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counselling • coaching • wellbeing

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## FIVE WAYS YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR MOOD

**BY NATHAN FOX (MBACP)**

How often have you woken up grumpy or felt nervous in a new situation? Emotions are an important part of our make up as human beings. But just because you feel a certain way, does that mean that you are stuck with that feeling? I hear people talk about how they feel helpless and unable to control their emotions and others who think that it's not good for you to control your emotions.

However, there is a way to feel better, through regulating your emotions not suppressing them. This can help you to change your mood, help you to feel calm when you get upset or feel positive when you get down.

### Distraction

Often thoughts will go around and around making you feel worse. So rather than going over what was done wrong or what that person said, distract yourself with something that takes your full attention. Find something that challenges your brain and concentration, playing an instrument, doing a quiz, listening to music or going for a walk. Anything that will move your focus away from what is uncomfortable and onto something positive.

### Change

Change the way you look at a situation. Taking a cognitive approach to your thinking could help to look at your situation and evaluate your emotional response. Did your work colleague mean to make you feel worthless or were they trying to help? Changing your cognitive outlook can be hard to do in the moment, but you can look back on a situation and reflect upon it and your thought process. What did you feel and think, how could you change that next time?



### Humour

Laughter has been proven countless times to have a positive impact upon physical health and wellbeing. Laughter releases chemicals in your brain that lift your mood and make you feel good. If you want to turn your mood around use your sense of humour to your advantage. Laughter is an automatic response, seek out things that trigger it such as TV, Films, even YouTube clips of cats(!)

### Environment

Your surroundings can have a massive impact on your mood. Research has proven that living in a rundown area can have a negative impact on your wellbeing. But the good thing is that any kind of change can have a positive impact. Even just leaving your house can have an impact. Try it next time you find yourself in a low mood, get out of the house and go for a walk. If you can't leave the house, go into a different room and do something that occupies your mind.

### Pull back

Look at the bigger picture. What is going on for you, right now. So often we don't see the big picture, but by stopping, taking a breath and pulling back to observe the situation you can spot the things that you are missing. This takes some practice to manage whilst in a situation so reflect back when you are calm and have a quiet space. What could you have done differently, what did you not notice at the time, if you were watching this scene in a play what would all the characters be doing and thinking?

It is important that we acknowledge and experience our emotions, even the painful ones, but when they take control it can feel like it's impossible to ever regain control and feel normal again. But you can, these tips can help you to take the first steps to change that. It is a process and it takes time to achieve change, part of the journey is getting things wrong, allow yourself to make mistakes, it's how we learn.

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