

Exercise 22.2: Comparing your depression symptoms before and after IPT

How does your experience of depression at the start of this process compare to how it feels now? Look carefully at the weekly rating forms you have completed and then circle the description that best describes your first (in column 1) and most recent (in column 2) depression rating forms.

| Severity of symptoms before starting IPT | Severity of symptoms now |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Mostly red | Mostly red |
| Mostly yellow | Mostly yellow |
| Mostly green | Mostly green |

If there is less red and more yellow, or less yellow and more green, this is very good news: this means that at least some of your symptoms have improved. Well done! When you are in the midst of depression you can feel very stuck and as if nothing can change. But the difference in the colour of your charts shows at a glance that your efforts and those of your IPT team have helped you to become unstuck and to redirect your life towards the way you want it to be. This is a significant achievement and something to congratulate yourself on.

It is also useful to think in more detail about what has happened to your symptoms. It may be that all or most of your symptoms have improved, or you might have noticed that some symptoms are less bothersome while others remain difficult. Some symptoms might have changed more quickly than others. You might feel particular relief at the improvement in some of your symptoms, for example, being able to sleep at night, or no longer feeling life is not worth living. You might also have noticed that you manage better in some areas of your life, such as your home life, even if you still need some extra support to achieve the same improvement in other areas, for example at work.