

# Beat those Blues

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## Day 7 – Thinking of You

Well done on getting through the first 6 days. Today we are going to be talking about making further changes in your life to introduce positive outcomes.

When we're feeling depressed, stressed or anxious, we tend to do less and less because of tiredness, difficulty sleeping and/or eating, and our negative style of thinking. We stop doing the things we used to do and enjoy. It could get so bad that we can't even go to work, or do things at home. We want to stay in bed, or stay at home doing very little, and we might isolate ourselves from friends and family.

Exercise or doing something you enjoy doing will help.

If you have an aversion to exercise read on. If you love exercising then still read on and maybe share your thoughts and any tips you might have on our Facebook page.

It is a simple fact that exercise benefits the mind, body and spirit.

The **brain** benefits from exercise, it helps keep the brain active. It increases the production of neurochemicals which promote brain cell repair. It improves your memory, improves your multi-tasking and planning skills (honestly) and lengthens your attention span.

Exercise improves your **sleep**. It promotes a deeper level of sleep and helps you fall asleep more quickly.

Exercise boosts **mood** and **self-confidence**. Endorphins produced by exercise help make you feel better. Regular exercise naturally helps you feel better about yourself and more energised.

Exercise helps boost your **immune** system and helps you become more mobile and flexible.

**Exercise** can help prevent excess weight gain or help maintain weight loss. When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn. You don't need to set aside large chunks of time for **exercise** to reap weight-loss **benefits**.

We could go on, but I am sure you are aware of the benefits exercise has on our lives. Do you feel that maybe you don't have the time to exercise, or the money, or do you just not enjoy it? You can definitely find the time..... if you look for it AND exercise doesn't need to cost you money. You can also build in some exercises that you do enjoy. Here are just a few examples of how you can easily start building a bit of exercise into your daily life:

**Find your favourite exercise** – don't choose something that you know you won't continue. If you choose something that you enjoy then there is more chance you will stick to it. Do you like to exercise alone or in a group? Try and experiment with a few things. Maybe you can start power walking with some friends or your partner / family – you can agree to do this anytime either once a week or a few times a week. Maybe you like to cycle? Have a look to

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see if there are any cycle routes near you or even a cycle club. There are so many FREE fitness workouts on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), whether you like yoga, cardio, zumba, you will find something that suits you and you can do it from the comfort of your own home. You can incorporate movement and exercise in any part of your life. Why not try adding a little more energy and stretch when doing your daily chores....



**Commit to regular exercise** – you may not be the type of person that wants to train for a marathon.... That's fine. You just need to commit to getting exercise regularly. Schedule exercise like any other appointment on your calendar and treat it as a commitment rather than something you squeeze in if you have time. Even if you can only allot 15 minutes at a time, schedule it.

**Think about how exercise boosts your sense of wellbeing** - you probably know exercise can help you live longer and go a long way to disease prevention, but what you might find more rewarding is to think about all the immediate benefits exercise provides to your wellbeing. Think short-term; all of us can use exercise today to get more energy, alleviate stress, increase productivity, improve our outlook, sleep better and feel happier - today! Think about what you stand to gain if you work out today. Maybe it's a sunnier disposition or the satisfaction in knowing you pushed your body. Just give it some thought or better yet, make a list.

**Take care of yourself** - stressful situations can take your focus away from properly caring for yourself. If you neglect yourself for the sake of external problems, you will be creating more problems than you are solving. Make sure you consider what you need and do something—however small—for yourself each day. Even if you only have 15 minutes, just commit to 15 minutes. You aren't able to effectively take care of anyone else if you don't take care of yourself first. Keep that in mind.

**Keep focusing on the WHY** - it's easy to get off track if you aren't reminding yourself of why working out and eating healthy is important to you. This goes back to your goal. If you make it automatic to wake up and remind yourself of why exercise is important to you, you will be more likely to keep your commitments to yourself.

You can use a daily activity diary to keep a note of the activities you do like doing (and those you don't like doing). You can log these on the Mood Diary attachment and see which you enjoy (and which you don't) and which make you feel better.

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[http://media.wix.com/ugd/fec33e\\_d9cec5855a4549a8b09727b643c421c0.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/fec33e_d9cec5855a4549a8b09727b643c421c0.pdf)

If you are not heavily into exercising or are unable to exercise then choose an activity that does give you a sense of achievement, enjoyment and being close to others. It is important for you to choose activities that have positive meaning.

Other things that you can consider could be:

- Walk in nature
- Get a little more daylight – it is a known fact that when the amount of sunlight our bodies receive increases our levels of serotonin increases. Serotonin maintains mood balance and a deficit of serotonin can contribute towards depression
- Do something different (to what you normally do)
- Pause, take a breath
- Meditate
- Put on some music - sing and dance along, or just listen attentively (use music that is likely to help you feel your desired emotion - avoid sad songs if you're depressed)
- Help others
- Be with others - contact a friend, visit family
- Talk to someone
- Grounding techniques - look around you, what do you see, hear, smell, sense? Hold a comforting object such as a crystal
- Engage in a hobby or other interest - if you don't have one, find one! What have you enjoyed in the past? What have you sometimes thought about doing but not got around to?
- Write down your thoughts and feelings - get them out of your head
- Just take one step at a time - don't plan too far ahead
- Pamper yourself - do something you really enjoy, or do something relaxing
- Do something creative – see our Wishing Star free resource
- If you are feeling stressed tell yourself 'This will pass, it's only temporary'. 'I've got through this before, I can do it now'. When we're going through a tunnel and become fearful of being trapped, there's no point in stopping - we just have to carry on in order to reach the end of the tunnel. That light is there, and waiting!
- Visualise yourself doing the things you used to enjoy doing, or would like to enjoy doing, and successfully doing what you need to do.

### Thinking differently

- **STOP!** Pause, take a breath (remember our breathing meditation)
- Ask yourself the questions we added to Day 6

Have you fallen behind and are you trying to catch up with the days? Don't worry and certainly don't put pressure on yourself. We understand that sometimes life gets in the way. If you feel you would like a few days space to get up to speed please let us know and we will stop sending the daily emails for a couple of days to enable you to catch up. All you need to do is let us know.

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Today we would like you to:

- Continue with the body scan meditation
- Choose an exercise and log how it makes you feel in the attached 'Mood Diary'. If the exercise doesn't give you a sense of achievement or enjoyment choose another exercise and log how it makes you feel. Do this until you find something you enjoy
- Keep practicing re-framing your negative thinking

With Love xxxx

