

# Behavioural Activation (BA)

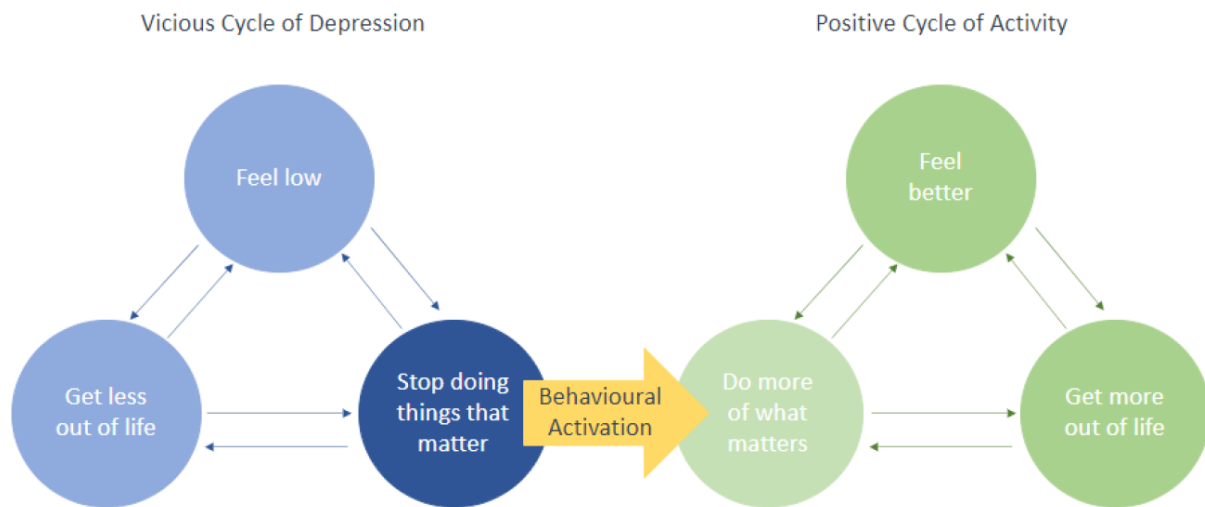
## What is BA?

BA focuses on encouraging children and young people to get more out of life through activities to lift their mood. It is used when we are feeling low.

When we are feeling low in mood, we may find it difficult to carry out everyday activities and so find ourselves withdrawing and avoiding these activities. For example, we may avoid seeing friends, stop doing our homework and put off responsibilities because we lack motivation or find them overwhelming.

Initially the pressure could make us feel that avoiding the activity would be a better solution, however, the longer we avoid it, the more difficult it becomes to build the routine up again.

# Breaking the cycle



The vicious cycle of depression (low mood) and positive cycle of activity above, is used to show how the more we do that we value, the more we enjoy life.

We use BA to highlight these activities to support people in getting the most out of what they enjoy.

# How does it work?

When feeling low, the tendency to do less in the longer term means that things that have to be done tend to pile up and you may find you are doing less of the things they enjoyed. You also have more time to dwell on negative thoughts. Over time, this lack of activity can make your mood worse rather than better. Then of course, you are likely to want to do even less and this makes you feel even worse – it is a downward spiral (or a black hole as some people describe it).

BA tries to break this cycle by encouraging you to start doing things again – a little at a time. This puts the spiral into reverse and things start to improve. By taking small steps you will start to feel better and have more energy and more confidence to take the next step. Best of all, you are the one who will set the pace, and you are the person who will decide what to do and when.

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**Hull Mental Health  
Support Teams**

[howareyoufeeling.org.uk](https://howareyoufeeling.org.uk)