



# **COVID-19**

## Virtual Care Package

This Students as Partners initiative is a Student Success Leaders and Health and Wellness Team collaboration.

**Students spoke, USQ listened.**

Semester 2, 2020

## COVID-19 continues to impact the mental health of our students.

May you find something here that makes a difference to you or someone you know who is struggling.

Topics within include:

- |                                |                      |
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| 1 Navigating Wellness          | 5 Recipes and Health |
| 2 Motivation and Encouragement | 6 Anxiety and Coping |
| 3 Learning Resources           | 7 Staying Connected  |
| 4 Hardship, House and Home     |                      |

### Look out

There are quotes throughout that are the voice of your peers, **cheering** you on!

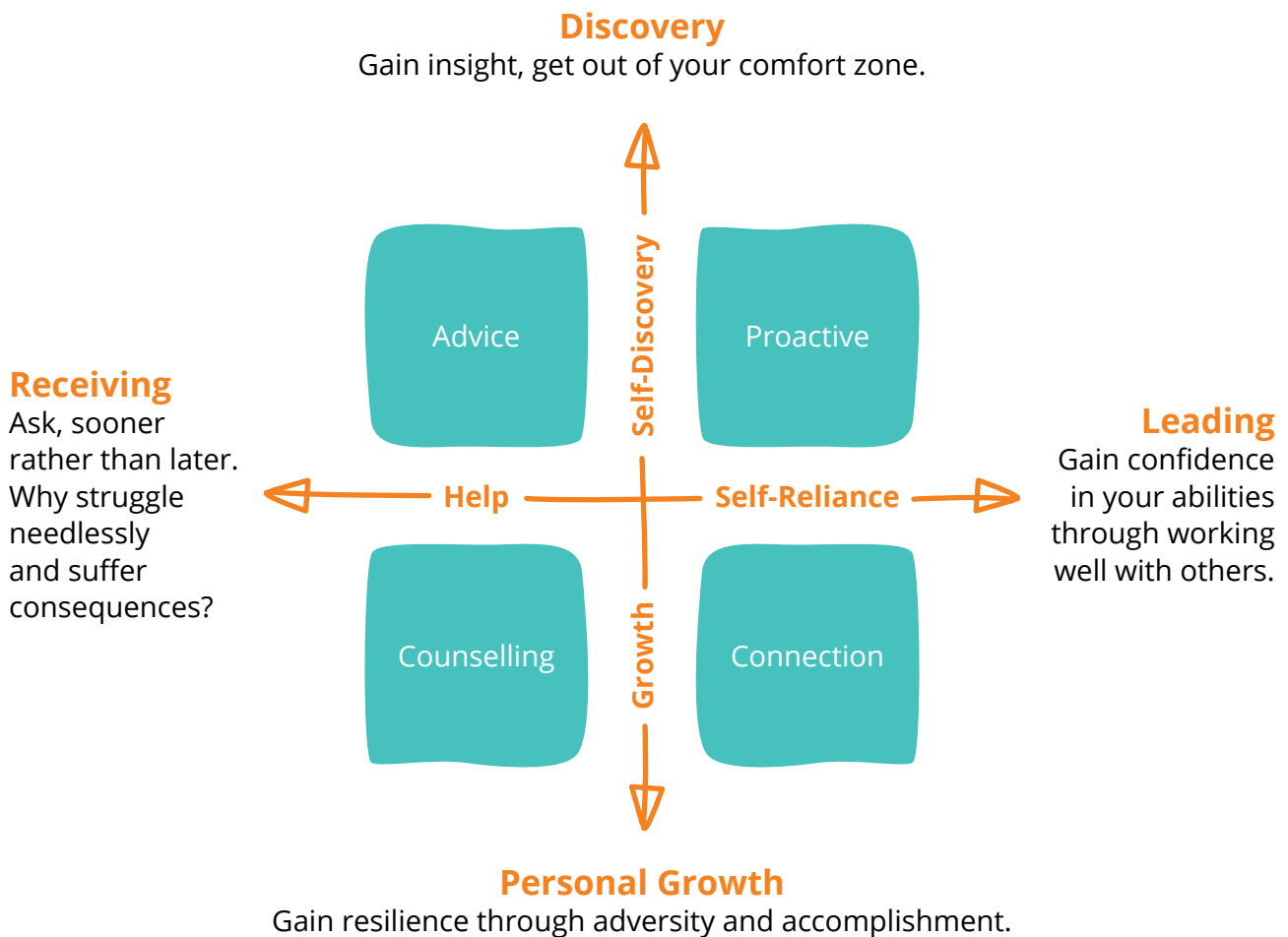
*USQ acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians as the keepers of ancient knowledge where USQ campuses and hubs have been built and whose cultures and customs continue to nurture this land. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.*

# 1. Navigating Wellness

Sometimes it can be difficult to know where to start or to reach out for help. We've included a guide to help you get started.

