



PILOT SLIDES

Supporting your child with low mood and depression

Information Session for Parents / Carers



Housekeeping



- Please mute yourself while we are presenting
- Please ask questions using the chat box or raise your hand
- This is a universal workshop and we may not be able to answer questions about individuals in the session.
- Please be mindful of confidentiality
 - Consider what you are sharing in a group setting
 - Please don't repeat out with the session.

Looking after ourselves



- These workshops will touch on a range of topics which can be difficult to think about – such as mental health difficulties in young people, as well as themes such as self-harm and suicide.
- Mental health difficulties such as a depression are common for young people and adults.
- Therefore some of the topics we discuss in our workshops may bring up difficult feelings or memories, sometimes unexpectedly.
- Please do what you need to look after yourself today. This may be taking comfort breaks away from the screen, going out for a walk, having a cup of tea, or taking time to chat to someone you trust.

Aims of the workshops

To provide information that can help you to:

- Recognise depression/concerning levels of low mood in your child
- Understand treatment approaches for low mood/depression
- Learn some tools you can use to support a child or young person (CYP) who experiences low mood/depression

To provide slides as a resource for supporting your child

Overview of Workshop



Introductions



Recap: The CBT cycle of depression



What can I do to support my child?



Keeping your child safe



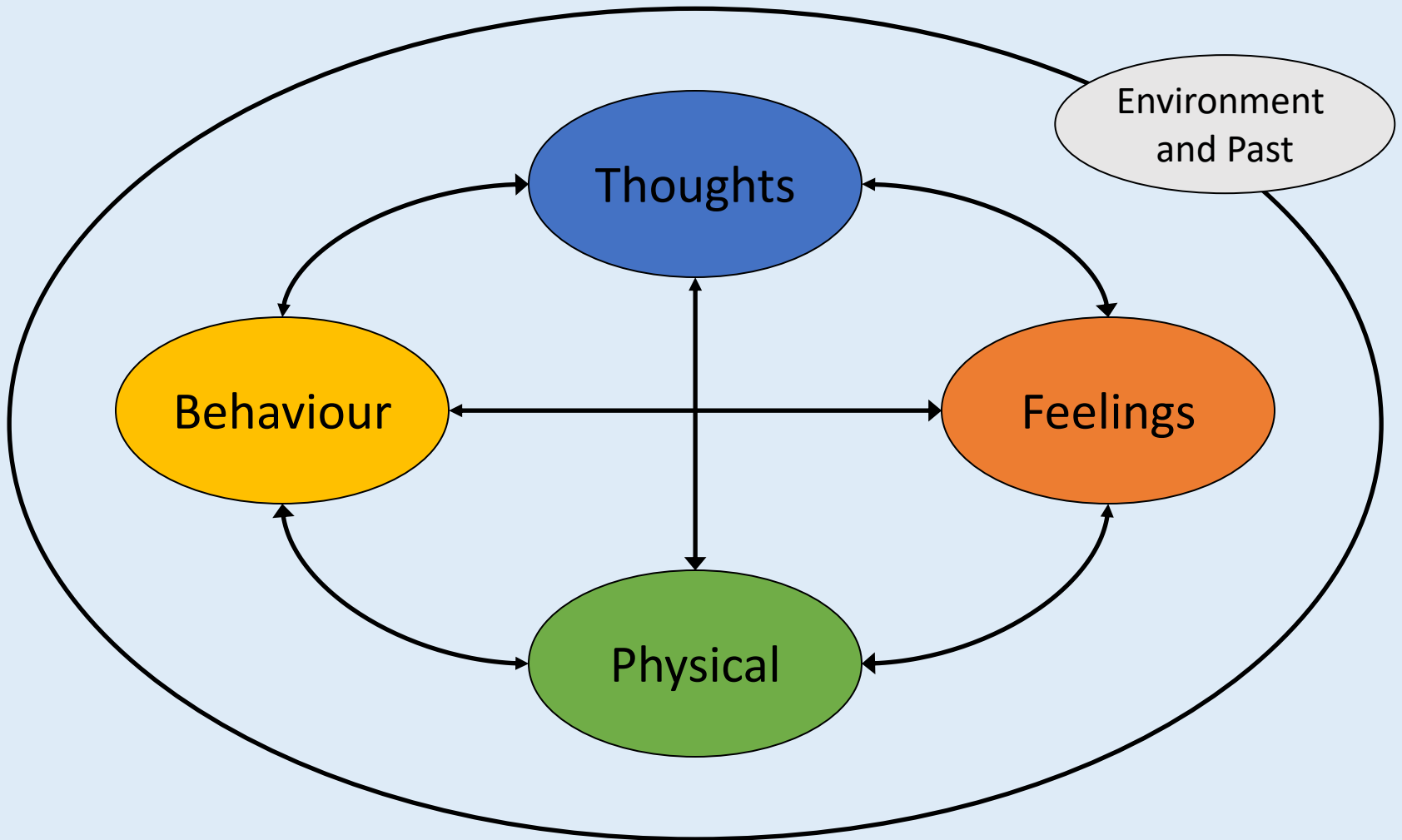
Taking care of yourself



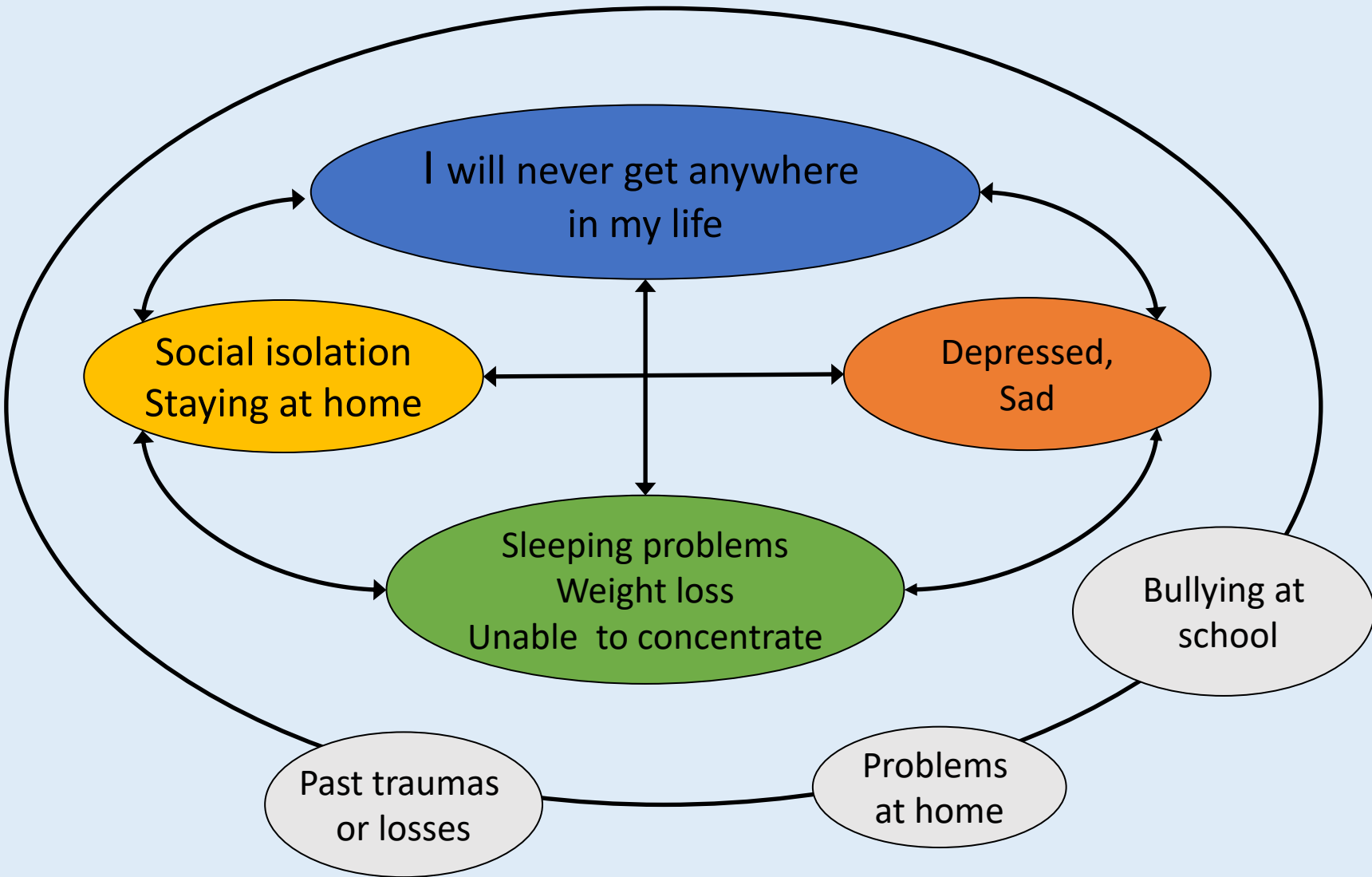
Remember...

- Everyone experiences periods of low or irritable mood and ordinarily this does not indicate ill mental health like depression
- If your child's mood is **frequently or persistently** low or irritable and this **interferes with their day-to-day functioning**, they may be experiencing symptoms of depression and may benefit from specific interventions to support them.
- The strategies and supports we will be covering in our workshops can be helpful for CYP who struggle with frequent or persistent mood difficulties

How does CBT work?



