

TREATMENT CONTRACT

I recognize that I have a _____ mood disorder. The purpose of this plan is to help me remain in control of my condition by identifying symptoms early and by giving the people around me my guidance as to how to help me manage when I am well and when I am not well.

The people that I would like to be involved in my plan are:

My _____ (name:) _____ (phone number) _____

My _____ (name:) _____ (phone number) _____

My _____ (name:) _____ (phone number) _____

My _____ (name:) _____ (phone number) _____

& My _____ (name:) _____ (phone number) _____

Developed by Dina Hirshfield, PhD., and Gary Sachs, MD., Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard University. Some sections incorporate adaptations of handouts about symptoms of depression and mania, and general means of coping from McBride L. & Bauer MS. Bipolar Disorder Life Goals Group Therapy Program Manual, Providence RI: Brown University Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

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Recognizing Normal Mood

I know I am well when my mood is stable and I do all of the following:

(Check off the ones that apply. Use the blank spaces to add items which are not on the list):

_____ Keep up my grooming and appearance

_____ Attend work regularly

_____ Attend school regularly

_____ Keep up with household chores

_____ Keep up with schoolwork

_____ Pay bills on time

_____ Get together with friends or do social activities _____ times per week

_____ Exercise regularly

_____ Socialize with people without being unduly irritable or starting arguments

When I am well, my plan is to:

1. Take my medications as prescribed
2. Attend: _____ once each _____ (week, month, etc.)
3. Avoid _____, _____ and _____
_____ (Situations which typically trigger problems).
4. Be sure to keep regular sleeping hours (go to bed and get up at about the same time every day).
5. Be sure to sleep at least ____ hrs. each weeknight and ____ hrs. on Friday and Saturday nights.
6. Work on solving the following problems or pursuing the following life goals:

7. Other coping strategies:

8. When I am well, other people can help me by:

1. Understanding that I have feelings like everyone else and I can be happy or sad without being ill.
I have good and bad moods, which are part of being human.
2. Asking me first if you think my mood is abnormal.
3. Not telling me everything I do is because of my mood.
4. Treating me with respect.

Recognizing Depression

Sometimes I get clinically depressed. I know I am depressed rather than just sad when my thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are effected for more than _____ (choose an appropriate number) days in a week.

During these times I frequently experience:

(check off the ones that apply. Use the blank spaces to add in symptoms which are not on the list):

	Thoughts		Feelings		Behaviors
	I think I deserve to suffer.		I feel sad without cause.		I cry very easily with little reason
	I have difficulty making even simple decisions.		I don't feel good even when good things happen.		I sleep too much or too little.
	My mind is like a sieve, I can't remember anything.		I feel worthlessness, bad or inferior.		I have trouble starting or finishing projects.
	I think I will never do anything right.		I feel guilty without cause.		I avoid social contact or keep away from people.
	I think nobody could or should care about me.		I lose interest in sex.		I reduce my activities (work, hobbies, etc.)
	I believe people are against me (Paranoia).		I am easily annoyed or irritable.		I start arguments or fights without good reason.
	I frequently think about dying or suicide.		I feel like eating all the time.		I don't return calls.
	My senses play tricks on me.		I never feel like eating.		I eat too much or too little.
	I am pessimistic about most everything,		I have no energy and feel tired all the time.		I am fidgety or restless or pacing.
	I think everything is my fault.		I feel a sense of dread, as though something awful will happen.		I move or speak slowly.
	I think things will never get better.				I have difficulty reading the newspaper or following shows on television.
					I can't collect my thoughts well enough to hold a conversation.

Some of these symptoms come on earlier than others and can be considered early warning signals to let me know I am becoming depressed. (Place a star next to those which are early warning signals).

Recognizing ELEVATED MOOD

Sometimes my mood gets too _____ (elevated, high, wired, hyper, etc.) This mood state could be called “mania” or “hypomania”. I can tell my mood is getting elevated when I experience the following symptoms. Sometimes these symptoms are noticed by other people (like my family or friends or doctor) before I notice them myself. (Check off the ones that apply. Use the blank spaces to add in symptoms which are not on the list):

