

Patient's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duration of symptoms: \_\_\_\_\_  
Educational level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship status: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current living arrangement: \_\_\_\_\_

### **I. FEAR CUES**

- A. External/environmental situations and stimuli
  
- B. Internal triggers: bodily signs, sensations
  
- C. Intrusive thoughts, ideas, doubts, images, memories

### **II. FEARED CONSEQUENCES OF EXPOSURE TO FEAR CUES**

### **III. SAFETY-SEEKING BEHAVIORS**

- A. Passive avoidance
  
- B. Checking and reassurance seeking
  
- C. Compulsive rituals
  
- D. Brief/covert (or mental) rituals
  
- E. Safety signals

**FIGURE 4.1.** Form for conducting a functional assessment of anxiety and fear.

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|     | Description of the exposure task | SUDS |
|-----|----------------------------------|------|
| 1.  |                                  |      |
| 2.  |                                  |      |
| 3.  |                                  |      |
| 4.  |                                  |      |
| 5.  |                                  |      |
| 6.  |                                  |      |
| 7.  |                                  |      |
| 8.  |                                  |      |
| 9.  |                                  |      |
| 10. |                                  |      |
| 11. |                                  |      |
| 12. |                                  |      |
| 13. |                                  |      |
| 14. |                                  |      |
| 15. |                                  |      |
| 16. |                                  |      |
| 17. |                                  |      |
| 18. |                                  |      |
| 19. |                                  |      |
| 20. |                                  |      |

**FIGURE 5.1.** Exposure list form.

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1. **Prepare to feel anxious during exposure.** It is normal to feel uncomfortable when doing exposure therapy. In fact, feeling anxious is a sign that you are doing exposure correctly. Your job is to remain in the situation, despite the anxious feelings, so you can learn that anxiety is safe and tolerable.
2. **Don't fight the anxiety or fear—lean into it.** Think of anxious feelings as the raw materials of change. Instead of fighting or resisting them, notice these feelings and body sensations and let them be there. Better yet, push yourself to *bring them on*. Remember that anxiety is a natural response to the perception of threat.
3. **Do not use safety behaviors or anxiety reduction strategies before, during, or after exposure.** In order to work properly, exposure practices must be completed without safety behaviors, reassurance seeking, distraction, medications, alcohol, or other anxiety reduction strategies that make you feel safer or that prevent you from becoming anxious. Even very small or brief safety behaviors can block the benefits of exposure. An important goal of exposure is to learn that you don't need safety behaviors or anxiety reduction strategies.
4. **Use exposure to learn something new.** Before starting each exposure practice, identify what you are afraid will happen when you confront this situation without using safety behaviors. Then think of exposure as an opportunity to test your predictions. Remain in the situation (or repeat the exposure) until you have learned something new. Afterward, consider what the experience has taught you. Did the feared outcome occur? Was it as awful as you expected? Could you tolerate the fear and anxiety? Have your thoughts about the situation changed?
5. **Surprise yourself.** The more you are taken aback by what happens during an exposure practice, the more the experience stands out and gets encoded in your memory—and this helps with extinguishing your fear. So, don't seek out information to reassure yourself that everything is going to be okay. Let yourself be surprised.
6. **Vary the intensity of exposures.** Although you might start with easier exposure items, changing up the degree of anxiety you experience with each exposure helps you learn that you can manage even high levels of anxiety and fear. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself.
7. **Practice in different settings.** Confronting your fears in new and different settings helps to solidify your improvement. Practice with your therapist, with friends or family members (if applicable), on your own, and in different places that trigger your fear.
8. **Practice every day.** The more often you practice exposure, the quicker you will learn that your feared situations are safer than you think and that you can manage the feelings of anxiety. Invest the time and effort up front so your fears don't get the best of you in the long run.

**FIGURE 6.1.** How to make exposure therapy work.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_  Alone  Accompanied  
(check one)

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. Describe the exposure:
2. What anxiety reduction strategies will you give up?
3. What feared outcome are you most worried about? **and/or** What are you worried you will not be able to tolerate?
4. How will this exposure practice put your fear to the test?
5. Every \_\_\_\_\_ minutes during the exposure, rate SUDS from 0 to 100:

SUDS when beginning exposure (0–100): \_\_\_\_\_

| SUDS | SUDS | SUDS | SUDS | SUDS |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1.   | 7.   | 13.  | 19.  | 25.  |
| 2.   | 8.   | 14.  | 20.  | 26.  |
| 3.   | 9.   | 15.  | 21.  | 27.  |
| 4.   | 10.  | 16.  | 22.  | 28.  |
| 5.   | 11.  | 17.  | 23.  | 29.  |
| 6.   | 12.  | 18.  | 24.  | 30.  |

**AFTER THE EXPOSURE**

6. What happened during the exposure? Did your fears come true? Were you able to tolerate the distress?
7. How was this outcome different from what you expected? What surprised you about the outcome?
8. What did you learn from this experience?
9. What could you do to vary this exposure?

**FIGURE 6.2.** Exposure Practice Worksheet form.

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