Here's how it works, take a look at the orange arrow in the middle of the graphic.

Between Help, Self-Discovery, Self-Reliance and Growth, pick two values and see which type of support may suit you best.



Click here to find COVID information in languages other than English

Times are tough, but **we're tougher**. 2020 may not have gone exactly as planned, but that doesn't mean we can't achieve our goals – the route may have changed but the destination hasn't.

**Kia kaha** (Stand strong) in Māori language, from Aotearoa/NZ.

## 2. Motivation

### Activity

Feeling overwhelmed? Take a few minutes to empty your too-busy brain into the boxes.

Study or work to-dos

Random thoughts

Appointments to make or Errands to do

What I'd rather be doing

Family or Friend needs

What is most important now? Do it!!



Student life in the time of coronavirus: How to stay on track with studies during lockdown by Joyce Chong.



Check out this video which shows how to use the Pomodoro technique for improving focus and productivity

- 1 Choose a task to do
- 2 Set a timer for 25 minutes. Work until it stops
- 3 Check, are you on track?
- 4 Take a 5 minute break
- 5 After 2 hours, take a longer break



USQ Study Support

# Encouragement

Do you find yourself procrastinating and thinking up lots of ways to avoid starting or completing something? Try this Solutions-Focused technique to kick-start your motivation!

Activity		
	Your number and ideas:	
<p>On a scale of 1-10 (1 = least, 10 = most), how motivated do you feel right now?</p>		<p>What would be different if you were more motivated?</p> <p>What would you be doing more or less of?</p>
<p>You've got this!</p>		<p>Think of at least one thing that you can <i>do</i> now.</p> <p>No matter how small, any action leads to bigger things!</p>

**We asked USQ students for what encouragement they would give to their fellow students. We received over 1154 responses. Here are just a few:**

Nothing in life is forever, the struggles now will help you to **appreciate** the good times that are just around the corner.

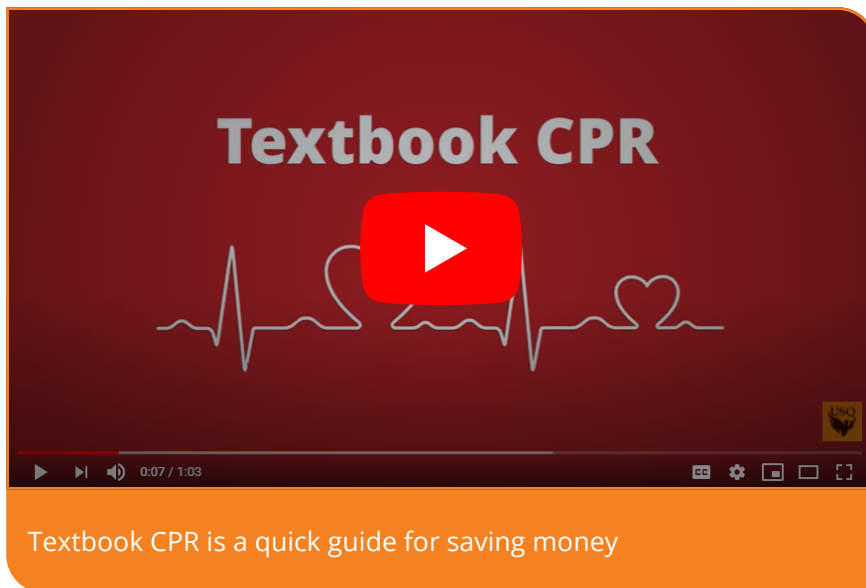
This too shall pass. While it may be hard, it will eventually end. The world has gotten through similar things before. Use this time to focus on yourself, your family and friends, and really consider your studies to pursue excellence in learning.

It is possible to triumph in spite of adversity so don't give up on your goals

**Just ask for help.** In Australia it is all about mate ship. We will help each other out. So please, put your hand up and say 'Hi mate, I need some support'.

Everyone has bad days and feels down at times. Remember you are always stronger than you think and you've come out the other side before, so you can do it again! Be grateful for what you have, there is always someone else worse off than you.

### 3. Learning Resources



Visit **StudyTexts** to buy and sell current textbooks from other students.

