you know  
Going away for the weekend

**Hobbies**

Doing a crossword puzzle  
Playing a musical instrument  
Trying something you always wanted to do  
Reading a book  
Woodworking projects  
Restoring an old car or boat

**Relaxation**

Getting a massage  
Having a nap  
Enjoying a bath  
Listening to music  
Taking a walk  
Stretching/Yoga

### Physical fitness fights stress in three ways

- A physically fit body is better able to withstand the effects of stress. A balanced lifestyle with regular exercise, healthy meals and adequate sleep gives you energy and endurance to handle whatever comes your way. You may be strong, but not necessarily aerobically fit.
- Research suggests that regular exercise is as effective as antidepressant drugs for mild to moderate depression and anxiety, and you get added physical health benefits as well.
- Exercise also has a calming effect. Repetitive exercise can produce a mental state like meditation. Exercise that gets your heart pounding for at least 20 minutes releases chemicals in the brain called “endorphins” that reduce depression and stress.

### Relaxation

- Stress tenses your muscles, makes your breathing shallow, raises your blood pressure, makes your heart pound and clouds your judgement.
- Relaxation skills can reverse those effects to make you feel better, think better and perform better.

### Getting a good sleep

Fishers can struggle to achieve regular sleep routines. To achieve the best sleep possible:

- Keep active but avoid too much exercise just before bed.
- Avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol.
- Eat your biggest meal early in your working day, eat lighter meals—higher carbs, lower protein—closer to bed time.
- Make sure the place where you are sleeping is dark—the darker the better.
- Make the most of down-time on the boat by power napping (30 or 90 minutes). Read more: <https://wb.md/2YVhh0I>

### 7 STEPS to keep stress In Check

- Stop to take breaks, relax at least 20 minutes a day.
- Talk about your stress with others.
- Prepare healthy meals/snacks for when at sea and eat three meals a day while on shore.
- Prepare for stressful events.
- Avoid the chemical haze: alcohol, tranquilisers, cigarettes and caffeine do not help deal with stress in the long term.
- Give your body an exquisite treat - take a 20 minute nap.
- Strengthen your relationships with others - HAVE SOME FUN!

## COPING SKILLS:

Fishers and their families can use action skills to increase their effectiveness when dealing with important and unimportant controllable stressors. Everyone can learn to do something to make things a little better.

### Communicate

- Talk about the tough realities as the start of a cooperative stress-busting effort.
- Recognise that communication takes time and includes talking and listening.
- Realise men and women may indicate their concerns in a different manner.
- Use “I” statements rather than blaming statements which lead to calmer, more productive discussions.
- Understand that the quality of one’s statements can be affected by energy level, past discussions and personality.

### Prioritise

- Make a list of everything you want to do while the weather is poor and you’re not fishing. Be realistic.
- Prioritise tasks and do the important ones when your energy is high and resources are available.
- Break down tasks into bite sized chunks.
- Combine similar trips and tasks.
- Delegate as much as possible. Can you share some tasks with another fisher? Can a spouse, kids or business partner take over some onshore tasks?
- Organise your paperwork and create a filing system that works for you.
- Avoid time-wasters. When you’re interrupted, let them know you can’t spend time now, and arrange to call or visit them soon.
- Admit when you have too many priorities.
- Ask for help.

## ACTION SKILLS:

### Support your family, crew/colleagues and community

- Plan ahead.
- Learn to negotiate and address the problem. Create interaction rules and develop agreed-upon methods for handling problems. It is OK to have a difference of opinion but take the time to find a compromise.
- Show confidence in your family's, crew's, and community's skills and decisions.
- Provide encouragement and concern for your family, crew and community. Ask what can be done to help the situation. A simple solution may be the answer.
- Have realistic expectations of your family, crew/colleagues and community.
- Spend time together to relax, laugh and celebrate. Family strength is very important in the prevention and coping skills for overwhelming stress.

### Laugh, it makes you feel good!

Laughter is critical for relaxation and wellbeing. It's FREE, low calorie, and available without a prescription. When you laugh...