CBT Cycle of Depression



Ways I can Help my Child

1. Recovery through relationships

2. Getting back to basic routines

3. Becoming more active

4. Helping with unhelpful thoughts

5. Keeping safe



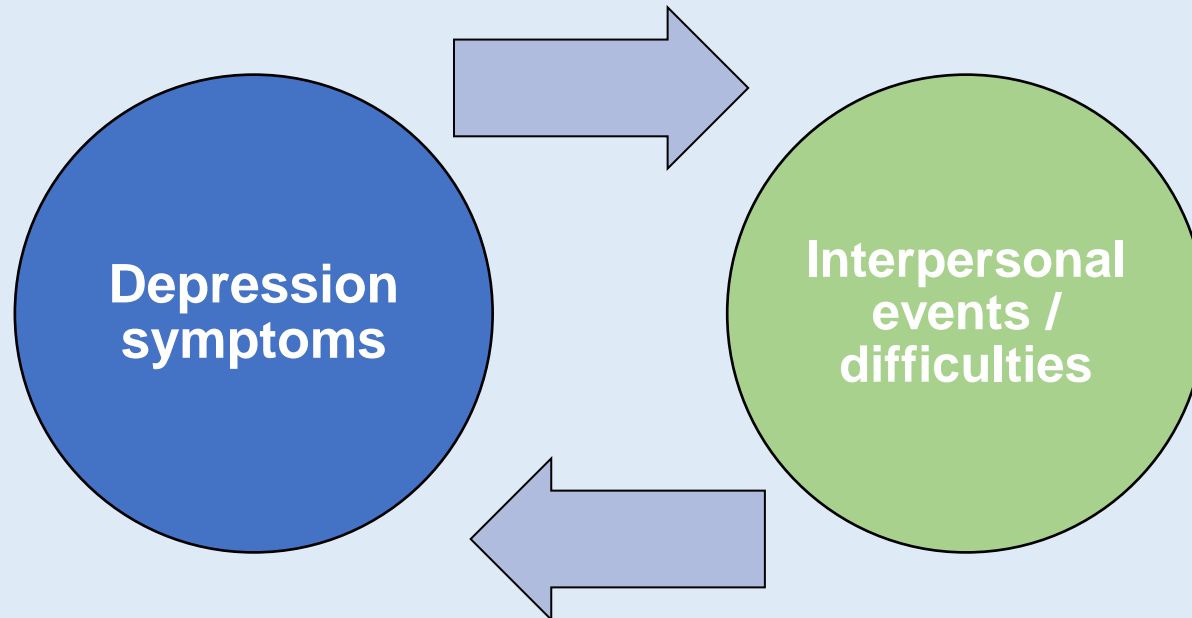
1. Recovery through Relationships



Recovery through Relationships

Interpersonal stressors and difficulties can contribute to feelings of low mood.

However, the cycle works both ways as **positive and supportive relationships are also key to help young people recover.**



For example, having supporting relationships, spending time with friends and family, reducing conflicts etc. can all help to lessen depression symptoms, such as sadness, hopelessness and poor motivation.

How can I support my child?



Some ideas of things you can do in your relationship:

Show you are available-

Feedback from CYP tells us that it's good for them to know their parents are there for them to talk to if and when needed.

Offer regular support with a gentle but persistent approach.

Recognise it's not easy to talk

Lots of questions can feel overwhelming; the CYP, may not know the answers or is finding it hard to concentrate.

Try to be **patient and understanding**

Set aside a **regular time** to talk or check-in

Be creative with how you communicate - talking, writing, texting...

Don't underestimate the value of knowing you are there for them - even if nothing is said!

Good Communication

“Listen first... problem solve later”



Try to be a good listener

- Even if you hear the same thing several times, or don't hear very much.
- Check that you have understood correctly to avoid misunderstandings – and express you want to learn if you do not understand.

Listen without lecturing

- Try not to rush into solve problems.
- Young people often need to feel heard first, before thinking of solutions.
- It may also be too soon to talk about solutions for that young person.

Problem-solve collaboratively

- Only give advice if asked for it, or if you have checked that they are ready to listen to your ideas.
- If you think you can see the problem that is behind the depression, you could offer to work with them to find a solution.

Validate feelings and remain non-judgemental

Lower expectations... but keep the hope

- Those around the CYP (home and school) may need to temporarily adjust their expectations
- Recognise that your ways of relating to each other might change while the CYP is depressed.
- CYP are likely to need more from the people around them than they can give back for a while. This will change again when the depression lifts. You can help by being flexible around these changes.
- Remind the CYP: **Depression is treatable and it is not their fault.**



“If someone broke their leg, we wouldn’t blame that person, and wouldn’t expect them to do everything they used to.

There are some things they could still do, some things they need help with, and other things that are not possible at that time.

We adjust our expectations of that person. BUT we reinforce that their leg will heal with treatment, and they will get back to their old self. We also make sure they are supported to do physio etc, which helps with the recovery... depression is the same.”

Build an 'Anti-Depressant' Team



- It is important to let CYP know that you and others are there for them.
- It can help to identify who the CYP would like support from, and what role different people may take.
- Not everyone has to have a supportive talking role, or even know much about the CYP's difficulties, in order to help in their recovery.

An example team:

1. *Dad – I will talk to about how I am feeling*
2. *Mum – will help me with practical routines and eating*
3. *Sister – will help me with physical activity e.g. walks and going on runs*
4. *Friend – practical fun activities e.g. going to the cinema, going shopping*
5. *Step-dad – watch football with and helps me travel to places e.g. gives lifts*

Build an 'Anti-Depressant' Team



Who can help?	What can they do?	How would this help?
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Video - Living with the Black Dog



(World Health Organisation, WHO)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VRRx7Mtep8>

2. Help your Child Get Back to Basics



Sleep and Diet are Important

Sleep problems and eating problems are some of the core symptoms of depression

The effects of poor sleep and diet can add to other problems of depression, including difficulties **with concentration, thinking, planning, irritability, tiredness and feeling hopeless**

These difficulties make it harder for the young person to participate in activities at school, with friends and at home and therefore feed into the **vicious cycle of depression**



Promoting Good Sleep



Bedtime routines might include things like: a warm bath or a shower, brushing teeth, going to the toilet, putting on pyjamas and reading a bedtime story together.



