



THE MATER
WELLBEING CENTRE

MANAGING LOW MOOD

Low mood or depression

Many people experience symptoms of low mood. Managing our mood is hard when you feel low in energy or motivation. We can feel quite overwhelmed at times, and can have a lot of negative thoughts going through our minds.

There are different ways to cope with this. Over the next few pages you will find some useful tips, suggestions and resources on managing low mood.

Open Up

- ▶ **Talk to someone** such as a trusted friend or family member.
- ▶ **Ask your GP** what support is available in your community.
- ▶ **Ask your healthcare team** what supports are available for people with your health condition.

Positive Self Talk

- ▶ **Speak to yourself with kindness** and acknowledge that you are trying the best you can in a difficult situation. Use helpful phrases such as 'I am ok right now' or 'this too will pass' or 'I choose to focus on this instead'.
- ▶ **Actively challenge your negative thoughts** if you tend to go back over and over old thoughts and stories that are not helpful. You won't get this right on the first try. But if you give it time and keep practicing, you'll be much more in control of what influences your mood.

Self-Care

- ▶ **Eat healthy food** even if you have lost your appetite.
- ▶ **Avoid** excessive caffeine, smoking, alcohol or overeating as we sometimes use these to self-soothe.
- ▶ **Try to maintain** a regular sleep cycle.
- ▶ **Exercise** (even small amounts) helps to break the cycle of low mood and negative thinking.

Coping Techniques

- ▶ **Stop and breathe** in a moment of distress. Breathing and relaxation exercises can help to shift your attention temporarily.
- ▶ **Ask yourself** 'is this really true?' when you have negative thoughts, and see what answer appears.
- ▶ **Do something pleasant** however small.
- ▶ **Visualise yourself doing well** with your goals and achieving them. This may help you to motivate yourself to act on your intentions.
- ▶ **Break tasks down** into small steps and start at step one to build a sense of accomplishment.
- ▶ **Acknowledge** when you've done well and achieved your goal.
- ▶ **Actively try to notice** positive things in the day that we often overlook when in low mood. At the end of each day, notice three things you are grateful for and spend time becoming aware of things that have gone well that day, however small.
- ▶ **Commit** to making one small change today.
- ▶ **Do a kind deed** for someone else or a pet to help shift your focus externally.
- ▶ **Engage with other people** who make you feel good.
- ▶ **Say no** to things that drain your energy.
- ▶ **Say yes** to things that nourish you when you can.

Seek support

- ▶ **Join** our six-week stress control series of talks, which takes place 3-4 times a year.
- ▶ **Talk to your doctor** if you are finding you are unable to manage your low mood to get the help you need

SELF HELP WEBSITES

- ▶ www.getselfhelp.co.uk
- ▶ www.cci.health.wa.gov.au
- ▶ www.psychologytools.com
- ▶ <https://www.alustforlife.com/tools/mental-health/looking-after-your-mental-health-well-being-and-prosperity>
- ▶ www.stresscontrol.org/stress

HELPFUL BOOKS

- ▶ **Overcoming Depression** by Paul Gilbert ◀
- ▶ **Mind over Mood** by Dennis Greenberger & Christina Paedesky ◀
- ▶ **The Compassionate Mind** by Paul Gilbert ◀
- ▶ **Mindfulness for health: A practical guide to Relieving Pain, Reducing Stress and Restoring Wellbeing** by V Burch & D Penman ◀



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