

Behavioral Activation: Evidence-Based Treatment For Depressive Symptoms

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This is required for attendance and to receive CE/CEU.



AIMS Center Introductions



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Speaker Disclosures

- No conflicts of interest



Planner Disclosures

- The following planner has indicated a financial relationship to disclose:
Anna Ratzliff, MD, PhD: royalties from Wiley Publishers; relationship not relevant as not related to products for patients
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Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the Behavioral Activation model of depressive symptoms
- Describe how to develop a case formulation for a patient experiencing elevated depressive symptoms
- Describe how to evaluate the outcome of patients' efforts and problem solve barriers to action planning
- Apply compilation of rewarding activities and activity scheduling to model cases.

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Action Planning Worksheet

AIMS CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences

Action Planning Worksheet:
Behavioral Activation: Evidence-Based Treatments for Depressive Symptoms

Instructions: Write down ideas, inspirations, or other things you want to take back to your organization to shape your work.

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Demonstration

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What is Behavioral Activation?

An evidence-based, best practice for treating depressive symptoms

BA targets patterns of avoidance, withdrawal, and inactivity

BA is structured - a weekly plan is created

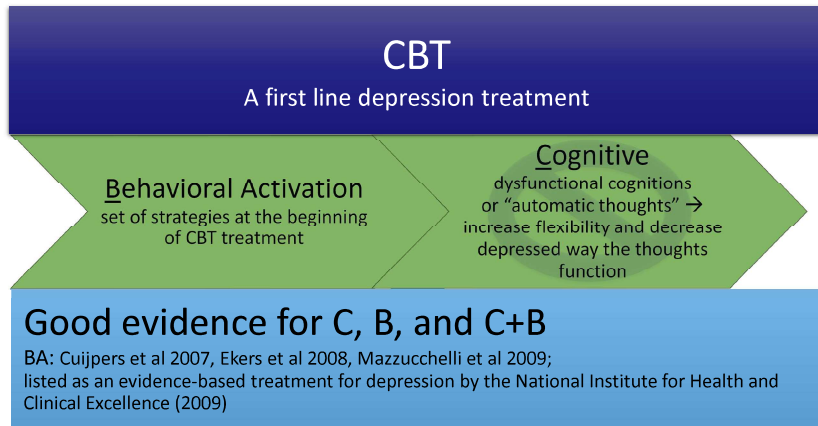
BA is brief and easy to use

BA helps depressed people improve their mood by engaging in pleasurable activities

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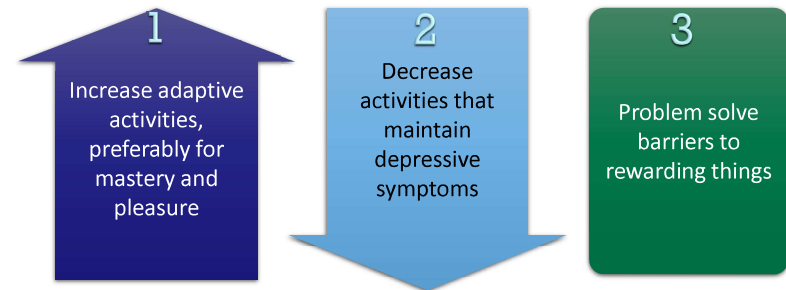
What is the Difference Between BA and CBT?



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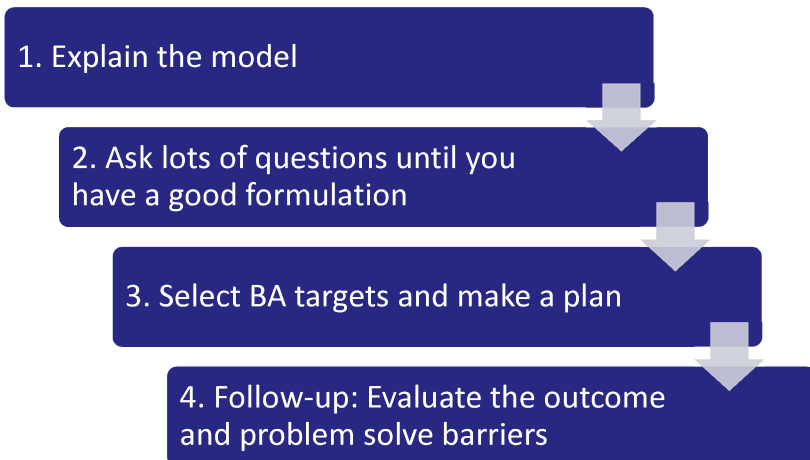
Three Goals of BA



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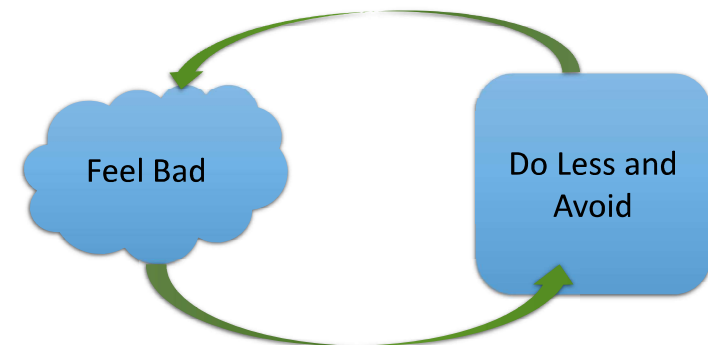
BA: The Four Steps



