Values and activity worksheet

Choose activities for their meaning and feasibility. You do not have to feel motivated first.

Editable PDF: replace or delete the fictional examples. Blank PDF: print and write. Guidance follows.

Life area	Quality that matters	Lower-energy option	Option with more support / capacity

Chosen action / when / support

What I noticed / what to adapt

Copyright Calm Breathing Therapies

Using this resource

Values and activity worksheet

What this helps with

When you feel low, it may be hard to know what you want or remember what used to matter. You do not need a clear sense of enjoyment before choosing an activity. This sheet starts with directions that feel meaningful, even faintly, and turns them into practical options. A value is a way you want to live, such as being caring or curious; an activity is one small action in that direction. The menu is a source of choice, not a list of obligations.

How to use it

1. Choose two or three areas that matter to you, such as relationships, learning, creativity or self-care.
2. Describe the quality you value rather than what you think you should achieve.
3. List small actions at different energy levels, including low-cost and accessible options.
4. Choose one action that fits your current circumstances and add a time or cue.
5. After trying it, notice meaning or connection as well as mood, then adjust.

A fictional worked example

Sam misses feeling connected to his younger brother but has no energy for a full day out. He identifies being interested and present as a direction he values. His menu includes sending a short voice note, sharing a photograph of something they both like and arranging a ten-minute call. He chooses the voice note for Thursday afternoon. He does not suddenly feel cheerful afterwards, but he notices he acted in line with the relationship he cares about. A planned call can remain an option for another week; it is not a requirement to compensate for choosing a smaller step now.

Keep in mind

Values should reflect your choices, not pressure from other people. Financial difficulties, disability, discrimination and caring demands may limit available options and deserve practical support. Keep activities safe and accessible. If even tiny steps feel unmanageable, discuss the level of support you need with a clinician.

Sources and attribution

Martell, C. R., Dimidjian, S., & Herman-Dunn, R. (2022). Behavioral activation for depression: A clinician's guide (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

NICE (2022). Depression in adults: treatment and management (NG222).

Original material informed by the sources above. No outside organisation endorses this worksheet.

Copyright Calm Breathing Therapies