

## Increasing Daily Pleasure

adapted from Brown & Lewisohn's *Coping With Depression: Participants' Workbook* (1984)

Nearly everyone who comes in for psychotherapy is struggling with symptoms of depression. They no longer enjoy life. They get little pleasure from things that previously made them happy. So do we feel depressed because we stop doing things we enjoy, or do we stop doing things we enjoy because we are depressed? Either way, it becomes a downward cycle of defeat and despair.

Fortunately, in this case, what goes down can come up, and be fun in the process. The list has been modified to make it acceptable in Utah Valley—you can add your own ideas ;-)

**Directions:** Use this list to help brainstorm and generate ideas of things you like to do.

1. Check the activities that you like in particular.
2. Add your own ideas to the end of the list.
3. Note how many (or how few) times you have actually done each of your checked items in the past 30 days.
4. Now schedule one small activity (short, inexpensive, requiring little planning) per day; one moderate activity (more time-consuming, expensive, or involving more people) per week, and one major activity or event per month.
5. Repeat forever.

- being in the country
- wearing expensive or formal clothes
- making contributions to religious, charitable, or other groups
- talking about sports
- meeting someone new of the same sex
- taking tests when well prepared
- going to a rock concert
- playing baseball or softball
- planning trips or vacations
- buying things for myself
- being at the beach
- doing art work (painting, sculpture, drawing, movie-making, etc.)
- rock climbing or mountaineering
- reading the scriptures or other sacred works
- playing golf
- taking part in military activities
- rearranging or redecorating my room or house
- going to a sports event
- reading a "How to Do It" book or article
- going to the races (horse, car, boat, etc.)
- reading stories, novels, poems, or plays
- going to a club or small music venue
- going to lectures or hearing speakers
- driving skillfully
- breathing clean air
- thinking up or arranging a song or music
- saying something clearly
- boating (canoeing, kayaking, motor-boating, sailing, etc.)
- pleasing my parents
- restoring antiques, finishing furniture, etc.
- watching TV
- talking to myself
- camping
- working in politics
- working on machines (cars, bikes, motorcycles, tractors, etc.)
- thinking about something good in the future
- playing cards
- completing a difficult task
- laughing
- solving a problem, puzzle, crossword, etc.
- being at weddings, baptisms, confirmations, etc.

- criticizing someone
- shaving
- having lunch with friends or associates
- playing tennis
- taking a shower
- driving long distances
- woodworking, carpentry
- writing short stories, novels, plays, or poetry
- being with animals
- riding in an airplane
- exploring (hiking away from known routes, spelunking, etc.)
- having a frank and open conversation
- singing in a group
- thinking about myself or my problems
- working on my job
- going to a party
- going to church functions (socials, classes, bazaars, etc.)
- speaking a foreign language
- going to service, civic, or social club meetings
- going to a business meeting or a convention
- being in a sporty or expensive car
- playing a musical instrument
- making snacks
- snow skiing
- being helped
- wearing informal clothes
- combing or brushing my hair
- acting
- taking a nap
- being with friends
- canning, freezing, making preserves, etc.
- driving fast
- solving a personal problem
- being in a city
- taking a bath
- singing to myself
- making food or crafts to sell or give away
- playing pool or billiards
- being with my grandchildren
- playing chess or checkers
- doing craft work (pottery, jewelry, leather, beads, weaving, etc.)
- weighing myself
- scratching myself
- putting on makeup, fixing my hair, etc.
- designing or drafting
- visiting people who are sick, shut in, or in trouble
- cheering, rooting
- bowling
- being popular at a gathering
- watching wild animals
- having an original idea
- gardening, landscaping, or doing yard work
- reading essays or technical, academic, or professional literature
- wearing new clothes
- dancing
- sitting in the sun
- riding a motorcycle
- just sitting and thinking
- seeing good things happen to my family or friends
- going to a fair, carnival, circus, zoo, or amusement park
- talking about philosophy or religion
- planning or organizing something
- listening to the sounds of nature
- dating, courting, etc.
- having a lively talk
- racing in a car, motorcycle, boat, etc.
- listening to the radio
- having friends come to visit
- playing in a sporting competition
- introducing people I think would like each other
- giving gifts
- going to school or government meetings, court sessions, etc.
- getting massages or backrubs
- getting letters, cards, or notes
- watching the sky, clouds, or a storm
- going on outings (to the park, a picnic, a barbecue, etc.)

