

# Managing Low Mood Workbook



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**Managing Low Mood provides treatment for symptoms of depression and is based upon principles of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT). The course consists of five weekly sessions, each focused on a different topic relevant to low mood.**

# Behavioural Activation (BA)

Behavioural Activation is a treatment which looks at making changes to our behaviour in a structured, evidence-based way, in order to improve wellbeing.

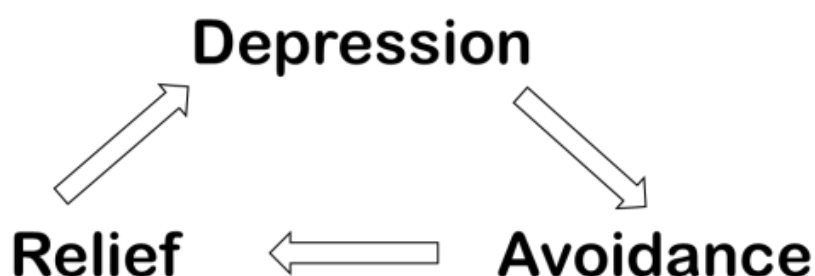
## How does BA work?

Perhaps the most common behaviour change when we are feeling low is avoidance. We might start to avoid social situations, avoid doing things we previously enjoyed, or other things that require effort such as housework.

By avoiding effort, we experience temporary relief. Avoidance is therefore a form of **negative reinforcement**. This makes us avoid further. Avoidance works in the short term, but in the long term it makes the problem worse.

As we avoid, we reduce the social and personal activities that bring us pleasure and achievement. Therefore we experience less **positive reinforcement** for these activities. This makes us reduce these activities further.

These maintain a vicious cycle of avoidance and reduced opportunity for positive reinforcement. Behavioural Activation works to break the cycle, by targeting different types of behaviours.



# Personal Projects

Therapy is an experiential process, so the tools and techniques covered in the sessions need to be transferred outside of the session to everyday life in order to have a positive impact on your mood.

This course uses change method to help make meaningful behavioural changes each week, with the overall goal of regulating activity levels and reducing symptoms of depression.

The personal projects set for the group will help you to implement new skills and techniques by practicing them in-between sessions.

We will be referring back to each week's personal projects in the following session.



# Change Balance Sheet

<b>Advantages of attending group and doing projects</b>	<b>Disadvantages of attending group and doing projects</b>
<b>Advantages of not attending group and doing projects</b>	<b>Disadvantages of not attending group and doing projects</b>

# What is Depression?

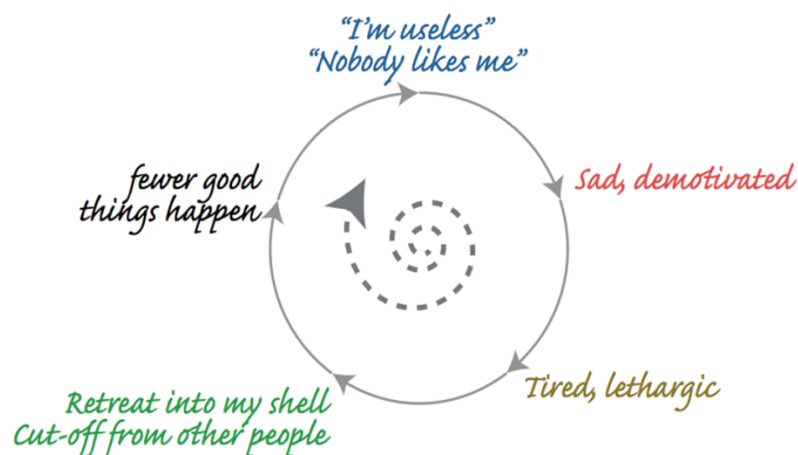
Depression is more than simply feeling unhappy or fed up for a few days.

Most people go through periods of feeling down, but when you're depressed you feel persistently sad for weeks or months, rather than just a few days.

Some people think depression is trivial and not a genuine health condition. They're wrong – it is a real illness with real symptoms. Depression isn't a sign of weakness or something you can "snap out of" by "pulling yourself together".

