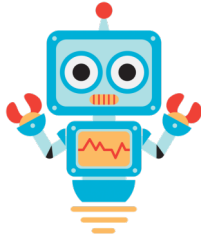


Artificial Intelligence and Your Mental Health

What is Artificial Intelligence?

AI stands for artificial intelligence. Most people think of programs like ChatGPT or Microsoft CoPilot. These programs can do a lot of things. Many people use AI like a conversation. This means the AI software communicates with you like a person. AI software is complex. Programs like ChatGPT are trained to look for patterns in what you say. These programs do not think or feel - even if it seems like they do! AI can be very useful for helping with learning, organising, and problem-solving. However, it should not replace mental health care. AI does not replace speaking to a psychologist or using self-help materials based on scientific evidence).

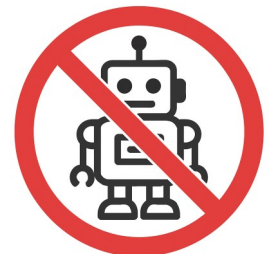


- Sometimes, AI can create “hallucinations”. This means it is making up information that is not real. This information cannot be trusted
- Avoid sharing personal or identifying information – what you type can be saved and reviewed
- It can be easy to rely too much on AI to tell you what to do or make you feel better. These can function as safety behaviours (take a look at our handouts: *What are safety behaviours?* And *Reducing Reassurance Seeking*)
- AI can be biased. This means it is influenced by the information that it is trained to use to answer your questions. AI learns from information that is written by people. This means AI answers can reflect stereotypes or unfair beliefs about people, places, and things.

When is AI not helpful for mental health support?

Remember that AI cannot think. This means that it cannot replace human care. There are some things that AI should not be used for – for your own safety.

- AI should not be used in place of real therapy (such as with a counsellor or psychologist)
- You should not use AI for personal advice, diagnoses, or treatment plans
- AI should not be used to make important life choices (like medical, legal, or relationship decisions)
- Avoid using AI in a crisis or emergency
- You should avoid using AI for emotional comfort or validation – it can sound empathetic, but it does not understand feelings



If you are ever in distress or feel unsafe, it's important to reach out to a real person who can help — such as a trusted friend, your GP, or a crisis service.

Tips for safe and helpful use

- Use AI to help organise information and support your learning
- Avoid sharing personal or identifying information — what you type can be saved and reviewed
- Consider your wording, be specific in your questions, and prompt AI to give you evidence or sources so you can check the information is correct
- Check important information with trusted sources (like your psychologist, GP, or reliable websites – see our handout on *Media Literacy*)
- Keep a curious mindset – not everything AI says will be true or helpful

When is AI helpful for mental health support?

AI can be a helpful tool in supporting your mental health and wellbeing goals — as long as it's used safely and thoughtfully. Here are some ways you might use it:

- Practical problem solving: AI can help you see things from different angles and come up with new ideas when you feel stuck (like suggesting ideas for how to prioritise items on your to do list)
- Breaking tasks into smaller steps: Useful if you're working on graded tasks for depression — starting small and building up
- Exposure planning: You can use AI to help design graded hierarchies for anxiety (like helping you think of ideas for gradual steps between a little and very challenging tasks)
- Motivation and accountability: It can help you plan routines or schedules
- Writing or journaling support: AI can suggest prompts for reflection, gratitude, or identifying thinking patterns
- Simplifying information: It can summarise complex material (like therapy notes or self-help resources) into easier language

AI can also be a way to organise your thoughts, explore ideas, or practice skills between therapy sessions.

When should you use caution with AI?

AI can be a helpful tool, but it's important to use it wisely and know its limits.

- Look out for information that is not accurate. AI can make mistakes and give you ideas that are no longer correct.