

# **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Anxiety Disorders in Parkinson's Disease**

## **Patient workbook Handouts and Worksheets**

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You may use this document for the purpose of treatment of patients. Circulation of the document for other purposes is not allowed.

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## Overview Session 1: Introduction and education about anxiety

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*This overview gives you information about the background of anxiety, symptoms and methods on how to reduce anxiety. It also provides information about how the current therapy can help you to reduce and cope with anxiety.*

### ***What is anxiety?***

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Anxiety is a natural and normal emotion. Almost every person experiences feelings of tension, stress and worry at times, especially in situations that involve any kind of pressure (such as a problem at work, at home, or in the family; or when making an important decision). In fact, anxiety can be very useful in life threatening situations and enables one to respond immediately to danger. However, anxiety becomes a problem if it starts to interfere with your daily life, if worry and fear are constantly present and become overwhelming.

It is important to realize that anxiety disorders are not the result of weakness, personal flaws or poor upbringing. Although the exact cause of anxiety disorders is not known, it is likely to be a combination of factors, including changes in the brain and environmental stress. Certain life events or other stressful environmental factors may trigger an anxiety disorder in people who were already susceptible to developing the disorder.

### ***What are symptoms of anxiety?***

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Anxiety includes a wide range of symptoms. The key symptoms of anxiety are:

- Feeling anxious or nervous
- Feeling tense or stressed
- Being unable to relax or feeling restless
- Frequent and uncontrollable worrying about daily matters
- Fear that something bad will happen
- Feeling irritable

These symptoms are often associated with:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep problems
- Feeling tired or exhausted easily

Anxiety can also be associated with physical manifestations such as:

- Shortness of breath, chest pain
- Heart palpitations
- Muscle aches and tension
- Feelings of nausea, stomach aches, bowel disorders, dry mouth
- Dizziness
- Flushing

These symptoms vary from one individual to the other. Some of these symptoms may overlap with other medical conditions, such as depression or symptoms of Parkinson's disease, and are therefore not always easy to recognize as being related to anxiety.

### ***How does anxiety work?***

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Our emotions, behaviour and physical reactions are largely influenced by the way we interpret situations and events. Often, all sorts of spontaneous, automatic thoughts influence the way we respond to a certain situation. The way we respond or behave with regard to a certain situation influences the way we feel to a large extent.

This theory can be illustrated by the following example:

- Situation/event: It is night and you are upstairs in bed. Suddenly, you hear a noise downstairs as if something fell down.
- Automatic thought: That is a burglar.
- Emotional/physical or behavioural response: You feel anxious.

Alternative:

- Situation/event: It is night and you are upstairs in bed. Suddenly, you hear a noise downstairs as if something fell down.
- Automatic thought: That is my cat.
- Emotional/physical or behavioural response: you calm down, perhaps you feel irritated, but not anxious.

As shown in the example, although the situation is exactly the same, different thoughts can lead to different feelings and reactions. Some of them can make you feel anxious, whereas others do not.

### ***How to reduce anxiety?***

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There are several treatment programs available for psychological problems. They all intend to reduce or improve coping with emotional problems. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is considered the gold standard for the treatment of anxiety, depression and other psychological problems. CBT aims to reduce anxiety by teaching patients

how to identify, evaluate, control and modify their negative anxiety-related thoughts and associated behaviours. In this therapy, patients are usually taught several relaxation techniques to reduce acute feelings of anxiety as well as helpful coping and problem solving strategies that can be used to challenge anxiety and eventually reduce anxiety.

The most common alternative to CBT is pharmacological treatment to reduce anxiety. Benzodiazepines, beta-blockers and antidepressants are the most frequently prescribed drugs. For some people, a combination of CBT and medication is necessary to achieve improvement. In some cases, the use of medication may not be preferable, especially if these drugs interfere with medication used for another medical condition, such as Parkinson's disease.

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## Overview Session 2: Anxiety Monitoring

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about anxiety monitoring that we discussed during session 2. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment on anxiety monitoring.*

### ***What is anxiety monitoring and why is it useful?***

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An anxious feeling often arises automatically, without the person being aware of its cause. People who suffer from anxiety find it therefore difficult to define what exactly made them feel anxious and which thoughts or behaviours were related to these feelings.

The goal of anxiety monitoring is to increase awareness of situations that create anxiety as well as to increase the ability to notice symptoms of anxiety. It can also help you to identify specific conditions, such as a certain time or day or certain occasions, when you are particularly prone to become anxious. Anxiety monitoring may help you and your therapist to target these situations and conditions and work on strategies for the next time a similar situation occurs.