Contact **USQ library** for up-to-date information regarding **borrowing** and **finding** your textbooks. While on the library webpage, be sure to check out the resources in the Study Support section.

**Interest free loans** can be used to purchase textbooks depending on eligibility.

#### Save on Printing!

A postage or printing subsidy of AUD50 is added into your Gift Account for each semester you are enrolled in a current course. This subsidy is automatically applied at the beginning of each semester. Additional credit can be added online or purchased from Omnia Books & Beyond.

Gift Account funds do not rollover to the next semester.

**Papercut Print** is networked to a fleet of self-serve printers/copiers on all campuses.

**Print Express** allows you to submit your file online and collect on-campus or have it posted.

View our **Guide to Student Printing (PDF 2.378MB)** for further information. For printing assistance, please email **print.kiosk@usq.edu.au** or phone 4631 2433 between 10.00am and 2.00pm weekdays.



Learn how to learn with USQ Study Support or meet with a learning advisor.



Don't forget **why you enrolled in** your course. What is happening at the moment is but a detour – it may be making the path harder, but the destination has not changed. We will get through this, provided we don't give up.

Keep studying even if it's a single subject, there is a lot of extra help that USQ offers. Never focus on your problems. **Focus on your possibility** (passing university and starting a career). The problems will pull you down. The possibilities will push you up (having a financially stable job).

## 4. Hardship

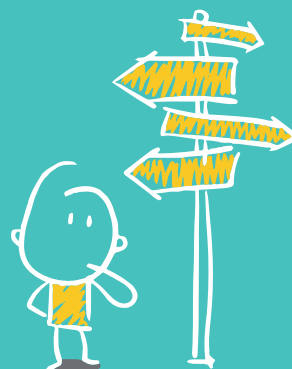
During COVID-19 many students have experienced a negative financial impact, including reduced or loss of income, and difficulty finding work in an uncertain and tight job market. Have you met USQ's dedicated Careers & Employability Team yet? What are you waiting for?!



[Click here to learn more about Careers & Employability](#)



[Click here for Welfare Advice](#)



### Hardship assistance

Here is a list of community organisations.

### Ask Izzy

Connecting people in crisis with essential services nearby, including housing and **homeless support**. Also **COVID-19 support** info.

### Homeless Australia

Statewide information and referral service for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

### DSS Grants Service Directory

Emergency relief service database. Searchable by category of need and location.



Make an appointment with a USQ Student Wellness Advisor to discuss your options. Phone 07 4631 2372, or Book online via ACCESS

It may seem like it is getting nowhere some days but **it will eventually become easier** and when you finally finish that degree it will be one of the proudest days of your life.

# House and Home

You may be finding it challenging to meet your payments on rent or mortgage. The following resources provide information as well as practical support.

**Tenants Queensland** have developed a fact sheet for tenants and residents whose tenancies are affected by COVID-19.

- **Residential Tenancies Authority QLD COVID-19**
- **Real Estate Institute of Australia**

## Utilities response to COVID-19:

See the individual service providers' websites outlining your options if you are behind on your payments and have been financially affected during COVID-19. You may be able to defer payments and arrange a payment plan.

- **Telstra**
- **Optus**
- **Vodafone**
- **Moneysmart** for problems paying bills and fines in general.
- **Moneysmart** tips during COVID-19. They provide advice as well as links to services to help you manage financially during this time.
- **Moneysmart** for advice on problems paying your mortgage. They outline options to help avoid mortgage default.