Even though you might feel alone, depression is very common. One-in-four people will experience depression at some point in their life

The good news is that with the right treatment and support, most people with depression can make a full recovery.



# Symptoms of Depression

Depression affects people in different ways and can cause a wide variety of symptoms.

They range from lasting feelings of unhappiness and hopelessness, to losing interest in the things you used to enjoy and feeling very tearful. Many people with depression also have symptoms of anxiety.

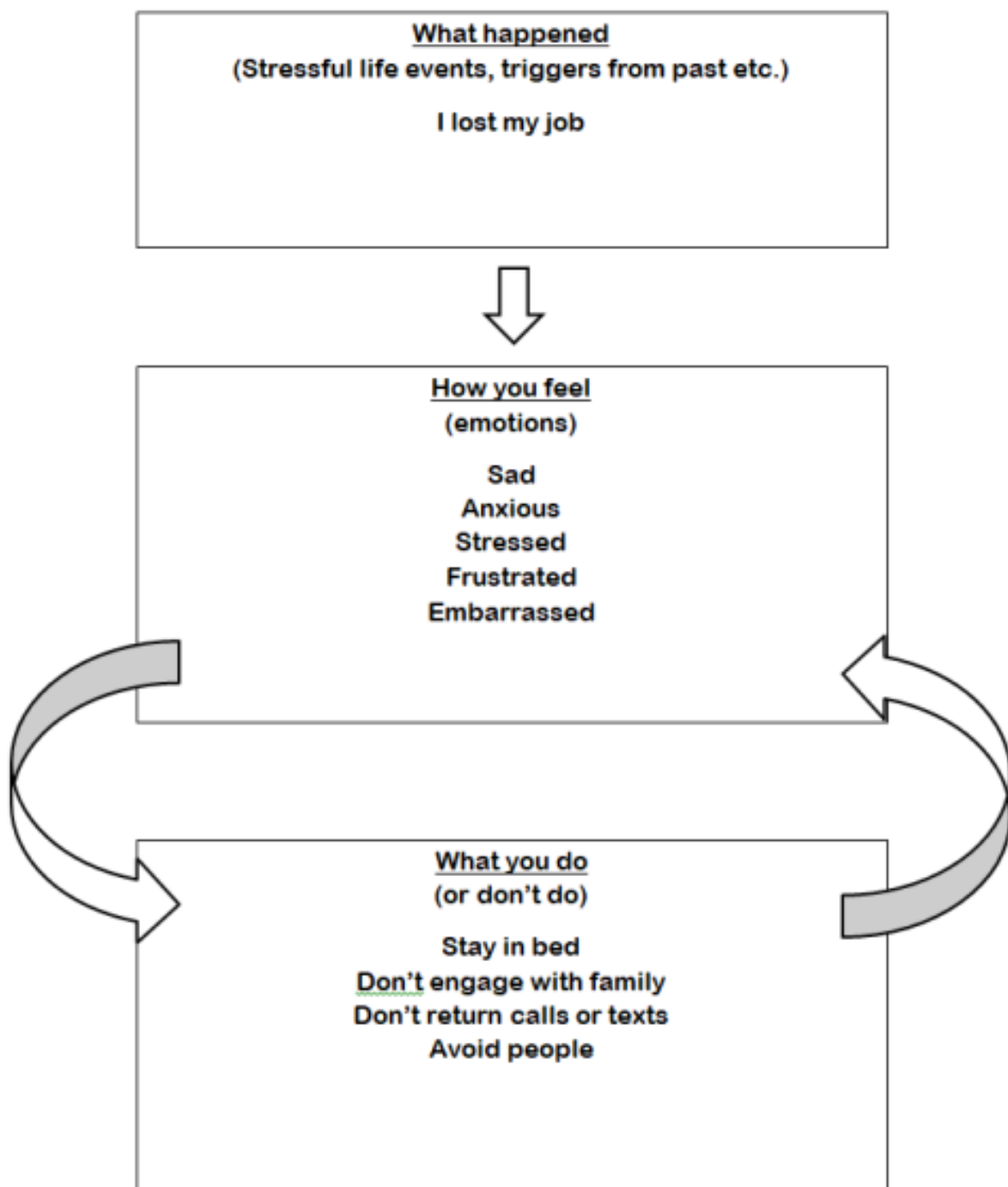
There can be physical symptoms too, such as feeling constantly tired, sleeping badly, having no appetite or sex drive, and various aches and pains.

