

15 October 2018

Think you have anxiety? People won't judge. Take the quiz.

Beyond Blue is encouraging people to take a quiz to check their mental health as a new survey reveals people are more accepting of anxiety conditions than many believe.

Research has found that seven out of ten people have never taken a simple online anxiety quiz to assess their anxiety. Anxiety is the most common mental health condition in Australia.

The Beyond Blue anxiety checklist can be found here: beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety/anxiety-checklist.

It replicates the clinically valid GAD-7 anxiety assessment, a quick seven-question quiz that lets you know whether you may be experiencing an anxiety condition serious enough to require professional support.

Evidence shows that perceptions of stigma remain a barrier to many people getting support when they need it.

Almost two in three people experiencing an anxiety condition believe others see anxiety as a sign of personal weakness.

However, a snapshot survey of more than 800 people - commissioned by Beyond Blue - shows people in Australia are more accepting of anxiety conditions than many believe. Results show:

- 90 percent believe an anxiety condition is a real medical illness
- 86 percent say they do not consider anxiety a weakness
- 86 percent don't believe anxiety is something you can just snap out of.

"We know that a big barrier for people seeking support can be stigma, including personal fear and shame, yet the research tells us that when it comes to anxiety, people are far more understanding than we may think," Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said.

"Anxiety is not a sign of personal weakness and most people in Australia know that," Ms Harman said.

"It is a real condition and it's not something you can snap out of. The majority of people in Australia accept this," Ms Harman said.

"We want people experiencing anxiety to know they need not feel alone or misunderstood – that people will believe them and not judge, and want to support them.

"And we want people to realise that reaching out for support shouldn't be a source of shame."

"The Beyond Blue anxiety checklist is a great place to start and it's on the Beyond Blue website along with a number of other resources."

Beyond Blue today launches its latest campaign to lift the veil on anxiety. Its tagline is: "What you're thinking isn't what they're thinking".

More than two million Australians experience anxiety conditions, making it the most common mental health issue in Australia. Research shows that one in six people take six years or more to recognise the signs of anxiety and seek treatment.

More information about Beyond Blue's anxiety campaign, including information about the conditions, can be found here: beyondblue.org.au/knowanxiety.

*Mental health professionals are available at the beyondblue Support Service via phone 24/7 on **1300 22 4636** or via www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).*

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