

Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before?

DR JULIE SMITH



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1

On
Dark
Places

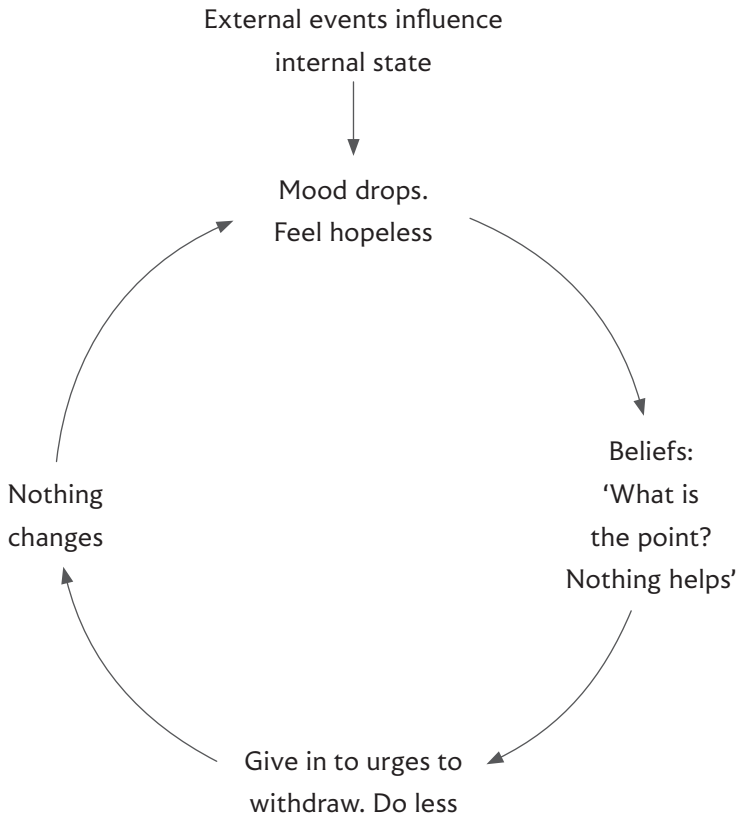


Figure 1: The downward spiral of low mood. How a few days of low mood can spiral into depression. Breaking the cycle is easier to do if we recognize it early and act on it. Adapted from Gilbert (1997).

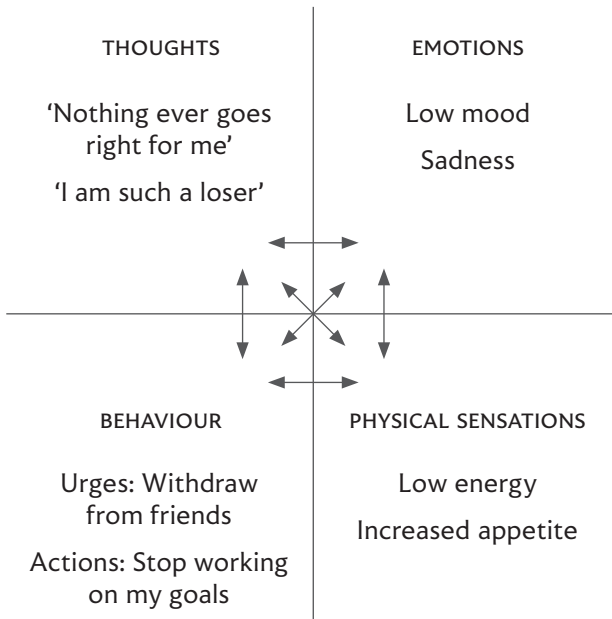


Figure 2: Spending time with negative thoughts makes it highly likely that I will feel low in mood. But feeling low in mood also makes me more vulnerable to having more negative thoughts. This shows us how we get stuck in cycles of low mood. But it also shows us the way out. Adapted from Greenberger & Padesky (2016).