Anxiety monitoring can help you to identify not only which situations cause anxiety, but also which feelings, physical signs, thoughts and behaviours are associated with your anxiety. Moreover, it also provides you with a way to know if your treatment is working and whether symptoms are improving. Recognizing all these aspects of anxiety helps you to better control and eventually reduce your anxiety.

### ***Practicing anxiety monitoring***

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Creating awareness of the feelings, thoughts and behaviours that are associated with our anxiety requires regular practice. Try to practice anxiety monitoring once per day by recalling a situation that made you anxious. This can be a situation that happened recently or a situation as it happened during the day.

Use the practice form to write down relevant details about the situation. Then try to think of any feelings (such as fear, nervousness, or feelings of danger) and physical signs (such as muscle tension) you experienced during this situation. Did you have any thoughts or worries at the time? How did you respond to the situation? The handout of session 1 with a list of anxiety symptoms may help you (p.5).

Try to write down your experiences in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review the situation with your therapist during the next session.

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*

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## Overview Session 3: Self-Management

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about self-management that we discussed during session 3. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment on self-management.*

### ***What is self-management and why is it important?***

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In Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) you will be trained in how to effectively cope with and reduce your anxiety. However, there may be certain personal habits that counteract the effectiveness of CBT without you being aware of it. In fact, you may be strengthening your anxiety without even knowing it. On the other hand, it can be useful to become aware of any personal habits that positively affect your level of anxiety. Reinforcing these habits can significantly contribute to successful and long-lasting effects of anxiety treatment.

### ***Personal habits that can influence your anxiety***

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#### Nutrition

Healthy, balanced meals are important for your overall physical and mental health. Starting your day with a good breakfast and consuming meals with fresh fruits and vegetables can influence your general mood and sense of well-being. Try to avoid food that is difficult to digest, have little nutritional content or contain high levels of sugar.

#### Stimulants

This includes excessive use of alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and soft- and hard drugs. All these stimulants are known to excite the mind and body and therefore have the potential to increase the level of stress and worsen anxiety.

#### Exercise

It is well known that regular exercise can decrease overall levels of tension, improve and stabilize mood, sleep and self-esteem. It can further improve mental health by helping the brain to cope better with stress and it can add to a long-lasting effect of anxiety therapy.

#### Sleep hygiene

Sleep is one of the most important tools for coping with stress and anxiety. Yet, factors like stress and anxiety can in turn affect our sleep remarkably. There are several sleep habits or routines that can improve both the quality of sleep and feelings of restfulness during the day. This is what we call 'sleep hygiene'. If you are currently having sleep problems, these rules may be helpful to improve your sleep. If not, becoming aware of the influence of sleep hygiene on sleep quality and learning skills to improve sleep may be helpful if sleep problems arise in the future.



Sleep hygiene rules:

1. Regular bedtimes and wake times can train your body to sleep well. Try not to sleep more than 6-8 hours per night. Even if you feel like you did not sleep well or you have no early appointments, try to wake up at about the same time every morning.
2. Make sure to actually feel tired or sleepy when trying to sleep. If not, try to do things that make you feel sleepy, like reading a book or doing a relaxation exercise. Try to reduce or, if possible, avoid doing things that keep your brain awake (watching TV, using the computer, eating, working, strenuous exercise, use of stimulants) in the hour prior to bedtime.
3. Make sure that you do not use your bed for anything other than sleeping (and intimacy) in order to train your body to associate going to bed with sleep. This means no TV, reading, eating, working etc. while in bed.
4. If you have not been able to fall asleep within about 30 minutes, get up and try to do something outside of your bedroom that can make you sleepy (reading, relaxation, drinking a warm glass of milk). Staying in bed while lying awake and worrying about not sleeping distorts the association of your bed(room) with sleep.
5. Try to avoid or limit daytime naps, as they can be disruptive to nighttime sleeping. If you do need a nap, make sure to limit it to 30 minutes and have it before 3 p.m. and preferably in bed.
6. Try to keep to your usual plans for the day, even after a bad night's sleep. Avoiding activities due to tiredness can actually worsen your sleep, while keeping busy brings energy during the day and promotes sleep at the end of the day.

### ***Practicing self-management***

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Try to be aware of any other habits that may influence your level of anxiety (such as nutrition, alcohol, caffeine, sugar, exercise). Which of these do you wish to maintain or improve? Try to think of ways to do this, see what works and does not work for you.

Try to get more insight into your sleep routines. Are there any sleep routines that you wish to improve or change? The sleep diary will help you track your sleep, allowing you to see sleep habits and possibly improve your sleep hygiene.

