

# Reconnect

I remember a time when I just couldn't bring myself to do the things I used to love. It was like I was trapped in a fog, and all the things that once brought me joy just felt... pointless. I didn't want to draw, play games, or even read, which was strange because these things were my go-to sources of comfort.

Turns out, depression has a way of stealing that energy away from us. According to renowned psychologists like Christopher Martell and Michael Addis, depression can sap our motivation, even for activities that usually give us pleasure. That's where behavioural activation comes in.

It's a simple but powerful approach that helps us break that cycle by encouraging us to re-engage with life, **even when we don't feel like it**. And here's the good part: by doing just one small thing, even when you don't feel up to it, it creates a snowball effect of positivity.

This worksheet I've put together will guide you through it, making sure you start small and set yourself up for success. It's like building a bridge out of the fog... one step at a time.

## When to Use It:

This worksheet is most effective when you're feeling stuck, disengaged, or overwhelmed by depression, especially when it starts to impact your daily life.

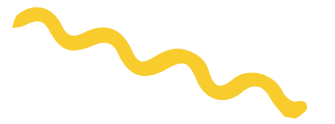
It's a great tool to use when:

- You notice you're withdrawing from social activities, hobbies, or work.
- You find it hard to muster the motivation to do anything.
- You're aware that certain activities used to bring joy, but now they feel like a chore.
- You're feeling overwhelmed by how little you're accomplishing.

It's helpful if you're feeling disconnected from your usual interests, or if you're not sure where to start in trying to feel better. Using the worksheet can help you gradually reintroduce positive activities into your routine, breaking the cycle of inactivity that depression often creates.



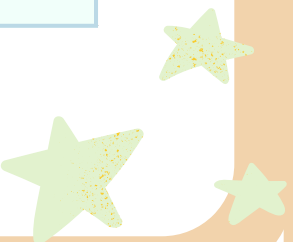
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## Identify Activities You've Been Avoiding

Depression often leads to avoiding activities that once brought you joy or a sense of accomplishment. List any activities or hobbies you've been avoiding because they feel overwhelming, difficult, or unpleasant. There's no pressure to fill in all 5 rows.

Activity / Hobby	Why I've been avoiding it
<i>Going for a walk</i>	<i>Because going for a walk will take up too much time and use up too much energy.</i>





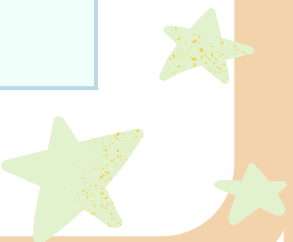
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## Identify Activities You've Been Avoiding

Now, do the same with any responsibilities (such as washing dishes, making the bed etc.) you've been avoiding because they feel overwhelming, difficult, or unpleasant.

Activity / Hobby	Why I've been avoiding it
<i>Doing the dishes</i>	<i>Because they've stacked up so much that it feels like a mammoth task that will take hours.</i>





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## Before we move on...



It might sound simple and silly, but doing something like the dishes really can help lift your mood, and here's why.

When you're feeling depressed, it's easy to get stuck in a cycle of inactivity. The longer you avoid things, the more overwhelming they seem, and that sense of being overwhelmed can keep you paralysed and stop you from doing even small tasks.

Even though doing the dishes might not seem like a huge win, it can provide a small spark of accomplishment. Sometimes, all we need is a spark to create a fire!

According to research, engaging in small tasks can reduce negative moods and prevent the paralysis that depression creates. The key is that it doesn't require much energy or emotional investment, so it's something you can start with, especially when your motivation is low.

Plus, as you start ticking things off, like getting the kitchen cleaned, you might find this little spark of satisfaction or pride. That tiny win can give you just enough momentum to tackle the next thing on your list. It's like the first step in a chain reaction of feeling better.





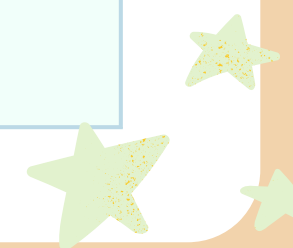
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## Identify Activities You Enjoy or Value

Look back at the previous 2 pages. In the table below, re-list activities you noted above that could improve your mood or provide a sense of purpose. They might be things you used to enjoy or things you think would help you feel better or more on top of things.

Activity	How it might make me feel better
<i>Going for a walk</i>	<i>I will get sunshine on my face and fresh air in my lungs which will help me feel refreshed compared to the stale indoors. Exercise also releases feel-good hormones which will help me feel a bit better and motivated to tackle other things too.</i>
<i>Doing the dishes</i>	<i>I'll feel accomplished that I completed this task and have nice fresh plates to eat from. I won't have to use brain space thinking about how it's not done anymore. This win will build momentum to tackle the next thing.</i>





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## Break Tasks Into Small, Achievable Steps

Choose one activity you'd like to start doing again, and break it down into smaller steps. Think about how you'll feel after completing each step. This helps make the activity feel less overwhelming.

<b>Activity:</b>	<i>Example: Doing the dishes</i>	
<b>Step</b>	<b>How I will feel after completing it</b>	
<i>Gather sponge, dish soap and a teatowel.</i>	<i>I will feel prepared to start the task with the right tools.</i>	
<i>Clear the sink. Take everything out and fill it with warm, soapy water.</i>	<i>Removing clutter makes room to start the cleaning process.</i>	
<i>Wash the cups and plates that aren't as dirty first.</i>	<i>I'll feel accomplished that I'm making a start with the easier items and get into a rhythm.</i>	





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## Schedule and Reflect on the Activity

Pick a time each day or week to engage in one or more activities. After completing each activity, rate how you felt from 1-10 (1 being “no feelings of” and 10 being “extreme feelings of”) in terms of your feelings of depression, pleasure, and achievement before and after the task.

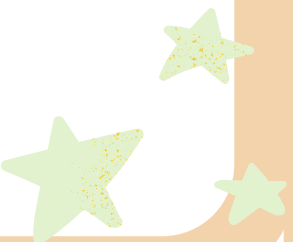
This will help you see how each activity impacts your mood.

Repeating the same activity a few times can help you see how this activity may impact you over time.

Engaging in different activities can help you compare and see which activities impact you the most.

When you see what has a positive impact and what has a negative impact, you can make adjustments and either stop or keep going with the activity. Repeat the worksheet below as many times as you need and see where your joy for things once loved returns...!

Good luck (not that you need it).





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Activity	Date to do	Time to do		Depression (1-10)	Pleasure (1-10)	Achievement (1-10)
Example: Going for a 10-minute walk	09/01/2025	14:00	Before	7	2	1
			After	4	5	6
			Before			
			After			
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