



# **Behavioural Activation in Groups**

Handbook

## Introduction

This handbook was originally created by Joe Curran and Paul Bliss (Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapists, Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust) to accompany their group format of Martell and colleagues' Behavioural Activation for Depression (BA). In collaboration with NHS Education Scotland (NES), Joe Curran and Paul Bliss came to Scotland in 2015 to provide training in that group format, Behavioural Activation in Groups (BAG).

Martell and colleagues have been developing BA over the last 30 years. The extensive evidence-base for its effectiveness has led to BA being recommended in 'The Matrix: A Guide for the Delivery of Evidence-Based Psychological Therapies in Scotland' (Scottish Government, 2015), the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) clinical guideline (2010) and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2009) clinical guideline for the treatment and management of depression in adults.

NES has provided training in Behavioural Activation in both individual (BA) and group (BAG) formats, and Brief Behavioural Activation for Depression (BATD-R), to increase the access for people experiencing depression to evidence-based psychological therapies and to standardise the quality of the therapy available across Scotland. For more information, the most up-to-date version of Martell and colleagues' BA for Depression can be found in the following:

*For people currently experiencing depression*

Addis, M. E. and Martell, C.R. (2004) *Overcoming Depression: One Step at a Time: The New Behavioural Activation Approach to Getting Your Life Back*. Oakland: New Harbinger.

If assistance is required in obtaining a copy of this book, GPs and local libraries should be able to assist through the 'Books on Prescription' scheme.

*Clinical guide for BA Practitioners*

Martell, C.R., Dimidjian, S. and Herman-Dunn, R. (2010) *Behavioural Activation: A Clinician's Guide*. New York: Guilford.

*A digital version can be accessed online via Athens here: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/nhsscotland/detail.action?docID=10356630>*

## Copyright

The following handbook contains material from:

1. Martell, C. R., Addis, M. E. and Jacobson, N.S. (2001) *Depression in Context: Strategies for Guided Action*. New York: Norton.
2. Addis, M. E. and Martell, C. R. (2004) *Overcoming Depression One Step at a Time*. New Harbinger: Oakland.
3. Martell, C.R., Dimidjian, S., Herman-Dunn, R. (2010) *Behavioural Activation: A Clinician's Guide*. New York: Guilford.

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The e-book of Martell et al (2010) is there for BA clinicians to use as a reference. Its limited photocopy license allows worksheets to be copied for personal use or individual clinical work but not for making additional handouts for therapy groups.

# Session 7

Freeing yourself from  
mood dependence

# Session 7

## Agenda

1. Review previous session on making changes one step at a time
2. Review between-session training using SUDS
3. Introduction to freeing yourself from mood dependence
4. Plan the next between-session training

## Goals for this session

1. Review between-session training and previous six sessions
2. Introduce mood dependence as a barrier to change
3. Plan the next between-session training

## How to accomplish short-term goals

Here are six manageable steps to achieving short-term goals:

1. Clearly define a goal.
2. Identify the steps necessary to achieve the goal.
3. Arrange the steps in a logical order.
4. Make a commitment to each step.
5. Take the step, no matter what your mood is like.
6. Pat yourself on the back after each step is completed.

The first thing you need to do is choose one or two short-term goals and define them clearly. Look over your list of goals and choose one short-term goal. Consider it carefully and ask yourself how well the goal is defined. Will you know when you've accomplished it? You may need to rework the goal somewhat to more clearly define it. Once you feel that your goal is clear, write it down in the space below:

Short-term goal 1: Organise and sort vegetable patch

Now you need to consider what steps are necessary to achieve the goal. Don't worry about the order of the steps at this point. Just think of as many steps as you can that need to be completed. Try to avoid combining several different steps into one big step that's difficult to accomplish. Write down the steps you think of in the space below:

Weed  
Buy seeds  
Go to library for a gardening book  
Read chapter on what to plant and when  
Prepare patch  
Water and maintain  
Plant seeds

Now think about a logical order for the steps. What needs to happen first? Are there some steps that require others to be completed first? If not, try to start with the easiest step, so you can quickly have a sense of progress. Write down an order for the steps below. There's space for ten steps. If you don't need all ten, leave some blank. If you need more, write them on a separate piece of paper.

1.	Go to library for a gardening book
2.	Read chapter on what to plant and when
3.	Weed
4.	Buy seeds
5.	Prepare patch
6.	Plant seeds
7.	Water and maintain
8.	
9.	
10.	

Now its time to make a commitment to step number 1. Commit to a day and time to begin step 1. Then, no matter what your mood is like, begin working on it. If you are unable to finish step 1, make another commitment to continue with it at a specific time in the future. Some people find it helpful to make a multiday or multiweek commitment. For example, if your goal was to spend at least one day of every weekend doing something fun outdoors, the first step might be doing some research to find activities. You might make the commitment to spend one hour between 8:00 and 9:00 PM every other night for a week researching and planning activities. Below is a space to write down your initial commitment to take the first step. (Make written commitments for each subsequent step on a separate sheet of paper, but only after you complete the step that precedes it.)

Commitment to step 1:

Place a check mark next to each step after completing it. Then, make sure to congratulate yourself and give yourself credit for what you have accomplished, no matter how small. Don't fall into the trap of saying to yourself 'Oh that was easy. No big deal. I should have been able to do that a long time ago.' Remember, you're working on self-activation because you're finding it difficult get back to engagement in your life. That means it's not easy to do these things. It's hard. If you've completed one of the steps towards your goal, it's worth giving yourself some credit.

*Addis, M. E. and Martell, C. R. (2004) Overcoming Depression One Step at a Time. New Harbinger: Oakland. Pages 139-141. Reproduced with permission.*

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1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
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# Your short-term goal planning worksheet

Short-term goal:

Steps toward the goal:

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Order of the steps:

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Initial commitment to step 1:

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# Self-reflection sheet

## Session number:

1. What did I learn from today's session?
2. What training for the week did I plan?
3. Thinking about today's session, I noticed myself behaving in this way... (Describe...)
4. This way of behaving/being is helpful because...
5. This way of behaving/being may be unhelpful because...
6. If I were to usually behave this way in my everyday life the likely consequences would be...
7. Is there anything I need to change as a result of my reflections?



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