

# Behavioural Activation in Social IsoLation (BASIL+)

Kate Bosanquet, Elizabeth Newbronner, Peter Coventry, Leanne Shearsmith, Elizabeth Littlewood, Della Bailey, Andrew Henry, Lauren Burke, Eloise Ryde, Dean McMillan, David Ekers, Simon Gilbody, Carolyn A. Chew-Graham, on behalf of the BASIL+ team

## Background

This qualitative process evaluation was nested within the BASIL+ (Behavioural Activation in Social IsoLation) pragmatic randomised controlled trial, which was conducted with patients recruited from general practices in England and Wales. The trial was designed to assess the effectiveness of behavioural activation (BA) in mitigating depression and loneliness among older people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were offered up to eight weekly sessions with trained BASIL+ Support Workers (BSWs) who delivered the intervention by telephone.



## Aims

To explore views and experiences of the BASIL+ BA intervention from:

- Trial participants
- Caregivers
- BASIL Support Workers



- Purposive sample
- 24 participants (3 non-completers)
- 2 caregivers
- 16 BASIL Support Workers



## Methods

- 42 semi-structured one-to-one interviews
- By telephone
- Interviews digitally recorded
- Used a professional transcription service
- Uploaded to NVivo 12
- Data analysed using Thematic Analysis with constant comparison



## Main Themes

**Three main themes** emerged from data analysis:

- 1) Engagement Dynamic: from Altruism to Self-Realisation
- 2) Changing Behaviour and Improving Mood
- 3) Synergistic Nature of the Intervention Components

### Key findings:

- The BASIL+ BA intervention effectively fostered self-awareness among older adults, giving them the confidence and skills to address low mood.
- Participant engagement with intervention materials varied, highlighting the importance of flexibility in delivery.
- BSWs acted as key facilitators, guiding participants through the intervention process, fostering understanding, and providing crucial support.
- The collaborative care element ensured participants received comprehensive and holistic support, promoting improved mental and physical well-being.
- **Findings underscore the adaptability and flexibility of the BASIL+ BA intervention, demonstrating its potential to address mental and physical health problems among individuals with varying needs and different starting points.**

## Participant Quotes

“If you [BSW] hadn’t have phoned me and asked me to take part in it, I think I’d have still been a cabbage sat on the settee. It did fetch me out of being in a cocoon, like being bored and everything”.  
(Completer-11017)

“I am more honest about my mood...I feel good, you know, when I can achieve something.”  
(Completer-11010)

“It was strange at the beginning sort of being able to...how can I say this...err come out, speak out, to say things that I would probably bottle it up inside. It made us be able to...talk about it.”  
(Completer-12001)



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