- 17 muscles in your face relax
- blood circulation is improved
- respiration is increased
- muscles in your abdomen are massaged
- the brain's natural pain killers are stimulated through the release of endorphins



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic



## ACTION SKILLS

## Set “SMART” goals

It's important to get a picture of what you, ideally, would like to have happen in your life and with your fishing business in the short and long term. SMART goals can help to achieve personal satisfaction and productivity.

**S Specific:** Set a concrete goal that addresses behaviour and results. “For the next month when I feel stressed I will tell my spouse about the problem. Using I statements rather than blaming statements so the discussion is calmer and more productive.”

**M** **Measurable:** State your goal in a way that you can easily measure progress. “My goal is to take twenty minutes during my day to relax.”

**A Agreed:** Don't do it alone, ask others to help and support you. "My co-workers and family have agreed to not interrupt my twenty minutes relaxation time."

**Realistic:** Make goals that are achievable; they should stretch you slightly so that you feel challenged, while also being clearly defined so that you can achieve them. You need to have the knowledge, skills and ability to achieve your goal. “I will go for a kilometre walk every day when I’m not fishing to get some exercise but will also take an afternoon off each week to do something with my family.”

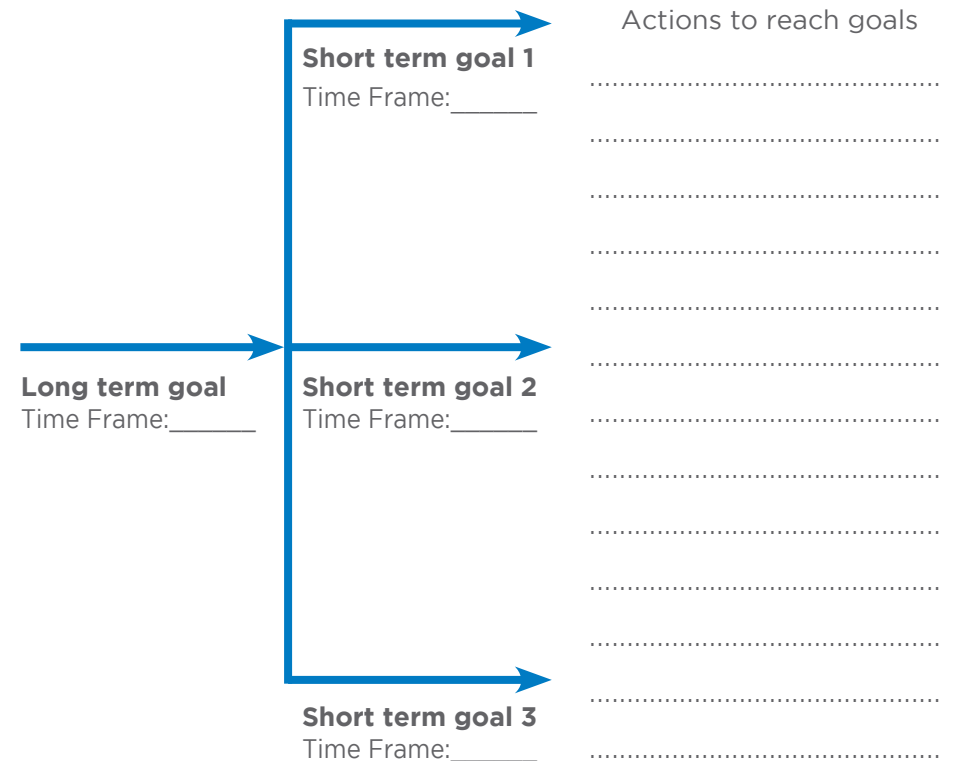
**T Time specific:** Goals should be connected to a timeframe that creates a practical sense of urgency. Set yourself a deadline for achievement. Keep track of your progress in a visible way to keep you motivated. “I will keep a notepad in my pocket with a list of jobs to do while I’m not away fishing. I can then strike jobs off when they are completed.”

## ACTION SKILLS:

### How to use the goal setting template:

In order to achieve long term goals you need to set three short term goals. Develop actions that will enable you to succeed in reaching the short term goals. Outline a time frame for each goal.

This template can be useful in setting goals for fishers.



Fishing families with positive coping skills are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, are involved in decision making, and are willing to give and use support.

