



Centacare

PACE Service Newsletter



KEEPING PACE

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the latest edition of Keeping PACE and our final newsletter of the year.

We are currently finalising the details of our support groups for 2022 and will be in touch during January to share this information with you.

The PACE Team will be returning to the office from 11 January 2022.

PACE Service

If you or someone you know is struggling with Anxiety or Panic Attacks, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder or an Eating Disorder... PACE can help!

The PACE service provides a range of recovery services for people living with these issues, and those who support them in South Australia.

Most of the PACE team are peer workers, which means they have experienced panic anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder or an eating disorder themselves, so they understand how difficult it can be, and they are living proof that recovery is possible.

**Please note that the PACE Service is funded to fill the gap for people who aren't eligible for the NDIS, so we are unable to accept clients who have NDIS funding for anxiety, OCD or eating disorders.*

What we do

At PACE we offer the following specialist services for:

Eating Disorders

Panic & Anxiety

OCD

Info for Family & Friends

Recovery Support Groups

Info Sessions & Other Groups

1:1 Support

Schools and Organisations

PACE Website

PACE has recently upgraded the website, www.centacare.org.au/pace-services. Please have a look at the updated information, resources and information, including a link to the 2022 referral forms.

The festive season is meant to be a time of joy and celebration but for many people it can also provide some additional challenges around managing our mental health. With this in mind, we have given you a few potential strategies for managing social anxiety during the festive season as well as some suggestions for resisting seasonal expectations about our bodies. See below.

Happy Holidays



4 Strategies for Managing Social Anxiety during the Festive Season:

Positive Self-Talk

If only it were as simple as replacing our anxious thoughts with positive ones! However, when going into any situation that may provoke anxiety it can be useful to check in with the things we are saying to ourselves. Instead of listening to your inner critic and the long list of 'what-ifs', make sure you remind yourself that you **can** do hard things and you want to be able to enjoy social situations. Practice evaluating your negative thinking by looking at what evidence supports your thoughts and what evidence does not.

Safety Behaviors

There are many strategies that we may employ to manage our anxiety in social situations. Offering to help the host is one such strategy which will give you a sense of purpose and something to keep your hands busy. Another way to do this is to interact with any children or pets which can also give you something else to focus on. We can also prepare some conversation starters to fall back on or research a topic so that we have something to share.

However, remember that using safety behaviours can be an avoidance strategy that we depend on to manage anxiety in social situations. These strategies make us feel safer at the time but may prevent us from learning that our feared expectations are either unlikely to actually happen or are not as bad as we think. The first step is to become aware of our safety behaviours and then work towards reducing these behaviours gradually over time.

Remember your Circle of Control

Social anxiety is often accompanied by many ‘what-if’ worries. Try to recognise when your mind has spiralled off into this cycle and think about which of these concerns are within your circle of control and which are not. Focus on the things that you **can** control and addressing triggers for your anxiety.

Set Boundaries

Remember that you are allowed to set healthy boundaries and say no! Whilst avoiding social situations is not a helpful long-term strategy for managing social anxiety, it is also important not to overschedule yourself just because you feel obligated to accept. Pick out the events that mean the most to you and decline the rest to ensure you have some recovery time for yourself too.

At this time of year, we are often expected to spend time with immediate and extended family which can be challenging and can trigger anxiety for some of us. It can be useful to think about what triggers may crop up when you are around certain people and practice some short phrases that will help to enforce some boundaries to try to manage the impact on your anxiety.



Resisting Seasonal Expectations about our Bodies:

The festive season can be tricky for folks who struggle with eating disorders or poor body image. It really ‘tis the season for the latest and greatest New Year diets, our “Best Festive Season bodies ever” etc...you know the drill!

We can fall into the same trap each year, focusing on getting our bodies ‘ready’ for the festive or summer season in the same way we prepare Christmas lunch – to be shown off, admired and revered.

Social expectations are high and we easily turn those expectations inwards and onto our bodies - because that's what we've been conditioned to do.

Weight stigma and anti-fatness are culturally sanctioned and stem from beliefs that...1. Stigma and shame will motivate people to change and...2. People are responsible for their own weight and "fail" because of poor self-discipline or lack of willpower.

The fact that you cannot tolerate or sustain dietary restriction and food restraint over time is actually a sign of health!

We weren't born to restrict, restrain and keep ourselves tight and small so that everyone else can be comfortable with us.

There is NO plan that is flexible enough to keep up with what normal life is.

This festive season, why not 'gift' yourself the freedom that rejecting the diet culture restriction and guilt can bring. Imagine the possibilities that could open up if you weren't focused on how small you could make your body and how tightly you could restrain your hunger and desires.

You've tried hard enough, now it's time to try different.

