

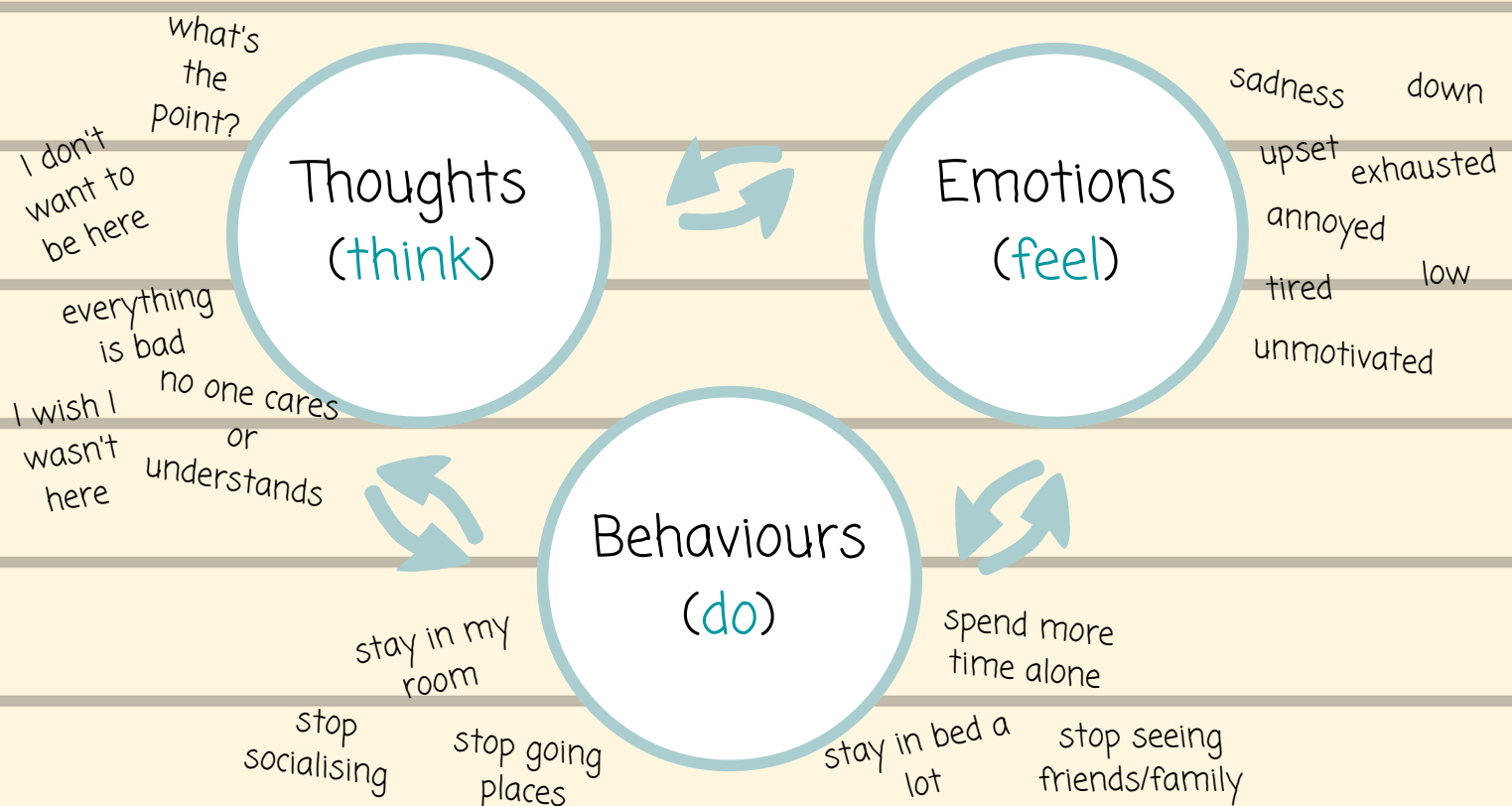
# What is Low Mood?

Anyone can get Low Mood. It is the most common psychological problem. It varies from person to person and stressful or difficult things can trigger it or it can seemingly come out of nowhere.

We all feel sad from time to time but usually the feeling passes. With Low Mood, these feelings of sadness just seem to go on and on and it's hard to see a way to feel happy again.



Low Mood can affect how you **feel**, how you **think** and the things that you **do**. It's all linked together.



# Symptoms of Low Mood

## Feeling Hopeless, Sad & Guilty

Feeling low for a long time can make us focus on the 'bad' things in life, making us feel hopeless, sad, or like nothing is good. We might also feel guilty for thinking this way.

## Concentration

Low Mood slows our bodies and brains down meaning we might struggle to concentrate or make decisions. We might also feel like we're 'clumsier' than normal or might forget things easily.

## Unhelpful Thoughts

Feeling low is linked to unhelpful thinking for example, we might think that nothing is good, that we don't want to be here anymore, or we might have thoughts about hurting ourselves. These are really upsetting thoughts but are a very common symptom of low mood.

## Change in Appetite

Cortisol (our stress hormone) is released by the brain when we feel low - this might mean we don't feel hungry. Or, we might also comfort eat and eat more than usual.

## Sleep

Changes to our hormones can make it difficult to get to sleep. Equally, unhelpful thoughts could also stop us getting to sleep. We might also notice we're sleeping more or sleeping through the day because we don't have much energy.

## Aches and Pains

Low mood and pain share nerve pathways in the spinal cord and also share chemicals in the brain. This means we might feel aches and pains in our muscles due to feeling low.

## Lack of Energy

Low mood drains our bodies of energy, making us feel tired and lethargic. This might mean we feel too tired to do the things we'd usually want to do.

Understanding your symptoms of low mood is the first step to getting better. Remember, though these symptoms are upsetting, they are a **NORMAL** reaction.

