

# MOOD MATTERS

## SESSION 5 COURSE WORKBOOK



## Mood Matters - Session 5

### Rumination and Problem Solving

It is important to understand more about the things that make changing your behaviour difficult like:

#### Negative Thoughts

- “what’s the point?”
- “what if...”
- “I’ll fail”

*Thoughts like this can feel uncomfortable or difficult to face and so, often, we avoid them.*

AVOIDANCE stops us from making changes that help you overcome low mood

Avoidance is the substitution of behaviours that cause discomfort or distress for behaviours that bring relief from distress

### Two Sides to Avoidance

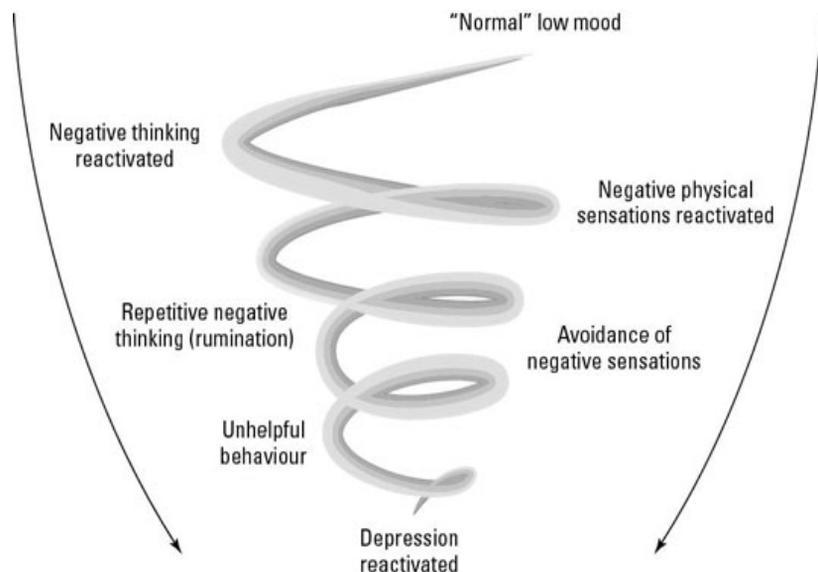
#### Cognitive Avoidance

Hiding from or ignoring difficult thoughts or feelings.

#### Behavioural Avoidance

Hiding from or refusing to engage in difficult or uncomfortable situations

**Coping behaviours:** Blocking thoughts out, distracting yourself, being overactive, taking to bed, cancelling plans, calling in sick to work, changing the subject.



## When Avoidance Is Not Helpful?

- Depression has a way of making things that normally wouldn't trouble you seem threatening. For example, going to work or meeting friends may raise the threat that you will have to face and interact with people.
- In time, avoiding people can become unhelpful because it can lead to guilt, breakdown of relationships, feelings of exclusion or isolation and less positive reinforcement from the people who care about you which feeds depression further. It becomes another vicious circle.
- Avoidance can help you temporarily escape a difficult situation but may not be very helpful in the long run.

## Other Avoidant Behaviours

- **Procrastination** – putting things off until later “I'll do it tomorrow.”
- **Rumination** – spending large amounts of time thinking about what you are experiencing.
- **Numbing or zoning out** – often using drugs or alcohol

## Start to Plan New Coping Strategies

- Think of an avoidance behaviour relevant to you and identify when, where and often you do it.
- Think about the emotions you might be trying to avoid.
- List the consequences of your avoidance behaviour.



## HOMEWORK

- Choose one problem, using the problem solving worksheet as an example.



## Problem Solving Worksheet

Step 1	Identify the Problem Break it down into smaller steps and decide what you need to action first		
Step 2	Brainstorm and write down as many ideas as you can that might help solve the problem, no matter how silly they seem – don't dismiss any possible solutions.		
Step 3	Consider the pros and cons of each possible solution.	Pro's	Con's

Step 4	Choose one of the possible solutions that looks likely to work, based on the advantages and disadvantages.
Step 5	Plan out step-by-step what you need to do to carry out this solution. What? When? How? With whom or what? What could cause problems? How can you get around those problems? Is this realistic and achievable?
Step 6	Do it! Carry out the plan
Step 7	Review how it went. Was it helpful? Did you achieve what you set out to achieve? If not, how could you have done it differently? Did you achieve any progress, however small, towards your goal? What have you learned?
Step 8	<p>If you achieved your goal – consider tackling the next step of your original problem.</p> <p>If you didn't fully achieve your goal – make adjustments to your chosen solution or return to steps 3 and 4 and choose another possible solution.</p>