Wishing you a gentle, be-kind-to-yourself-kinda festive season! This year, aim for a C-grade (not that punishing A-grade) in everything you do, especially when it comes to your body.

Extra Eating Disorder Support Groups:

Here at PACE, we recognised that while lots of stuff winds down before Christmas, eating disorders have a funny way of ramping up this time of year. After all, as social and family expectations rise, so do our anxieties and, quite often, our maladaptive coping mechanisms. So, this year we decided to add a few extra Eating Disorder Support Groups to the schedule so that folks felt there was a safe space they could 'land' every week to talk about their struggles, their wins and to stay connected with others going through the same issues.

We hope it's provided some extra solace through these tricky weeks. As one participant said "just knowing the extra groups were there was enough to make me feel better"... and that's half the battle...



Current Research Studies Seeking Volunteers:

The OCEAN Study

Do you experience intrusive thoughts?

We are seeking participants with sub-threshold to mild obsessive-compulsive symptoms to participate in a clinical trial investigating the effectiveness of two evidence-based online programs in their impact on well-being. It is an open trial where all participants get immediate and free access to one of the programs, which you can participate in at your own time and space.



What's involved?

- Completing 4x online modules (30-50 minutes each, made up of smaller exercises) over 6 weeks
- Practicing learned skills between modules
- Completing questionnaires online and being reimbursed up to \$20 for your time completing them, including a 3 month follow-up
- Receiving emails with recaps of each module and/or reminders.

How to Participate

Eligibility includes being aged 18 or older, experience sub-threshold to mild obsessive-compulsive symptoms, have had no changes to medications or therapy in the last 8 weeks, and no suicidal intent or psychosis symptoms.

To find out if this study is the right fit for you, we need to ask you some questions about your obsessions and/or compulsions as well as other aspects of your wellbeing. You won't be asked to provide your name or any identifying information until the end, where you'll be given more information about what's involved in the study.

If you are interested in finding out more about this study, you can access the eligibility survey at [The OCEAN Study \(qualtrics.com\)](https://www.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_es0S1fNFC99U98N) or find out more at [Participate in Research | ADAVIC Anxiety Disorders Association of Victoria, Inc](https://www.adavic.org.au/participate)

Diagnosis and Treatment Experiences of Body Dysmorphic Disorder in Australia Study

Posted 2 September 2021
Swinburne University of Technology

Are you an Australian adult (18+) who has been diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder (BDD)?

Researchers from Swinburne University of Technology are looking to understand the healthcare experiences of Australian adults who have been diagnosed with BDD, so that we can identify problems, missing gaps or barriers, that prevent people with symptoms of BDD from receiving appropriate diagnosis and treatments.

You can help by taking part in our anonymous online survey, which only takes 30 – 45 minutes to complete.

How to participate:

For further information and to begin the survey, please click this link:
https://swinuw.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_es0S1fNFC99U98N

Contact: Dr Amy Malcolm, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Swinburne University of Technology. Email: amalcolm@swin.edu.au



If you are interested in finding out more about this study visit [Online Survey Software | Qualtrics Survey Solutions](#)

Genetic Predisposition to Eating Disorders Study

The Eating Disorders Genetics Initiative (EDGI) is the world's largest ever genetic investigation of eating disorders ever performed.

The Australian arm of EDGI aims to identify the hundreds of genes that influence a person's risk of developing the complex, devastating illnesses of anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder, to improve treatment, and ultimately, save lives.

Australia aims to recruit more than 3,500 Australians who have been diagnosed with an eating disorder, including a control group (people without eating disorders), by March 31, 2022.

This ground-breaking research should identify hundreds of genes that influence a person's risk of developing an eating disorder.

Identification of the genes that predispose individuals to eating disorders will revolutionise future research into causes, treatment, and prevention of the illness.



If you are interested in finding out more about this study, you can access the eligibility survey at [Home - EDGI](#)

Where to Find Help if you are Struggling over the Holidays:

Some alternative spaces to Emergency Departments for people experiencing distress are available.

These services are accessible on a walk-in basis.

- **CBD Urgent Mental Health Care Centre**
215 Grenfell St – 7 days a week – 12pm-12am – 8448 9100
- **North Sonder**
2 Peach Rd, Edinburgh North – Mon-Fri 5pm-9pm – 8209 0711
- **South Links to Wellbeing**
Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga (GP Plus Super Clinic) – Thu-Mon 5pm-11pm
- **Just Listening Community**
29 Shepherd Rd, Christies Beach – Thu-Sat 4.30pm-7.30pm – 0466 368 022

Telephone support services include:

- Mental Health Triage 13 14 65
- Lived Experience Telephone Support Service (LETSS) 1800 013 755

(7 days a week 5pm-11.30pm)

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636

**For more information, to get in touch or to complete a
PACE referral please go to our website,
www.centacare.org.au/pace-services/**

Centacare

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