



# Inactivity

“In a Nutshell”

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## 6 practical ways of getting rid of inactivity.

Remember that increasing your activity is helpful to break the vicious circle of depression for many reasons, including the below:

1. It may distract your mood from painful thoughts.
2. It will give you a sense of control over your own life.
3. It may make you feel more worthwhile.
4. You may enjoy things once you try them.
5. Paradoxically activity may actually make you feel less tired. Normally, when you are tired, you need a rest. When you are depressed, doing nothing will only make you feel more lethargic and exhausted.
6. Increasing your activity level will also increase your motivation; the more you do, the more you'll feel like doing.

Your schedule is just a guide, so you can be flexible. If something unexpected happens which disrupts your schedule, don't give up. A friend may call when you have planned to clean the bathroom, for example. You can use the visit as a distraction and try to enjoy it. The schedule can wait. You just continue with it when you can.

You may need to plan alternative activities as your plans may depend on factors beyond your control, such as the weather. So, if you cannot get on with the gardening, you can listen to that record you haven't had time to listen to yet, or indulge in some other pleasant activity. Your schedule is a general plan rather than prescribed hourly activities. If it is interrupted, don't try to go back to catch up, but just carry on and reschedule what you did not achieve for another time.

Try to make plans which are not too general: 'cleaning the house', for example, is too general and 'weeding the garden' is probably too open-ended. If you tell yourself you *must* clean the entire house or weed the entire garden and you don't manage it, you'll probably think of yourself as a failure and get discouraged. On the other hand, if you simply set yourself the goal of cleaning or weeding for one hour, you increase your chances of success and how much you have achieved does not really matter. Above all, remember the saying "If something is worth doing, it's worth doing badly". This may sound strange as it differs from what you have usually heard, but think about it. Isn't it worth cleaning the house less than perfectly, rather than not at all?

Review your schedule every evening to check how you got on. Did you schedule too much, or too little? Are you trying to run before you can walk? Do you need more pleasant activities? Were you blocked with negative thoughts? Maybe you need to introduce some rewards for yourself after you've done a chore.