

8. Pleasurable Activities

When people are depressed they often lose interest in activities they used to enjoy and they often forget about how pleasurable these activities used to be. Incorporating these activities in your day can have a positive impact on your mood and how you feel about yourself. These activities are ones that bring you enjoyment, that you do well and where performance is not measured.

Scheduling time for fun and enjoyment is a powerful way to lift your mood and balance your life. Even though you may not feel motivated, or get the same amount of pleasure out of activities that you used to, we recommend that you commit to scheduling some fun activity each day. The reality is that the less you do, the more depressed you feel. The more depressed you feel, the less you do! This is a vicious cycle you can break by **INCREASING** those activities which make you feel better.

These activities can be called:

- 1) "pleasant"
- 2) "rewarding"
- 3) "meaningful"
- 4) "inspiring"
- 5) "relaxing"

These activities **DO NOT** have to be special activities. They can be very small and simple activities such as watching your favorite comedy on TV or petting your cat or dog. When people are depressed, it is even harder to remember pleasant things. To help you come up with your personal list of activities which make you feel good, use this "LIST OF PLEASANT ACTIVITIES" on the next page. Circle the ones you used to find pleasurable or that you think you may be interested in trying. Add additional activities to the list that you have found enjoyable in the past.

LIST OF PLEASURABLE ACTIVITIES

1. Wear clothes I like
2. Be outdoors (beach, country...)
3. Watch or participate in sports
4. Do artwork or crafts
5. Read books or magazines
6. Rearrange my room or house
7. Hear lectures or sermons
8. Boating
9. Play board games
10. Solve a puzzle
11. Take a long bath or shower
12. Do outdoor work
13. Hear jokes, or comedy routines
14. See beautiful scenery
15. Be downtown
16. Be with relatives
17. Talk on the phone
18. Cook meals
19. Eat out
20. Write in a diary
21. Listen to music
22. Go to the library
23. Repair things
24. Ride a bike
25. Care for house plants
26. Take a walk
27. Do things with children
28. Travel
29. Play with pets
30. Exercise
31. Do volunteer work
32. Walk barefoot
33. Say prayers
34. Kiss
35. Learn to do something new
36. Go to health clubs, sauna
37. Help others
38. Improve my health (new glasses, fix teeth, change diet)
39. Help a group I respect
40. Work on machines (cars, bikes)
41. _____
42. _____

Disclaimer:

This written information is not intended as a substitute for medical or mental health care advice. Please be sure to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with a professional person.

Exercise: Incorporating pleasurable activities

Remember the last pleasurable activity you did (write in below).

What enjoyment did you get from it?

How do pleasant activities affect your mood?

Identify three activities which you would consider pleasant.

Now set a goal for yourself!

"Every day during the next week, I will spend at least _____ minutes
(make it easy, reasonable) doing _____"