



Pleasant Activities Tip Sheet

Research^{1,2} has shown that ratings of mood improve if you add some pleasant activities to your routine. Here is a strategy to use pleasant activities to manage stress and add some fun to your life.

- ◆ Plan for at least one pleasant activity per day, even if just a few minutes long.
- ◆ The activity should not be for someone else — it should be designed to give you joy.
- ◆ If you can't do something you used to enjoy, think about a good replacement. For example, you may not be able to go deep sea fishing, but you might enjoy visiting the boat show or just walking on a pier.
- ◆ Aim for gentle pleasures, like taking a walk in a favorite place, walking the dog, or taking time to read the comic strips.
- ◆ Mix it up! Variety is the spice of life.
- ◆ Simplify — look for simple pleasures that don't require a lot of preparation or money.
- ◆ If you have trouble coming up with activities, think about what you enjoyed in the past.

Here are some examples of pleasant activities that some have chosen, but remember to focus on what **you** enjoy:

- Stop at a park on the way home from work to go for a walk by the lake.
- Park your car for a few minutes at a place with a nice view.
- Go for a bike ride.
- Sit outside and watch for birds or wildlife.
- Cut some flowers to put in a vase in your home.
- Check the rankings of your favorite sports team.
- If you like boating, doing something like waxing your boat, visiting a marina, or fixing a part may be enjoyable.
- Take a warm bath.
- Go fishing.
- Call an old friend.

1. Lewinsohn, P.M., Munoz, R.F., Youngren, M.A., & Zeiss, A.M. (1986). *Control your depression* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

2. Antonuccio, D.O. (1998). The coping with depression course: A behavioral treatment for depression. *The Clinical Psychologist*, 51(3), 3–5.