

Behavioral Strategies for Mania

- Keep a journal so you can start to notice if there is a pattern to your thoughts just before mania hits (i.e., “things feel surreal right now,”
- Ask yourself questions such as: “Would I normally wear this?” or “It is possible I could be misreading their behavior or interest in me?”
- Give yourself 48 hours before any action or decision.
- Ignore the desire to talk to strangers.
- Cancel commitments and reschedule other commitments and lay low for a bit.
- Take a few days off work to ensure you can balance your needs and possibly prevent an episode.
- Avoid caffeine (coffee, energy drinks, chocolate) or stimulating television or news
- Watch for people’s reactions. If they look offended or concerned, remind yourself that your behavior is likely off and needs to be checked.
- Stick to a set of clothes and do not wear anything outside of this pre-arranged set. This will help to reduce the need for reputation damage control afterwards.
- Delay any big decisions until you feel you are healthy again. If not possible to delay a decision, then share your decision process with at least one trusted person. Two people would be better.
- Staying away from busy or exciting social activities
- Reduce background noise or stimulation
- Get near nature or water
- Alert my friends that I will not be available to emotionally support them for the next few days as supporting them or worrying about them right now might be enough to flip my building mania into full mania. Explain you want to do self-care right now so you can be a healthy support for them on the long-term rather than get sick and require more help from them. .
- Avoid alcohol. 1-2 beers or drinks may be enough to flip my rising energy into full blown mania.
- Avoid pot/THC for same reasons
- Put phone away so I don’t use it or over stimulate myself with it in evening or late at night.
- Download and use an app that will prevent access to social platforms or texting for a certain number of hours (i.e., 8-10 hrs for overnight avoidance).
- Talking to my boss or professor about upcoming deadlines that I may need to push back
- Limiting sunlight as this can bring on mania

Behavioral Strategies for Mania – For Supporters

- Tell me that you notice that I have been showing clues that I may be going into mania. Make sure these clues are ones that we have discussed together previously
- Plan for the future and agree to hold on to my bank/credit cards and only give me a set amount of cash a week for lunches and snacks
- Join me while I am jogging/walking/exercising. Make sure that I do not exercise for too long, and encourage me to relax afterward
- Understand me when I say ‘no’ to different activities. I am not saying no to you, I am trying to keep myself balanced
- Check in regularly with me! As we know, going into mania can happen very fast.
- If you have not heard from me in awhile, and cannot get a hold of me, please come to my house to check in with me
- Remind me to take my medication, to sleep, to eat, and to stick to my schedule that I have planned out. Please use the words we agreed too so your concern does not become triggering or irritating.
- Ask if my activity or decision is a good one and explain what your concern is. But please don’t keep restating if I say “I got it.” I get it and I might be embarrassed and need time to work through embarrassment, which can sometimes look like irritation or anger, before I implement your suggestion that I agreed with.
- Provide a calm and safe place for a loved one to stay at.
- Become “clinical” or “professional” so you can keep emotional distance from what is happening, can remain more neutral, and not get as easily pulled into the episode.