## Now that you are AWARE...

You are aware of your stressors and have identified what you can and cannot control. Direct your energy towards problem solving and coping with stressors that are within your control. Incorporate actions, goal setting, coping skills and where to get help in the following table to organise your thoughts.

Use this recipe to assist you as you fish in difficult times.

What is on my mind?

What does this affect?

What can I do?

Who can help?



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the National Centre for Farmer Health and the Institute of Agricultural Rural and Environmental Health, University of Saskatchewan, Canada, for their generosity in allowing us to adapt the publication 'Managing Stress on the Farm' for the Australian fishing context.

The project team would like to thank the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation for funding the 'Sustainable Fishing Families' project FRDC 2016-400, and all of the people involved in the project.

Every care has been taken to provide accurate information in this booklet, but the authors are not liable for any results that arise from the application of this material.

Although some of these resources have been designed for farmers, they are also highly relevant for the fishing industry. Don't be too proud to use/access these resources. The services are confidential and helpful for improving mental health.

## Sustainable Fishing Families

- **Sustainable Fishing Families Project Report**  
<http://frdc.com.au/Archived-Reports/FRDC%20Projects/2016-400-DLD.pdf>
- **Staying Healthy Project Report**  
<http://frdc.com.au/Archived-Reports/FRDC%20Projects/2012-402-DLD.pdf>

## Mental Health & Wellbeing

- **A NSW Farmers Blueprint for Maintaining the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the people on NSW farms**  
<http://www.aghealth.org.au/blueprint/>
- **Project Regard: An initiative of Women in Seafood Australia (WISA), to open the discussion about poor mental health in the seafood industry**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-QQx3qGck>

## National Centre for Farmer Health Fact Sheets

- **Anger**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/relationships-family/anger>
- **Relationships and communication**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/health-centre/relationships-and-communication>
- **Trauma: Reaction and recovery**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/health-centre/trauma-reaction-and-recovery>
- **Trauma: Supporting others**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/health-centre/trauma-supporting-others>
- **Heat stress and heat stroke**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/health-centre/heat-stress-and-heat-stroke>
- **Extreme heat and heatwaves**  
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-public-health/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat>

## Farming Fit (farm-based physical exercise tips)

- **Video Part 1**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/videos/farming-fit-part-1>
- **Video Part 2**  
<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/videos/farming-fit-part-2>

## Fishing Business Support Service Information

- **How to access tax concessions**  
<https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/Primary-producers/>
- **How to contact your bank about being in financial hardship**  
<https://www.ausbanking.org.au/policy/customers/financial-hardship/>
- **Financial hardship tax deferral**  
<https://www.ato.gov.au/general/financial-difficulties-and-serious-hardship/>
- **Rural financial counsellors to support you to make the right decisions for your business**  
<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service>

## Fishing Household Support Service Information

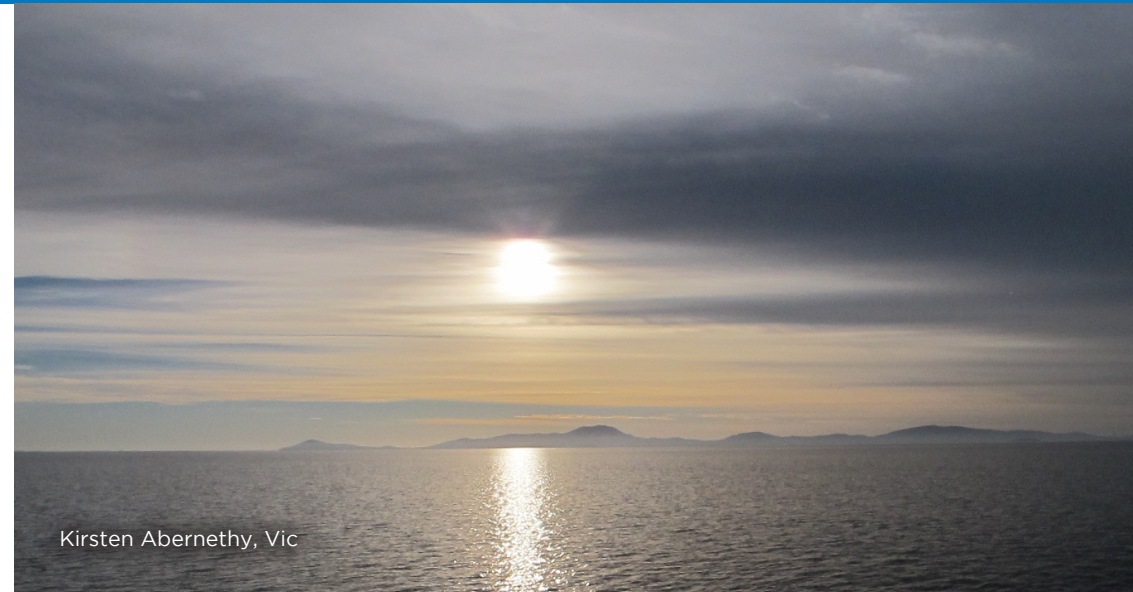
- **Emergency Re-Establishment Grants: Grants available for eligible clean-up, emergency accommodation, repairs, rebuilding (a principal place of residence), and replacing some damaged contents.**  
<https://www.disasterassist.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx>
- 