The symptoms of depression range from mild to severe. At its mildest, you may simply feel persistently low in spirit, while severe depression can make you feel suicidal, that life is no longer worth living.

Most people experience feelings of stress, unhappiness or anxiety during difficult times. A low mood may improve after a short period of time, rather than being a sign of depression.

# Understanding Depression

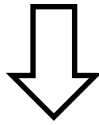
When feeling low we might find ourselves feeling and acting differently, in a vicious cycle that feels hard to break out of. We can use this model to understand what might be happening when we are low, this can help us to begin breaking this cycle





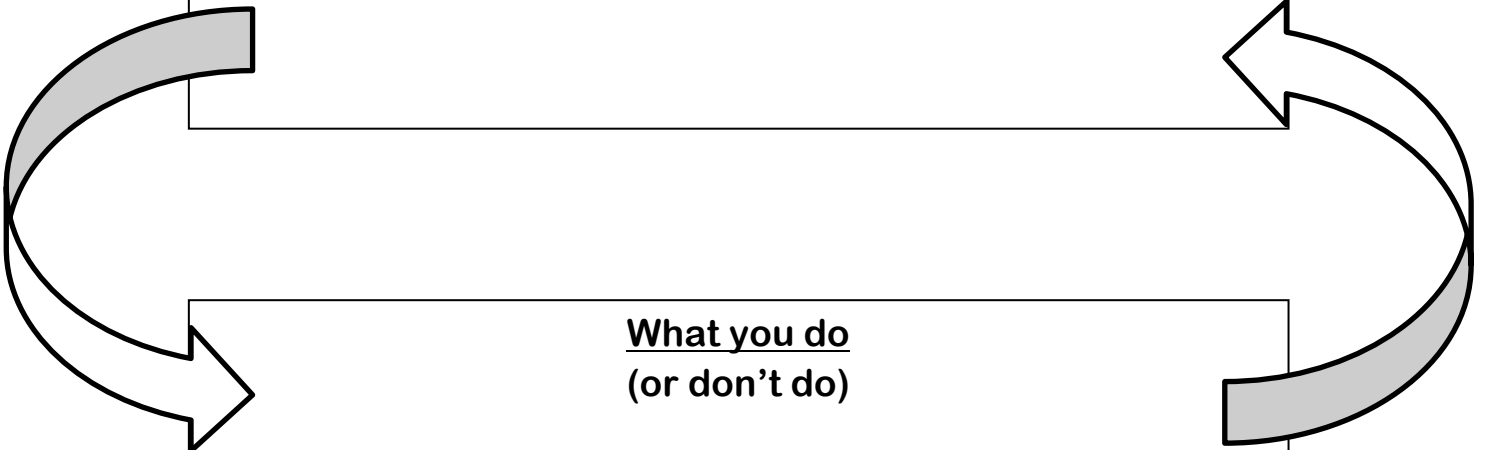
# My Vicious Cycle

What happened  
(Stressful life events, triggers from past etc.)



How you feel  
(emotions)

What you do  
(or don't do)



# Problem Statement

A problem statement is a short summary of how things are for you now. It is a baseline to measure your progress against and helps you to set goals for treatment.

For example...

My **main problem** is feeling depressed

This is **triggered** by difficulties at work

I **feel** upset and frustrated

My **physical symptoms** are tiredness

I **avoid** social activities and exercise

I have **thoughts** of “what’s the point?”

As a **consequence**, I am signed off sick currently

Now write your own problem statement in the space below...

# SMART Goals

It may be helpful to start to consider some goals to help guide treatment as you proceed through this course. To do this, it can be helpful to break down our goals and make them Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related.

An example would be; ‘I want to be able to go to the corner shop next Monday at 9am to buy milk and bread’.