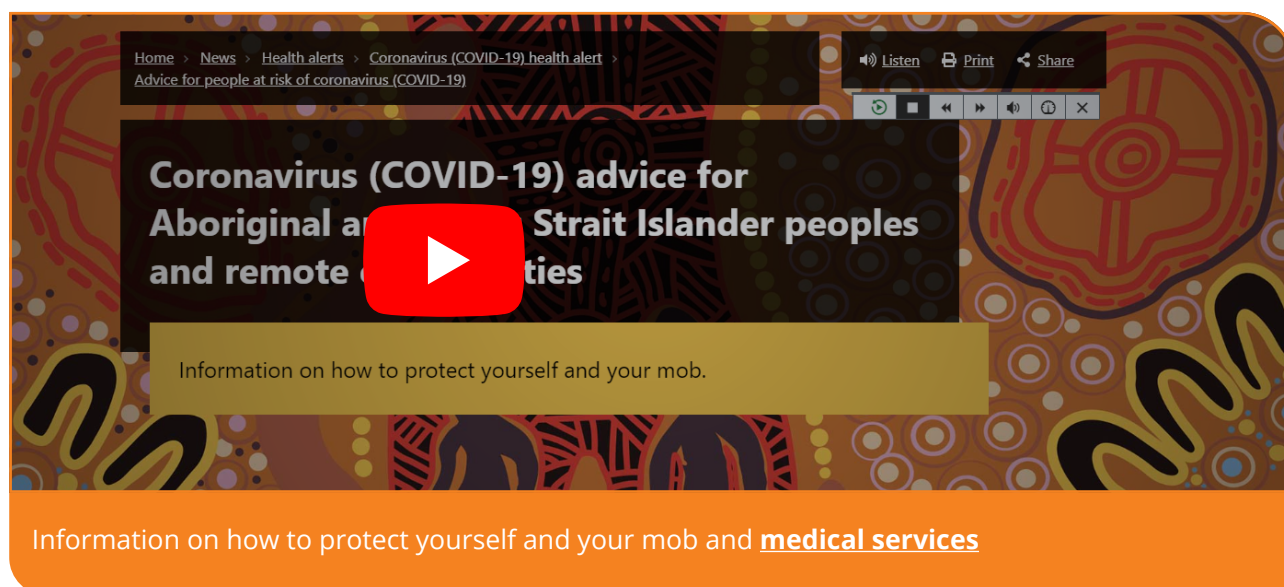


Coronavirus information for international students

Hard times like these create **resilient people.**

These people will carry their resilience with them for the rest of their lives.

**Calculate your money** and have a budget for bills. Pay the bills as best you can and stay positive. Don't be afraid to ask for help regardless what it is for.



**Foodbank** for finding out how to help others. Allows you to search in all states of Australia for providers.

**GIVIT** for accessing donated goods and services. You may be in need of an item such as white goods or furniture and are unable to afford. GIVIT matches donated items to people in need in their local area. To access this service, you will first need to connect with a registered organisation, such as Red Cross or St Vincent de Paul. There is a searchable database on the GIVIT link for your local organisation.

**Ask Izzy** for connecting people in need with housing, a meal, money, help, health and wellbeing services, family violence services and so much more.

**Disability Information Helpline** provides information and referrals for people with disability who need help because of coronavirus.

Swap, don't stop. Rather than stopping something to try and save money, swap it for something not so expensive. Thinking about everything you feel you will miss out on can get you down, so think about the things you can do.

## 5. Recipes and Health

There are many cost-effective ways to provide meals for yourself and your family. We've found a few that you may like to taste test, plus some that have even been tried and tested by USQ students!



A great website to discover healthy and fast recipes for cooking on a budget



The ultimate guide to healthy eating on a budget

Stuck for ideas on what to snack on while you study? Compiled from **USQ's Instagram account** as part of #healthyU Mondays, these 10 recipes have been voted most popular by our students. What will you make first?

These simple meal-planning tips will help you to get the most out of your student budget while still enjoying **nutritious, tasty food.** For more great dollar-saving ideas, check out our **budget tips** or **part two of the Stingy Student Series** for tips to becoming a supermarket super-sleuth!

However hard it is now, if you can **find your way through this**, you will be future proofing yourself and your family and it's a legacy that never stops giving.

Book an appointment to discuss your health with a GP or Nurse in the USQ Health Clinic 4631 2372.

**Health Direct** for health advice (1800 022 222)

Now is the time to **quit** smoking!

## 6. Anxiety

Feeling anxious, or uncertain, in some situations can help us avoid danger, it is how humans have evolved to keep ourselves safe. Even if you are not usually an anxious person, it's common to feel some anxiety during periods of change or uncertainty.

1. **CHANNEL** your anxious energy into action: get informed, plan and prepare
2. **LIMIT** or avoid unhelpful media and misinformation
3. **CUT** down or stop the behaviours that are fuelling your anxiety
4. **STAY** focused on the here and now, taking each day step by step
5. **BE** aware of negative thoughts and don't give them too much power
6. **LOOK** after your body
7. Stay **CONNECTED** with others
8. **HELP** other people, be kind, and compassionate
9. **BREATHE**
10. If you are feeling like you're not coping, get professional advice

Find this and more on the [\*\*BlackDog website.\*\*](#)

Did you know? Pandemics research shows that people who worry are more likely to do the things that help to keep the virus at bay, like handwashing and social distancing!

However, sometimes anxiety can be unhelpful. Here are some practical ways that you can keep feelings of anxiety at bay if you are starting to feel overwhelmed.



Anxiety Fact Sheet

### Self-Compassion vs. Self-Judgement

Instead of mercilessly judging and criticising yourself, self-compassion means you are kind and understanding when confronted with personal failings – after all, who ever said you were supposed to be perfect? Click [\*\*here\*\*](#) to learn more.

