

Activity Scheduling

The Fabulous Four

When you're depressed you tend to be less active than normal and you might stop doing things that lift your spirits. This can be a vicious circle and make you feel even worse.

It can help hugely to do things which you **get pleasure from**, or things which give you a **sense of achievement**. Depressive symptoms can also be helped by doing some exercise, which can help boost your self-esteem, or by doing something **sociable**. These are what we call the 'Fabulous Four'.

Step 1 – Think about activities you could do which fit into the following 'Fabulous Four' groups:

- Pleasurable activities
- Activities which give you a sense of achievement
- Activities which make you physically active
- Social activities

It's important to do a balance of activities from each group. So, for example, each day try scheduling in an activity from a different group to the day before.

Of course, each activity might fit into more than one group – a coffee and cake with friends can be both pleasurable and sociable.

Step 2 – Schedule your activities:

Print or copy the diary below, and then fill in what you plan to do for the next week.

Mark on the diary whether you managed to do the activity or not and how you felt about it, or why you didn't manage to do it.

Step 3 – Practice makes perfect:

It might take practice to find the combination that works for you. Just remember to try to keep a good balance of activities from across the Fabulous Four, and keep it realistic – don't overstretch yourself.

Example diary:

	Pleasurable activity	Activity with a sense of achievement	Physical activity	Social activity
MONDAY		Sorted out utility bills		Meet friends for a coffee
TUESDAY	Walking the dog		Walking the dog (same)	
WEDNESDAY	Walking the dog		Walking the dog (again!)	Went to the local Residents meeting
THURSDAY	Coffee and cake with friends			Meet friends for a coffee (same!)
FRIDAY		Fixed security lights	Walking the dog (couldn't say it was pleasurable – it rained)	
SATURDAY			Walking the dog (rained, again...)	Meet friends for a coffee
SUNDAY	Coffee and cake with friends			Went to church... and coffee...

Blank diary:

	Pleasurable activity	Activity with a sense of achievement	Physical activity	Social activity
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				
SATURDAY				
SUNDAY				