

BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVATION FOR DEPRESSION

## BOOKLET TWO

### Monitoring Activity and Mood

week .....

# 2

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TALKING THERAPIES SOUTHWARK revised February 2021

## **Introduction: why monitoring?**

The aim of activity and mood monitoring is to help us understand how aspects of your life may be contributing to your depression, and get some clues as to the kinds of changes that are likely to be helpful.

Keeping a record is important because:

- many of our emotional and behavioural reactions to events are so automatic that we are likely to forget them unless we write them down
- recording detail and then stepping back to look at the whole is a good way to see patterns that we wouldn't otherwise notice (like a mosaic)
- recognising patterns of mood and behaviour helps us know when and what to change.

To start it is helpful to track what you are doing, hour by hour, also noting associated moods, emotions or feelings.

## Instructions

For each hour:

1. write down the main thing or things you were doing during that hour (e.g. having lunch, watching TV, going to the shops, etc.)
2. write a word or two to describe how you felt (e.g. miserable, anxious, happy, etc.)
3. rate the strength of each feeling on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least intense and 10 being the most intense.

Here is a list of common feelings that you might experience over the week:

sad, down, gloomy, miserable, despairing,  
nervous, scared, afraid, alarmed, terrified,  
irritable, tense, edgy, restless, agitated,  
embarrassed, ashamed, guilty,  
resentful, sulky, vulnerable, weak,  
pleased, happy, joyful, elated, satisfied,  
excited, passionate, strong, proud,  
numb, blank, empty,  
angry, furious, cross, frustrated, jealous,  
surprised, amused, lively, light-hearted  
content, peaceful, calm, settled, at ease.

There is an example on pages 6-7.

### Optional variations

If there are one or two particular aspects of your experience that you

## **Possible obstacles**

**I know I am miserable most of the time - won't writing it down just make me feel worse?**

Yes, it might; sometimes looking at what is happening in our lives can make us feel worse in the short-term. However, it is an important first step to making changes. Try to approach this task with as much kindness towards yourself as possible - give yourself credit for having a go.

**I don't do much - I won't have anything to write down**

We are always doing something - even 'doing nothing' is actually doing something if you look more closely. So if you spend an hour just sitting lost in thoughts miles away, write that; if you lie in bed dozing, write that; and so on.

**There are some things I do that I don't want to write down because I don't want anyone else to see them**

How much you include is entirely up to you. It is fine to use a code or to leave things out completely. Remember also, though, that your therapist is here to help you, not to judge you.

**This is a lot of effort and I don't see how it is going to help me**

This approach has already helped lots of people recover from depression. And yes, you are right, it will take some effort and determination on your part.

## Tips

- Carry this booklet and a pen or pencil around with you so you can write things down as close in time to when they happened as possible
- Try setting an alarm (e.g. on a mobile) to remind you to complete the record at the end of each morning and afternoon
- If you forget or don't manage to complete it one day, just start again the next day
- If you forget two days, just start again the day after that
- (and so on, for 3 days forgotten, etc)
- If it is taking more than half an hour to complete each day's activities, you are probably trying to include too much detail
- If it is taking less than a minute a day, you might consider including a little more detail

## Daily Activities Record

Day/Date: <i>Monday 05/03/11</i>		<i>Example</i>
Time	Activity	Mood
6 a.m	<i>Awake lying in bed</i>	<i>Depressed 7 Anxious 5</i>
7 a.m	<i>Get up and shower. Toast for breakfast</i>	<i>Depressed 6</i>
8 a.m	<i>Get dressed, bus to work</i>	<i>Depressed 6</i>
9 a.m	<i>Get on with paperwork</i>	<i>Depressed 3</i>
10 a.m	↓	
11 a.m	<i>Have a coffee with a friend</i>	<i>Relaxed 4</i>
12 p.m	<i>More paperwork</i>	<i>Involved 4</i>
1 p.m	<i>Finish piece of work early and have lunch in staff room</i>	<i>Pleased 5</i>
2 p.m	<i>Several phone calls</i>	<i>Stressed 3; pleased 4</i>
3 p.m	<i>Meeting (get headache)</i>	<i>Stressed 5; Annoyed 4</i>
4 p.m	<i>Have a good chat with friend in team in next office</i>	<i>Happy 3</i>
5 p.m	<i>Head home on bus, delays in traffic</i>	