### Self Help Websites

- **Mindspot**  
<https://mindspot.org.au>  
 A free online service for Australian adults who are experiencing difficulties with anxiety, stress, depression and low mood. Providing assessment, treatment courses and help to find local services.
- **Head to Health**  
<https://headtohealth.gov.au>  
 A guide to finding Australian mental health resources.
- **This Way Up**  
<https://thiswayup.org.au>  
 Low cost online courses clinically proven to help with a wide range of mental health conditions.



Kirsten Abernethy, Vic



Apollo Bay Coop, Vic

### Self Help Apps (FREE)

- **Day Break**  
 Apple: <http://bit.ly/AppleDayBreakApp>  
 Android: <http://bit.ly/AndroidDayBreakApp>  
 An app to help you change your relationship with alcohol.
- **Smiling Mind**  
 Apple: <http://bit.ly/AppleSmilingMind>  
 Android: <http://bit.ly/AndroidSmilingMind>  
 Simple guided meditation exercises to help develop mindfulness for the whole family.
- **Beyond Now**  
 Apple: <http://bit.ly/AppleBeyondNow>  
 Android: <http://bit.ly/AndroidBeyondNow>  
 A suicide safety planning app to assist with developing a structural plan to work through when experiencing suicidal thoughts or crisis.
- **Calm**  
 Apple: <http://bit.ly/AppleCalm>  
 Android: <http://bit.ly/AndroidCalm>  
 A guided meditation app to help reduce stress, improve sleep and improve wellbeing.