	Thoughts		Feelings		Behaviors
	I think I have special abilities.		I feel good even when negative things happen.		I sleep less than usual.
	I take unusual notice of coincidences.		I feel happy or cheerful without cause.		I laugh frequently or with little reason.
	I become very focused on a cause or project.		I feel unusually self-confident.		I start several new projects or increase my activities (work, hobbies, etc.).
	I think many people are interested in me.		I feel energetic even when I get less sleep than usual.		I seek out social contacts or I make many more phone calls than usual.
	I believe people are against me (Paranoia).		I become more interested in sex than usual.		I spend money impulsively, have shopping sprees, tip excessively, or gamble.
	I find deep meaning in things other people miss.		I am easily annoyed or irritable.		I start arguments or fights without good reason.
	My senses play tricks on		I am optimistic about most everything.		I drive recklessly or fast.
	I get a lot of good ideas or my thoughts seem unusually sharp.		I feel euphoric.		I take more risks or become involved in dangerous activities.
	My thoughts jump quickly from one topic to another.		I feel everything will go my way.		I am fidgety or restless or pacing.
	It seems to me like the rest of the world is in slow motion.		I feel that nothing bad can possibly happen to me.		I am usually talkative.
	I believe I can get away with anything or can do no wrong.		When I want something I feel I have to have it right away.		My speech or writing, become unusually fluent.
					I dress in a flashy way or wear more jewelry or make up than usual.
					I have trouble concentrating or am easily distracted.
					I make impulsive decisions.
					I increase my use of alcohol or drugs.

Some of these symptoms come on earlier than others and can be considered early warning signals to let me know my mood is becoming elevated. (Place a star next to those, which are early warning signals).

COPING WITH ELEVATED MOOD

When my mood gets elevated, I sometimes need the help of my _____ and other support sources (friends or family) to recognize what is happening. Just as I am usually the best judge of when I am getting depressed, others are usually the best judges of when I am getting manic.

When someone in my support system points out to me that I am getting manic, I will do the following things to help myself:

1. Contact my _____ early: _____
_____ Phone number _____
2. Identify any situations that may have come up which typically make me feel worse or trigger elevated mood
Physical _____
Emotional _____
Medication changes _____
3. Get early medical attention for any physical illness.
4. Minimize sleep loss (even if it means contacting my doctor for medications to help me sleep).
5. Avoid alcohol and drugs.
6. Minimize stimulation (e.g. stay in a dark, quiet room).
7. Schedule my days to include activities that are restful and not over-stimulating, and avoid taking on too much.
8. Avoid confrontations.
9. Avoid big decisions (especially irreversible ones).
10. Consult with at least two people in my support system before making any decisions.
11. Contact support persons: (name) _____ (phone #) _____
(name) _____ (phone #) _____
(name) _____ (phone #) _____
12. Other helpful coping strategies for when my mood is elevated _____

13. Thing NOT TO DO when my mood is elevated _____

14. If I feel that I cannot keep myself, or others safe, contact my _____, immediately at (phone number) _____ or seek emergency services at _____.

When my mood is elevated, other people can help me by:

1. Letting me stay alone in a room with minimal stimulation when I am feeling agitated.
2. Preventing my driving (as by holding my car keys) when a consensus of two or more, of my _____ or support people judge that it is unsafe for me to do so.
3. Preventing my shopping (as by holding my credit card or bank card or checkbook) when a consensus of two or more of my _____ or support people judge that I am too impulsive to do so.
4. Avoiding arguing with me, especially when I am feeling irritable.
5. Calling my doctor and/or taking me to the hospital if my symptoms are serious enough and I am not aware enough of what is happening to take care of myself.

I hope that by signing this treatment contract and going over it with my _____ and members of my support system when I am well, I can be better prepared for and exercise more control over any further episodes of depressed or elevated mood that may arise.

I understand that I (or any other party) can request a meeting to change or cancel this contract at any point, as long as I give three weeks prior written notice to all parties to the contract.

Signature _____
 Date _____

Other signatures:

Signature _____
 Date _____

Signature _____
 Date _____

Signatures _____
 Date _____

Signatures _____
 Date _____

Signatures _____
 Date _____

Addendum: TIMES WHEN IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE ALERT FOR MOOD SYMPTOMS

Sometimes my depressions or periods of elevated mood come on out of the blue. Other times they are triggered by certain events or situations. The following are some of the kinds of situations that sometimes trigger depression or elevated mood for me: (for each situation that applies, check off whether it tends to trigger depression or elevated mood. Use the blank spaces to add situations not on the list.

SITUATION	TRIGGERS DEPRESSED MOOD	TRIGGERS ELEVATED MOOD
The break up of a relationship		
The start of a new relationship		
The loss of a job		
Changes in medication (specify which:)		
Physical illnesses (specify which:)		
Changes in drug or alcohol use		
Times of transition (specify which:)		
Other life events:		