Can you think of any other personal habits (not mentioned here) that may improve or worsen your anxiety? What could you do to maintain or change these habits?

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*

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## Overview Session 4: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about Deep breathing and Mindful awareness that you discussed and practiced during session 4. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment for these techniques.*

### **Introduction**

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As you learned during session 1, anxiety involves different components that all contribute to an anxious response: a physical component (increased heart rate, muscle tension,...), a cognitive component (negative thoughts), and a behavioural component (avoidance, trying to escape the situation). These components can strengthen each other, therewith creating a vicious circle. Deep breathing and mindful awareness are two effective ways of breaking this vicious circle and that can help you to control your anxiety response.

### **Deep breathing: rationale and instructions**

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An effective way to control your anxiety response is to learn how to control the physical component of your anxiety. Changing your breathing patterns provides an easy and fast method to change the physical symptoms of anxiety and can help you to become more relaxed. Here, it is important to learn to change two aspects of breathing: the rate and the way of breathing. Often when we feel anxious, we tend to breathe rapidly and shallow. Rapid breathing can disturb the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the body, which leads to anxiety-related symptoms (dizziness, light-headedness, shortness of breath, increased heart rate etc.). In addition, people who feel stressed or anxious often tend to take shallow breaths into their chest and through their mouths, whereas calm people are more likely to take deeper breaths into their stomach via the nose. The deep breathing technique can teach you how to change your breathing pattern into a calm and relaxed way of breathing during stressful and anxious situations. This may help you to control and reduce your symptoms of anxiety.

#### Instructions:

- Make sure you are in a comfortable position, for instance sitting in a chair, with your legs relaxed and uncrossed.
- Pay attention to your breathing by placing one or both hands on your stomach. Your hand(s) should move out as you inhale and in as you exhale.
- Now try to slow down your breathing. Breathe in through your nose and expand your stomach, and breathe out through your nose and relax your stomach.
- Make sure inhaling takes about the same amount of time as exhaling: Inhale, 2, 3, 4, 5. Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Repeat this for about 2-3 minutes.

## ***Mindful awareness: rationale and instructions***

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Mindful awareness provides another technique that can help you to control any physical sensations and thoughts you can have during stressful or anxious situations. People often tend to focus their attention on anxiety-related symptoms and thoughts when feeling anxious or worried. They feel controlled by their body and thoughts, which prevents them from being in the moment. The Mindful awareness technique involves two simple steps aimed to refocus your attention, away from the physical sensations and thoughts related to your anxiety, back to the present and the world around you. By shifting your awareness back and forth several times between what you feel in your body and what is going on around you, you will learn that you can control your attention and therewith control and reduce feelings of anxiety. A simple technique that allows you to feel more in control as you stay mindful of the present.

### Instructions:

- Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Notice your body, the intake of air, your heartbeat, or other sensations in your body.
- While keeping your eyes closed, consciously shift your attention away from your body to everything you can hear or smell around you or feel through your skin.
- Repeat these steps several times for about 2-3 minutes.

## ***Practicing Deep breathing and Mindful awareness***

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To practice these techniques, you can imagine yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or practice the skills in everyday situations as they happen.

In both cases, follow the instructions for each technique as described above. You can also ask your therapist for the audio tracks with guided instructions. After using the audio recordings for a while you may find it easier to practice without them. Use the worksheet to record afterwards whether the skills were helpful to you. If you wish to record any other experiences related to these techniques, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session. Try to practice both skills at least twice a day for approximately 2-3 minutes.

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*

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## Overview Session 5: Changing thoughts (REACT)

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about Changing thoughts that you discussed and practiced during session 5. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment for this skill.*

### ***Introduction***

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As you learned during session 1, the way we respond or behave with regard to a certain situation influences the way we feel to a large extent. Remember the example of interpreting an unfamiliar noise at night as a burglar or as your cat. This example showed you that different thoughts can lead to different feelings and reactions. Some of them can make you feel anxious, whereas others do not. In this session you will learn to recognize thoughts that are not accurate or realistic and you will learn skills how to change these thoughts to reduce your anxiety.

### ***Changing thoughts (REACT): rationale and instructions***

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The goal of this session is to provide you with a toolbox of skills that will help you to change anxiety-related thoughts in order to reduce your anxiety symptoms. Changing thoughts is based on the principle of REACT, which will be further explained below.

#### R = Recognize

Recognizing thoughts related to your anxiety is the first step of REACT. In the 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise that you learned in session 2 you already practiced with this step. Therefore, when practicing REACT you can use one of the thoughts from today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise.