Have a go at coming up with your own SMART Goal below and use the check list to check its SMART.

My SMART goal to work towards is...

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<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>Specific</b>	<b>Measurable</b>	<b>Achievable</b>	<b>Relevant</b>	<b>Time-bound</b>
Provide a clear description of what needs to be achieved.	Include a metric with a target that indicates success.	Set a challenging target, but keep it realistic.	Keep your goal consistent with higher-level goals.	Set a date for when your goal needs to be achieved.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
06:00 – 07:00							
07:00 – 08:00							
08:00 – 09:00							
09:00 – 10:00							
10:00 – 11:00							
11:00 – 12:00							
12:00 – 13:00							
13:00 – 14:00							
14:00 – 15:00							
15:00 – 16:00							
16:00 – 17:00							
17:00 – 18:00							
18:00 – 19:00							
19:00 – 20:00							
20:00 – 21:00							
21:00 – 22:00							
22:00 – 23:00							
23:00 – 00:00							

# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

	What I did	Comments
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Discussion points for the next session

# Week One Notes

- **Between sessions:**
- **Complete your SMART goal and problem statement**
- **Complete your Change Balance Sheet**
- **Complete your Low Mood Cycle**

# Sleep and Low Mood

Regularly getting a good night's sleep is important for our wellbeing. Most of us at some stage in our lives will experience some sort of sleep problem which can be made worse by low mood and can also impact on our behaviour.

## Sleep Hygiene

- Establish a routine with a regular bedtime and regular waking time
- If you can't sleep, within half an hour - get out of bed
- Be aware of caffeine and alcohol intake
- Turn your bedroom into a sleep friendly environment
- Establish soothing pre-sleep routine (reading, soft relaxing music)
- Try not to nap in the day/evening
- Exercise during the daytime

Keep a notebook by the bed to record anxious thoughts, worries or "things to do" that pay pop into your head

### Stage 1

lightest (1-7 min)

- Heartbeat slows down
- Breathing slows down
- Eye movements slow down
- Muscles relax, and might occasionally twitch
- Brain waves begin to slow down

### Stage 2

light (10-25 min)

- Heartbeat and breathing slow down even more
- Muscles relax even more
- Body temperature drops
- Eye movements stop
- Brain wave activity slows

### Stage 3

deep sleep (20-40 min)

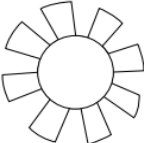

- Heartbeat and breathing slow to the lowest levels they will reach during sleep
- Muscles stay relaxed
- Brain waves slow down even more

### Stage 4

REM (20-40 min)

- Behind your eyelids, your eyes move rapidly from side to side
- Breathing speeds up and can become irregular
- Heart rate increases
- Blood pressure increases

# Sleep Diary

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
 <b>Complete in the MORNING</b>							
I went to bed last night at (time)							
I got up this morning at (time)							
I slept for a total of (hours)							
I woke up during the night (# times)							
 <b>Complete in the EVENING</b>							
Number of caffeinated drinks today							
Time of last caffeinated drink							
Exercise completed today (minutes)							
What I did in the hour before I fell asleep							
Mood today? (0=awful, 10=great)							



# Meal and Sleep Planner

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Breakfast</b>	e.g. bowl of cereal at 8am						
<b>Snack</b>							
<b>Lunch</b>							
<b>Snack</b>							
<b>Dinner</b>							

Routine plan for getting up this week:

Routine plan for going to sleep this week:

# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

	What I did	Comments
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
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Saturday		
Sunday		

Discussion points for the next session

# Week Two Notes

- **Between sessions:**
- **Schedule a regular time to wake up and implement this over the next week**
- **Choose one meal e.g. breakfast, and schedule/implement this using a meal planner**
- **Optional... complete a sleep diary if you feel this would be helpful for you**

# Identifying Activities

**Routine activities** are done day to day to make our lives more comfortable e.g. housework

**Necessary activities** are essential and the longer we leave them the worse the negative consequences e.g. paying bills