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Step 1. Explain the Model: How Depressive Symptoms Arise

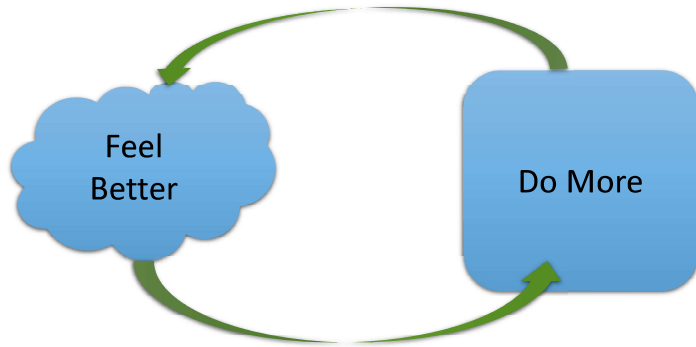


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The Model: How BA helps

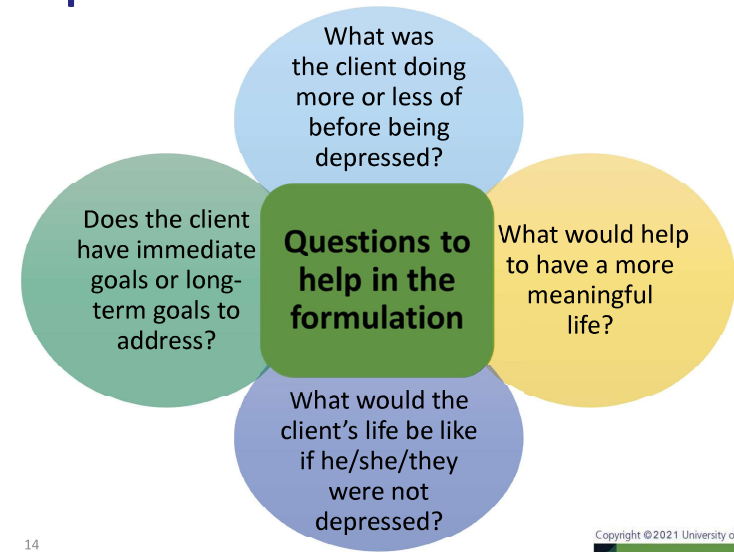


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Step 2. Assess



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The Role of Avoidance

What is it?

Discomfort experienced in a particular situation is followed by behavior to feel better

Why do it?

Short term gain, but long term loss

What to do about it?

Identify the avoidance behaviors and help choose alternative coping behaviors

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Pleasant and Rewarding Activities

List of Pleasant and Rewarding Activities		
Instructions: List desired activities and rate the difficulty of each		
	ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY: E = Easy M = Medium H = Hard
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

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Activity: Introducing BA and Compiling List of Rewarding Activities

The image shows three handouts from the University of Washington. The first, 'Facts about Depression', defines depression, lists symptoms (depressed mood, loss of interest, sleep changes, etc.), causes, and treatments. The second, 'Why is it Important To Do More Pleasurable Rewarding Activities?', explains the vicious cycle of depression and provides a diagram with arrows: 'Do Less and Avoid' leads to 'Feel Bad', which leads to 'Do More Rewarding Activities', which leads to 'Feel Better', which then leads back to 'Do Less and Avoid'. The third, 'List of Pleasant and Rewarding Activities', is a table with columns for 'ACTIVITY' and 'DIFFICULTY' (Easy, Medium, Hard) and a numbered list from 1 to 15 for recording activities.

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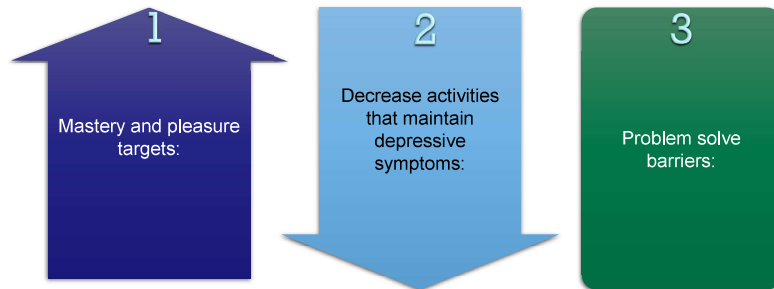
Zoom Breakout Rooms

- Groups of 2 or 3 per room
- Click “Join” if prompted to enter the breakout room
- Notification for 1 minute wrap-up
- Return to main session will happen automatically
- Need help?
 - Click “Ask for Help” and then “Invite Host”

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Three Goals of BA



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Step 3. Select BA Targets and Make a Specific Plan

- The more detailed the plan, the more likely it will be followed
- In the plan, consider:
 - Date or days of the week
 - What time of day
 - How long
 - With whom
 - What obstacles could come up? What is a Plan B?
- Ask patient:
 - How likely are you to do this? What will you do if you don't feel like doing it?



