

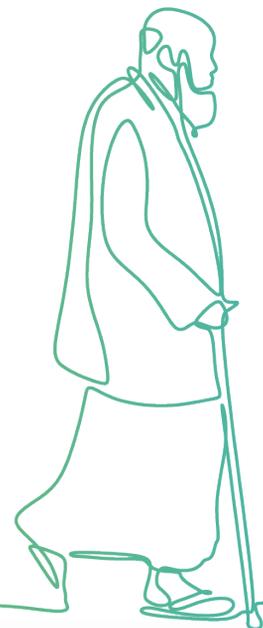


vita
health group

What is Low Mood?

Name:

Date:



What is Low Mood?

Low mood can happen to anyone - and does happen to **one in six of us over our lifetimes**. What keeps it going though, is how we deal with it. The way we think and what we do affects the way we feel. Low mood is often accompanied by other feelings such as guilt, shame, anger and anxiety, which can prolong it further.

It's different from sadness in that it is ongoing and comes with its own symptoms.

It's perfectly normal, but when it starts to impact our day-to-day life, we may need some help to lift our mood.

Here are some quotes that you might find helpful



Experiences of depression can vary from individual to individual, but it is often felt and described as blackness, a heavy weight, an emptiness, as if the life source or spirit has been extinguished. You may feel removed from other people, aware that your experience of life is different, and uncertain about how or whether you can relate to others or indeed if you want to relate or to engage with them, or with the world outside yourself

SANE



...a common mental disorder that presents with low mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy and poor concentration. These problems can become chronic or recurrent and lead to substantial impairments in an individual's ability to take care of his or her everyday responsibilities

World Health Organisation



There are many different definitions and no one 'correct' definition, as everyone experiences it in different ways.

What is Low Mood?

Low mood is:

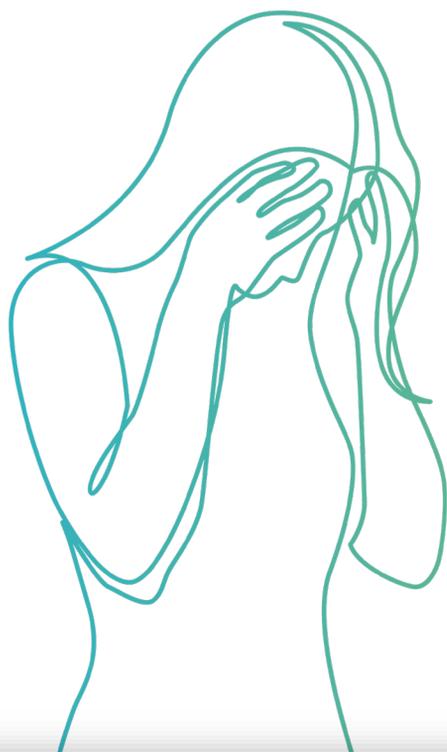
-  A mental illness that is recognised worldwide
-  Something that anyone can get
-  Different from sadness – it is ongoing and has additional symptoms
-  Treatable

Low mood is NOT:

-  Something you can snap out of
-  A sign of weakness
-  Something that lasts forever



How common is low mood?



1 in 6 people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year (Mental Health Foundation, 2011)

According to the Mental Health Foundation in England, **women are more likely than men** to report a common mental health problem (Mental Health Foundation, 2011)

2.6 in 100 people suffer from Depression (Mind, 2009)

Causes of Low Mood:

You may have a good idea of what originally caused your mood to deteriorate, but for some people it can be hard to figure out exactly why their mood changed. Below are some common life events which often trigger or contribute to the development of low mood. You may find it helpful to read through them and tick any that apply to you.

Loss/death of a family member or friend

Divorce/separation/relationship issues

Change of job

Excessive working/work pressure

Financial worries/debt/large mortgage

Neighbour problems

Personal injury/illness/managing a long-term physical or psychological health condition

Child leaving home

Unemployment/retirement

Moving house

Pregnancy/birth of a child

Increased responsibilities

Lack of future focus

Prolonged stress



Are some people more prone to low mood than others?

A risk factor is something that increases the likelihood of us developing low mood. But these risk factors do not mean we are certain to develop low mood if we have or have experienced any of the below.

