



Behavioral Activation and Setting Obtainable Goals

Behavioral Activation (BA) is a therapeutic approach that helps you break free from patterns of stress, depression, and avoidance by engaging in activities that improve your mood and motivation. It emphasizes **setting manageable goals** that reconnect you with life and increase your sense of accomplishment.

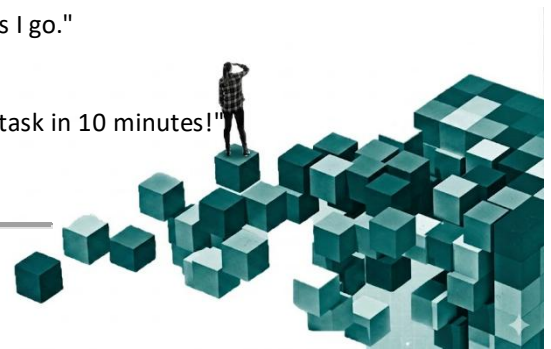
When stress or anxiety is overwhelming, it's common to withdraw from previously rewarding activities and goals, which can worsen mood. By setting clear, achievable goals and taking small actions, you can create positive change, feel more in control, and build momentum.

SMART Goals: Setting Clear, Achievable Objectives

- S: Specific** – What exactly do you want to achieve? **Example:** "Walk for 20 minutes every day."
M: Measurable – How will you track progress? **Example:** "Exercise for 30 minutes, three times a week."
A: Achievable – Is this goal realistic? **Example:** "Jog for 15 minutes without stopping."
R: Relevant – Does this goal align with your values? **Example:** "Join a gym to improve my energy and health."
T: Time-bound – When will you achieve it by? **Example:** "Cook a new recipe every week for the next month."

Breaking Down Goals into Smaller, Manageable Pieces

- 1. Write Your Big Goal:**
Example: "Difficulty finding motivation and direction with daily tasks."
- 2. Identify Smaller Steps:**
 - *Step 1:* "Make a list of 3 tasks to accomplish tomorrow."
 - *Step 2:* "Start with the easiest task and set a timer for 10 minutes."
 - *Step 3:* "Add 1 new task to the list each day for the next week."
- 3. Set Deadlines for Each Step:**
 - *Step 1 Deadline:* "Complete tomorrow's task list by tonight."
 - *Step 2 Deadline:* "Begin with a 10-minute task tomorrow morning."
 - *Step 3 Deadline:* "Add a new task to the list by next week."
- 4. Anticipate Obstacles:**
 - *Obstacle:* "I might feel overwhelmed by too many tasks."
 - *Solution:* "Start with just one small task and increase as I go."
- 5. Track Progress:**
Celebrate each completed step, such as:
 - "I completed my task list today, and I finished the first task in 10 minutes!"



Next Steps:

- Choose a Goal: Pick a goal you want to work on.
- Apply the SMART Criteria: Use the SMART framework to make your goal specific and measurable.
- Break It Down: Break the goal into smaller, achievable steps.
- Track Your Progress: Celebrate your success along the way.

By breaking down larger goals into smaller steps and applying the SMART framework, you can create manageable, motivating objectives that lead to lasting positive change.