

PRACTICE GUIDE

Behavioral Activation

One tiny action against the pull of depression

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." -- Ecclesiastes 9:10

Depression says 'stay in bed.' Behavioral Activation -- one of the most effective depression interventions in CBT -- says 'do one tiny thing and track what happens.' Action creates motivation, not the other way around.

THE PRACTICE

- 1 Notice the pull to withdraw**
Name it without judgment: 'Depression is telling me to stay in bed.'
- 2 Choose one tiny pleasurable action**
A 5-minute walk, making tea, texting a friend, opening the curtains.
- 3 Rate your mood before (1-10)**
Write it down. Honesty matters more than accuracy.
- 4 Do the action**
Just one. That's enough. You are not lazy -- you are fighting something real.
- 5 Rate your mood after (1-10)**
Most people see 1-3 points of improvement. The data builds hope over time.

TIP

Keep a list of 'tiny things that help' on your phone. When depression hits, you don't have to think -- just pick one from the list.