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# Learn The Signs

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Sometimes we think we're coping when we're not. Even if we don't think we've got a problem, there are certain signs to look out for that tell us we need to look after our mental health better.

## BEHAVIOUR SIGNS

- Shutting down; avoiding eye contact and conversation.
- Not wanting to get up in the morning.
- Finding it hard to make decisions that used to be easy.
- Losing interest in things you used to enjoy, or not making time for them.

## PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Headaches
- Stomach aches & ulcers
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Shingles
- Insomnia

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# Where to Get Help

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Advice and support for rural communities  
[rural-support.org.nz](http://rural-support.org.nz), 0800 787 254

Ideas for improving your health and wellbeing  
[farmstrong.co.nz](http://farmstrong.co.nz)

Find a doctor  
[healthpoint.co.nz](http://healthpoint.co.nz)

Telephone counselling 24/7  
[lifeline.org.nz](http://lifeline.org.nz), 0800 543 354

Help for depression  
[depression.org.nz](http://depression.org.nz), 0800 111 757

Suicide crisis helpline 24/7  
0508 82 88 65



#MenStartTalking

## About Us

Men's Health Trust NZ was established in 2007 as a national charity. Our purpose is to inspire men to make positive and rewarding lifestyle choices. We do this by providing information and education programmes that encourage and promote good health.

## Contact Us

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[www.menshealthnz.org.nz](http://www.menshealthnz.org.nz)



[www.facebook.com/menshealthnz.org.nz](https://www.facebook.com/menshealthnz.org.nz)



[@menshealthnz](https://twitter.com/menshealthnz)

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# Men's Health Rural Men Managing Stress

[www.menshealthnz.org.nz](http://www.menshealthnz.org.nz)

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# We're feeling the pressure.

Making the best decisions for our land and livestock is a major responsibility. Throw uncontrollable weather, uncertain prices, and a natural disaster into the mix, and it's easy to see why our stress levels are up.

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**One wrong decision or one bad season can cause a huge amount of worry. If left unchecked, that can lead to anxiety and depression.**

**Here are some ideas to keep you going when the going gets tough.**

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## A Healthy Mind

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A little bit of stress is good for us, it keeps us motivated. But too much and we can become sick, physically and mentally. There are things we can do to stay positive, even when circumstances are out of our control. One of the main things is to open up about what's going on.

### START TALKING

Whatever's going on in your head, let it out. When we stew over things they can snowball. Talk to your mates and your family about what's worrying you. They can't solve the problem, but getting it off your chest helps.

### SHARE THE LOAD

If you've got problems, chances are others in your community have too. Get in touch with neighbouring farmers, tell them what you're going through, and ask them how they're getting on.

### ACCEPT THE ROUGH TIMES

No one's pretending farming's an easy life. Sometimes you might feel like there's no light at the end of the tunnel. No matter how bad things get, there's always the potential for things to get better. You might need help to keep you going in the mean time.



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## Get Help

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Asking for help is a sign we're taking action to make things better. It's not a sign of failure and we need to get over that. Help might come in the form of financial aid, medical help (eg. antidepressants), legal advice, community support, or counselling. There's a list of places to start looking for help over the page.

### GET OFF THE FARM

Getting away and being with other people can recharge our batteries and give us perspective. Allow yourself to have outside interests and distractions. It's healthy.

### BE SOCIAL

Social interaction is important for everyone, especially if we live in isolated areas. It takes extra effort to make sure we see other people face to face, and even if we don't like doing it at the time, it's good for us.

### SLEEP WELL

If our worries are keeping us awake at night we can end up sleep deprived, making us tired, overwhelmed, and unable to make good decisions. Here are some things to try if you're having trouble sleeping:

- Write down your worry and park it til tomorrow.
- Read a book. This can help distract you from thinking about your problems.
- Listen to music or specially made sound recordings.
- Get into a routine. Our bodies love routine so try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Try some mindfulness exercises.

### CHECK YOUR DRINKING

A few drinks can help us relax. Too many drinks too often and we get into trouble with our decision making and liver health. It also messes with our sleep.

### KEEP A WORK DIARY

Write down what you need to do and also what you have achieved. It's motivating to read over what we've done right.