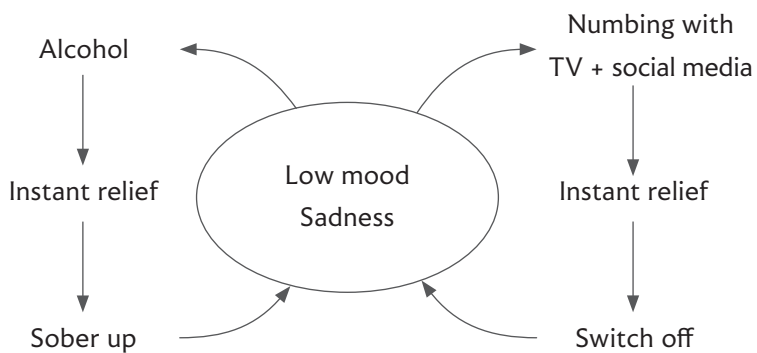


Figure 3: The vicious cycle of instant relief. Adapted from the work of Isabel Clark (2017).

Figure 4: Table of thought bias examples.

THOUGHT BIAS	WHAT IS IT?	EXAMPLE
Mind reading	Making assumptions about what others are thinking and feeling.	'She hasn't called in a while because she hates me.'
Overgeneralization	Taking one event and using it to generalize about other things.	'I failed my exam. My future is ruined.'
Egocentric thinking	Assuming that others have the same perspective and values as we have, and judging their behaviour through that lens.	'I would never be late like that. He obviously doesn't care enough about me.'
Emotional reasoning	I feel it, therefore it must be true.	'I feel guilty, therefore I am a bad parent.'
Musts and shoulds	Relentless and unrealistic expectations that set us up to feel like a failure every day.	'I must always look perfect.' 'I should never do any less than my absolute best.'
All-or-nothing thinking	Thinking in absolutes or extremes.	'If I don't get 100 per cent I'm a failure.' 'If I don't look perfect I'm not going out.'

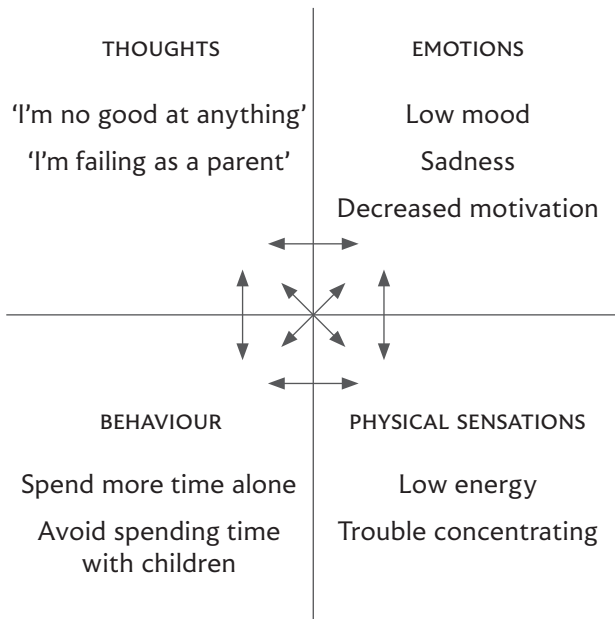


Figure 5: Example formulation for low mood.

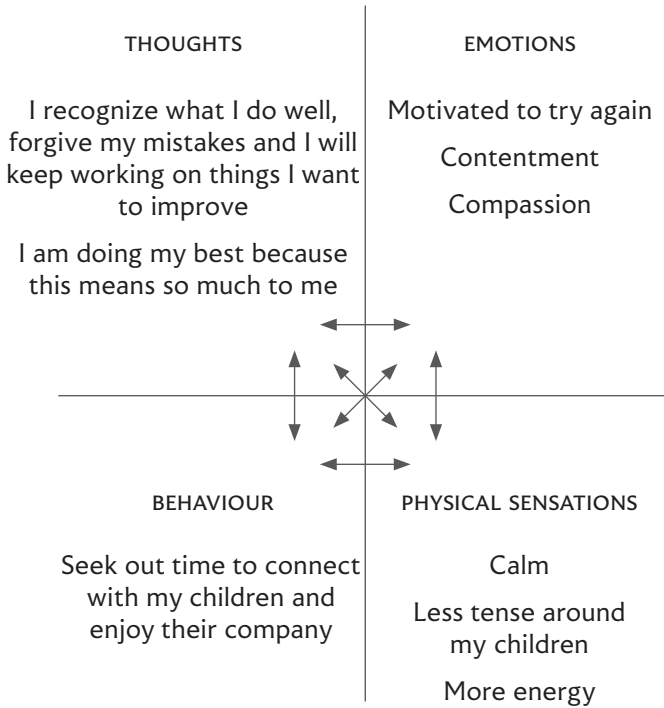


Figure 6: Example formulation for better days. How do you want to feel, behave, think?

