

Lethargy and lack of energy are classic warning signs for depression – depression drains your motivation and reinforces the withdrawal from daily activities and interests which in turn leads to isolation and loss of purpose...

Activity (or the lack of it) has a direct effect on the brain chemicals affecting mood, so one very effective way to turn this spiral around is to build simple, fun or purposeful activities back into your daily schedule.

Don't wait to 'feel like it'! This worksheet will help you figure out the simplest, most manageable way to 'get going' – giving you a very powerful strategy for tackling depression and moving forward.

## 1. My activity record

The simple first step is to keep an activity record, so you have a clear picture of how depression is depriving you of pleasurable activities. Use the Activity Record page at the end of this worksheet to record what you are doing in each period of the day, giving a rating for how enjoyable it was and a separate rating for your sense of achievement.

The achievement rating needs to be based on your own personal sense of achievement at this time – so if you've been finding it very hard to get out of bed in the mornings and you manage to do this reasonably quickly on a given day, then this should result in a relatively high sense of achievement. (ie. the rating is not based on whether or not you feel this 'should' be an easy thing for you to do!)

Don't try to change anything yet – just observe what you do and how you feel for regular intervals over the course of a day. You'll get the most information if you can do this for a whole week, but even one day is still beneficial.

## 2. Linking my activity levels and mood

Once you have get the activity record for a few days, or up to a week if possible, look back over your record and notice any patterns, and which activities had the highest pleasure or achievement ratings. You should find that your mood is generally slightly better when you have engaged in activities with higher pleasure or achievement ratings.

Don't dismiss this exercise if you don't see a perfect correlation between pleasure/achievement and mood. This is just one of the complex factors that affects your mood, so it can't be as simplistic as suggesting that if you just do fun stuff you'll feel fine! However, you might be pleasantly surprised to see how much difference it can sometimes make...



***"During my CBT sessions it was suggested to record the amount of pleasure and achievement I gained from each daily activity and to then build in more of the highly scoring activities into my day to lift my mood and self-esteem. These could be simple things like going to a lecture, emailing a tutor, having a coffee, blowing bubbles, even just cooking dinner."***  
– Iona



**My fun activities are:**

My fun activity is different on most days including

- \_\_\_ going for a coffee with Tom on Monday, \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ walking round the block with my 'feelgood' music on after lectures on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ phoning for a catch up with Sarah (which is also an achievement) on Wednesday, \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ playing with dog on Saturday when I go home, then \_\_\_

Try to include physical activity - it doesn't have to be vigorous exercise, could be something like walking, dancing, gardening, or even hoovering - at least three times in the week, because this is particularly effective at lifting mood

I have filled the activities in on my activity schedule to give myself a rough time period for when I will do this each day, \_\_\_ but it is okay to do it later if I don't make it when I planned to. \_\_\_

I will do each activity for at least \_\_\_ 5 minutes \_\_\_ and after that I can give up if I want to - and it will still count as an achievement.

You can use the activity record sheet each day to rate your pleasure, achievement and mood as before. Keep notes to help you modify your activities if you notice anything that makes a particular difference.

**4. Next steps**

Once you have successfully introduced more fun and achievement into your life, in simple ways, you can build on and consolidate this powerful strategy with other sections and worksheets:

- Use the 'Healthier daily routines' section to monitor and improve on your daily routines for sleep, eating, exercise, relaxation and socialising. 'Increasing exercise' is a particularly effective strategy against depression.
- Use the 'Changing attitudes' section to identify and challenge depressed thinking habits that may be preventing you from making the most of your activity goals, and improve your motivation for self-caring activities by learning greater self compassion.
- Use the 'Living well' section to introduce further life skills such as mindfulness, assertiveness and emotional literacy, and provide yourself with a powerful compass for the way forward by identifying your life values.

Day:	What was I doing?	Pleasure rating (1=lowest 10=highest)	Achievement rating (1=lowest 10=highest)	Mood rating and/or notes
7am to 9am				
9am to 10am				
10am to 11am				
11am to 12pm				
12 to 1pm				
1 to 2pm				
2 to 3pm				
3 to 4pm				
4 to 5pm				
5 to 6pm				
6 to 7pm				
7 to 8pm				
8 to 9pm				
9 to 10pm				
10 to 12am				
12 to 2am				
2am to 7am				

Time	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
7am to 9am							
9am to 10am							
10am to 11am							
11am to 12pm							
12 to 1pm							
1 to 2pm							
2 to 3pm							
3 to 4pm							
4 to 5pm							
5 to 6pm							
6 to 7pm							
7 to 8pm							
8 to 9pm							
9 to 10pm							
10 to 12am							
12 to 2am							