#### E = Evaluate

The next step is to *evaluate* how realistic or helpful this thought is. Many thoughts we have are actually not that realistic or helpful. Imagine that your spouse or a friend is late for dinner, and you think that something terrible must have happened such as a car accident, while in fact this person is just a little late with no clear reason. The first thought is not very realistic, although it can induce feelings of anxiety. In other situations, some thoughts may actually be realistic, but they are just not helping you. It is therefore important to begin to think of certain thoughts as hypotheses rather than facts and to evaluate how realistic and helpful these thoughts are. This evaluation should be as objective as possible, which results in concluding whether a thought is valid or not. In order to evaluate whether your thoughts are realistic you can ask yourself questions as illustrated in Box 1.

### A = Alternative Thought

If you decided that your thought is not very realistic or helpful you can now try to think of *alternative thoughts* or other ways of thinking about the specific situation that are more realistic or helpful. It is important to open your mind to multiple possibilities because it is often easy to assume that the first (alternative) thought that pops up is the truth or the best option. Also keep in mind that the goal is to replace a dysfunctional thought by a more realistic or helpful thought, which is different from simple positive thinking. Box 1 provides new ways of thinking that follow from the questions used for evaluating your thoughts.

### C = Coping Statement

Another option is to use a *coping statement* or self-statement that may help you to prepare for a stressor, handle or confront a difficult situation, reduce feelings of being overwhelmed, and reinforce yourself for getting through a difficult experience. You can do this by providing instructions to yourself that can help you to manage feelings of anxiety and their impact on your behaviour. Box 2 provides examples for coping statements that can be useful for you. Try to identify which statements are most likely to be useful or relevant for you, or write down any alternative statements you can think of. As with using alternative thoughts, the goal of using coping statements is not simply to look on the bright side of things, but instead to help you to be more realistic or helpful in your thoughts about situations and events.

### T = Thought Stopping

Sometimes it can be useful to use *thought stopping* in order to manage your anxiety-related thoughts. This simply involves to stop dwelling on anxiety-provoking thoughts and to direct your thoughts elsewhere. You can do this for instance by redirecting your attention from your thoughts to everything that is happening around you, as you learned in the Mindful awareness exercise, or to ongoing activities. Sometimes it helps to actually use a sign or an image, such as a big red stop sign, to stop dwelling and ruminating and to return in the present situation.

## ***Practicing Changing thoughts (REACT)***

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Try to practice changing thoughts once daily by applying each of the REACT skills on one of the thoughts that you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise.

Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts.

If you wish to record any other experiences related to these techniques, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.

## Box 1. Evaluating thoughts and identifying alternatives

### 1. *All-or-none thinking*

Am I thinking about a situation in an all-or-none way (e.g., either things are all good or all bad, wonderful or horrible, a success or a failure)? Not seeing a middle ground or leaving room to make mistakes (as all humans do) creates stress.

Alternative thoughts:

Try to use thoughts that look at the middle ground instead of using all-or-none thinking, such as “I may be a success at some activities but not others” or “If I make a mistake, it is not the end of the world”.

### 2. *Overgeneralization*

Do I jump to general conclusions based on a single incident (e.g., if something bad happens once, it will happen over and over again)? Assumptions based on one single, negative event can lead to a continuous cycle of defeat, and create a great deal of stress.

Alternative thoughts:

What evidence is there for your assumption that if something bad happens once, it will happen over and over again? Do you think others would draw the same conclusion? If not, why not? Can you think of a more realistic or helpful conclusion, such as “perhaps this was just bad luck, it does not necessarily mean that it will go wrong every time”.

### 3. *Should statements*

Does my thought include the words *should*, *must*, or *ought* (e.g., “I or other people should act in a certain way”, or “This should turn out in a certain way”)? *Shoulds* set up inflexible rules about how things should go, rules that may not be realistic and cannot be applied to every situation. For that reason, thoughts involving *shoulds* can create stress.

Alternative thoughts:

Try to ask yourself if your expectation is realistic. Ask yourself for example if it is realistic that everyone (including you) will be polite all the time.

### 4. *For sures*

Do I believe *for sure* that something bad will happen or do I overestimate the chance that something bad will happen (e.g., my spouse could have an accident)? Although negative events are always possible, they are often not very likely to happen. Believing that something bad will happen when it probably will not, can create unnecessary feelings of anxiety.

Alternative thoughts:

Ask yourself whether you believe that *for sure* something bad will happen or do you perhaps overestimate the chance that something bad will happen (e.g., my spouse could have an accident)? What is the actual chance, based on facts for instance, that this will happen? Are there any alternative scenario's that are less stressful but are more likely to actually happen?

