Mood Diary

Depression: CBT Mood Monitoring

A mood diary is a short daily record of how you felt and what was happening at the time. Tracking moods is a standard part of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which psychiatrist Aaron Beck developed. Psychologists Dennis Greenberger and Christine Padesky made naming and rating moods one of the first skills in their book Mind Over Mood. Fill in the diary once a day and bring it to your next session.

1 Name your mood

A mood can usually be named in one word, such as sad, worried or calm. If you need a whole sentence, you are probably describing a thought. This diary is for the mood itself, so pick the word that fits best. You can feel more than one mood at once.

- sad
- down
- lonely
- guilty
- ashamed
- hopeless
- worried
- nervous
- angry
- irritable
- frustrated
- numb
- tired
- calm
- content
- hopeful
- proud
- grateful
- happy
- excited

2 Rate how strong it is

How strong is the mood?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

barely there *the strongest I have felt*

Rate how strong the mood is, not whether it is good or bad. A 9 for calm is a very calm day, and a 9 for sad is a very sad one. Here is one day filled in as an example.

Day	Mood	Rating, 0 to 10	What was happening	Anything that helped
Tue	*Lonely*	*7*	*Ate dinner alone after a long day and scrolled my phone all evening*	*Called my sister. Lonely went down to 4.*

Why does this work? *Writing a mood down the same day gives a clearer record than trying to remember the whole week later. After a few days, the diary can show links between what you do, who you are with and how you feel. You and your therapist can use those links to plan what to try next.*

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

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3 My week

Each day, write the mood that stood out most, how strong it was, and what was happening: where you were, who you were with and what you were doing.

Day	Mood	Rating, 0 to 10	What was happening	Anything that helped
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				
Sat				
Sun				

4 Look back on the week

When did I feel best this week? What was happening?

When did I feel worst? What was happening?

What patterns do I notice?

If a low mood lasts most of the day, nearly every day, for two weeks or more, tell your therapist. If you are in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, call or text 988 in the US to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, or call your local emergency number.

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