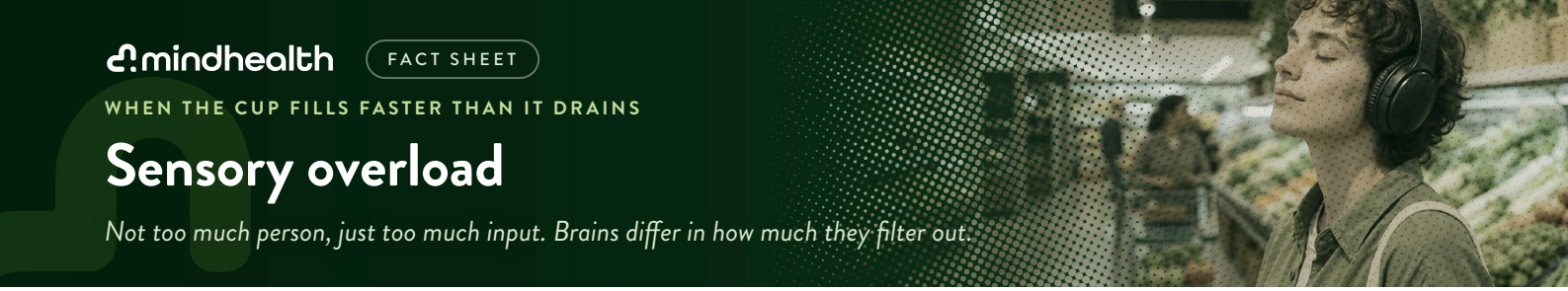
mindhealth FACT SHEET

WHEN THE CUP FILLS FASTER THAN IT DRAINS

# Sensory overload

*Not too much person, just too much input. Brains differ in how much they filter out.*



**More input lands**
Filters working overtime

**It drains fast**
Noise, light, crowds, motion

**Plan the exits**
Recovery is a skill

## 01 When the world is too loud

Every brain filters a flood of input: sound, light, movement, touch, other people. Some brains, especially autistic and ADHD brains, filter less out, so ordinary places cost more: the supermarket's fluorescent hum, the open-plan office, the Saturday shopping centre. When the cup overflows you might feel irritable, panicky, foggy or suddenly shut down. That's a nervous system at capacity, not an overreaction.

## 02 Lower the volume, on purpose

Overload is managed at the source, not by pushing through. Know your top triggers and dial them down before they stack: headphones in loud places, sunglasses under harsh light, shopping at quiet hours. Build exits into big days, and treat recovery time afterwards as part of the plan, not a failure of it. Telling the people around you what helps turns them into allies.

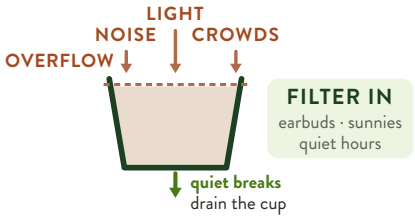
## 03 What genuinely helps

- Mapping your top three triggers
- Headphones, sunnies, quiet-hour shopping
- Built-in exits and micro-breaks
- Scheduling recovery after big-input days
- Telling people what helps, before you're maxed

### A PRACTICAL STORY




### THE CUP
**When input overflows**




*Noise, light and crowds pour in faster than the cup can drain. Quiet breaks open the tap at the bottom.*

### PRACTICAL TOOLKIT
**Turn it down**

1. Carry one filter: earbuds or plugs
2. Take the exit before the overflow
3. Bank quiet time after big days

*Less input, more you.*

### WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If overload is shaping where you can work, shop or socialise, a psychologist can help you build a sensory plan that fits your life and wiring. Ask your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Beyond the five senses we learn at school, the body has interoception: the sense of what is happening inside you, like a racing heart or hunger.

*Craig, Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 2002*

### THE KEY TAKEAWAY

*You're not fragile. Your filters are just set fine. Fewer decibels in, more capacity out.*

**Need support right now?** Lifeline **13 11 14** · Emergency **000** — available 24/7. More options: **mindhealth.com.au/urgent-help**

TALK TO US WHEN YOU'RE READY
Parramatta and online, Australia-wide · **Book at mindhealth.com.au**

**1300 084 200**

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