Common risk factors for low mood include:

- Family history of low mood
- Chronic physical illness or pain
- Major life events or stress
- Minimal social support
- Psychological factors
- Sleep problems
- Low socio-economic status
- Your gender
- The gender you identify with
- Medications
- Substance misuse (drugs or alcohol)
- Your identity (e.g. race, ethnicity, religion or culture)



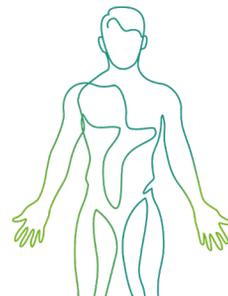
Symptoms of Low Mood

There are many different symptoms that accompany low mood.

Put a tick next to the symptoms that you relate to or write down some of your own.

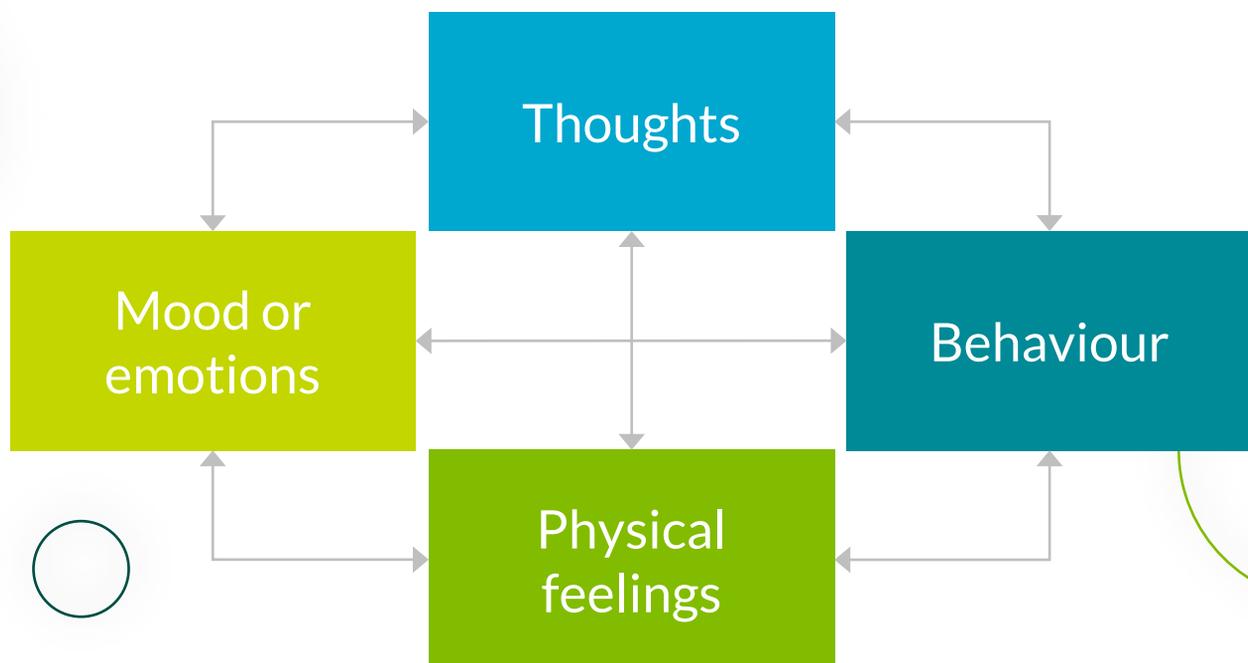
Common low mood symptoms

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative thoughts about yourself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling heavy | <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of not being “good enough” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changes in appetite | <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of guilt or shame |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problems concentrating | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative thoughts about your situation, your environment, and the world |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability/ feelings of anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking the worst |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crying more | <input type="checkbox"/> Aches and pains |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low energy/ lethargy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest or motivation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing less activities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawing from others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding things | |



Do you have any other symptoms you've noticed?

