

# BEHAVIORAL ACTIVATION QUICK GUIDE



## WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL ACTIVATION?

a brief intervention that breaks patterns of avoidance and helps re-establish routines, thereby increasing pleasurable experiences and decreasing depression in patients.



*Get curious about your patient! Exploring your patient's values and priorities is paramount to creating meaningful activity goals*

FEEL A LITTLE BIT BETTER

DO A LITTLE BIT MORE

VS.

FEEL BAD

DO LESS

## KEY CONCEPTS:

**Cycle of depression** – Depression is associated with avoidance of activities and a decrease in pleasurable experiences. This avoidance tends to worsen depression as people lose the opportunity for positively reinforcing experiences, thereby creating a cycle of depression.

**Outside-In approach** – Motivation follows action. This approach shows patients that completing an activity regardless of how they are feeling promotes positive feelings.

**Function of avoidance** – Avoidance helps in the short term by avoiding negative feelings, but harms you in the long run by trapping you in the cycle of depression.

**TRAP & TRAC** – Trigger-Response-Avoidance Pattern & Trigger-Response-Alternative Coping. Helpful in teaching patients to recognize when they are engaging in avoidance and teaches techniques to manage a stressful situation in a healthy way.

## SETTING ACTIVITY GOALS:

*Remember: The patient is the expert in this step!*

- Generate a list of possible activities with the patient
- Look for activities that provide positive reinforcement to their mood
- Schedule the activity goals! Make sure they are SMART
- Check-in with your patient and troubleshoot barriers

| Time        | Day and Date: |
|-------------|---------------|
| 6:00 am     |               |
| <b>Mood</b> |               |
| 7:00 am     |               |
| <b>Mood</b> |               |
| 8:00 am     |               |
| <b>Mood</b> |               |
| 9:00 am     |               |
| <b>Mood</b> |               |