



Defining  
Minds

PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELLING  
Redefining Futures

# Psychologist

NSW Telehealth and Port Macquarie

EMDR & Sand Tray Therapy

by  
Kylie Hutchings Mangion



Defining Minds Psychology and Counselling

Kylie Hutchings Mangion | Psychologist

B.Teach (PAVE), B.LDes, MEd Tech, EdD, GradDipPsychSc,  
BPsychSci (Hons), MAPS, MAAPi, MEMDRAA, MIAST

## Caring Hearts: The Emotional Impact of Supporting a Partner in Later Life

### How to Identify the Challenge

As we age, relationships evolve—and for many women, this includes becoming a caregiver for a partner facing illness, cognitive decline, disability, or emotional challenges. While caregiving often comes from a place of deep love, it can also bring emotional strain, role changes, and invisible grief. If you're finding yourself exhausted, emotionally overwhelmed, or unsure how to balance your needs with theirs, you may be carrying the mental load of long-term caregiving.

### Common Symptoms or Signs

- Constant worry or hypervigilance about your partner's health
- Fatigue, burnout, or feeling emotionally drained
- Mood swings, tearfulness, or irritability
- Grief or sadness over relationship changes (e.g., less intimacy, increased dependency)
- Guilt about feeling frustrated or needing space
- Loneliness, even when not physically alone
- Neglecting your own needs or health
- Feeling invisible or unsupported in your role as a caregiver

### Potential Impacts on Daily Life

Caring for a partner can be emotionally rewarding, but without support, it can also lead to compassion fatigue, anxiety, and depression. Many women feel they have to be "strong" or "cope quietly," especially when societal or generational expectations discourage asking for help. Over time, this can lead to emotional isolation, strained relationships, and a loss of self.

There's also a quiet grief that comes with witnessing a loved one's decline or the slow shift in a once-equal partnership.

### How Professional Psychological Support Can Help

Psychological support offers a space for caregivers to feel seen, supported, and emotionally held. A psychologist can help you:

- Navigate complex emotions such as guilt, resentment, or grief
- Set boundaries and develop sustainable caregiving strategies
- Reconnect with your identity outside the caregiver role
- Process anticipatory grief or relational changes
- Learn self-care practices that actually feel doable
- Build emotional resilience and seek support without shame
- Improve communication and emotional intimacy with your partner

You don't have to carry it all alone. Caring for someone else is one of the most human, vulnerable things we can do—but it's just as important to care for yourself along the way.

NSW Wide Telehealth Clinic

Suite 1011/4 Young Street

Neutral Bay NSW 2089

Phone: 0490 888 124

admin@kyliehutchingsmangion.com.au



PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELLING  
Redefining Futures

Port Macquarie Clinic

3/66 Lord Street

Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Phone: 02 5525 3800

info@thehealthcentre.au