Make their **bedroom as comfortable and calm as possible**



Try to avoid **sugar and stimulants** (found in energy drinks, tea and coffee) in the hours before bedtime.



Similarly, **avoid screens close to bedtime** as the blue light they emit can keep children awake.



Keep the bed for sleeping – avoid watching TV, playing games or doing other activities that require a lot of focus and attention in bed
-> These cues can be misleading the brain and make it feel like it needs to stay alert.

It is important to have a sleep routine **every day of the week**—not just on week nights!

Resetting the Internal Clock



The young person needs to decide what their sleep routine should look like.

Some things for you to think about with them:

- The average teenagers need about 8 to 9 hours of sleep (but individual needs can vary)
- If the CYP has to be up at 7:00 am to get to school, college, work on time, they probably need to be asleep sometime between 10-11pm
- Start with getting up earlier. In order to fall asleep, your child needs to feel tired at the scheduled time. It's hard to fall asleep if not tired.
- You can help your child to gradually change their habits. For example, move the time you wake them up forward by 30-60 minutes every few days
- Consider and discuss what will work for your family

Healthy Eating



What we eat can have an impact on our mental health

We need sufficient energy each day to function. Not eating enough can further contribute to symptoms like tiredness, fatigue and lack of energy.

What you can do:

- ✓ Support your child with eating regular meals and snacks – children and young people should eat 3 meals and 3 snacks per day
- ✓ Support your child with eating a healthy, balanced diet
- ✓ Involve your child in preparing meals and snacks
- ✓ Invite your child to add foods to the shopping list or accompany you to the supermarket
- ✓ Make time to eat together - mealtimes are social events
- ✓ Encourage your child to drink enough water

Physical Activity



Physical activity stimulates various chemicals that can help with feeling happier, more relaxed and less anxious.

How you can help your child with physical activity:

- ✓ It is important your child finds something they enjoy
- ✓ The idea of exercise can be overwhelming when you are depressed. Start small!
- ✓ Physical activity can be doing a **sport** or form of **exercise** but also simply going for **quick walk together**, getting something from the shop, walking the dog, Hoovering... Get creative!
- ✓ There are lots of **exercise videos** for CYP on Youtube
- ✓ Schedule exercise into the daily routine

Research suggests you should aim to do some form of exercise for at least 30 minutes, at least three times a week.

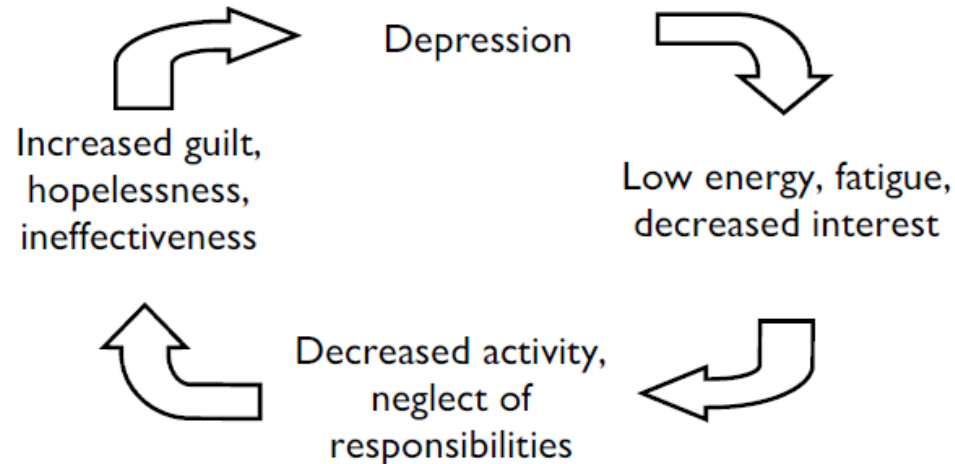
Remember!



3. Help your Child Become more Active



The Vicious Cycle of Depression



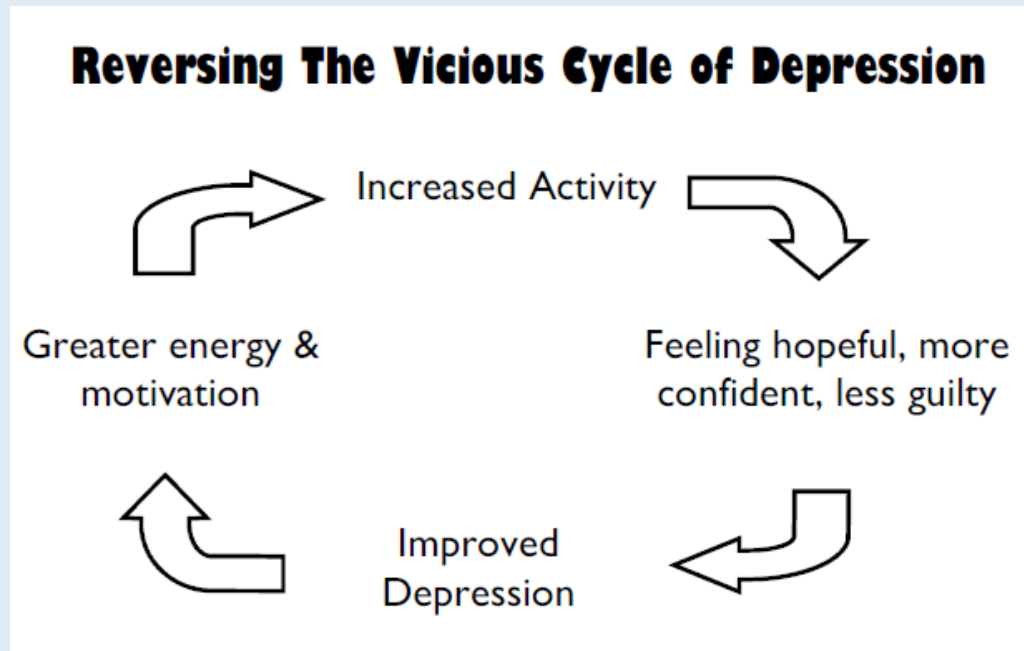
Less Activity = *Less 'feel good factor'*