5. *My faults*

Am I thinking something is *my fault* or am I taking too much responsibility or blame for something that is actually out of my control (e.g., feeling responsible for problems of your children, spouse or a close friend)? Anxious people often tend to think in terms of 'if only I had' or 'if only I had not' and tend to take responsibility for past- or future events that are actually out of their control.

Alternative thoughts:

Try to think of other factors that may be contributing to the situation. Try blaming yourself less, especially when something is out of your control. Instead of feeling responsible, think of ways on how to support someone who has problems.

6. *Big deals*

Am I making a *big deal* out of something that is not a big deal or am I making a mountain out of a molehill (e.g., being late for an appointment)? People can worry or become anxious over things that are not a big deal. Thinking in terms of 'this is terrible' or 'this is a disaster' probably causes them to worry more than necessary.

Alternative thoughts:

Ask yourself "What is really the worst thing that could happen?". Often you will find that whatever the answer to this question is, it is something that you can cope with. When being late for an appointment, worst case you may have to reschedule the appointment. This may be frustrating, but you could cope with it.

## Box 2. Coping statements

### Coping self-statements:

#### **1. Preparing for a stressor**

I can do what I need to do.  
I can develop a plan to deal with this situation.  
I can manage this situation.  
It will be okay once I get started.  
Do not worry; worry will not help anything.

#### **2. Confronting and handling the stressor:**

If I take one step at a time I can meet this challenge.  
Do not think about fear, just about what I have to do.  
Stay relevant.  
Even if I make mistakes, it will be okay.  
Keep the focus on the present. What is it that I have to do *now*?

#### **3. Feeling overwhelmed:**

When the anxiety comes, take a step back, take a deep breath, and think.  
It is not the worst thing in the world.  
Do not avoid.  
This is an opportunity to cope with my anxiety.  
I can do what I have to do in spite of my anxiety.  
My anxiety will not hurt me.

### Reinforcing self-statements:

It worked! I was able to do it!  
It was not as bad as I had expected.  
I made too much out of the situation.  
I can control my anxiety.  
This experience will help me in the future.  
It is getting easier each time I practice these techniques.  
I can learn to cope with my anxiety.  
Relax now, take a deep breath.

### Can you think of other alternative statements (optional):



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## Overview Session 6: Progressive muscle relaxation and Imagery

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about Progressive muscle relaxation and Imagery that you discussed and practiced during session 6. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment for these techniques.*

### ***Introduction***

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Anxiety is often accompanied by muscle tension, a natural response of the body that helps to prepare to escape from potentially dangerous situations. However, people who suffer from anxiety or stress can experience similar tenseness, even though they are not actually in danger. In fact, often we are not even aware of this physical tension, which can result in muscle soreness and other symptoms of physical pain. In this session you will learn two techniques that can help you to recognize and reduce muscle tension, to relax your body and eventually reduce your anxiety response.

### ***Progressive muscle relaxation: rationale and instructions***

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Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is an easy, yet effective method to reduce muscle tension and to become increasingly aware of physical tension during everyday situations. PMR is based on the principle of producing tension in order to achieve relaxation. By tensing up particular muscles and then relax them, you can create a state of deep relaxation within your muscles. It also helps you to recognize the contrast between tension and relaxation more easily, which can increase your awareness of tension that can sometimes build up without noticing.

The goal of PMR is to reduce muscle soreness, not to produce pain. If you experience any physical constraints in certain muscles, such as arthritis, rigidity or cramping, do not involve these muscles in the PMR practice. If you experience chronic pain in most or all of your muscles, you can try Imagery as an alternative method to relax your body.

#### Instructions:

- Make sure you are in a comfortable position, for instance sitting in a chair or lying at your bed. Take off your shoes and use the restroom if necessary.
- Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Slow down your breathing and try to make your mind empty.
- Now tense the first muscle group from the list below for about 5 seconds. Make sure you actually notice the tension, without producing heavy pain.
- Now relax the muscles for about 5-10 seconds. Notice how feelings of relaxation enter your muscles, and notice the difference between tension and relaxation.
- Continue with the next muscle group, or repeat the same muscles if you feel that you are not yet completely relaxed there.

- After finishing the relaxation procedure, take a couple of deep breaths through your stomach to slowly become alert again.

