

## Heads Up – Bipolar Disorder

### What helps? – Mania Specific Coping Strategies

#### Address elevated mood

It is common for people to enjoy the feeling of elevated mood, especially if it follows a period of depression. Look back at your pros and cons list of trying self management strategies.

- What are the pros and cons of addressing elevated mood?
- Do you have experience of the consequences of ignoring elevated mood in the past?
- What are the risks of not addressing elevated mood?

#### Reduce levels of stimulation

When individuals are feeling slightly high, avoiding further stimulation by reducing activity or social contact can be helpful in reducing the severity of the episode. This can be very difficult to achieve. Many people find it difficult to resist the temptation of enjoying the experience of elated mood and enhanced sociability. This is particularly difficult when these experiences have occurred following a period of prolonged depressed mood, where activity has been particularly hard to maintain and there has been an accompanying period of relative social isolation.

However, high levels of stimulation can make mania and hypomania worse. (e.g. children playing, loud music), too many people and busy environments like shopping centres, pubs, parties. Stimulation can come from within our minds as well, such as racing thoughts, rumination and planning and ideas.

When feeling even slightly high, avoiding further stimulation by reducing activity or social contact can be helpful in reducing the severity of the episode. It can be helpful to quieten your environment, reduce noise levels and spend time in calm environments, perhaps with soothing music or applying relaxation techniques.

<http://wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk/audio-resources/>

Further information on this topic can be seen in the *Coping Strategies* (mania or hypomania) section below.

#### 24 hour rule

This means holding off making decisions or acting on a plan for 24 hours.

It is helpful to apply this rule when your plan involves doing something that you would not normally do, that others would object to, or that may involve some risks. If something is a good idea today, it will be a good idea tomorrow. If 24 hours is not enough time, make it a 48 hour rule. Examples of when to use the rule may be:

- If you have an urge to travel
- Urge to overspend
- A decision about an important relationship