3

On Emotional Pain

5

On
Self-
doubt

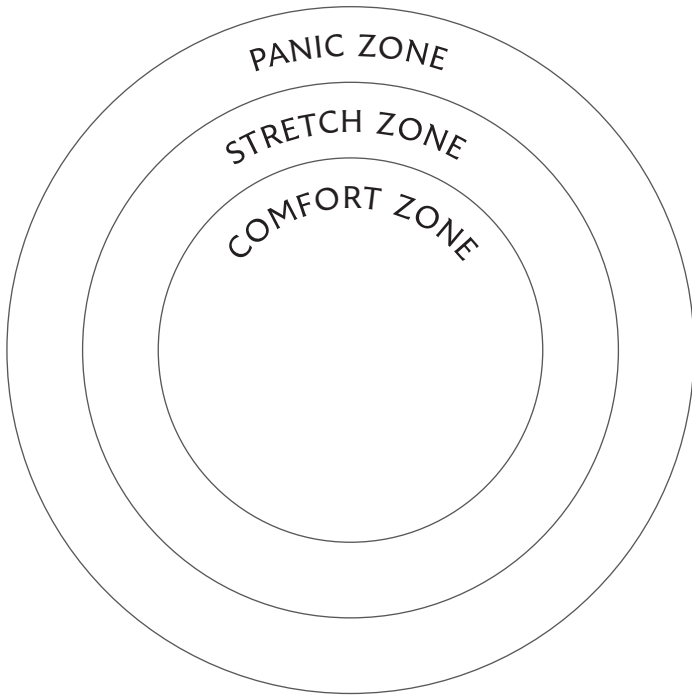


Figure 8: The Learning Model (Luckner & Nadler, 1991).

7

On
Stress

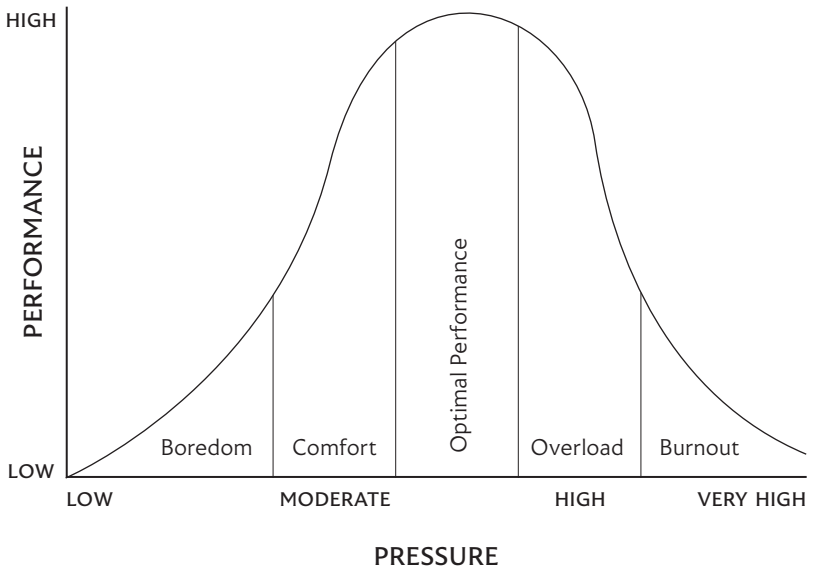


Figure 9: The stress curve. A certain degree of stress will help you perform at your best. Go beyond that, and your performance declines.

8

On a Meaningful Life

Figure 10: Values – circle the values that feel relevant and important to you.

