When Your Brain Shuts Down

When we're depressed, the brain often conserves energy. Activities that once felt rewarding may feel pointless or exhausting. This isn't laziness or a lack of willpower, it is a change in how your brain is processing effort, reward, and hope. Help your brain reconnect with movement, meaning, and reward.

1. What is my brain saying?

☐ What's the point?
☐ It won't matter anyway.
☐ I'm too tired.
☐ Nothing sounds enjoyable.
☐ I'll do it later.
☐ It's too much.
☐ I don't care.
☐ Other:

2. What do I notice?

My brain says...	What I notice...
It's too much.	Everything feels overwhelming.
I don't care.	My brain isn't expecting reward.
I'll do it tomorrow.	I'm waiting to feel different first.
I can't do anything.	My brain sees the whole mountain instead of one step.

3. What might my brain need?

☐ Rest
☐ Nutrition
☐ Sunlight
☐ Movement
☐ Connection
☐ Structure
☐ Accomplishment
☐ Something meaningful
☐ Compassion
☐ Professional support

4. Shrink the goal

Instead of *clean the house,* try *pick up five things*.
Instead of *exercise* try *walk outside for five minutes*.
Instead of *cook dinner* try *eat something with protein*.
Instead of *answer every email* try *answer one*.

Note: *Action often comes before motivation, not after.*

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