



Our nervous system is made to be a guide and is designed to be automatic in its perception of protecting our survival, real or imagined.

Emotions are meant to be experienced to process experiences – good and bad.

Stressors are meant to be relieved – not exacerbated.

- Cycles can be broken and we can take responsibility to start a healing process to move toward recovery.
- We wait until we feel better to do what's better for our nervous system. Emotions love to take control and make decisions without our permission. We can take our power back by changing what we do to improve our mood, despite our nervous system trying to take charge of how we respond (or do not respond) - we don't have to listen.
- Create a playbook that is uniquely you – be curious about moods
- Knowing what works for you and what doesn't, gives choices that are more likely to be effective. Finding ways to evaluate and adjust without self-judgment is something we can learn. We can identify what is of value and use this info to prioritize.
- Paying attention to our personal when/then gives us the information we need to notice the automatic nature of our responses and to make choices that move us toward improving mood.

It is valuable to make a written plan to refer to when mood makes follow-through difficult. Our best on any given day is variable and affected by many factors. We can be self-compassionate and encouraging, meeting ourselves in the moment, to reduce the narratives that activate guilt and shame.

It is helpful to create a scale of motivation when well, to identify your feelings, capacity and strategies to line up to small actions that keep us from emotional paralysis.

SCALE OF MOTIVATION & ACTIVATION FOR EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

From: BadassAlchemy.ca

<i>SCALE</i>	<i>FEELINGS</i>	<i>UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS</i>	<i>THINGS I CAN DO TODAY</i>

It is difficult to find motivation without activity and it is difficult to participate in life's activities when mental health challenges 'steal' motivation. The chart below is a way to sort activities and have categories to choose from when fitting them into the chart above, matching your scale.

List some routine activities *e.g. vacuum, shower, clean the kitchen, shopping, brush teeth*

List some pleasurable activities *e.g. meeting up with friends or family, walk in the park*

List some necessary activities *e.g. sort mail, pay bills, tidy, attend appointments*

Now sort activities in your lists above into the categories below. Try to include some from each type of activity in each difficulty box.

The most difficult

Medium difficulty

The easiest

Keep this plan accessible to pull out before the thoughts compound into feelings that provoke thoughts that are energy draining and sometimes paralyzing. Even when avoidance is justified, we can find small significant things to do despite automatic limiting thoughts and feelings.

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