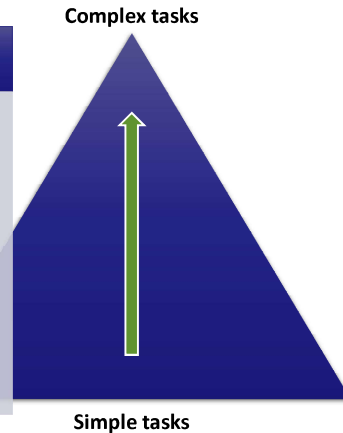
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Avoiding Mount Everest

Start simple and move to harder tasks over time → ensures success

- Help break tasks down
 - Mastery and success of one small task will increase likelihood of completing other tasks
- Have them tell you what and how they'll do the task (Details! Details! Details! Have them walk you through it)
 - Help problem solve and ask how likely it is they will do it.
 - If it seems too challenging, it is! Break it down further.



Scaling Back to Ensure Success

Acknowledge “difficult” enjoyable or rewarding activities (e.g., going to the gym for 2 hours), but...

Help patient scale back and set a *feasible* short term plan (e.g., walk around the neighborhood for 15 minutes, walk around the house for 5 minutes).

Success at small goals builds confidence and sense of mastery and control.

Exceeding a goal is great! Encourage patients to note any accomplishments and discuss at next meeting.

Scheduling Activities

Scheduling Activities Pleasant – Social – Physical
 Plan at least one activity each day. It is an important way to deal with stress and depression. Schedule out a week's worth of daily activities.

Each day should contain at least one activity. These can be pleasant, social, or physical activities. For example, a pleasant activity might be reading a book or doing a hobby, a social activity might be calling or getting together with a friend, and a physical activity might be going for a walk.

Rate how satisfied you felt after doing the activity.

Daily Activities				How satisfied did you feel? Rate from 0 to 10: 0 = Not Satisfied At All 10 = Extremely Satisfied	Completed ✓
Day	Date	Activity (What? Where? With Whom?)			
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Activity: Schedule Activities

From: Meeting # _____ Date: _____

Scheduling Activities Pleasant – Social – Physical
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Zoom Breakout Rooms

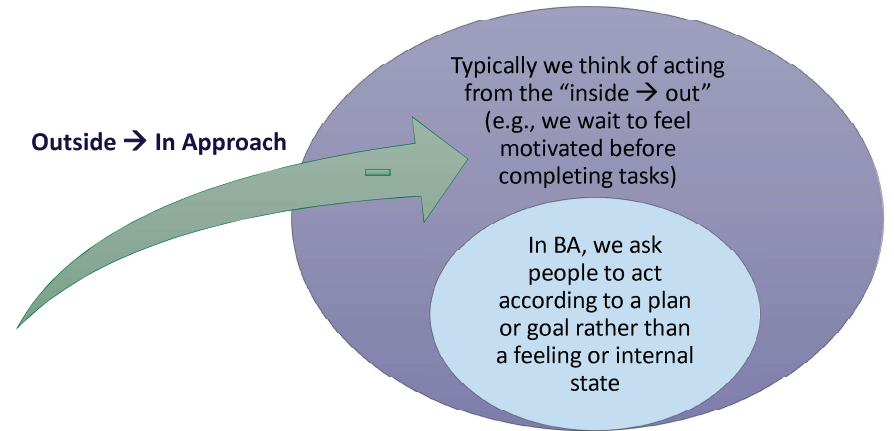
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But I don't feel like it...



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Step 4. Follow-up: Evaluate the Outcome and Problem Solve Barriers

ALWAYS ask about target behaviors at follow up meetings.

Expect that patients might not do the activities. Do not judge.

If goal not accomplished, ask 3 questions:



Do they have buy-in to the treatment?



Did they simply forget?



Was it a Mt Everest? (too hard)

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Reframing “Failure” is Essential

- **Wrong plan, pick another...learning what worked and what didn't work**
- **“Mistakes are portals of discovery.”**
 - James Joyce



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Building Success



It's an experiment, a trial; it's not forever

Suggest patients act first and see what happens

Praise any success they make, even a small success

Go slow and start small

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Next Steps

- Practice and incorporate the 4 steps of BA with patients
- Use the handouts A-D and the patient selection criteria handout as your guide
- Include BA in future case presentations during monthly BHCM training calls
 - BA is very appropriate for Telehealth appointments and to support patients experiencing stress related to COVID-19

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Action Planning Worksheet

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Evaluation

- Email with link to online evaluation
- If claiming CME, instructions for obtaining credit will be available after completing the online evaluation
- If claiming CE, please login to the AIMS Center LMS 1-2 business days after the training to claim credit and obtain a certificate

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