The Cognitive Behavioural Model (CBT)



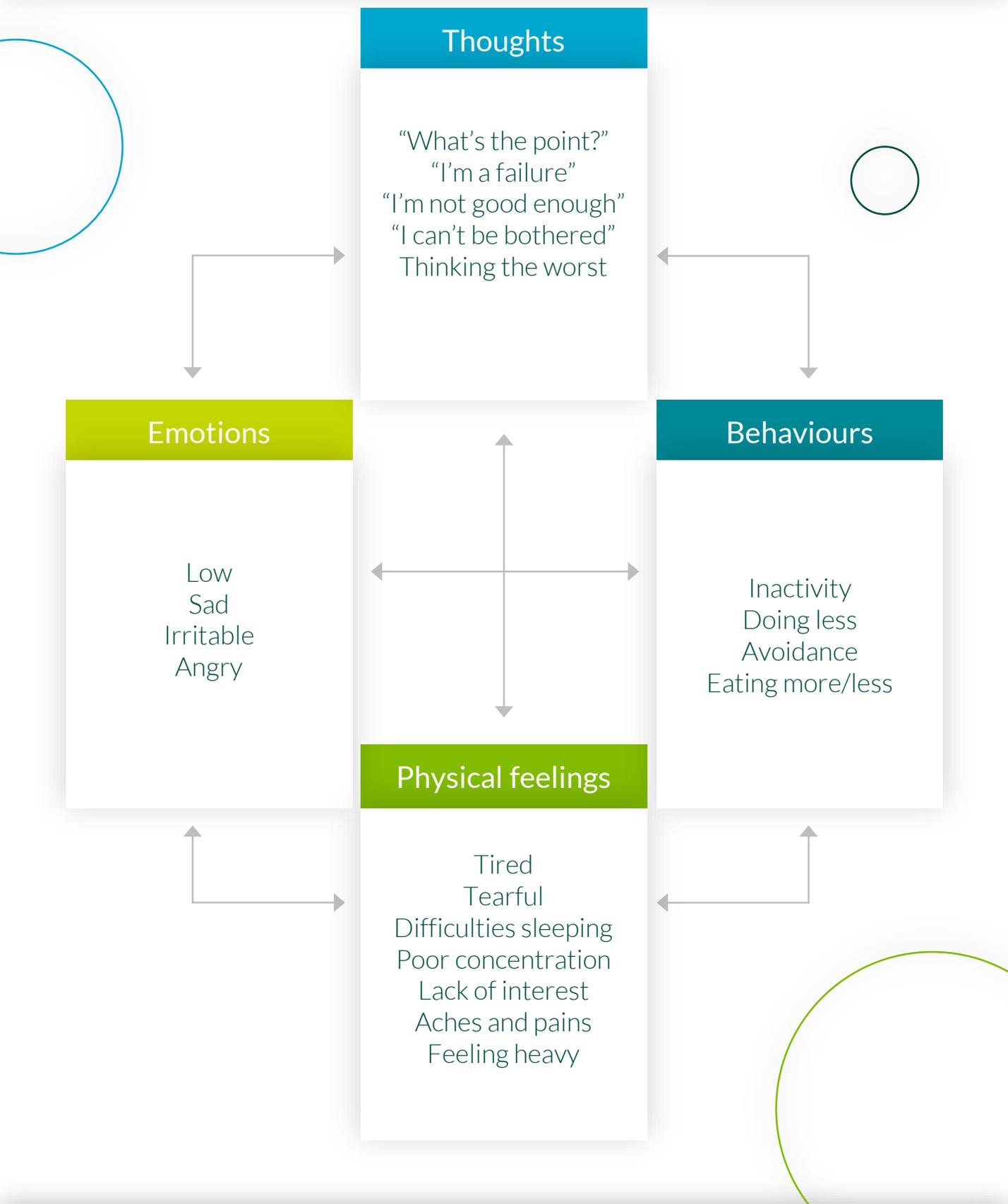
Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) focuses on present maintenance cycles to understand our difficulties. CBT looks at what physical symptoms, behaviours, thoughts and emotions we experience, and how each of these areas impact each other:

-  **Thoughts** are often negative and exaggerated (e.g. worst case scenario, self critical)
-  **Behaviours** are our attempts to cope with a situation (e.g. avoidance)
-  **Physical sensations** are how our body reacts to our problem (e.g. tension, tiredness)
-  **Mood or emotions** are how we feel (e.g. low, angry, scared, or embarrassed)

When we understand this, we can see that by changing one of these to be more helpful or positive, the others will change too. CBT uses evidence-based techniques to help us make positive changes to break out of these cycles and improve our wellbeing.

Throughout your sessions, we will help to introduce specific tools and techniques which you can use to help manage your mood and anxiety. You will be expected to practise these techniques and review these each week. This will enable you to become your own therapist.

Vicious Cycle of Low Mood



Your CBT Cycle

