



the Exposure Hierarchy Worksheet

Your Guide To Building An Exposure Hierarchy

Facing fears is tough but crucial for personal growth and managing anxiety. The Exposure Hierarchy Worksheet is a tool that will help you address avoidance-related anxiety. This guide will help you understand how to identify your anxiety-producing situations and set up a safe and intentional way to address the fears surrounding those situations with your therapist.

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1. Identify Anxiety-Triggering Situations:

Start by listing the situations that make you feel anxious. What events or certain environments trigger that uneasy feeling for you? List them all below.

2. Assess Your Anxiety Levels:

For each situation, determine how anxious it makes you feel using the Subjective Units of Distress Scale (SUDS), which ranges from 0 (no anxiety), 50 (significant anxiety), and 100 (the most intense anxiety imaginable).

3. Begin with the Least Distressing Situations:

Take your list to your therapist and identify strategies to confront your fears. Start confronting your fears with the situations that are a bit uncomfortable but still manageable. This approach builds your confidence and resilience gradually.

***Note:** If you do decide to face these situations alone. We recommend that you do not attempt to confront any situation that is above a mild distress for you without a professional therapist to help guide and support you through the process.*

4. Confront Your Fears:

You'll tackle these fears through direct (in-vivo) or imagined (imaginal) exposures, especially for situations too challenging or impractical to face in real life. With support, these step-by-step encounters will gradually reduce the anxiety these situations cause.

5. Overcome Protective Behaviors:

It's common to rely on certain behaviors you think of to protect you from the anxiety you experience. Effective exposure therapy involves identifying and gradually abandoning these protective behaviors, empowering you to face your fears more directly and freely.



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Anxiety-Triggering Situations	SUDS (0-100)	Plan