Relaxation sequence:

- **Right arm:** Make a fist and tense your biceps. Bring your wrist upward to your shoulder while pushing your elbow down against the arm of chair or bed.
- **Left arm:** Same as above.
- **Forehead:** Lift your eyebrows as high as possible.
- **Upper cheeks, eyes and nose:** Squeeze your eyes tight shut and wrinkle up your nose.
- **Mouth and jaw:** Open your mouth as wide as you can, similar to if you would be yawning.
- **Neck and throat:** Pull your chin down towards the chest, without actually touching the chest. Then pull your head back slowly, ending with your face forward again. Be careful not to hurt your neck.
- **Shoulders and upper back:** Take a deep breath and hold it. At the same time, push your shoulder blades back and together, trying to make them touch. Try to keep your arms as relaxed as possible while tensing this muscle group.
- **Stomach and chest:** Take a deep breath, fill your lungs and chest with air. Make your stomach hard by holding it tight.
- **Hips and buttocks:** Squeeze your buttock muscles.
- **Right leg:** lift your foot off the floor, flex it, then curl your toes downwards. Do this slowly and carefully to avoid cramps.
- **Left leg:** Same as above.

***Imagery: rationale and instructions***

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Imagery provides an alternative method of creating feelings of deep relaxation that can help you to reduce problems such as muscle soreness, back pain and headaches as well as feelings of anxiety. This method can be particularly useful if you suffer from chronic pain in your body, making PMR less convenient. With Imagery you are asked to recall or imagine a situation in which you feel happy and relaxed, such as the beach, a forest or another specific location from for example a previous holiday. When you mentally (re-)create a relaxing environment in detail, you can actually elicit the same calm and happy feelings as you would experience when actually being present in that situation.

### Instructions:

- Make sure you are in a comfortable position, for instance sitting in a chair or lying at your bed. Take off your shoes and use the restroom if necessary.
- If it feels comfortable you can close your eyes, or keep them open if you tend to fall asleep during this exercise.
- Now allow your body to relax. Feel your arms, back and legs resting against the chair or feel how your body parts melt into your bed. Feel the weight of your body and allow your body to become heavy.
- Now take a couple of deep breaths, in through your nose while expanding your stomach, and out through your nose while relaxing your stomach.
- Now recall or imagine your chosen situation in as much vivid detail as possible. Make sure you incorporate all of your senses in this experience (sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch). Take your time.
- When you are ready, begin to bring awareness back into your body. Become aware of your body sitting in the chair or lying on your bed. Slowly start to wiggle your fingers and toes, and when you are ready, gently open your eyes.
- Take one final deep breath to finish this relaxation procedure.

### ***Practicing progressive muscle relaxation and imagery***

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To practice these techniques, follow the instructions for each technique as described above. You can also ask your therapist for the audio tracks with guided instructions. After using the audio recordings for a while you may find it easier to practice without them. Make sure to record afterwards whether the skills were helpful to you. If you wish to record any other experiences related to these techniques, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.

Try to practice both skills (if possible) once daily in a relaxing environment. Explore which technique is most convenient for you to achieve a state of physical and/or mental relaxation.

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*

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## Overview Session 7: Problem solving (SOLVED)

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about Problem solving that you discussed and practiced during session 7. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment for this skill.*

### **Introduction**

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Everyone encounters problems in daily situations that sometimes seem impossible to solve. It is not always easy to think of solutions to solve a problem, especially when you are stuck in a certain way of thinking, such as all-or-none thinking (e.g., there is only one solution and I cannot do it). Anxious people often underestimate their ability to solve problems, or they may have good ideas about how to solve problems but somehow never seem to actually take the steps to make them happen. Unsolved problems or difficulties with generating solutions can make you feel worried and increases your anxiety. It can also make you avoid anxiety-producing situations that seem difficult to solve.

### ***Problem solving (SOLVED): rationale and instructions***

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The goal of this session is to add another coping skill to your toolbox of skills that will help you to change anxiety-related behaviour. Here you will learn to identify and carry out strategies to solve problems. Problem solving is based on the principle of SOLVED, which will be further explained below.

#### S = Select a problem

The first step is to select a relevant problem to be solved. This can be an anxiety-related problem that is related to a previous or today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise. Make sure that the problem you select is specific, as well as reasonable and solvable. Before you decide whether a problem is solvable, check whether you should apply thought-changing strategies to avoid all-or-none thinking, shoulds (I should be able to make this work perfectly, but I cannot), for sures (this situation is so terrible, there is just nothing I can do) etc. Also reflect on the difference between changing the way you think about a situation and actually doing something to solve the problem. Examples of solvable, reasonable problems are: "I'm afraid to share my concerns about the future with my doctor", "I'm embarrassed to speak in public", "I can't go out, because my medication may 'wear off'".

#### O = Open your mind to all possible solutions

In this step you are going to brainstorm about every possible solution that comes to your mind, without consideration of the consequences or the likelihood that the solution will actually work. Think as broad as possible. Think for instance about what advice you would give someone else with this problem, or look at the ways you and others have

handled similar situations. It may also help to brainstorm with your spouse or a close friend or family member about how they would solve this problem.

