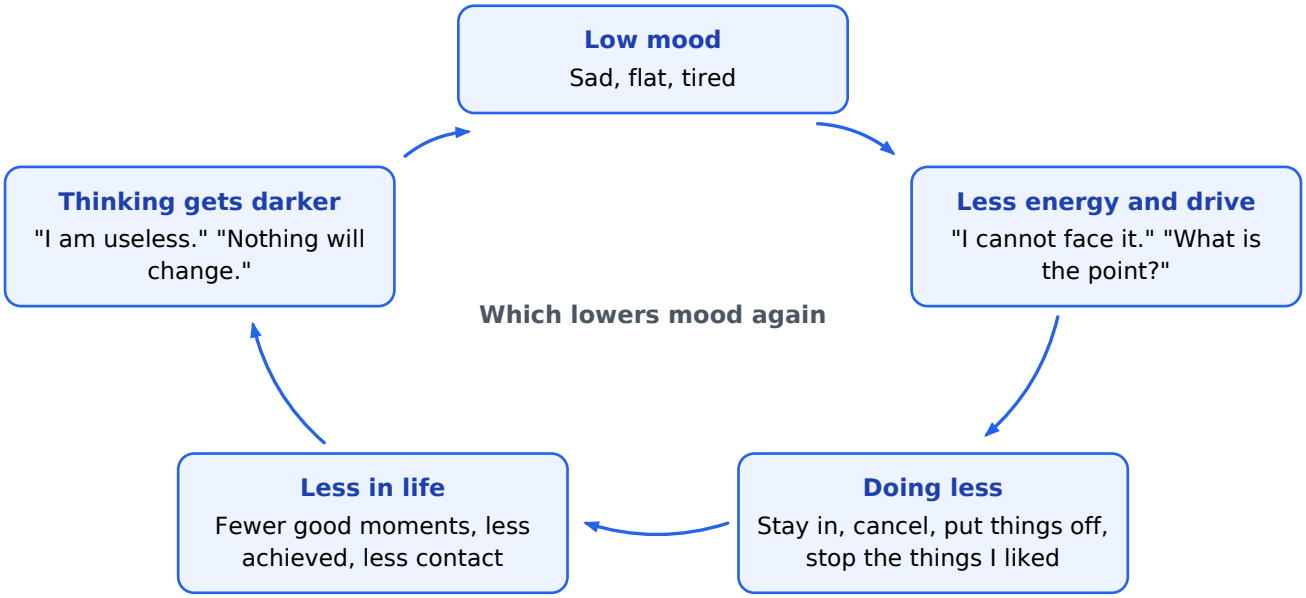
The low mood cycle

How low mood and doing less feed each other, and where to break the cycle.



Each step makes sense

When you feel exhausted and flat, resting and pulling back seem like the obvious thing to do. With a physical illness they would help. With depression they backfire: the less you do, the less there is to lift your mood, and the more time there is for dark thoughts.

Where to break the cycle

You cannot simply decide to feel better, and arguing with your thoughts is hard when your mood is on the floor. Behaviour is different. You can do something small without feeling like it.

1. **Start with what you do.** Add back small activities, on a plan, whatever your mood says.
2. **Mood follows.** Not straight away and not every time, but reliably over a few weeks.
3. **Thinking lifts with it.** After a day with something in it, the bleak thoughts are less convincing.

> **The reverse cycle**
> A little more activity brings a little more achievement, pleasure or contact. That gives a little more energy, which makes the next step easier.

My notes and questions

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