

Homework To Support Your Mood

There is so much we can do to help our mood. When we are stressed out, overwhelmed, depressed or anxious it may be hard to believe that we do have the ability to improve our mental and physical well-being... but trust me... we do. You may not feel motivated to do any of these suggestions, but even so, consider scheduling some time each day to explore one of suggestions listed below. Just do it because you know it's good for you, your doctor recommended it, and it's time to take care of yourself.

And most importantly, take some times to develop your support system. Connect with other people in your life. We often feel very isolated and lonely when experiencing difficult mood states. Consider calling, emailing or texting a friend or family member. Check in with them regularly. Consider booking a follow-up with appointment with me. Consider seeing a therapist. If you do not have a drug plan speak to me about OHIP covered options. Consider a more intensive therapy like the Ontario Shores CBT program (I need to refer you), or an 8 week mindfulness group (I facilitate MBCT and MBSR at Medical Associates of Port Perry). Consider a program or workshop with our Family Health Team. Check out portperrymedical.ca for information on the Family Health Team, MBCT or MBSR.

Remember... you don't have to do this alone.

Home Practice Activities To Support Your Mood:

Consider scheduling some time each day to explore one of these areas.

1. Self Care

How are you taking care of yourself? Dedicate some time to reflect on your self-care. What things are you doing that nourish you? Can you schedule them more regularly? What things are you doing that drain you? Can you reduce them?

Sleep habits (recommend at least 8 hours a day):

Diet (healthy, real food):

Caffeine, alcohol, or drug use (consider reducing):

Smoking or vaping (consider reducing):

Exercise (recommend 150 minutes a week, and at least 10 minutes a day):

Screen time and social media (reduce to < 2 hours a day and consider a social media break):

Nature time (spend 2 hours a week connecting with nature, and consider 20 minutes each day):

Hobbies (especially creative activities):

2. Mindfulness

Pause at least once a day for just a few moments to simply notice your surroundings. Pay attention with all of your senses. Take it all in. Then check-in with yourself as well. Asking yourself: What can I notice about my body's position right now? What do I notice within my body? What is my mood right now? What am I thinking about right now?

3. Gratitude Journal

Make a point of noticing something that made you smile each day. It may be very "minor" or simple, like the sound of the birds... but notice it. Consider journaling about things you are grateful for.

4. Pleasurable Activities

Make a list of activities that you enjoy. Then plan one of these activities each day... even a short 5 minute pleasurable activity like enjoying your favourite cup of tea. Avoid multi-tasking, and instead place your full attention on that activity when you do it.

5. Meditation

Consider meditating every day. Start with 3 minutes at a time, perhaps focusing on your breath. Consider starting or ending your day with this type of practice.

6. Dealing With Overwhelming Tasks

When you are feeling overwhelmed with something you need to do ... pause. Take a moment to check-in with yourself. Then think about breaking down this task into multiple smaller tasks. And consider only completing one small part of that right now.

7. On-Line Resources

Explore on-line resources to support difficult mood states. This is an extensive list. Perhaps read through it and choose the one that intrigues you the most at this time. Then spend some times exploring that resource. You can always return to this list in the future and explore another.

Wellness Together Canada

On-line self-directed resources for your mood. Click "Take The First Step" and register an account. You can then access "Self-Guided Tools" like:

MindWell

Watch the short videos "Hardwiring Happiness" and "Mindfulness And Working With Negative Thoughts" and review the "Learn To Take 5" handout. Click "Sign in with WTC" to access further programs

- Start training with the 5 day "Mini Challenge"
- Access "Studio Be" to register for live classes and webinars
- Access "The Well" Library for recording's of past webinar highlights On-Demand mindfulness practices
- Access Welltrack (Sign in with your WTC account) for more self-directed courses on Anxiety, Depression and Resilience

TAO

Therapy Assistance On-Line to access self-directed brief educational sessions and mindfulness exercises.

Breaking Free

To access supports for alcohol and drug use.

Breathing Room

For new ideas and tools to help cope with challenges.

Kids Help Phone (youth) and Homewood Health links for further programs

MindBeacon

An e-therapist guided program. After registering and completing questionnaires, your e-therapist will contact you through the MindBeacon private messaging function to chat, and assign you self-directed courses.

BounceBack

A skill building program delivered with a coach (by phone or email), to work on CBT based materials. Access to 6 therapy sessions, workbooks, and videos. I would need to refer for the coaching however everyone with an account can access you can access the 10 great VIDEOS.

The Working Mind

Under "COVID-19 Resources" and then under "Workplace Resources" is a "Mini-Guide to help employees mental health through the winter".

Togetherall (previously Big White Wall)

On-line peer-to-peer support, self-help courses and tools to improve mood.

CMHA Ontario and CMHA Durham

Canadian Mental Health Association website for both Ontario and Durham.

8. CBT and Mindfulness Self-Help Workbooks

Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think. Dennis Greenberger, Christine A. Padesky.

The Mindful Way Workbook: An 8-Week Program to Free Yourself from Depression and Emotional Distress. by Williams, Teasdale, Segal and Kabat-Zinn. **

A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook. by Stahl and Goldstein. **

The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive, by Kristin Neff

** Dr. Shepherd offers MBCT and MBSR, 8 week group psychotherapy programs. Consider taking them in person rather than using the workbook on your own. --