If you can think of more than 4 solutions (as listed on the work sheet) do not feel restricted to write them all down.

#### L = List the pros and cons of each potential solution

Now you are going to consider the possible consequences or outcomes of each solution if you would actually enact them. For this, try to write down the pros and cons of each solution (or costs and benefits). Putting this on paper will help you to reduce the time spent ruminating. Also, keep checking for any thoughts that may benefit from change (by using the steps from Changing thoughts). If you are not sure about the consequences of a certain solution, you may consider to seek advice from other people such as family or friends or even professionals such as a financial advisor.

#### V = Verify the best solution and create a plan

Evaluation of the outcomes of each solution often makes it easier to rank the solutions according to how practical or desirable they are. It also helps you to identify whether you can enact a solution by yourself or if you may need help from other people. Now try to identify the best solution to your problem and the steps that are needed to carry it out. Again, apply any thought-changing skills if necessary in order to avoid the pitfall of all-or-none thinking or shoulds (e.g., I should be able to solve this by myself). Keep in mind that the goal is to solve the problem, and that you are allowed to use every possible help that is necessary to enact the solution. Make sure that you break the actions down into small steps to facilitate solving the problem.

#### E = Enact

Now it is time to actually carry out the actions that you specified in the previous step. Try to identify which steps can be taken during the upcoming week to work towards solving the problem.

#### D = Decide if the plan worked

In this last step, you are going to evaluate how well the chosen solution actually worked. For this, you can list the pros and cons of the outcome. If the solution was effective, give yourself a pat on the back! If not, try to think of possible reasons why not. Did you perhaps select a problem that appears to be unsolvable or not specific enough? If so, go back to step "S" and select a new problem or make the problem more specific. Or would another solution have been more effective? You can then go back to "O" or "L" to identify alternative solutions for the same problem. Try not to blame yourself for not solving the problem at once. Remember that going through all those steps and opening your mind to possible solutions is already an important step towards changing anxiety behaviour. Do not expect to succeed at once, but notice the progress you make with every practice.

## ***Practicing Problem solving (SOLVED)***

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During session 7 you and your therapist have discussed steps to solve a problem. Start practicing 'Problem solving' by reviewing these steps (problem 1). Also try to apply the learned strategies to one additional anxiety-related problem (problem 2) from your 'Anxiety-monitoring' exercise.

You can use the upcoming week to practice the SOLVED steps and to enact those actions toward solving problem 2 that you wrote down at step "E". You do not have to select a new problem every day, but you are of course free to apply any of the steps to other problems that you encounter during the week.

If you wish to record any other experiences related to the SOLVED steps, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*

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## Overview Session 8: Changing anxiety behaviour

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*This overview gives you a summary of the information about Changing anxiety behaviour that you discussed and practiced during session 8. It also provides information about how to do the home assignment for this skill.*

### **Introduction**

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Problem solving can be very useful for problems or situations that otherwise cause you to feel worried or anxious. However, for some problems it may not be necessary or appropriate to solve them. Sometimes anxiety behaviour involves activities that just need to be done or behaviours that need to be stopped. In other words, there is no problem to solve. In this case, you need to give yourself the chance to face anxiety-producing situations and learn how to handle them in order to reduce your anxiety.

### **Changing anxiety behaviour**

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Some behaviours may seem to reduce your anxiety feelings in the short term, but in the long run these behaviours actually maintain your anxiety as they are not aimed at learning how to handle these anxiety-producing situations. If you are afraid of going to the dentist you may tend to procrastinate making an appointment or just never go in order to avoid your anxiety. However, simply making an appointment and finding a way to make the visit as comfortable as possible to yourself is actually much more effective in reducing your fear for the dentist. Or, if you are constantly worried that something bad happened to your relatives, you can call them repeatedly to ask whether they are okay in order to take you away from the fear of not knowing if they are always okay. This behaviour does, however, not release you from your anxiety.

Sometimes the best strategy to decrease your anxiety is to first increase anxiety by doing something you usually do not do or by stopping a behaviour that you do too much. As illustrated in the two examples above, simply making your dentist appointment or just stop calling your relatives all the time may be much more effective for changing your anxiety behaviour and reducing your anxiety symptoms.

Changing anxiety behaviour by exposing yourself to anxiety-producing situations is deliberately left for late in treatment. As anxiety will probably increase when facing situations that have been avoided for a long time, you need to be able to apply the skills you learned to control and reduce your anxiety (e.g., relaxation, changing thoughts and problem solving).

