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**Behavioural Activation – An introduction**

When people are feeling down or low, they typically behave in certain ways to cope with their mood. They might stop seeing friends, stop doing hobbies, play less sport etc. They may behave in certain ways in order to cope with the depressed mood.

In the short term, this may help to cope with feeling down. However, in the longer term it tends to be pretty unhelpful – it can make the depressed mood worse, (or at the very least doesn’t make the mood any better). When people stop doing the things that they used to enjoy, this can make them feel even worse.

It becomes a vicious cycle – not doing things because you feel down, and then not getting any pleasure or enjoyment from life because you’re not doing the things you normally enjoy.

**Behavioural Activation works to break this vicious cycle. It can help to change how you feel by changing what you do (even if you don’t feel like doing it at the time).**

Avoiding friends/activities

Lower mood

Withdrawal

Low mood

Negative things that are going on if your life

Not getting any pleasure from everyday activities:

* Feeling worse about yourself
* Low energy levels
* Feeling like you can’t cope

**What’s happening with you?**

Have any recent life events or circumstances changed to make you feel down?

What are you doing differently now? Have you stopped doing anything that you used to do?

Low mood

How do these changes affect how you feel?