Some miserable times come to everyone — how we manage ourselves in the face of painful emotions is the key to how much and how long we suffer.

To manage the biological aspects of low moods, GET ACTIVE even if you don’t feel like it. Your mood will slowly change as a consequence:

- Do half an hour’s aerobic exercise most days (running, dancing, swimming, fast cycling).
- Get into sensible routines for sleep, eating, drinking (see cards 6 and 7).
- Set specific times to work, relax, socialise. Don’t judge the results!

Common psychological aspects of low moods are shown on the diagram overleaf. To lessen your suffering:

- Lay off criticising yourself.
- Treat yourself as a good friend might.
- Drop your impatience and perfectionism, simplify your life.
- Focus on all small positive things in your day.
- Just take the next small step, one step at a time.
- Seek help from reliable people.

HOW THINKING STYLES KEEP LOW MOOD GOING

Blame self

OR

Avoid work (then blame)

“I’m so stressed I can’t think straight”

Pile on the pressure

EITHER

Knee-jerk response to rush to satisfy all demanding voices

OR

Panic (only to resume cycle later feeling worse)

OUR OWN

Demanding

Threatening

Critical Voices

MAKING US

Stressed

Angry

Inadequate

RECOGNISE THESE?

Pressurising:
Hurry up! Get it all done! Do it right!

Future-gazing:
You will...(fail, mess it up, never manage, be brilliant if...)

Gazing at past:
I haven’t, could’ve, should’ve, last time...

Generalising:
You always/never...

Catastrophising:
If not successful, then CATASTROPHE

Awfulising: I feel 100% AWFUL

• Step back, slow down, pace yourself
• Slow breaths
• Get on with the next thing, notice & let go of fretting — & breathe!