## Daily Activities Record

Time	Activity	Mood
6 p.m	<i>Go to the supermarket</i>	<i>Depressed 3</i>
7 p.m	<i>Heat up &amp; eat ready meal</i>	<i>Depressed 5</i>
8 p.m	<i>Watch TV</i>	<i>OK</i>
9 p.m	↓	<i>Bored, tired</i>
10 p.m	<i>Go on internet—Facebook</i>	<i>Upset 5</i>
11 p.m	<i>Go to bed</i>	
12 a.m	<i>Asleep</i>	
1 a.m	↓	
2 a.m	<i>Wake up, noises outside</i>	<i>Anger 7</i>
3 a.m	<i>Asleep</i>	
4 a.m	<i>Awake, tired</i>	<i>Depressed 4 Anxious 6</i>
5 a.m	<i>Still awake</i>	<i>Very fed up 9</i>

## Daily Activities Record

Day/Date		
Time	Activity	Mood
6 a.m		
7 a.m		
8 a.m		
9 a.m		
10 a.m		
11 a.m		
12 p.m		
1 p.m		
2 p.m		
3 p.m		
4 p.m		
5 p.m		



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Day/Date		
Time	Activity	Mood
6 p.m		
7 p.m		
8 p.m		
9 p.m		
10 p.m		
11 p.m		
12 a.m		
1 a.m		
2 a.m		
3 a.m		
4 a.m		
5 a.m		

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2 p.m		
3 p.m		
4 p.m		
5 p.m		

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3 a.m		
4 a.m		
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2 a.m		
3 a.m		
4 a.m		
5 a.m		

## Reflections

The next few pages have some suggestions for using the information you have collected over the week.

### **Activities associated with positive and negative moods**

Look back over the week.

What things were you doing when your mood was most **positive**?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

What things were you doing when your mood was most **negative**?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

How does your recorded mood compare with your expectations?

**Overall level:** was it better or worse or as you expected?

.....  
.....

**Up & down or flat:** Was it more or less varied than you had expected?

.....  
.....

**Range of emotions:** What range of emotions did you record?

## Response to distress or getting upset

How we respond to upsetting events and emotional distress can play an important part in how quickly or slowly we recover from depression. It is also important in building resilience for the future. Look back at the week and make a note of any times when you got upset or started feeling worse. For each time, make a note of what you **did next**.

### Event

### What I did next

Ex. *Weds eve*

*Friend didn't reply to my text Sat alone drinking and wondering what I had done wrong*

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

## Variety & balance

Most of us feel best when our lives include a variety of different sorts of activities. There is also evidence that having a range of different activities can improve our mental well-being and make us more resilient. We generally thrive with a mix of the familiar and the new. However, we are all different and what works best for one person at one point in their life may be very different from works best for someone else or at a different stage in life. These questions are designed to help you think about the current variety and balance in your life and what works best for you.

**How much time over the week was spent:**

**with others?**

.....

**on your own?**

.....

**outdoors?**

.....

**indoors?**

.....

**relaxing?**

.....



**on physical activity?**

.....

**on activities that are mentally stimulating?**

.....

**on creative activities?**

.....

**on familiar activities in the comfort zone?**

.....

**on things that are new or challenging?**

.....

**other?**

.....

**How does this balance of activities work for you? Does it suit you as an individual?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Routines

Depression is sometimes associated with changes in body-clock rhythms, and regular routines can help correct this. Therefore, insofar as this is under our control, it is probably helpful to get the body rhythms working for you rather than against you, and establish as regular routine as you are can. Of course, many things can make this difficult such as work shifts and caring responsibilities.

Look back at your week again: What were your routines like?

You may find that you can get a better sense of this using a chart like the example on the next page (blank version for you to use if you wish on page 28).

