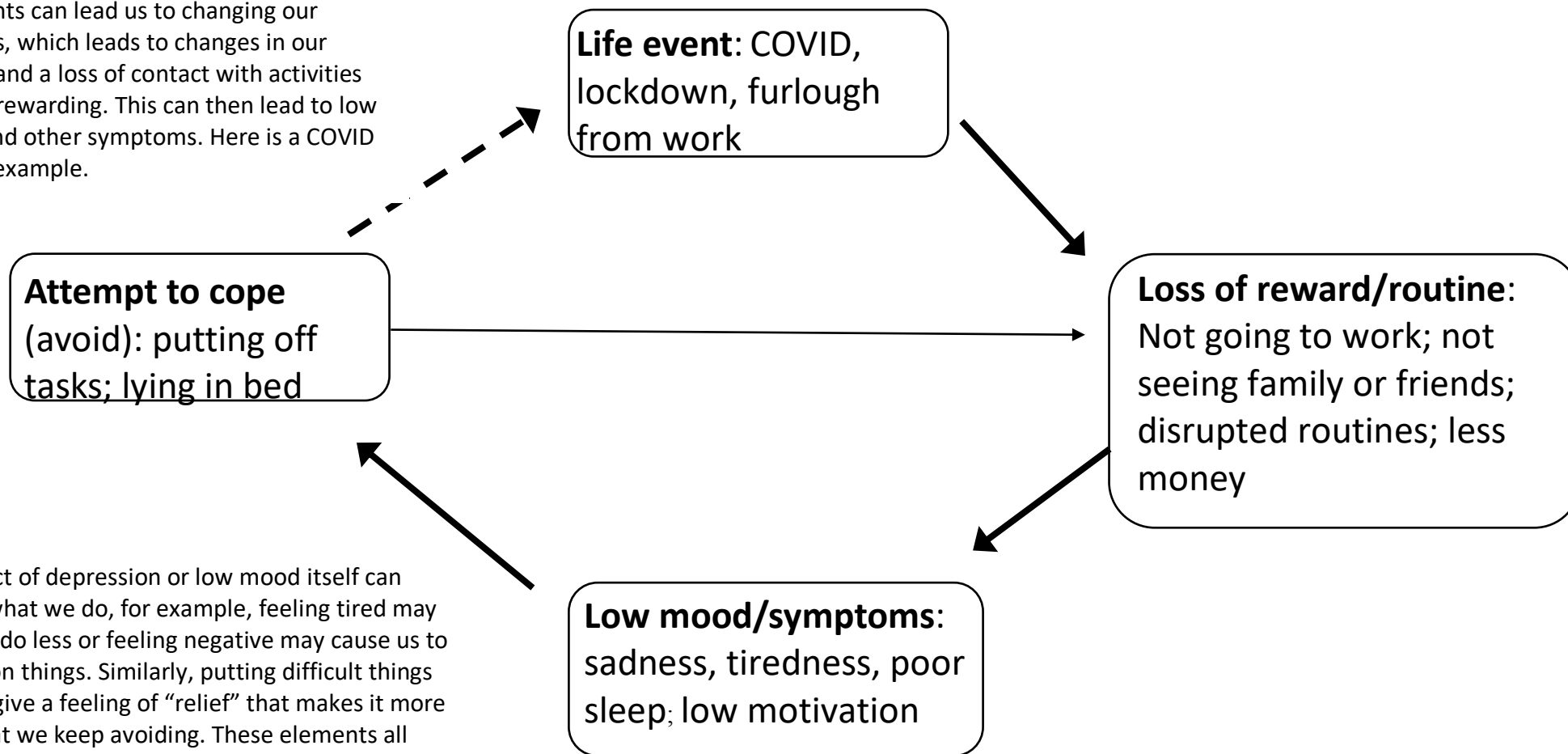


Understanding Low Mood and Depression

Life events can lead us to changing our activities, which leads to changes in our routine and a loss of contact with activities we find rewarding. This can then lead to low mood and other symptoms. Here is a COVID related example.



The effect of depression or low mood itself can impact what we do, for example, feeling tired may make us do less or feeling negative may cause us to give up on things. Similarly, putting difficult things off may give a feeling of “relief” that makes it more likely that we keep avoiding. These elements all reinforce each other, resulting in an unhealthy cycle or “downward spiral” that is hard to break out of and leads to prolonged low mood.

- The way out of this low mood is to become more active and**
- 1. build up positive and rewarding activities**
 - 2. re-establish helpful routines and schedules**
 - 3. Reduce any avoidance that may keeping the problems going.**

Using this diagram, think about what may be contributing to your low mood or depression. In each of the boxes, write in the events that have happened to you, what losses or changes in routine this has caused, your symptoms of depression, and how you have responded to those symptoms.