**Professional Fishing Support Contacts**

Fisher Advocacy		
Seafood Industry Australia		<a href="http://www.seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au">www.seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au</a>
Seafood Industry Victoria	03 9687 0673	<a href="http://www.siv.com.au">www.siv.com.au</a>
Wildcatch Fisheries SA	08 7221 1960	<a href="http://www.wfsa.org.au">www.wfsa.org.au</a>
Western Australian Fishing Industry Council	08 9432 7777	<a href="http://www.wafic.org.au">www.wafic.org.au</a>
Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council	03 6224 2332	<a href="http://www.tsic.org.au">www.tsic.org.au</a>
Northern Territory Seafood Council	08 8981 5194	<a href="http://www.ntsc.com.au">www.ntsc.com.au</a>
Queensland Seafood Industry Association	0417 631 353	<a href="http://www.qsia.com.au">www.qsia.com.au</a>
NSW Professional Fishermen's Association	02 6652 7374	<a href="http://www.nswpfa.com.au">www.nswpfa.com.au</a>
Health and Safety		
Nurse-on-call—24-hours service	1300 606 024	
Sustainable Farm Families	03 5551 8588	<a href="http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/sustainable-farm-families/sff-programs">www.farmerhealth.org.au/sustainable-farm-families/sff-programs</a>
The Australian Maritime Safety Authority	1800 627 484	<a href="http://www.amsa.gov.au">www.amsa.gov.au</a>
Social and Emotional Wellbeing		
Beyond Blue (mental health) - information only	1300 224 636	<a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>
Lifeline (mental health)	131 114	<a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au">www.lifeline.org.au</a>
R U OK		<a href="http://www.ruok.org.au">www.ruok.org.au</a>
SANE (mental health)	1800 187 263	<a href="http://www.sane.org">www.sane.org</a>
Stay Afloat (Rural Alive and Well - Tasmania)	130043576283	<a href="http://www.tsic.org.au/stayafloat.html">www.tsic.org.au/stayafloat.html</a>
Alcohol and Drug Foundation	1300 858 584	<a href="http://www.adf.org.au/help-support">www.adf.org.au/help-support</a>
Family Drug Support	1300 368 186	<a href="http://www.fds.org.au">www.fds.org.au</a>
Family Relationship Service	1800 050 321	<a href="http://www.frsa.org.au">www.frsa.org.au</a>
Parentline		<a href="http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/parents/issues/how-parentline-can-help-you">www.kidshelpline.com.au/parents/issues/how-parentline-can-help-you</a>
Mensline Australia	1300 789 978	<a href="http://www.mensline.org.au">www.mensline.org.au</a>
Gambler's Help	1800 858 858	<a href="http://www.gamblershelp.com.au">www.gamblershelp.com.au</a>
Kids Help Line	1800 551 800	<a href="http://www.kidshelpline.com.au">www.kidshelpline.com.au</a>
Men's Referral Service (family violence)	1300 766 491	<a href="http://www.mrs.org.au">www.mrs.org.au</a>
Suicide Call Back Line	1300 659 467	<a href="http://www.suicidecallbackservice.com.au">www.suicidecallbackservice.com.au</a>
Women's Information Referral Exchange (WIRE)	1300 134 130	<a href="http://www.wire.org.au">www.wire.org.au</a>
Safe Steps—Family Violence Response Centre	1800 015 188	<a href="http://www.safesteps.org.au">www.safesteps.org.au</a>
Other Rural Support Organisations		
Red Cross	03 9345 1800	<a href="http://www.redcross.org.au">www.redcross.org.au</a>
Australian Men's Shed Association	1300 550 009	<a href="http://www.mensshed.org">www.mensshed.org</a>
Women in Seafood Australasia		<a href="http://www.facebook.com/WomeninSeafoodAU">www.facebook.com/WomeninSeafoodAU</a>
Country Women's Association	03 9827 8971	<a href="http://www.cwaa.org.au">www.cwaa.org.au</a>
National Rural Women's Coalition	0455 844 101	<a href="http://www.nrwc.com.au">www.nrwc.com.au</a>

**Notes:**

As a first port of call for local mental health services, consult your GP or local Community Health Service for information and referral if required

For more information contact us via [www.stayafloat.com.au](http://www.stayafloat.com.au)

Follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/StayAfloatAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/StayAfloatAustralia)



Notes:

Notes:

**This book has been re-printed with permission for use in the Stay Afloat Program.**

The Stay Afloat program is a National Mental Health Pilot program for the seafood industry running between 2020 and 2022. It is funded by the Federal Government Department of Health and managed by Seafood Industry Australia in collaboration with Women In Seafood Australasia.

**For more information contact us via [www.stayafloat.com.au](http://www.stayafloat.com.au)**



**Contact the authors:**

**National Centre for Farmer Helath**  
Western District Health Service  
McKellar House  
Tyers Street  
Hamilton Victoria 3300

**03 5551 8533**  
[ncfh@wdhs.net](mailto:ncfh@wdhs.net)  
**[www.farmerhealth.org.au](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au)**

Find us on







***“When you own a business, you have to work. No one else will do it for you. Fishing is a very stressful occupation, not knowing what the government will do next, if you can catch your quota and what price you will get, being responsible for the families our business employs.”***

***- (Fisher from South Australia)***

Persistent stress, associated with fishing in difficult times, can impact the wellbeing of fishing families and effect business decision-making. This resource enables fishing families to understand stress, it's effect on us and provide tips on managing stress. Learning to cope with stress is like developing a new skill, and—once learned—it makes handling stress easier next time.