In the example the hours spent in bed are coloured pale blue and the hours asleep a darker blue.


The mealtimes are coloured orange, with the paler colour for snacks. Obviously there are lots of different ways of doing this, and if you want to take a closer look at your eating patterns, you might prefer to use a more detailed food diary.


We could also use another colour to show times of walking outdoors or other physical activity if we wanted.

Then, either using the chart or looking back at your the daily records, take a look at your routines, using the questions on page 29 as prompts.

You might also like to think about what you'd say about the patterns in the example on page 27.

## Example

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12-1 am							
1-2							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10				snack			
10-11							
11-12				snack			
 12-1							
1-2	snack						
2-3				snack			
3-4		snack				snack	
4-5							
5-6		snack					
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12-1 am							
1-2							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							
 12-1							
1-2							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							

## Routines: Sleep

**Getting up:** Did you get up at reasonably regular times?

.....  
.....

**Going to bed:** Did you go to bed at reasonably regular times?

.....  
.....

**Sleeping:** Did you sleep at the same times most days? Did you sleep much during the day?

.....  
.....

**Knock-on effects on the rest of the day:** Did when you slept have an effect on when you ate, when you went out, etc.?

.....  
.....

Note on sleep in the example:

*The earliest going-to-bed time is between 9 and 10 pm whereas the latest is between 1 am and 2 am. This is quite a large difference of around 4 hours, and if repeated over several weeks could be having an impact on sleep quality. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the waking up time also varies a fair bit. Getting up time varies less but that is because some days an hour or so is spent awake in bed before getting up, which although understandable when feeling bad, may make depression and sleep worse rather than better. It's possible that sleep patterns are also affecting meal times. If we wanted to establish a more regular routine, a first step might be to set a fixed getting up time, such as 7 am. Any other thoughts you have?*

## Routines: Eating

**Eating times:** How much did mealtimes vary over the week?

.....  
.....  
.....

## Routines: Activity and Rest

**Physical activity, being outdoors, and rest:** How consistent was this? If you are struggling with pain and/or fatigue, it can be important to avoid getting into a ‘boom and bust’ pattern in which you are tempted to overdo things on a relatively good day and then find yourself totally exhausted for the next day or so.

.....  
.....  
.....

## Routines: Overall Reflections

Are there any changes you think it would be helpful to make to your routine?

.....  
.....

## Doing what matters

In depression, it can be easy to lose sight of or neglect the things that are most important.

**Of the things you did over the week, which were most important to you?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Which activities gave you the greatest sense of achievement?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Are there any important things that you did NOT do?**

.....  
.....  
.....

**Are there any unimportant activities that you would like to spend less time on?**

.....  
.....  
.....

## Depression 'fingerprint'

If you have been depressed in the past, the following questions may help with your relapse prevention plan when you get to the end of the course.

1. Did you notice any patterns that are typical for you when you are depressed, but not typical for you at other times?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Are any of these 'early warning' signs, that come up before the others?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Do any of these early changes feed into others? And if so, are there some that can be caught early, before depression develops further? Which are the easiest (or least difficult) to change?

.....  
.....  
.....



**Any other reflections**

## **Any other reflections**

## What next?

You might want to continue monitoring for another week or two, or you might want to move onto making some changes.

The next booklet has some suggestions about making changes, but you might want to note one or two ideas here

1. ....

2. ....

## BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVATION FOR DEPRESSION

### *LIST OF BOOKLETS*

1. Introduction to BA for Depression
- 2. Monitoring activity and mood**
3. Roadmap: The Activation Plan
4. Finding direction: values, flow and strengths
5. Avoidance and the depression TRAPs
6. Problem solving
7. Thinking habits
8. Next steps

**We hope you have found this booklet helpful. We welcome your feedback.**

You can give comments to your therapist or by emailing us at [slm-tr.SPTS@nhs.net](mailto:slm-tr.SPTS@nhs.net)

<https://slam-iapt.nhs.uk/southwark/welcome-to-southwark-psychological-therapies-service/>