

## **Depression – Behavioural Activation & Coping Skills**

Depression can drain our energy and motivation, making it challenging to engage in activities we used to enjoy. At Evolve Mental Health, we believe that even small actions can make a big difference in managing depression. Here are some strategies to help break the cycle of inactivity and improve mood:

### **1. Choose Activities Wisely:**

- Select activities that you are likely to complete, considering your interests and capabilities.
- Examples include exercising (e.g., walking, biking, yoga), socializing (e.g., calling a friend, joining a group), fulfilling responsibilities (e.g., housework, paying bills), engaging in hobbies (e.g., gardening, drawing), and practicing personal care (e.g., grooming, preparing healthy meals).

### **2. Practice Consistently:**

- Break activities into smaller, manageable tasks if needed.
- Set reminders or tie activities to existing routines to increase consistency.
- Consider involving a friend to enhance motivation and enjoyment.

**Social Support:** Depression often leads to social isolation, which can worsen feelings of loneliness and low mood. At Evolve Mental Health, we emphasize the importance of maintaining social connections to support mental well-being:

- Prioritize socializing with friends or family every day, either in person or remotely.
- Challenge the urge to isolate yourself by saying "yes" to social opportunities, even when it feels difficult.
- Consider joining a support group to connect with others who understand and can provide valuable support.

**Three Good Things:** Combat negative thinking by focusing on positive experiences each day. Reflect on three good things that happened and consider why they were meaningful or how you can invite more positivity into your life.

**Mindfulness Meditation:** Practice mindfulness meditation to cultivate present-moment awareness and reduce rumination and worry associated with depression:

- Find a quiet, comfortable space for 15 to 30 minutes daily.
- Sit or lie down with relaxed posture, focusing on the sensation of breathing.
- Acknowledge wandering thoughts without judgment, gently redirecting your focus to the breath.