Behavioral Activation
Care of Mental, Physical, and Substance use Syndromes

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Objectives

After this session learners will be able to:

• Describe what behavioral activation is and why it is important
• Understand methods and tools for improving activation
• Improve skills in helping patients move forward at a rate that makes sense for them
What is your experience with patients with depression?

What part of the interaction worries you most?
Cycle of Depression

Depression

Withdrawal

Inactivity
Patient Education for Depression

Depression / alcohol, drug abuse ⇒ inactivity and withdrawal from usual activities
= downward cycle of doing less and feeling worse

Awareness of this pattern can help some patients understand the purpose and benefit of behavioral activation.
Scheduling Activities

Why scheduling activities is important
Feeling stressed or depressed can prevent you from doing activities that you used to enjoy and make you feel happy.

Spiraling Down
It can work both ways—the less you do, the more depressed you feel and the more depressed you feel the less you do. Using alcohol or other drugs can lead to a similar cycle—the more you drink/use drugs the less you feel like doing enjoyable and productive things and the less you do the more you drink/use drugs.

Spiraling Up
By doing more pleasant activities, even if you don’t initially feel like it, you can break the cycle. Motivation follows action.
You may be asking yourself…

“How do I share this information in a way that respects the collaborative relationship with the patient?”
Sharing Information in a Collaborative Way

Provider

Patient
MI Spirit: Sharing Information (Collaboratively)

Make sure you are doing it when the individual is ready – and not before

There are specific strategies to do this in an MI way:
Explore – Offer – Explore
Before You Offer

Ask yourself

✔ Does this person need this information?
✔ Does this person want this information?
How Can You be Sure?

1. The person asks for the information
2. You ask permission to share the information

Can I share some information with you?
Is it okay with you if I tell you what we know?
Before You Offer

You reinforce their autonomy about how to handle the information

This may or may not work for you….
What you decide to do with this information is up to you…
Offer

- Talk about what others do
- Emphasize choice
- Use neutral, non-judgmental language
- Offer multiple options
Offer

- Others have benefited from….
- What we generally recommend is…
- Folks have found….
- Some people in your situation…
- Some ideas might be….
- What we know is…..
MI Spirit:
Sharing Information (Collaboratively)

- Explore (Elicit)
- Ask permission
- Offer (Provide)
- Explore (Feedback)
- Reflect
“I guess I am feeling depressed. I need to do something about it, so I want to learn more.”

Explore (elicit)
Ask permission
Offer (provide)
Explore (feedback)
Reflect
Behavioral Activation

- Increasing pleasant activities to improve mood
- Goal setting and self-management (MI Spirit)
- Behavior modification

Why Focus on Self-Management?

Increased skills + Confidence, ability to make changes
Affirmations: Building Confidence

Importance

Confidence (self-efficacy)
Framework for Behavior Change

Plan → Do → Study → Act
Behavioral Activation Guide

Care Manager Sample Script:
It’s easy to feel overwhelmed when you’re depressed. It can be hard to deal with problems or decisions when you’re feeling sad, have little energy, and are not thinking clearly. Even though you may not feel as motivated as you used to, it will be important to your recovery to have some pleasurable activities in your life. We’ll work together to find pleasant activity goals that are small steps. You can then give yourself credit for each step you accomplish.

Review Initial Contact Worksheet
1. Social history? Strengths and resources? Health habits and activities?
   • What was going on in your life at that time?
   • If I had met you then, what would I see you doing?
   • How would your friends/family describe you?

Set a Pleasant Activity
Potential goals for depressed patients:
Physical Activity: Staying physically active is difficult when you have low energy. Slowly increasing your physical activity may help you feel better and sleep better. There is good research showing the benefits of exercise on improving symptoms of depression.

Social contacts: It is easy to avoid people when you are feeling depressed. However, it is important to spend time and get support from friends and family. Maintaining or re-establishing social contacts is a valuable goal for many people with depression.

Relaxation: For many people, the changes that come with depression—no longer keeping up with our usual activities and responsibilities, feeling increasingly sad and hopeless—leads to anxiety. Since physical relaxation can lead to mental relaxation, practicing relaxing is another way to help yourself. Try deep breathing, or a warm bath, or just finding a quiet, comfortable, peaceful place and saying comforting things to yourself (like, “It’s OK”).