**Pleasurable activities** give a sense of achievement or connectedness to others and improve our quality of life

<b>Routine</b>	<b>Necessary</b>	<b>Pleasurable</b>
Washing dishes	Paying bills	Seeing friends
Eating meals	Booking Drs appt.	Learning new skill
Hoovering	Food shopping	Gardening
Washing the car	Taxing car	Singing in choir
Regular bedtime	Updating CV	Taking a bath
Going to the gym	Medication	Walking the dog
Doing laundry	Personal care	Baking a cake

# Identifying Activities

Identify activities that you think you're not doing or no longer find pleasure in

## Routine Activities


## Necessary Activities


## Pleasurable Activities


# Ranking Activities

Rank activities in order of how difficult they would be to carry out currently

Easy Activities	Routine	Necessary	Pleasurable

Moderate Activities	Routine	Necessary	Pleasurable

Difficult Activities	Routine	Necessary	Pleasurable

# Implementation and Monitoring

The final step of Behavioural Activation is to complete the activities you have planned into your diary

## Monitoring Your Mood

Monitoring your mood during behavioural activation allows you to see the effect that carrying out these activities can have on your mood

## Being Flexible

Day to day life can throw obstacles into our path unexpectedly; it may be that you cannot complete a planned activity due to such obstacles. It is important to be flexible, activities not complete can be postponed to a later day when you feel it would be more achievable

## Increasing Activity Levels

Once you have completed your first week of behavioural activation you might find that you wish to begin to add more activities gradually into the diary at your own pace. Remember this is a gradual process and should not be rushed

Obstacles and Solutions	
Too difficult to start	Try the activity for just 5 minutes
Tasks are too large	Break tasks down further
Lack of energy or motivation	Be time specific instead of tasks specific
Not enough time	Prioritise and ensure a balance
No improvement in mood	Complete activities in spite of how you feel, not because of how you feel

# Behavioural Activation Diary

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	What Where When Who						
Morning	What Where When Who						
Afternoon	What Where When Who						
Afternoon	What Where When Who						
Evening	What Where When Who						



# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

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Monday		
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Saturday		
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Discussion points for the next session

# Week Three Notes

- **Between sessions:**
- **Identify routine, necessary and pleasurable activities that you are avoiding or putting off**
- **Rank activities in order of how difficult they would be to carry out currently**
- **Schedule and complete at least 1-2 easy activities using your BA diary**
- **Monitor your mood before and after completing tasks on the schedule**

# Is your Life in Balance?

Below you can find areas of life that are valued by some people. This questionnaire will help clarify your own quality of life in these areas.

Rate the importance of each area (by circling a number) on a scale of 1-10 (1 means that area is *not important*, 10 means that area is very important).

Not everyone will value all of these areas, or value all areas the same. Rate each area according to **your own personal sense of importance.**

Area	Not Important <span style="float: right;">Very Important</span>									
Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Intimate Relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parenting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Friends/Social Life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Education/Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recreation/Fun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Citizenship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Time, Effort and Head Space

Now, give a rating to how much time, effort and head space you currently put into each area.

In other words, how in line with your values are you? Are you living your life in accordance with your values?

1 = little time, effort and 'head space'

10 = Maximum time, effort and 'head space'

Area	Minimum	Maximum								
Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Intimate Relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parenting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Friends/Social Life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Education/Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recreation/Fun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Citizenship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Value to step closer to \_\_\_\_\_

# Values and Activity

VALUE

ACTIVITIES

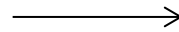
Example:

Parenting  
I want to be involved in my children's interests and learning. I'd like to build special memories with my kids and spend quality time with them.



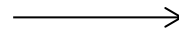
I'm going to attend the next PTO meeting and maybe contact the teacher to be a classroom volunteer. I can plan a small vacation to take with the kids next summer.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing a value.



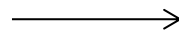
Four horizontal lines for writing activities.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing a value.



Four horizontal lines for writing activities.