ENTHUSIASM	HONESTY	FAITH	FAIRNESS
KINDNESS	CARING	COMPASSIONATE	
STRENGTH	AMBITIOUS	DEPENDABLE	
RELIABLE	PRESENT	FLEXIBILITY	CURIOSITY
OPEN-MINDEDNESS	DARING	LOYALTY	
CREATIVITY	ADVENTUROUS	GRATITUDE	
TRUSTWORTHY	UNDERSTANDING	SPIRITUALITY	
SUSTAINABILITY	SINCERITY	SELF-AWARE	
INDEPENDENCE	CONNECTION	ACCEPTING	
LOVING	DETERMINATION	PATIENCE	
PROFESSIONALISM	RESPECTFUL	BRAVERY	

Figure 11: This chart gives a couple of examples of the distinction between values and goals that may be in line with those values and how that may translate into everyday actions.

VALUES	GOALS	DAY-TO-DAY BEHAVIOURS
Lifelong learning, curiosity, personal growth.	Educational courses.	Reading, studying, challenging self with exams or performances that push and expand those skills and promote learning.
Love and compassion for others.	To remember special dates for loved ones, to visit relatives at certain times.	Expressing love and compassion in small ways every day. Writing down dates of birthdays and anniversaries. Making time to spend with loved ones. Helping an elderly neighbour across the road.

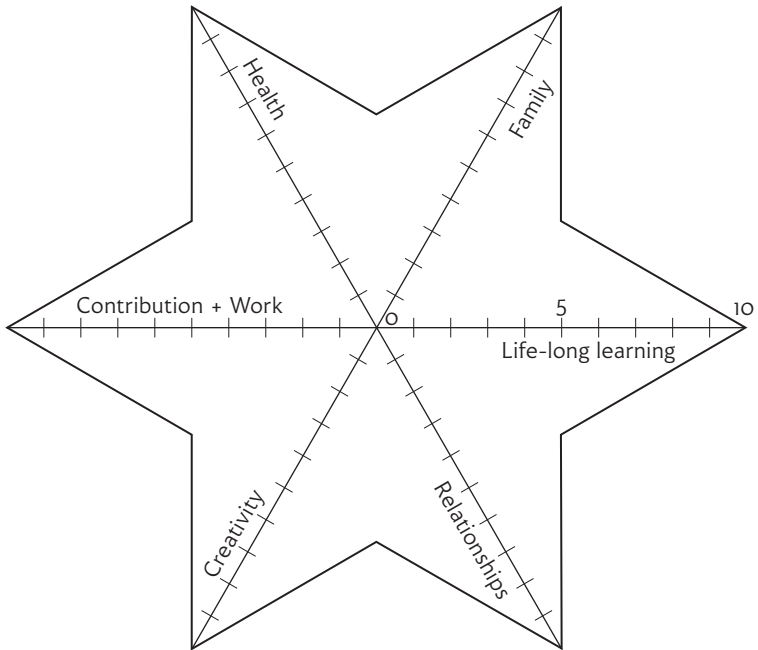


Figure 12: The values star.

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Diagrams

Figure 1 is an adapted variation based on an original from:

Clarke, I., & Wilson, H. (2009), *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Acute Inpatient Mental Health Units: Working with Clients, Staff and the Milieu*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Figure 2 is an adapted variation based on an original from:

Greenberger, D., & Padesky, C. A. (2016), *Mind Over Mood*, 2nd Edition, New York: Guilford Press.

Figure 3 is an adapted variation based on an original from: Clarke,

I., & Wilson, H. (2009), *Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Acute Inpatient Mental Health Units*, Sussex: Routledge.

Resources

This book is your toolkit to use for improving or enhancing your mental health and wellbeing. If you find a specific tool or approach especially helpful and are interested to find out more about that approach, see the following list of related self-help books and organizations that offer support.

Isabel Clarke, *How to Deal with Anger: A 5-step CBT-based Plan for Managing Anger and Frustration*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2016.

Paul Gilbert, *Overcoming Depression: A self-help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques*, London: Robinson, 1997.

John Gottman & Nan Silver, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, London: Orion, 1999.

Alex Korb, *The Upward Spiral: Using neuroscience to reverse the course of depression, one small change at a time*, Oakland, CA: New Harbinger, 2015.

Professor Felice Jacka, *Brain Changer: How diet can save your mental health*, London: Yellow Kite, 2019.

Dr Sue Johnson, *Hold Me Tight*, London: Piatkus, 2008.

Helen Kennerley, *Overcoming Anxiety: A Self-Help Guide Using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques*, London: Robinson, 2014.

