



# Increasing Activity

When we're feeling depressed, we tend to do less and less because of the tiredness, difficulty sleeping and eating, and negative style of thinking. We stop doing the things we used to do and enjoy. It could get so bad that we can't even go to work, or do things at home. We want to stay in bed, or stay at home doing very little, and we might isolate ourselves from friends and family.

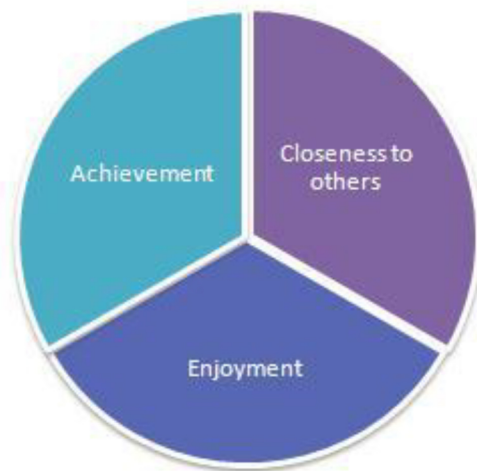
Just increasing our activity and exercise levels can make an enormous impact on our mood by:

- Making us feel better about ourselves
- Making us feel less tired
- Motivating us to do more
- Improving our ability to think more clearly
- Helping us think about something other than focussing on our unhelpful thoughts
- Using up the adrenaline resources created by anxiety and anger
- Increasing motivation
- Giving us a sense of achievement
- Enjoyment
- Being with other people
- Stimulating the body to produce natural anti-depressants
- Making us generally more healthy
- Stimulating our appetite



**Healthy Balance - Schedule activities each day which give you a sense of:**

- ❖ **Achievement**
- ❖ **Closeness to others**
- ❖ **Enjoyment**



- Use an Activity Diary, or the **ACE Log**
- It's important to get a healthy balance of activities which give you a sense of achievement, enjoyment and being close to others. Choose activities which are important to you, have positive meanings, or are purposeful, and you might want to plan rest periods too.
- At first, you can try an activity for just 5 minutes, then you can choose to stop or carry on.
- Keep your goals realistic – set achievable limits. For example: aim to walk for 15 minutes rather than a half-marathon, or wash the dishes rather than spring clean the whole house. Don't set yourself up to fail! You can build up your activity over time.