

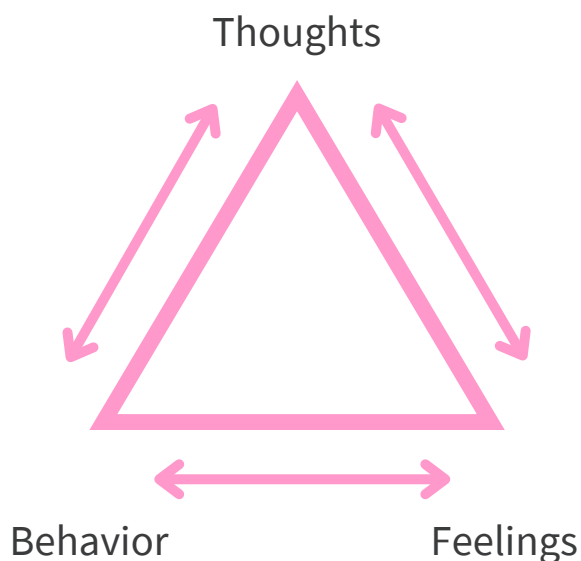
BEHAVIORAL ACTIVATION

Family Therapy Center of Bethesda

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Some characteristics of depression include social isolation, apathy, and lack of motivation for regular activities. Behavioral activation is a skill from cognitive behavioral therapy that is used to combat depression through activity. If you are feeling depressed, read through this worksheet and complete the activity log to break the cycle of depression.

Understanding the cycle: The cognitive triangle



This diagram shows us that thoughts, feelings, and behavior all influence each other. When we have negative thoughts, or have experienced a stressful event, this can trigger emotions such as sadness, anxiety, embarrassment, or hopelessness. These emotions often cause people to isolate themselves and lose motivation for day to day activities.

Breaking the cycle with action

Once a person starts having these negative thoughts, feelings and actions, they begin to feed off of each other and create a vicious cycle. An extremely important way to break this cycle is by eliciting positive emotions and experiences through action. This can be difficult because depression can take away motivation and cause us to isolate. However, it is vital to fight the urge to stay in and get up, get moving, and keep doing things.

ACTIVITY LOG

Directions: Use this as a space to keep track of your activity. These activities can be anything that your depression tells you not to do. For example, if your depressed thoughts are telling you not to get out of bed and make breakfast but you do anyway, write that. If you step out of your comfort zone and hang out with a new friend, write that.

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

Made me feel _____

Date _____ Activity _____

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