Less Activity = *More time to worry and ruminate*

Stopping Activities = It's harder to get back to them

Lack of activity keeps depression going.

It's easier to change Behaviour than Thoughts & Feelings

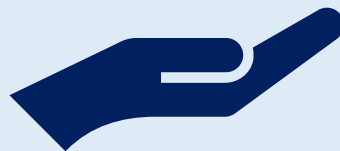


More Valued Activity = *More 'feel good factor'*

More Valued Activity = *more reward*

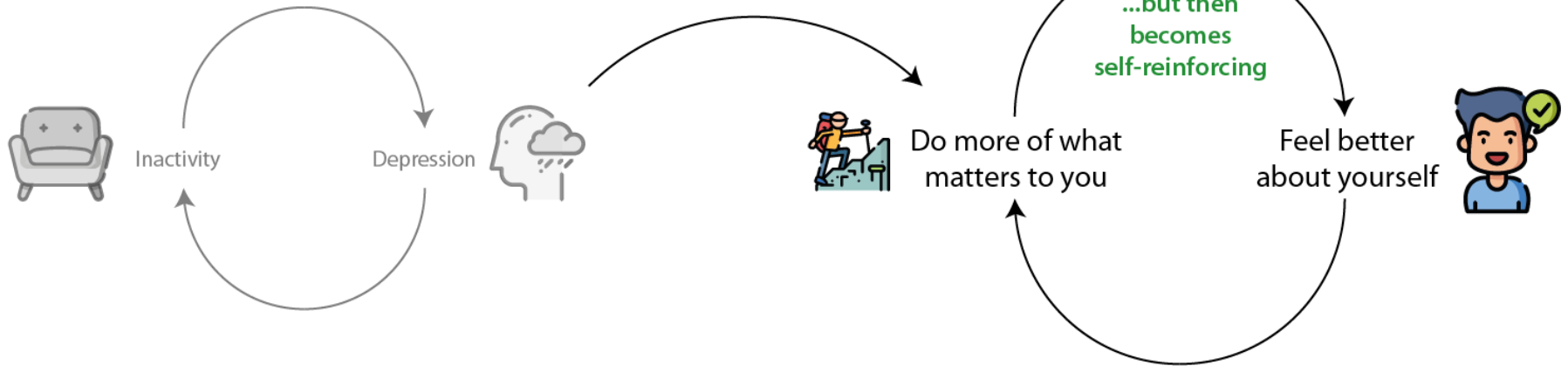
More valued activity helps the young person to start feeling better. Simple and straightforward but NOT easy.

How to help my child become more active?



1. Help your child understand the link between activity and low mood.

Behavioral Activation (BA) is effortful to begin with...



2. Help Your Child Keep an Activity Log

- It can be helpful to have a measure of your child's current activity level before increasing it
- Encourage them to record all activity no matter how small or boring. No activity is activity.
- A log can help identify patterns of how activities affect mood

	Monday	Tuesday	
06:00 – 07:00	<i>sleeping</i>	<i>sleeping</i>	
07:00 – 08:00	<i>sleeping</i>	<i>sleeping</i>	
08:00 – 09:00	<i>sleeping</i>	<i>sleeping</i>	
09:00 – 10:00	<i>sleeping</i>	<i>iPhone: Facebook</i>	
10:00 – 11:00	<i>Watch TV</i>	<i>iPhone: news</i>	
11:00 – 12:00	<i>Watch TV</i>	<i>Watch TV</i>	
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Eat</i>	<i>Watch TV</i>	

3. Help your child identify meaningful activities

What activities are **meaningful** to your child?

What activities align with their **values**?

These may be different from things you value.