Try a self-assessment quiz to get clarity and guidance.



Mind Quiz



Anxiety and Depression Checklist



# Apps for Coping

Click [here](#) to see a few of the best Anxiety Apps of 2020 according to Healthline, or look for them in your appstore.



Calm.com



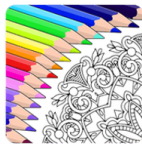
Moodnotes



Anxiety Relief Hypnosis



Breathwrk



Colorfy



Antistress Anxiety Relief Game



Check out this Stress Less strategy ebooklet on Social Hub

Click here for  
free Counselling  
Services



For information specifically aimed towards LGBT communities about looking after yourself during COVID-19



You have already achieved so much, studying at USQ is an ambition and you have demonstrated that you want to be here.

Now, remind yourself why you are here, hold on to that answer as it will fuel your commitment to finish this journey.

This is not permanent, like many of life's challenges, things may seem insurmountable but you will find the strength to press on to the end and you will be a stronger, more resilient person for the effort.

But remember you never succeed on your own, you have a community of family, friends, peers and colleagues who will support you through your struggle, make the most of your support network and most importantly do not be afraid to ask for help.

## 7. Staying Connected

Isolation is another impact of COVID-19 that is causing distress for many people. It is important to be aware of this impact and take positive and proactive steps to help alleviate the effects.

### Connecting with your peers:

You may find it beneficial to connect with your student peers through **USQ Student Clubs**, which are still operating online.



### Connecting with USQ:

iconnect Concierges aim to connect you student relationship officers, Faculty staff, ICT, Library staff and many others to make sure you get the guidance you need.



Iconnect

### Spiritual Support:

A source of support and connectivity can be one's faith. USQ celebrates the diversity of faiths and beliefs amongst our students.

**USQ Multi-Faith Service** supports religious and spiritual life at USQ and can help you connect with local faith communities.



## Tips to get you started

Physical distancing does not have to mean social isolation; with some creativity we can continue to foster a sense of connection with family, friends, community and the world around us.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Take part in projects that others in your community are involved in, such as the Facebook group 'Bin Isolation Outing' or Sktchy's 30 faces/30 days drawing challenge.
- Organise a regular lunch date with a friend or family member over video chat or put your phone on speaker. Book it in your calendar as something you can count on each week.
- Write the names of friends and family on separate pieces of paper and put them into a bowl. Pull one name out each day and contact them – email, text, call or video chat, or even write a letter!
- If restrictions allow it, take time each day to get outside and connect with nature. Spend time in a garden, walk near green space and feel the sun on your shoulders.
- Use the Netflix party extension to watch Netflix with your friends online.
- Foster compassion and kindness towards others through a daily Loving Kindness meditation.
- Use the video chat app 'houseparty' to play popular games like trivia and Heads Up! With friends.
- Continue to make and attend appointments using video chat options.
- Find ways to be generous and thoughtful towards others. If you live with someone, see if they need a hand with anything or offer to cook dinner.

Reach out for help – you are not alone in this fiasco by any means, but that doesn't mean you are not still deserving of assistance. Don't set yourself on fire to keep others warm.

# Immediate Connections



## Phone support service

What ever you're feeling during these challenging times, you can talk it through with a BeyondBlue counsellor. Call 1800 512 348



## Web chat support service

Sometimes you may not feel like talking on the phone, you can chat online with a BeyondBlue counsellor 24/7."



## Online community forum

Connect with others, share experiences and exchange messages of support on the dedicated online forum: Coping During the coronavirus pandemic.



## Suicide and crisis support

If you are in an emergency, or at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please contact emergency services on 000.

Call Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467



Lifeline (13 11 14) is a free and confidential service staffed by trained telephone counsellors.



1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) For those experiencing the impacts of sexual assault, domestic and family violence.



Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service



Suicide Call Back Service (1300 659 467) is a 24/7 professional and nationwide telephone and counselling service.

You are not alone and there are many organisations that can help you.

**Maintain a routine and look after your health and well-being.**

Focus on completing your studies as life always gets better and at the end of your degree you will be in a position to take advantage of the many opportunities that will come your way.



## **USQ Health and Wellness**

**[usq.edu.au/current-students/support/health-and-wellness](https://usq.edu.au/current-students/support/health-and-wellness)**

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### **Visit us**

**USQ Toowoomba: G Block**

**USQ Springfield: Building B, Level 1 Atrium**

**USQ Ipswich: Building D**



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