

Monday 12 August 2019

## Cooking for a healthy mind – using the beauty of ingredients to heal the soul

Highly regarded chef, Matt Golinski calls for every Australian to invest in a passion they love, in a bid to promote better mental health. Tomorrow, he joins more than 800 delegates, at the [Dietitians Association of Australia 36<sup>th</sup> National Conference](#) on the Gold Coast, to share how his journey has been shaped by good food and the art of cooking.

Growing up on a tropical fruit farm on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, Golinski was surrounded by food from a very young age.

"I discovered what I wanted to do very early on in life, so I've been lucky in that sense. In high school I signed up for home economics and I'd cook the family meals at night. All I ever wanted was to be a chef," Golinski said.

In 2011, Australia grieved when Golinski lost his wife and three daughters in a devastating house fire. He suffered catastrophic burns to more than 40 per cent of his body and was kept in an induced coma for more than eight weeks.

"I probably spent four months crying, feeling anxious and asking myself why. But in the end, there's no explanation for it ... the only thing you can do is just accept that sometimes life can give you a very tough hand and there's absolutely nothing you can do to change it," said Golinski.

Golinski used his love of what he does to assist in his physical and emotional recovery.

"Everyone's got something they love to do. For me, it's cooking with fresh, seasonal, healthy ingredients. When I was cooking, I was healing," he said.

In Australia, it is estimated that 45 per cent of people will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime, with young people (10-24 years of age) the most likely of all age groups to experience the onset of mental-ill health<sup>1</sup>.

Poor diet has been consistently linked with poor mental health, highlighting the important role of nutrition for our mental wellbeing<sup>2</sup>.

Mental health professionals credit cooking with helping to relieve depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and other conditions<sup>3</sup>, and now suggest using cooking or baking as therapy tools for people suffering from mental health issues<sup>4</sup>.

"Exercise, family and cooking helped me through the most difficult years of my life," said Golinski.

Matt Golinski joins Accredited Practising Dietitians Janice Plain, Associate Professor Tracy Burrows and Dr Tetyana Rocks at tomorrow's Mental Health plenary session.

**ENDS**

**For further information or to organise an interview with Matt Golinski contact**

**DAA: Pattie King: 0409 661 920 or Trish Kirkland: 0459 491 545**

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Background:

### About the Dietitians Association of Australia National Conference:

The DAA National Conference is being held from 12-14 August 2019 at the Gold Coast Conference and Exhibition Centre. For more information and program details, visit: [daa2019.com.au](http://daa2019.com.au). Follow the conversation via twitter [@DAA\\_Feed](https://twitter.com/DAA_Feed) and share your interest using #DAA2019.

Press passes can be made available for interested media (including Australian-based journalists) to attend sessions at the conference. To request a press pass, please contact Pattie King 0409 661 920.

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<sup>1</sup> Black Dog Institute (2018). Facts & figures about mental health. Available at:

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/about-us/publications-and-resources/fact-sheets>

<sup>2</sup> Lakhan, S. E., & Vieira, K. F. (2008). Nutritional therapies for mental disorders. *Nutrition Journal*, 7, 2. doi:10.1186/1475-2891-7-2

<sup>3</sup> Orygen (2015). Research Bulletin Food for thought: the relationship between diet and outcomes for depression and anxiety. Available at: <https://www.orygen.org.au/Education-Training/Resources-Training/Resources/Free/Research-Bulletins/Food-for-thought-diet-depression-anxiety>

<sup>4</sup> Farmer, N., Touchton-Leonard, K., & Ross, A. (2018). Psychosocial Benefits of Cooking Interventions: A Systematic Review. *Health education & behaviour*, 45(2), 167–180. doi:10.1177/1090198117736352