

BEHAVIORAL ACTIVATION

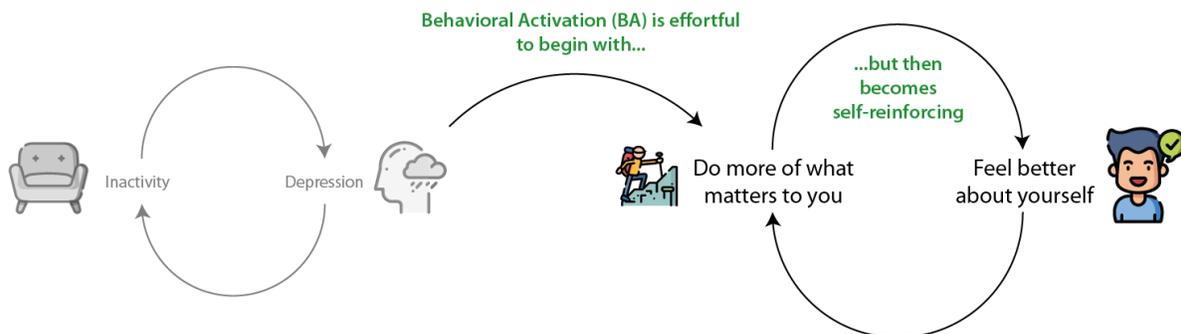
VICIOUS CYCLE OF DEPRESSION:

- Depression can decrease the amount of time that we spend engaging in activities that bring us *joy* or give us a sense of *accomplishment*.
- Failure to engage in activities that bring us joy or a sense of accomplishment makes us feel worse – we feel badly about ourselves for not doing them, and we don't get to experience the positive rewards of the things we enjoy.
- This lack of activity decreases mood and reinforces the cycle of depression.

POSITIVE CYCLE OF ACTIVITY:

- ***By changing your behavior, you can change your mood.***
- When we engage in pleasant activities, we experience the joy or accomplishment that the behavior brings.
- These experiences are rewarding – they increase our mood and make us feel better, helping us break the cycle of depression.

Engaging in pleasurable activities, even when we don't feel like doing them, helps break the vicious cycle of depression.



PSYCHOLOGYTOOLS*

HOW TO ENGAGE IN BEHAVIORAL ACTIVATION:

1. Identify a pleasant activity to try.
2. Set a goal for the number of times you'll do this activity (3 times over the next week? Every day?).
3. Schedule the activity into your day or week.
 - a. Pick a time and date to engage in the pleasant activity.
 - b. Find some way to remind yourself to do the activity. Try setting an alarm or agreeing to do the activity with a friend.
4. Do the activity – even if you don't feel like it in the moment!
5. Notice your mood afterwards.
 - a. Is your mood improved? This is information that the activity gives you pleasure or a sense of accomplishment.
 - b. Is your mood no different or worse? This is information that it's worth experimenting with other kinds of pleasant activities.

IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES:

Exercise, look at the sky, sing a song, call or text a friend, take a bath or shower, smell your favorite scent, go for a walk, watch a funny or interesting YouTube clip, put on lotion or lip balm, drink water/coffee/tea, play with a pet, go stargazing, put on comfortable clothes, cook your favorite meal, listen to your favorite song, clean up