



Sir John Kirwan
Westpac Ambassador

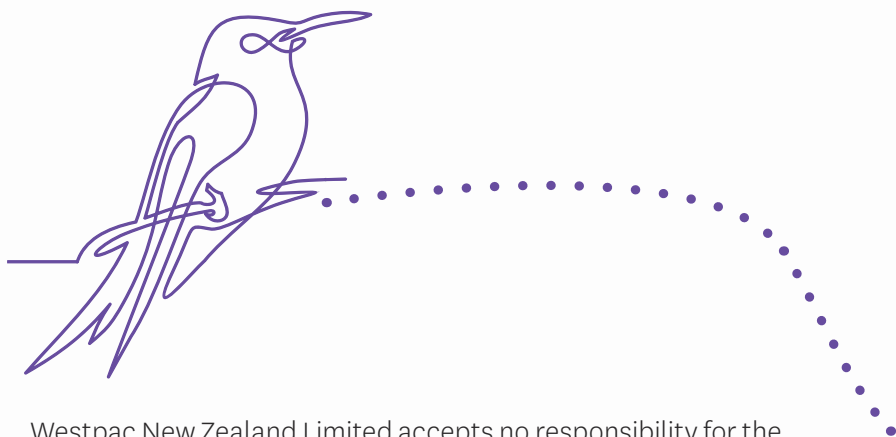
**AN ILLNESS,
NOT A
WEAKNESS.**



**TOGETHER
GREATER**

As a Westpac Ambassador, Sir John Kirwan is helping New Zealanders understand mental illness, talk more openly with each other and build supportive networks.

Together with Westpac, JK has spoken to tens of thousands across the country to share his message.



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You're not alone

All Blacks do cry. Trust me.

Depression is not a weakness, it's an illness. I wish I'd known that earlier, before I spent five years struggling with my thoughts and feeling as though I was a failure.

All my happiness had gone, I couldn't see how to get it back, and I was exhausted from fighting a secret battle with my own mind.

Once I accepted that I had depression, I started to get better immediately. I now know how to manage my depression. Now I have a daily mental health plan.

I wouldn't wish depression on anyone, but I think my depression has made me a better father and a better husband. I work on my wellness: I take care of my mind and my body. I know how to be happy, how to enjoy myself and how to be motivated. It's wonderful to have those feelings back when they've been gone.

This isn't an easy subject to talk about.

But if you're depressed, reach out and you'll find other people who have been where you are and they've come out the other end. It will pass – I'm proof of that. I've been through hell, and I'm back.

Signs of depression

It's normal to feel down or stressed sometimes. But when it lasts for several weeks on end, it begins to have a serious impact on your life. Some of the signs of depression are:

- Feeling tired all the time, having no energy
- Sleeping too much, or not enough
- Feeling worthless and hopeless, low self-esteem
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Sadness or emotional numbness

