

What you did, and how it landed

You do not need motivation to start. We do most things on autopilot, without ever waiting to feel like it first.

Depression also dampens the brain's reward system, so things that once felt good can feel flat for now. **The aim of this log is not to enjoy, it is simply to do: to start re-engaging with life, one small step at a time.** Working out what is worth re-engaging with is the Values Audit's job; this log is just about the doing.

WHY MOTIVATION COMES LAST, NOT FIRST

WAITING TO FEEL LIKE IT

- You wait until you feel motivated to act
- In depression that feeling rarely arrives first
- **So little happens, and the waiting feeds the low**



ACTING THE WAY YOU ALREADY DO

- You already do most things on autopilot, no motivation needed
- You start one small thing the same way, before you feel ready
- **The doing comes first; re-engaging follows slowly**

Behavioural activation works in this order: action first, the rest after (Martell et al., 2010). The reward and motivation system is dampened in depression, so the urge to begin tends to lag well behind the doing (Frey et al., 2023).

YOU HAVE ALREADY ACTED ON AUTOPILOT TODAY

- Got out of bed
- Made a drink
- Checked your phone
- Answered a message
- Got dressed, maybe

None of these waited for you to feel motivated, or to enjoy them. **A chosen activity can begin the same way: you act first, and whatever follows, follows after.** That is all this log asks of you.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU DO IT

You probably will not enjoy it, at least not yet, and that is not a sign you did it wrong. Depression blunts the reward system, so the lift that would normally come with an activity is muted for now. **Doing it anyway, without the reward, is the whole exercise.** Mood tends to follow the doing over time, not all at once, and not the other way around.

SMALL WAYS BACK IN

These are ways to re-engage, not ways to feel better on the spot. Pick what fits; none has to be big.

MOVEMENT

The body leads

Even a short walk counts; one of the most consistently studied supports for low mood (Noetel et al., 2024).

CONNECTION

Not alone

Contact with people, even brief. Withdrawal tends to feed low mood; small contact pushes back.

A SENSE OF DONE

One finished task

Completing something, not its size. One drawer, one email, one dish all count.

MATTERS TO YOU

Tied to a value

Connected to something you care about, even slightly. This is where the Values Audit helps.

1 Do first, decide later

Pick something small and do it before you feel like it.

2 Record what you did

And how it felt, even if that is flat or nothing. The feeling is data, not the goal.

3 Read down the columns

Over the week, notice which doings shifted anything, especially the surprises.

WHAT ONE LINE MIGHT LOOK LIKE

DAY	WHAT I DID	HOW IT FELT	VS EXPECTED	WHAT I NOTICED
Mon	Walked to the shop and back	Flat, a bit less heavy by the end	I expected nothing; about right	Starting was the hard part. I did it anyway.

Useful alongside therapy, not a substitute for it. Nothing here is scored, there are no right answers, and a partial week still shows a pattern.

REMEMBER

You do not need motivation, and you do not need to enjoy it. The aim is simply to do. Mood follows action, slowly, not the other way around.

Your one-week log

One row per day for a week. **A few words per cell, and skip any cell if nothing comes.** You are noticing, not writing a report. At the end of the week, read down the columns for the patterns described on page 1.

DAY & DATE	WHAT I DID	HOW IT LANDED	HOW IT COMPARED	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1 <i>date:</i>				
Day 2 <i>date:</i>				
Day 3 <i>date:</i>				
Day 4 <i>date:</i>				
Day 5 <i>date:</i>				
Day 6 <i>date:</i>				
Day 7 <i>date:</i>				

WHEN YOU HAVE READ THE PATTERNS

You can bring this to a first conversation, or just keep noticing.

The patterns you notice are useful whether or not you book a session. If you would like to talk them through, the Meet and Greet is a short call to see if we are the right fit.

MEET & GREET

Free
15 minutes
Online or in-person
No obligation