Think about:

- ✓ **Self-care** - Can be easy to organise and show an immediate effect – shower, haircut, manicure, face mask, makeup
- ✓ **Hobbies/Fun** – What did your child used to do for fun? Any hobbies they gave up? New interests they mentioned?
- ✓ **Physical activity**
- ✓ **Everyday stuff** - Tidy room, help with dinner/shopping, gardening
- ✓ **Friends/Family/Important others** – Text/call a friend, eat dinner with family, go for a walk with someone

4. Help your child to do more in their day



- Start with something small and simple
- Start with things that are more likely to be enjoyable
- Gradually add activities over a few weeks - Small steps!
- Use an activity planner
- Expect times when your child doesn't want to do the activity - *'I'm too tired' 'There's no point'*

You can help and support:

- ✓ Encourage your child to stick to the plan
- ✓ Remind your child that progress takes time - They won't feel better overnight
- ✓ Explore what would make it easier for your child - Someone joining the activity or getting help with the first few steps

Top Tips



- **Be positive** and give **praise and encouragement at every opportunity** and for every effort, no matter how small. Praise all efforts even if they are not successful.
 - ✓ *'It's great to see you having a go at that'*
 - ✓ *'I can see how hard you are trying'*
 - ✓ *'I'm really proud of you'*
 - ✓ *'You're nearly there'*
 - ✓ *'That must have taken a lot of effort, well done!'*
 - ✓ *'Thanks for helping'*
- Use verbal and non-verbal (hugs, smiles) ways of showing you're pleased

Top Tips

Be creative: Send a text, leave a note, give them a funny card/picture

Consider involving the **whole family** when you encourage changes in sleep habits, exercise, eating and activity

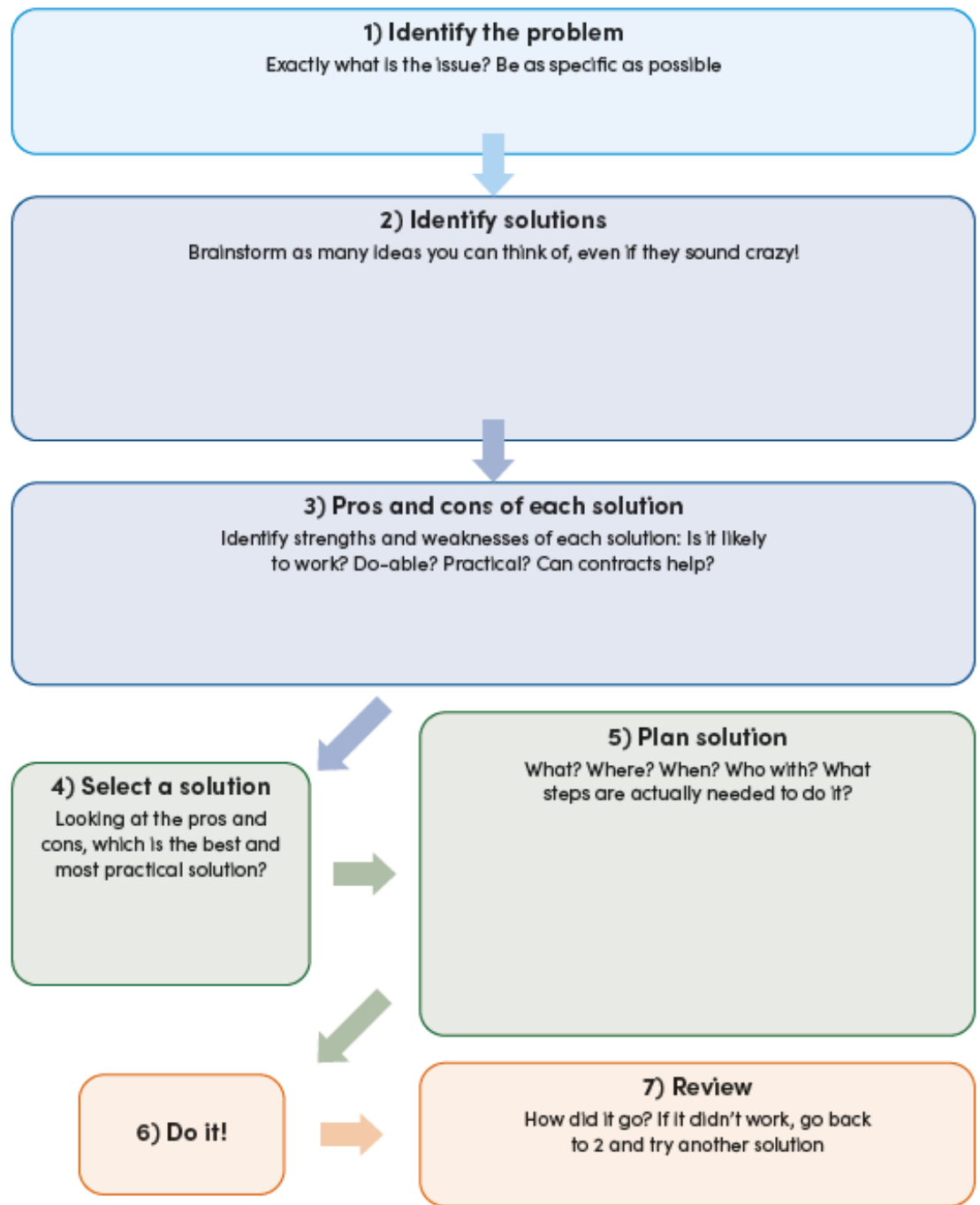
Consider your **own habits** (sleep, eating, exercise, activity) - Are you a good role model?

Encourage them to try things out '**just to see what happens**'

Remember the '**Anti-depressant team**' - Who can help/participate in activities?



