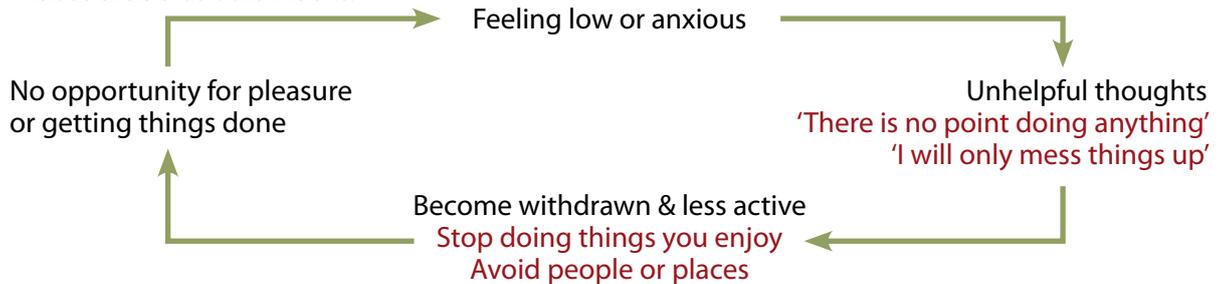


Changing Unhelpful Behaviour (1) – Becoming More Active

As you have read in the leaflet on 'Recognising Helpful & Unhelpful Behaviours', many people who are feeling low or anxious change their behaviour in unhelpful ways. This may mean reducing their overall level of activity and, in particular, not doing activities that they would normally enjoy. This can lead to a 'vicious circle' that looks like this:



Have you changed your activities recently? Are you doing less than you used to, or not doing things that you enjoy? What effect is this having on you? Many people end up feeling worse, both mentally and physically. They feel tired all the time, with no enthusiasm or energy, struggling through each day at work or home and only doing what they have to without any sense of pleasure or achievement. They then become anxious or upset because they cannot function properly or meet the needs of other people who depend upon them. Do you feel anything like this at the moment?

Write here anything that you have stopped doing recently, particularly anything that you enjoy, because you feel anxious or low.

How to start changing your reduced activity or avoidance

Quite simply, the only way to change your activity levels is to deliberately increase them; however this is easier said than done. You can make it easier by following a few simple rules:

- > Start gradually and build your activity levels up slowly. Make allowance for the fact that, when you are anxious or depressed, you won't do as much or enjoy things as much compared to when you are well.
- > Keep a record of the changes that you make – there is an activity diary overleaf – and record how much pleasure or sense of achievement the changes give you
- > Aim for a mixture of activities you enjoy and activities that help you achieve things – taking care of yourself is just as important as doing things for other people. Ask other people to help you be more active if you can

You can use the simple diary on the other side of this leaflet to record your present activity levels and

to plan the changes that you want to make.

1. In each box write what you spent most of that 2-hour period doing, or what you plan to do. Remember, don't be too ambitious – whatever changes you achieve will be better than no change at all. Just one or two words will do, and don't worry if you leave some gaps.
2. For each activity, use a 'P' (Pleasure) or 'A' (Achievement) and a number 1 to 10 to show how much pleasure or achievement you got from that activity.

Finally, DON'T GIVE UP – you might start off thinking negatively about yourself and your efforts to change but those thoughts are normal in someone who is anxious or low and hopefully they will begin to change as you increase your activity levels. Keep filling in your diary, ask other people for their help and encouragement wherever possible and come and talk to your guide about the changes you have tried and any difference in how you feel.

Changing Unhelpful Behaviour (1) – Becoming More Active

Contd.

Activity Diary

For each activity, rate any pleasure (P) or achievement (A) you have felt from 0 (none at all) to 10 (the most you have ever felt)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7 – 9 AM							
9 – 11 AM							
11 – 1 PM							
1 – 3 PM							
3 – 5 PM							
5 – 7 PM							
7 – 9 PM							
9 – 11 PM							

Related leaflets include:

- > Completing Your Own Five Areas Review
- > Assertiveness & You
- > Recognising / Changing Unhelpful Thinking (several leaflets)

