

Brighter Days

Issue 6: Contact with Others

Others affect the way we feel and knowing that can be a source of strength. Last month, you learned ways to change harmful thought patterns to achieve a healthier mood. In this concluding edition of *Brighter Days*, we discuss how our relationships with other people affect mood. That's why it's important to identify the people in your life who support you.*

Contact with Others Improves Mood

When we feel down, we are less likely to socialize. But not having contact with people can deprive us of a good source of support, making us more depressed. When depressed, we do even fewer things with people. This cycle leads to us feeling alone. We can break this cycle and improve our mood by having more positive contacts with other people and having fewer negative contacts.

Activity 1: Quick Mood Scale

For the next week, every night before going to bed, circle the number from 1–9 that best represents your mood. At the bottom of each column is space where you can note how many positive and negative contacts you have each day. See if there is a relationship between how you feel and the people you have contact with.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Best Mood	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Average	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Worst Mood	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of Positive Contacts							
Number of Negative Contacts							



Resources

Prevea360 Health Plan

For assistance in finding a behavioral health therapist or psychiatrist, call the Customer Care Center number on the back of your insurance card or use the “Find a Provider” feature on prevea360.com.

Prevea360 Health Plan also provides free phone education and resource coordination for members with complex, unstable behavioral health needs. To learn more, visit prevea360.com or call our Customer Care Center.

*This information was developed by and re-printed with permission from Northwestern University Center for Community Health's Mothers and Babies program.



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Social Support System

By social support system, we mean the people who are close to you with whom you share moments of your life, both positive and negative. Your social support system may include family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, health care providers and others. In general, the stronger your support system, the better you will be able to face tough situations.

Activity 2: The People in My Life and Ways They Support Me

Write the names of people who make up your social support system in the row that best describes your relationship with them.

People closest to me: are people with whom you can share your thoughts and feelings.	
Close friends: are people you feel you can talk to, but maybe not about everything.	
Friends: are people who you enjoy doing things with (like going to the movies) even though you don't share personal details about your life with them.	
Acquaintances: are people you see whom you nod or say hi to.	

Now that you've identified your support system, think about who might provide the different types of support listed below, and write them down. If you can't think of anyone who helps you in this way, put down a question mark. After completion, identify areas of social support that are adequate and areas of social support you would like to change and develop.

Practical Support Example: Who will you ask to help you with chores or babysitting when you are overwhelmed?	Advice or Information Example: Who will you turn to for advice when something doesn't go your way?
Companionship Example: Who will you spend an afternoon with?	Emotional Support Example: Who will you look to for encouragement and understanding?

Other Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):
nami.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance:
dballiance.org

Anxiety and Depression Association of America:
adaa.org