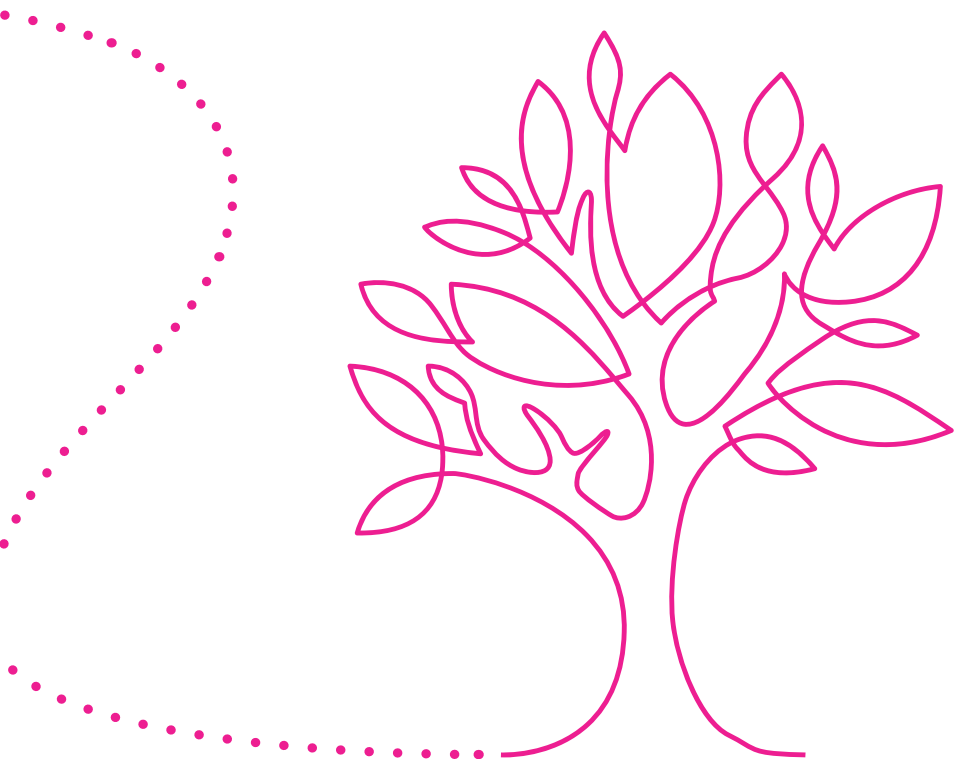


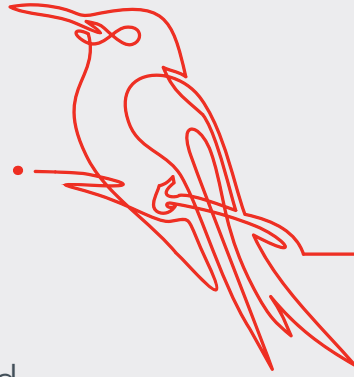


- Taking no pleasure in things that you used to enjoy
- Being irritable, anxious or restless
- Struggling to concentrate
- Feeling guilty
- Crying for no reason
- Thinking about death or suicide.

Everyday mental health

These are some proven everyday ways
to help keep your mind balanced.





- Stay connected
- Be active in a different way
- Try to manage your stress
- Eat well
- Protect your sleep
- Identify what brings you happiness
- Give yourself time to relax
- Stay on top of daily chores
- Try not to procrastinate
- Avoid negative thinking
- Know when to get help.

Taking the next steps

There's a world of information and support out there – here are just a few options to get you started.

Learn more online.

Depression.org.nz

depression.org.nz

The Journal

myjournal.depression.org.nz

The Lowdown

thelowdown.co.nz

The Mental Health Foundation

mentalhealth.org.nz

After a Suicide

afterasuicide.nz



Talk to someone.

Visit your doctor and make an appointment or ask someone to make one for you.

Call the Depression Helpline

 0800 111 757

 text 4202

 support@depression.org.nz

Call Lifeline

 0800 543 354

Read a book.

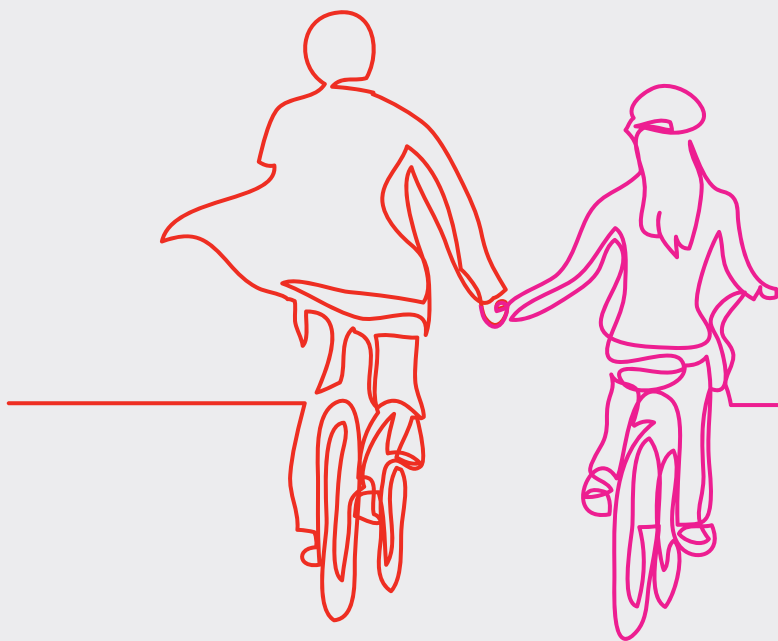
- All Blacks Don't Cry. The full story of Sir John Kirwan's depression.
- The Resilient Farmer. Doug Avery's book tells the story of his journey through depression.

Apps and activities.

- Groov. A workplace wellness app with science-backed tools and guides to help you take care of yourself through the working day. groovnow.com/app

Supporting a loved one who's struggling

When someone you love is depressed, you can help by being there for them and supporting them.



Here are some ideas for helping someone you know well:

- Be available to talk
- Learn about depression
- Be patient
- Stay calm
- Talk about their behaviours to get started
- Know where to go for urgent help. There are emergency teams to help. They work 24/7 to assess and treat people who are experiencing a serious mental health crisis.
- Call your local Mental Health Crisis Service – you can find phone numbers on the Ministry of Health website by searching “mental health crisis team”.