

Activity Menu

Doing the things that matter to you is one of the most effective ways to improve your mood. Being more active increases your sense of pleasure and achievement in life, and gives you more opportunities to connect with people. You could think of these activities as an ‘anti-depressant’ or ‘stress-reducer’ – if you don’t do them, your mood starts to suffer. Most importantly, behaving in line with your values (what is important to you in life) provides you with a sense of purpose and direction.

Choosing activities that you find important and rewarding can be difficult, particularly if you’re struggling with low mood. The *Activity Menu* describes a range of things that you can do to become more active and lift your mood.



How could this tool help me?

- The *Activity Menu* contains lots of examples of activities that you might find rewarding.
- It can remind you of things you’ve stopped doing, but that matter to you.
- You can use it to plan activities in all the important areas of your life (e.g., your relationships, self-care, learning, etc.).



How should I use it?

- Read through the list to identify some activities that are important to you and that might be rewarding.
- Choose a range of activities (e.g., some that are achievement-focused and some that involve other people).
- Once you’ve selected some activities, plan how to introduce them into your life.



Helpful tips

- You might need to tolerate some temporary discomfort or anxiety to do the things that matter to you. Try not to let that stop you.
- Make sure that your activities are specific and realistic. For example, if planning a holiday is important to you, where could you go?
- It might be worth limiting or stopping any activities you do to excess because of your mood (e.g., watching TV). Aiming for balance will make more time and space for the activities you care about.
- You may not want to do certain activities, even if they’re important to you. For instance, you might expect to feel anxious or uncomfortable doing them, or doubt whether they’ll help. See if you can find a way to do them gradually.



Activity Menu



Animals

- Pet an animal
- Walk a dog
- Ride a horse
- Volunteer at an animal shelter
- Go bird watching
- Go fishing
- Listen to the birds
- Visit the zoo



Be active

- Go for a walk
- Go for a run
- Go for a swim
- Go hiking
- Go cycling
- Go to the gym
- Go bowling
- Go ice / roller skating
- Play golf / football / tennis
- Throw a frisbee
- Fly a kite
- Try a martial art



Clean

- Clean the house
- Clean the yard
- Clean the bathroom
- Clean the toilet
- Clean your bedroom
- Clean the fridge
- Clean the oven
- Clean your shoes
- Do the washing up
- Fill / empty the dishwasher
- Do laundry
- Do some chores
- Organize your workspace
- Clean a cupboard



Connect with people

- Contact a friend
- Invite a friend to come over
- Be with friends
- Meet a friend for coffee
- Make new friends
- Join a new group
- Join a political party
- Join a book club
- Join an exercise class
- Join a mother & baby group
- Join a dating website
- Ask someone out
- Go on a date
- Go 'people watching'
- Send a message to a friend
- Write a letter to a friend
- Reconnect with an old friend



Cook

- Cook a meal for yourself
- Cook a meal for someone else
- Bake a cake / cookies
- Roast marshmallows
- Have a BBQ
- Find a new recipe
- Organize a dinner party



Create

- Draw a picture
- Paint a portrait
- Take a photograph
- Doodle / sketch
- Organize photographs
- Make a photograph album
- Start a scrapbook
- Finish a project
- Do some sewing / knitting



Expression

- Laugh
- Cry
- Sing
- Shout
- Scream



Kindness

- Help a friend / neighbor / stranger
- Volunteer at a charity
- Make a gift for someone
- Try a random act of kindness
- Do someone a favor
- Offer to babysit
- Teach somebody a skill
- Do something nice for someone
- Plan a surprise for someone
- Make a list of your good points
- Make a list of things or people you are grateful for



Learn

- Learn something new
- Learn a new skill
- Learn a new fact
- Enrol in a class
- Go back to school
- Watch a tutorial video



Mend

- Repair something in the house
- Repair your bike / car / scooter
- Make something new
- Change a lightbulb
- Decorate a room



Mind

- Daydream
- Meditate
- Pray
- Reflect
- Think
- Try relaxation exercises
- Practice yoga



Music

- Listen to music you like
- Find some new music to listen to
- Go to a concert
- Turn on the radio
- Make some music
- Sing a song
- Play an instrument
- Listen to a podcast



Nature

- Try some gardening
- Plant something
- Do some pruning
- Mow the lawn
- Pick flowers
- Buy flowers
- Go for a walk in nature
- Swim in the sea
- Hike in the mountains
- Walk in the woods
- Sit in the sun
- Go to the park



Plan

- Set a goal
- Create a budget
- Make a 5 year plan
- Make a 'to do' list
- Make a 'bucket list'
- Make a shopping list



Read

- Read a favourite book
- Read a new book
- Read the newspaper
- Read your favourite website



Schedule

- Get up extra early
- Stay up late
- Sleep in late
- Book a day off
- Tick something off your 'to do' list



Self care

- Take a bath
- Take a shower
- Wash your hair
- Give yourself a facial
- Trim your nails
- Go for a massage
- Sunbathe (wear sunscreen!)
- Take a nap



Shop

- Shop for groceries
- Shop for clothes
- Go to a car boot sale / yard sale
- Take things to a charity shop



Travel

- Go for a ride in the car
- Take the bus somewhere
- Catch a train
- Plan a holiday



Try something new

- Try a new food
- Take a walk in a new place
- Listen to some new music
- Watch a new TV show or movie
- Wear some new clothes
- Read a new book
- Try a new class
- Do something spontaneous
- Express yourself



Watch

- Go to the cinema
- Go to the theatre
- Watch a movie
- Watch a TV show
- Watch a YouTube video



Write

- Write a letter of complaint
- Write a letter with compliments
- Write a letter to your politician
- Write an angry letter
- Write a grateful letter
- Write a 'thank you' card
- Write a journal / diary
- Write your CV
- Start writing a book