Problem Solving



4. Help your Child manage Unhelpful Thoughts



Rumination and Biased Thinking



- Rumination is a common problem in depression
- Thoughts go round and round in the CYP's head and get stuck

Remember!

- The thoughts of a depressed person can sometimes be biased and there can be a higher likelihood of making 'thinking errors'
- Thoughts are automatic and your child may not notice their thoughts are biased

What I can do to help?



- Help your child catch negative or biased thoughts
- Help your child consider a different perspective
 - *Is there another way to think about this?*
 - *If your best friend had this thought what would I say to them?*
 - *What would my friend think if they were in that situation?*
 - *What would my best friend say to me if they knew I had this thought?*
- Help your child come up with a thought that is more neutral, balanced and accurate
- Distract them to interrupt rumination - Divert your child's attention to something else
 - *Give them a task*
 - *Watch a film together*
 - *Thinking puzzles*
 - *A challenging computer game*
 - *Exercise*

What I can do to help



Model

A kind, more compassionate voice

Listen

- Set aside a regular time each day for them to talk about their thoughts and feelings – Use problem solving if appropriate

Encourage

- Encourage your child to share or write about their experiences. Getting thoughts and feelings on paper can create a bit of distance from them

Support

- Your child with problem solving

5. Keeping your Child Safe



Depression and Risk

Suicide and Self-harm are different:

Self-Harm

- Self-harm is non-suicidal self-injury
- Serves various functions which can vary over time

Suicide

- An act of self-harm with the intention to die
- Suicidal behaviour may well follow a history of self-harm, BUT not most people who self-harm do not intend to die

Suicidality

- Depression is a risk factor for suicidality
- Suicide may seem like an option for CYP to regain some control in their life, or as a way to escape a painful situation or experience
- The reasons why people experience thoughts of suicide are complex and differ from person to person. You may never fully understand them and that is OK.
- It can be distressing to learn that your child is feeling suicidal and also frustrating when you are trying to understand what is happening and why they are feeling this way.
- However, knowing that they are struggling gives you the opportunity to support them

Talking about Suicide

- Talking to your child about suicidal thoughts can be difficult and feel very daunting. Remember - starting the conversation is the most important thing.
- Asking young people about suicide is not the same as suggesting it to them. You will not be putting the idea in their head.
- Asking about suicide might make things better (Blades et al, 2018) and lets your child know that you care.
- The only way to understand risk is to ask about it

Asking the question

- Ask directly
- Stay calm
- Be clear and direct - 'Are you thinking about suicide?'

How can I help?

- Acknowledge how difficult it must be for them to open up. Tell them you are there to listen.
- As a parent your first reaction will likely be to try and fix or make things better for your child. Hold back and let them talk.
 - Give your child time to talk through how they are feeling
 - Be there with them in the moment
 - Allow for silences
 - Listen non judgmentally
 - Connect with them
- There may be times when your child feels like a stranger to you and you may not recognise some of their behaviours. Remember: Children often lash out at those they love the most.
- Distressed behaviours are a result of what they are going through. They still need your support.

How can I help?

- Help your child focus on getting through this moment rather than thinking too far ahead into the future
- Encourage your child stay away from drugs or alcohol. If they contact you while away from home, help them to get to a safe place
- Encourage them to spend time with other people
- Let them know the importance of doing things they enjoy
- Work with them on a plan to keep them safe

NHS Education Scotland



<https://vimeo.com/450054407>

Why do I want to stay safe?

What are the reasons I don't want to die today? Are there people or animals that make me want to stay safe? Do I have hope that things might change? Am I afraid of dying? Do I want to stay alive just for right now?



A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the questions above.

Making my environment safer:

Whilst I am focusing on safety, how can I make it harder to act on any plans I might have for suicide? Where can I put things I could use to harm myself so they are harder to get to if I feel overwhelmed?



A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the questions above.

Papyrus Suicide Safety Plan

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Suicide-Safety-Plan-Template-1.pdf>

Services to reach out to in a crisis

Services available 24/7

- **NHS 24 Mental Health Hub** – The 111 service provides urgent mental health assessment and support 24/7
- **Samaritans** - A helpline for anyone feeling low or considering suicide - Call: 116 123 - Website: samaritans.org
- **Childline** - A service for young people under 19 struggling with mental health issues, or any other problem - Call: 0800 1111 - Webchat: childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/ - Website: www.childline.org.uk
- **Young Minds Crisis Messenger** - A 24/7 text messaging service for young people in crisis - **Text:** Text YM to 85258 - **Website:** youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/youngminds-crisis-messenger/

Services to reach out to in a crisis

Other Services

- **Hopeline UK** – Call: 0800 068 4141 Text: 07860 039 967 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org - 9am - 10pm weekdays 2pm - 10pm weekends and bank holidays
- **Breathing Space** - “We're here to listen” - Call: 0800838587 - Webchat: breathingspace.scot - Service open: Mo - Thur: 6pm to 2am and Weekends Friday 6pm to Monday 6am
- **Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention** - <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/> - Supporting Your Child: A Guide for Parents

Suicide and Self-harm Resources

- Papyrus – Prevention of Young Suicide <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>
- Papyrus Parent Guide: Supporting your child with self-harm and suicidality <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Supporting-Your-Child-A-Guide-for-Parents.pdf>
- Harmless – Includes a range of information and support for people who self-harm www.harmless.org.uk
- National Self Harm Network (section for parents) <http://www.nshn.co.uk/downloads.html>
- Edinburgh Self Harm Project (Penumbra) – For people aged 16 years old and over and who self-harm <https://ithriveedinburgh.org.uk/services/edinburgh-self-harm-project-penumbra/>

You can't pour
from an empty cup.