Resources

Kristin Neff & Christopher Germer, *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook*, New York: Guilford Press, 2018.

Joe Oliver, Jon Hill & Eric Morris, *ACTivate Your Life: Using Acceptance and Mindfulness to Build a Life that is Rich, Fulfilling and Fun*, London: Robinson, 2015.

Julia Samuel, *Grief Works*, London: Penguin Life, 2017.

Michaela Thomas, *The Lasting Connection: Developing Love and Compassion for Yourself and Your Partner*, London: Robinson, 2021.

Organizations that offer support

NHS Choices (UK) – www.nhs.uk

Mind – A charity that offers information on their website and local support initiatives. See www.mind.org.uk

Young Minds – A charity that provides information for children, young people and their parents. See www.youngminds.org.uk

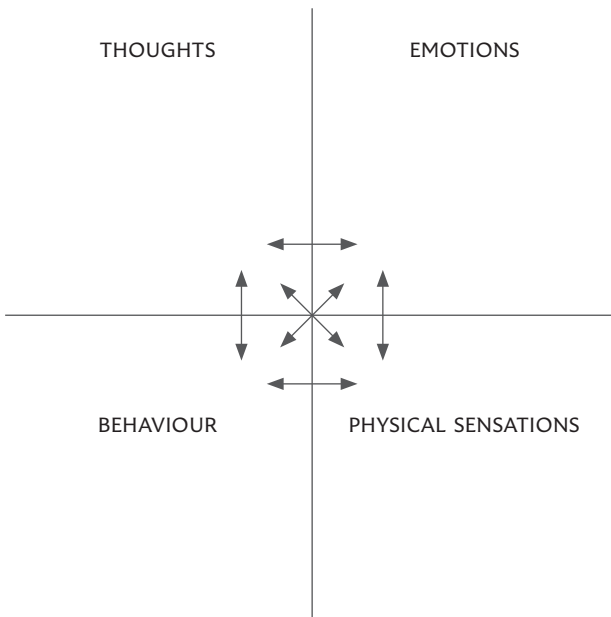
Nightline Association – A service run by students for students through universities. They offer a free, confidential listening service and information. See www.nightline.ac.uk

Samaritans – For anyone in crisis, this service offers support and advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. See www.samaritans.org

Spare tools

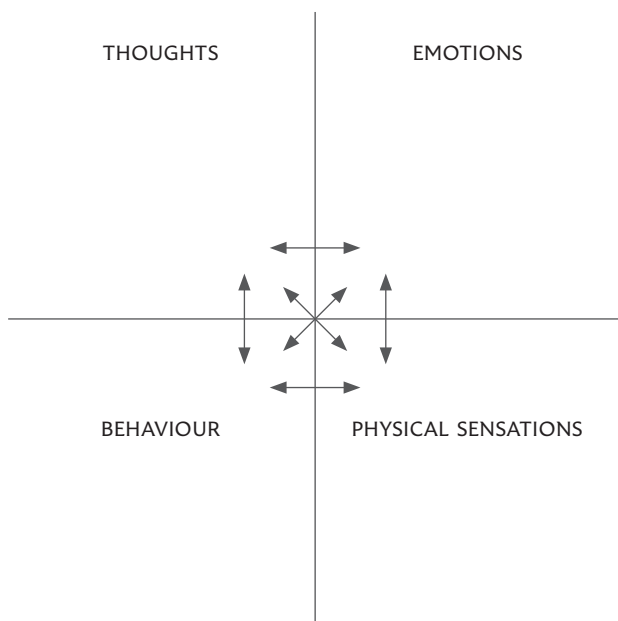
Here are some blank reproductions of the tools found throughout the book for you to have a go at filling out yourself.

The cross-sectional formulation



Blank formulation for low mood (see Figure 5).

The cross-sectional formulation



Blank formulation for better days (see Figure 6).

The values chart

Use these blank grids to help you reflect on what you value most in each area of your life.

Values, goals, actions

Use these blank charts to help you translate your values into goals and everyday actions (see Figure 11).

VALUES	GOALS	DAY-TO-DAY BEHAVIOURS

VALUES	GOALS	DAY-TO-DAY BEHAVIOURS

The values star

Here is a blank values star for you to fill in using Figure 12 to help you.