Eliciting Motivational Statement from the Patient
Ask: “On a scale of 1-10 (1 being not at all and 10 being extremely likely) how likely are you to follow through with this activity before our next contact?”
After response, reply: “So why did you say [number they chose] instead of a 2 (a lower number)?”

At Follow up - Patient achieved goal:
What about the activity did you enjoy?
How did you feel after this activity?
Now that you have achieved this goal, what should be the next step?
“It’s easy to feel overwhelmed when you’re depressed. It can be hard to deal with problems or decisions when you’re feeling sad, have little energy, and are not thinking clearly. Even though you may not feel as motivated as you used to, it will be important to your recovery to have some pleasurable activities in your life. We’ll work together to find pleasant activity goals that are small steps. You can then give yourself credit for each step you accomplish.”
Identifying Strengths

Review Initial Contact Worksheet

Social history? Strengths and resources? Health habits and activities?

Ask the patient to reflect on the last time they felt “good.”

• What was going on in your life at that time?
• If I had met you then, what would I see you doing?
• How would your friends/family describe you?
Planning

• Establish goals collaboratively with patient
• Help patients re-engage in pleasant activities that are patient identified
• Assist patient to develop a plan that will support their goals
• Document the plan
Self-Care Activity Plan

Patient Name: ____________________________  Today's Date: ____________________________
Telephone Number: ____________________________  Primary Care Provider: ____________________________

Actions that will improve my health:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

My reasons for completing these actions are:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

In order to move towards my goal, I will do the following pleasant activities before my next appointment:

Step 1: ____________________________
Step 2: ____________________________
Step 3: ____________________________
Step 4: ____________________________
Step 5: ____________________________

Some things that could interfere with my plan are:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Other people who will help me, and what they can do to help:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

I will know that my plan is working if:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Actions I will take if this plan isn't working:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Patient Signature: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________
Developing a Self-Care Activity Plan

• Draw on previous strengths, resources and successes
• Build confidence
• Seek new possibilities
• Potential goals:
  – Physical activity
  – Social contacts
  – Relaxation
Goals are Care Plan
Activities

• *What do you do now?*
• Start small
• Identify potential barriers
• Details, details
• Do a walk through
• Written action plan
• Confidence ruler
Remember: Scheduling Activities

Scheduling Activities

Why scheduling activities is important
Feeling stressed or depressed can prevent you from doing activities that you used to enjoy and make you feel happy.

Spiraling Down
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Spiraling Up
By doing more pleasant activities, even if you don’t initially feel like it, you can break the cycle. Motivation follows action.
On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “extremely confident,” how confident are you in your ability to discuss depression with a patient?
Elicit and enhance motivational statements from the patient

“On a scale of 1-10 (1 being not at all and 10 being extremely likely) how likely are you to follow through with this activity before our next contact?”

After response, reply:

“So why did you say (number they chose) 5 instead of (a lower number) 2?”
Video:
Behavioral Activation

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-6Nxp9DBvo&feature=related
Follow-up Visit(s) (Active Management phase)

• Continue to establish the relationship
• Emphasize personal choice and control
  – (MI Spirit: Autonomy)
• Administer the PHQ-9
• Review interval history, PCP care plan and recommendations (as approved by the PCP)
• Review and activate plan in relation to treatment goals and community resources
Follow-up Visit(s) (Active Management phase)

• Discuss the plan as an experiment (PDSA)
• Like the PHQ-9, review the plan at the beginning of each session
• Celebrate and find successes
  – What about the activity did you enjoy?
  – How did you feel after this activity?
  – Now that you have achieved this goal, what should be the next step?
Follow-up Visit(s)  
(Active Management phase)

• Learn from goals not accomplished
  – Maybe we picked the wrong activity?
  – What do you think would be a more reasonable goal?
  – Was there something small within the goal that was accomplished?
  – What obstacles got in the way?
  – What might work better next time?

• Set the next goal
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How do you feel about these patient interactions?