



Understanding low mood



What is low mood?

Everyone feels sad sometimes and that is completely normal. Our feelings come and go all the time. With low mood, these feelings of sadness just seem to go on and on and it's hard to see a way to feel happy again. Low mood varies from person to person and stressful or difficult things can trigger it (or it can come out of nowhere). Low mood can impact how you feel, how you think and things that you do.

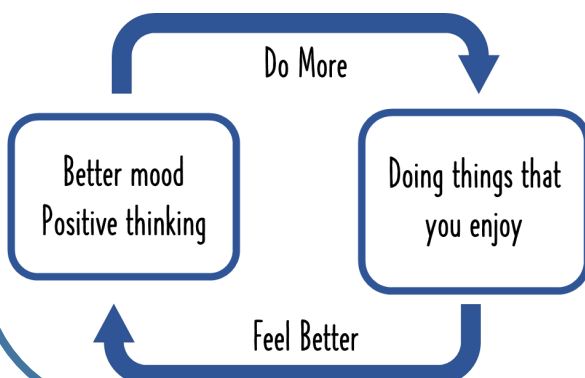
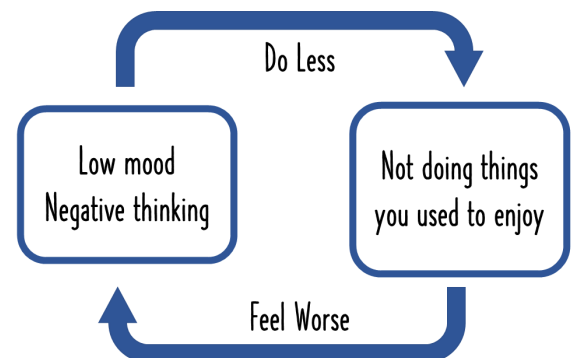
What are some signs of low mood?

- Having low energy
- Struggling to sleep or sleeping more than usual
- Losing interest in activities that you usually enjoy
- Losing your appetite or comfort eating
- Struggling to concentrate or remember things
- Feeling restless
- Isolating yourself from others

Breaking the cycle: Do more to feel better

When low in mood, we get stuck in a vicious cycle. To feel better, we therefore need to change something in this cycle so that it becomes a positive cycle.

The longer we're stuck in this cycle, the lower and more unhappy we feel. This then makes it more and more difficult to do things.



A really good way to break this cycle is to start **DOING** more enjoyable activities. This can be very difficult at first but the more you do things, the happier you will feel, the closer you will feel to others and the more you will feel a sense of achievement.

10 things to try to improve your low mood

1. Share your feelings with someone.

It can be really helpful to talk with others about how you are feeling.



2. Challenge any unhelpful thoughts.

Remind yourself that thoughts are not facts.

3. Take care of your wellbeing.

Make sure that you get enough sleep, food and water.



4. Start a daily habit of positive thinking.

At the end of each day, think about 3 good things that happened during the day.

5. Try fitting in some exercise into your day.

Try something that makes your heart pump faster. It can make you feel better.



6. Take time out everyday to do something you enjoy and that relaxes you.

Do things that make your mood better.

7. Keep a diary and write down your feelings.



8. Spend some time outside in nature and take a walk.

Make a note of things you can see, hear, feel and smell.



9. Listen to your favourite music.

10. Take some deep belly breaths to calm your body.



Further help or support

If you feel like you need a bit more support with these big feelings, it is okay to ask for extra help. Talk to your parents, family doctor, health visitor or a school nurse.

If you have access to a phone or the internet, you can also get support from:

- Young Minds (0-25 years old) = Text YM to 85258 (www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Chat Health (11-19 years old) = Text 07480 635060 (<https://chathealth.nhs.uk>)

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