

Coping & Wellness: Activity Scheduling



The Mecca of Black Wellness



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Take a moment to think about the last time that you felt happy, content, and hopeful about your future.

- What were you doing?
- Who were you with?
- Where were you?

Now take a few minutes to think about other activities that you have participated in that made you feel good or that gave you a sense of purpose. Create a list of all these activities, experiences, people and places. If you need additional ideas, review the Black Mental Wellness' list of **Pleasant Activities** to get started.

Tips for Creating an Activity Schedule

This all sounds easy to do right? No! If you are struggling to get out of the bed, or barely holding on to make it through the workday, this will be a challenging process. But, you got this!! Here are a few tips to get you started.

1. Identify activities that are **Valuable** and meaningful to you (faith and spirituality, health, work, family relationships), **Pleasurable** (enjoyable, fun, hobbies), and that give you a sense of **Mastery** (leadership opportunities, volunteering, sports, creative outlets, do it yourself projects).
2. **Reach out to your family and friends.** Involve other people into your plans. They can serve as both accountability partners to keep you focused and motivated, and as a way to increase your social interactions.
3. **Pick out a range of both easy and hard tasks.** When you're first starting out, the **easier** activities are a great way to start accomplishing your weekly goals, as time progresses, begin to challenge yourself to engage in harder tasks.
4. **Set a realistic goal for the week.** Start with something small and specific that feels attainable with how you are feeling, ("I will go to the gym 2 times this week" or "I will wash the laundry this week") and work towards achieving that goal. **Don't overwhelm yourself.**
5. **Plan activities for different times of the day.** For example, are there activities that you enjoy in the morning, afternoon, or evening? How about the weekends?
6. **Barriers/Obstacles.** Think about any barriers that may get in the way of you successfully achieving your weekly goal, and make a plan to overcome those obstacles.

As you are going through this process here are some things to note:

- If you don't reach your goal this week, try again. Don't beat yourself up!
- As you begin to feel more motivated and engaged, add more activities to your daily/weekly schedule.
- Every activity that you try out may not be helpful to you. If you find yourself engaged in activities that are not rewarding or helpful in improving your mood, now is the time to review your pleasant activities list and pick something else to try!
- Monitor your mood in response to activities and make changes based on your observations.
 - What did you notice about yourself?
 - Did you pick too many/too little activities?
 - How did you feel before the activity? After?
 - As the week progressed was it easier to engage?

After a few weeks, you should start to notice some improvements in your mood. However, if you are still struggling to get active and engaged, it may be a good idea to seek professional mental health treatment.

Reference:

Ekers, D., Webster, L., Van Straten, A., Cuijpers, P., Richards, D., & Gilbody, S. (2014). [Behavioural Activation for Depression: An Update of Meta-Analysis of Effectiveness and Sub Group Analysis](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0100100). Aleman A, ed. *PLoS ONE*. 2014;9(6):e100100. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0100100.

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Resources During Crisis or Distress

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visit, <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or dial 1-888-628-9454 to speak to someone.

Psychology Today

www.PsychologyToday.com

Psychology Today's Therapy Directory lists clinical professionals, psychiatrists and treatment centers who provide mental health services in the US and internationally.

Therapy for Black Girls

www.TherapyForBlackGirls.com

Therapy for Black Girls is an online space dedicated to encouraging the mental wellness of Black women and girls.

Zoc Doc

www.ZocDoc.com

With Zocdoc, you can see doctors' open appointment times and book instantly online, make informed choices with verified reviews, and stay on top of important checkups with tailored reminders.

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