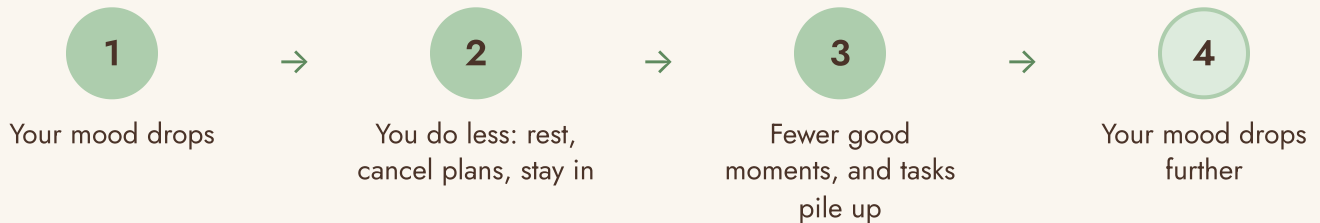


# What is behavioral activation?

A proven way to lift low mood by doing things, even before you feel like it.

## The low-mood trap



🔄 ...and the cycle keeps itself going.

Waiting to feel motivated keeps you stuck. **In behavioral activation, action comes first.** Motivation usually follows.

## Three kinds of activities that help

### Enjoyment

Small pleasures: a walk, music, a call with a friend, a favorite meal.

### Achievement

A sense of getting something done: one email, a load of laundry, a simple meal.

### What matters to you

Things linked to your values: caring for someone, faith, learning, community.

## How to start

- 1 **Track.** For a few days, note what you do and rate your mood from 0 to 10. Look for patterns.
- 2 **Start small.** Pick activities so small they feel almost too easy. Stepping outside for five minutes counts.
- 3 **Schedule it.** Decide when and where, like an appointment. Don't wait for the right mood.
- 4 **Rate it.** Notice your mood before and after. Even a small change matters.
- 5 **Build up.** Add a little more each week, mixing all three kinds of activity.
- 6 **Be kind to yourself.** If a plan doesn't happen, make the next step smaller and try again.



Miriam Slikhanian  
PSYCHOLOGIST

# My activity plan

WEEK OF

Plan one small activity a day. Type: **E** enjoyment, **A** achievement, **V** what matters to you.

| Day       | Planned activity<br>What, when, where | Type<br>E · A · V | Done?<br>Yes / No | Mood<br>before<br>0–10 | Mood<br>after<br>0–10 |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday    |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Tuesday   |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Wednesday |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Thursday  |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Friday    |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Saturday  |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |
| Sunday    |                                       |                   |                   |                        |                       |

Didn't manage it? That's information, not failure. **Make the next step smaller.**

If low mood lasts more than two weeks, talk to a professional. If you have thoughts of not wanting to live, reach out now: in the Netherlands call 113 (0800-0113, free, 24/7) or 112.



Miriam Slikhanian  
PSYCHOLOGIST