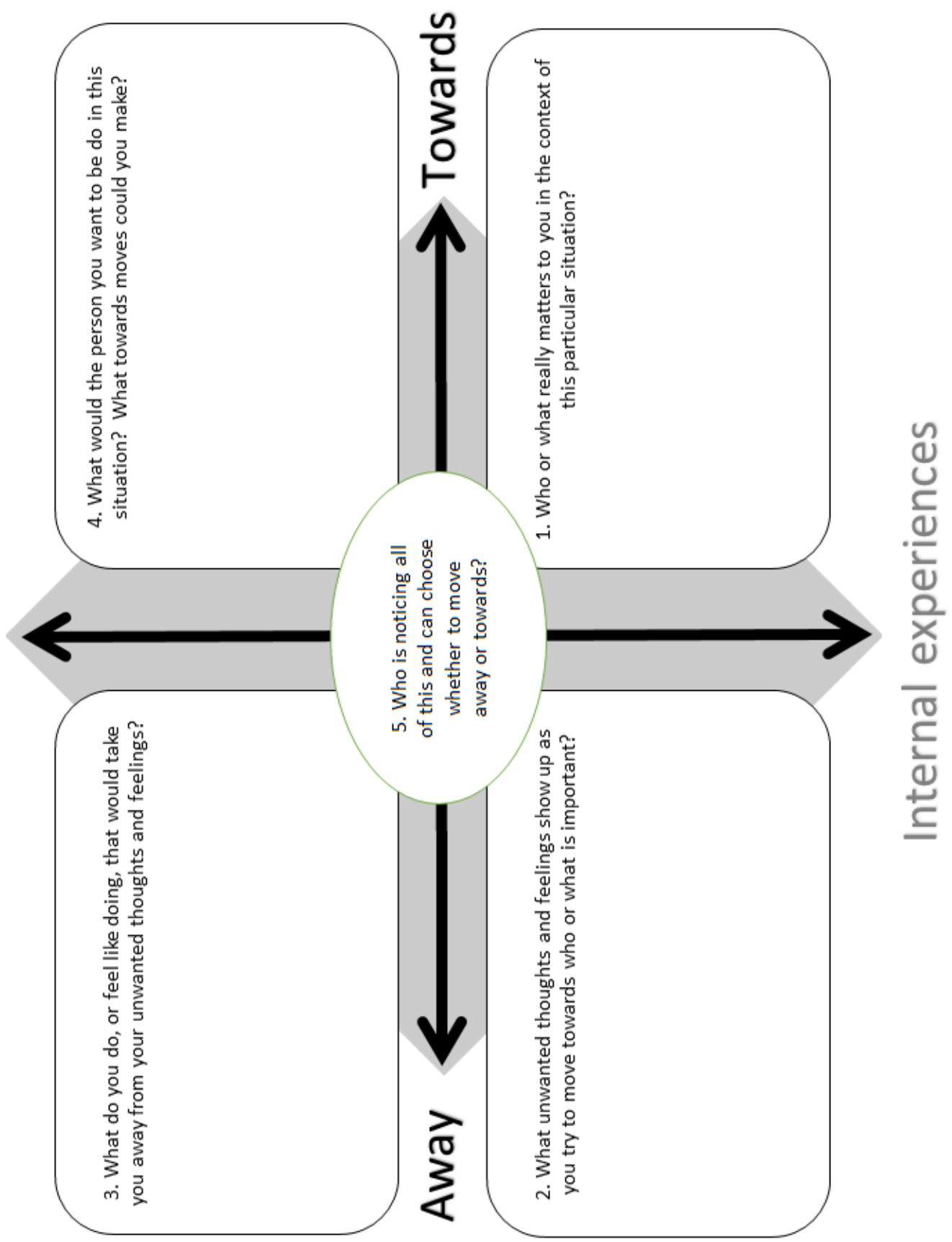
Empty rounded rectangular box for writing a value.



Four horizontal lines for writing activities.

# External experiences

ACT Matrix (adapted by Richard Bennett)



# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

	What I did	Comments
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Discussion points for the next session

# Week Four Notes

- **Between sessions:**
- **Completed values questionnaire rating importance followed by time, effort and headspace**
- **Identify several value-oriented activities e.g. friendship – go for a coffee with a friend**
- **Schedule at complete at least 1-2 value-oriented activities**



# Problem Solving

<b>Identify problem</b>

<b>List possible solutions</b>

<b>Solution</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>

# Problem Solving

Select one solution

--

Make an action plan

Steps	What, Where, When and Who...
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Review solution

What went well?