- playing basketball
- buying something for my family
- photography
- giving a speech or lecture
- reading maps
- gathering natural objects (wild foods or fruit, rocks, driftwood, etc.)
- working on my finances
- wearing clean clothes
- making a major purchase or investment (car, appliances, house, stocks, etc.)
- helping someone
- being in the mountains
- getting a job advancement (being promoted, given a raise, or offered a better job; getting accepted to a better school, etc.)
- hearing jokes
- winning a bet
- talking about my children or grandchildren
- meeting someone new of the opposite sex
- going to a Christian revival or crusade
- talking about my health
- seeing beautiful scenery
- eating good meals
- improving my health (having my teeth fixed, getting new glasses, changing my diet, etc.)
- being downtown
- wrestling or boxing
- hunting or shooting
- playing in a musical group
- hiking
- going to a museum or exhibit
- writing papers, essays, articles, reports, memos, etc.
- doing a job well
- having spare time
- fishing
- loaning something
- being noticed as sexually attractive
- pleasing employers, teachers, etc.
- counseling someone
- going to a spa, gym, health club or sauna
- having someone criticize me
- learning to do something new
- going to a drive-in (McDonald's, Taco Bell, etc.)
- complimenting or praising someone
- thinking about people I like
- being at a fraternity or sorority
- taking revenge on someone
- being with my parents
- horseback riding
- protesting social, political, or environmental conditions
- talking on the telephone
- having daydreams
- kicking leaves, sand, pebbles, etc.
- playing lawn sports (badminton, croquet, shuffleboard, horseshoes, etc.)
- going to school reunions, alumni meetings, etc.
- seeing famous people
- going to the movies
- kissing
- being alone
- budgeting my time
- cooking meals
- being praised by people I admire
- outwitting a "superior"
- feeling the presence of the Lord in my life
- doing a project in my own way
- doing odd jobs around the house
- crying
- being told I am needed
- being at a family reunion or get-together
- giving a party or get-together
- washing my hair
- coaching someone
- going to a restaurant
- seeing or smelling a flower or plant
- being invited out
- receiving honors (civic, military, etc.)
- using cologne, perfume, or aftershave
- having someone agree with me

- reminiscing, talking about old times
- getting up early in the morning
- having peace and quiet
- doing experiments or other scientific work
- visiting friends
- writing in a diary
- playing football
- being counseled
- saying prayers
- giving massages or backrubs
- hitchhiking
- meditating or doing yoga
- seeing a fight
- doing favors for people
- talking with people on the job or in class
- being relaxed
- being asked for help or advice
- thinking about other people's problems
- playing board games (Monopoly, Scrabble, etc.)
- sleeping soundly at night
- doing heavy outdoor work (cutting or chopping wood, clearing land, farm work, etc.)
- reading the newspaper
- snowmobiling or dune-buggy riding
- being in a body-awareness, sensitivity, encounter, support, or therapy group
- dreaming at night
- playing ping-pong
- brushing my teeth swimming
- being in a fight
- running, jogging, or doing gymnastics, fitness, or field exercises
- walking barefoot
- playing Frisbee or catch
- doing housework or laundry; cleaning things
- being with my roommate
- listening to music
- arguing
- knitting, crocheting, embroidery, or fancy needlework
- making out with someone
- amusing people
- going to a barber or beautician
- having house guests
- being with someone I love
- reading magazines
- sleeping late
- starting a new project
- being stubborn
- having sexual relations with my partner
- going to the library
- playing soccer, rugby, hockey, lacrosse, etc.
- preparing a new or special food
- bird watching
- shopping
- watching people
- building or watching a fire
- winning an argument
- selling or trading something
- finishing a project or task
- confessing or apologizing
- repairing things
- working with others as a team
- bicycling
- telling people what to do
- being with happy people
- playing party games
- writing letters, cards, or notes
- talking about politics or public affairs
- asking for help or advice
- going to banquets, luncheons, potlucks, etc.
- talking about my hobby or special interest
- watching attractive women or men
- smiling at people
- playing in sand, a stream, the grass, etc.
- talking about other people
- being with my husband or wife
- having people show interest in what I have said
- going on field trips, nature walks, etc.
- expressing my love to someone
- smoking tobacco
- caring for houseplants