Looking after Yourself

- Worrying about your child can be exhausting and isolating and watching them struggle can be a very painful experience.
- There will be times when you need to take a deep breath and reach out for help yourself.
- What can impact your own stress levels and what helps you to manage this?
 - ❖ What do you need to do to stay regulated, particularly when stressed?
 - ❖ How are you looking after yourself?

Looking after Yourself

Take time for yourself doing the things you enjoy and that help you relax



Take care of your physical self

Eat regularly in healthy ways

Get exercise

Receive regular, preventive medical care

Sleep enough

Take time away from the phone, email, TV, etc.

Spend time outdoors in fresh air and natural light



Take care of you mental/emotional self

Spend time and stay in touch with friends & family

Express emotions, allow yourself to cry, talk about feelings

Find activities that make you happy or relaxed

Say no to extra responsibilities



Take care of your creative/spiritual self

Give yourself quiet time for self-reflection

Attend a local place of worship

Write in a journal

Spend time out in nature

Enjoy a hobby or learn something new

Looking after Yourself



- Build and use your own **support network**.
- Help your child build a support network so that you are not on your own.
- Think practically how to plan in self-care to your busy schedule – if it's not in the diary, other things often take priority!
- **Be kind to yourself** – we are only human and can't get everything right all the time.
- Remember to '**put your oxygen mask on first**'. Prioritising your self-care, means you will have the energy to more effectively support your child.

The word "QUESTIONS" is written in a bold, white, 3D sans-serif font. It is centered and surrounded by a cluster of overlapping squares in various shades of blue and green. The squares vary in size and opacity, creating a dynamic, abstract background for the text. The entire graphic is set against a white background within a blue-bordered frame.

QUESTIONS

Resources

Self-help Books

- Overcoming teenage low mood and depression: A five areas approach by N. Dummet and C. Williams
- Am I depressed and what can I do about it? A CBT self-help guide for teenagers experiencing low mood and depression by S. Reynolds and M. Parkinson
- Defeating Teenage Depression: Getting there together, by Roslyn Law (free IPT worksheets can be downloaded here [Defeating Teenage Depression - Law | Overcoming](#))
- Think good feel good: A cognitive behavioural therapy workbook for children and young people by P. Stallard

Self-harm

- Harmless – Includes a range of information and support for people who self-harm www.harmless.org.uk
- National Self Harm Network (section for parents) <http://www.nshn.co.uk/downloads.html>
- Edinburgh Self Harm Project (Penumbra) – For people aged 16 years old and over and who self-harm <https://ithriveedinburgh.org.uk/services/edinburgh-self-harm-project-penumbra/>

Resources

Sleep

- Sleep Scotland - Ten Steps to better sleep for teens
<https://www.sleepscotland.org/education/teen-zone/>
- The Sleep Council's video on 'The 10 Commandments of Sleep'
https://youtu.be/DkmCDo3DQ_M

Exercise

- Braive's video on 'How exercise affects your body and mind'
<https://youtu.be/Wto7zISB2d0>
- Anna Freud Centre – Using physical exercise to improve mental health, videos, ideas and tips: www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/physicalexercise/
- Exercise for Depression <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/exercise-for-depression/>

Diet

- Mia Nacamulli's video 'How the food you eat affects brain'
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyQY8a-ng6g>
- NHS Eat Well website - Includes advice on how to maintain a healthy and balanced diet: <https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/eat-well/>

Resources

Increasing Activity

- Centre for Clinical Intervention (CCI): The Vicious Cycle of depression Information Sheet <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Mental-Health-Professionals/Depression/Depression---Information-Sheets/Depression-Information-Sheet---04---Vicious-Cycle-for-Depression.pdf>
- CCI Information Sheet Behavioural Activation <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/docs/ACE.pdf>
- CCI Module on Increasing Activity <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Consumer-Modules/Back-from-The-Bluez/Back-from-the-Bluez---02---Behavioural-Strategies.pdf>
- Printable Activity Logs <https://www.get.gg/docs/ACELog.pdf>
- Printable Activity Planner <https://www.get.gg/docs/WeeklyPlanner.pdf>
- Values Worksheets <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheets/values/adolescents>

Resources

Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts

- Moodjuice: Challenging unhelpful thoughts and problem solving
https://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/files/counselling/depression_moodjuice_self-help_guide.pdf
- CCI Unhelpful thinking styles
<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Consumer-Modules/Back-from-The-Bluez/Back-from-the-Bluez---05---Unhelpful-Thinking-Styles.pdf>
- CCY Challenging unhelpful thoughts
<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Consumer-Modules/Back-from-The-Bluez/Back-from-the-Bluez---06---Detective-Work-and-Disputation.pdf>