What could you do differently?

--

# Rumination

## What Is Rumination?

Ruminating is simply repetitively going over a thought or a problem without completion. When people are depressed, the themes of rumination are typically about being inadequate or worthless. When you feel depressed you can find that you can spend large amounts of your day stuck in this negative thought pattern.

## Rumination as Avoidance

Most people find that much of the time rumination makes them feel worse and reduces their motivation to do things. When people spend so much time in their heads, trying to sort out the problem, they don't actually take action to solve the problem. As a result Rumination becomes another form of avoidance.

## People who ruminate more...

- Tend to get depressed more often and for longer
- Become more negative
- Are less effective at solving problems
- Have less motivation and energy
- Have difficulty paying attention to their environment
- Engage others in rumination. This can push other people away.

# Rumination Diary

Date / Time	Trigger What had happened just before the rumination started?	Emotion How did you feel at that time?	Duration How long did the rumination last?	Content What were you thinking about?	Consequences How did ruminating make you feel?	Stopping What stopped the rumination?
	<p>Who were you with? What were you doing? Where were you?</p>					<p>Did you try to stop? What did you try?</p>

# Re-focus Attention - Mundane Tasks

When we are ruminating we are distracted from whatever else we are doing.

If we can reconnect with what we are doing by refocusing our attention then the rumination will reduce.



**What are 5 things you can see?** Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.



**What are 4 things you can feel?** Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture, and other physical qualities.



**What are 3 things you can hear?** Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.



**What are 2 things you can smell?** Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.



**What is 1 thing you can taste?** Carry gum, candy, or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.

Take a moment to write down the various everyday routine tasks you do, that you could use as an opportunity to focus your attention (e.g. eating a meal)

# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

	What I did	Comments
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Discussion points for the next session

# Week Five Notes

- **Between sessions:**
- **Identify at least one practical problem and apply problem solving using the 6 steps**
- **Use your rumination diary to begin record when you are ruminating and the content of your rumination (is this a problem that can be solved?)**
- **Practice connecting with the present using the 54321 technique**

# My Early Warning Signs

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**Make a note of symptoms that you experience when you feel low. Keeping an eye out for these will help you to recognise when your mood is worsening. It's normal for our mood to go up and down as situations and events around us continue to change day to day but knowing what our warning signs are can help**



# Therapy Blueprint

<b>How did the problem develop?</b>	
<b>What kept the problem going? e.g. thoughts or actions</b>	
<b>What are the most important things I learned in therapy?</b>	
<b>What do I need to keep doing to maintain my progress?</b>	
<b>What can I do if a setback occurs? How can I overcome it?</b>	

## **My Check-in Period**

**My Check-in time:**

**How have I been feeling this week?**

**Have I noticed any my early warning signs?**

**Is there a need to do something now?**

**What has helped me before?**

**What can I do now and when am I going to do it?**

## Goals for the Future

Having some goals in place to follow on from treatment, can help us to stay focused and keep on track.

Remember to keep them SMART and if it feels too overwhelming to begin with, break it down into little steps

<b>What do I want to achieve?</b>	
<b>How will I measure it?</b>	
<b>How will I achieve it?</b>	
<b>What will I need to carry it out?</b>	
<b>When do I want to do it by?</b>	

# Self-Practice Record Form

What I am committing to do?

How often will I do it? (How many times per week/day)

	What I did	Comments
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Discussion points for the next session

# Week Six Notes

- **Final session:**
- **Complete your Therapy Blueprint**
- **Schedule your check-in period for the next couple of weeks**
- **Write down your SMART goal for the future**
- **Schedule a group review appointment if necessary**

## **Need Further Support?**

**If you are concerned about your safety or you do not feel able to keep yourself safe, please contact one of the following for support:**

- **GP**
- **NHS 111**
- **Samaritans**

**Freephone: 116 123**

**Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**

- **In an emergency, attend your Accident and Emergency Department at your local hospital or dial 999**