## ***Practicing Changing anxiety behaviour***

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To practice 'Changing anxiety behaviour', use the list from session 8 with situations that you would like to face and behaviours that need to be stopped. Feel free to add other situations or behaviours to the list, as long as they are specific and realistically changeable, as your goal is to practice them in real life.

In the upcoming week, try to practice one or two situations or behaviours from the list. Make sure to record afterwards on the form which relaxation or coping skills you used when facing the situation or behaviour and whether this was helpful.

If you wish to record any other experiences related to exercise on Changing anxiety behaviour, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.

*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety.*



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## Overview Session 9: Review of coping skills

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*This overview gives you a summary of all the coping skills that you learned during the previous sessions. It also gives you some instructions to start preparing your Self-management plan.*

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### Summary of Coping skills

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#### Relaxation

You learned several anxiety management techniques. First, Deep breathing that helps you to control and calm your breathing, by breathing in and out through your nose via the stomach. Then, Mindful awareness that helps you to refocus your attention in order to regain control and calmness during anxious situations or excessive worrying. You also learned PMR, which involves tensing and relaxing of your muscles in order to reduce muscle soreness. And finally, Imagery, which involves visualizing of situations in which you feel happy and relaxed.

#### Changing thoughts

To change anxiety-related thoughts you learned how to use REACT. **R**-ecognize the anxiety-related thought, **E**-valuate how realistic this thought is (check for thinking errors such as all-or-none thinking, shoulds, for sures, my faults or big deals). If you decided that the thought is not realistic, try to think of **A**-lternative thoughts that are more realistic, use **C**-oping statements for handling anxiety situations, or use **T**-hought stopping to stop dwelling on anxiety-provoking thoughts.

#### Problem solving

An effective way to change anxiety-related behaviour can be to solve the problems that you are worrying about by applying the SOLVED strategy. First **S**-elect a specific and solvable problem. Then **O**-pen your mind to all possible solutions without thinking about the outcome or consequences. Now **L**-ist the pros and cons of each solution and use this list to **V**-erify the best solution. Make a realistic plan to **E**-nact your solution and, finally, **D**-ecide if your plan worked. Repeat this process if necessary.

#### Changing anxiety behaviour

Anxiety-related behaviours are often those that you do not do (avoidance behaviour) or do too much (e.g., repeated checking) in order to reduce your anxiety feelings in the short term. However, in the long run these behaviours actually maintain or even increase your anxiety. To decrease your anxiety in the long-term, you need to give yourself the chance to face anxiety-producing situations and learn how to handle them. For this, you can use your relaxation and coping skills to help you control and finally reduce your anxiety.

## ***Preparing your Self-management plan***

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The next session will be the final session of your treatment. During this session your therapist will discuss with you which skills were most helpful to you in coping with or reducing your anxiety-related thoughts and behaviours. It may be helpful to already think about this beforehand. Also try to reflect on how these skills can be integrated in your everyday life in a way that you can easily use them to target future or recurring anxious situations or behaviours.

Another important part of your self-management plan will be to discuss your original treatment goals. Here you can reflect on what gains you have made and what progress is still needed to help you to control your anxiety in the long run. Are there other changes that you wish to make? What steps are needed to realize these changes? Try to write some first thoughts about this on the worksheet.

Your therapist will also discuss the overall utility of the treatment for you. Did you find it worthwhile? Which parts did you like and which parts were less useful? But also, how do you feel about terminating this treatment? Try to already reflect on this before the next session. If you want you can make notes on the worksheet.

If you make notes, try to write them down in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.

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## Overview Session 10: Self-management plan

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*This overview gives you a summary of things you can do to maintain your treatment gains and how to deal with or prevent a (re)lapse when treatment has ended.*

### **Staying healthy**

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For your mental health and well-being, it is important to maintain the positive changes you have made during treatment. For this you should keep practicing and using the skills you have learned during treatment, even when there are no more therapy sessions to attend. The easiest way to do this is when these skills and insights are part of your everyday lifestyle. In addition to this, there are a number of things that can help you to stay healthy or achieve additional improvements.

#### **1. Habits and routines**

During session 3 we discussed how personal habits can influence your anxiety and well-being. Maintaining a reasonably structured routine and a balanced lifestyle, such as healthy meals, good sleep hygiene and regular exercise, can positively influence the way you feel. Also don't forget to regularly engage in social activities that can be relaxing, fun and/or challenging.

#### **2. Social support network**

When we worry about things it can sometimes be difficult to stop the worrying-cycle when we are on our own. Problems can seem bigger than they really are. At these moments, and in general, it might help to have someone to talk through your worries. This should not be a therapy session, but just a way to share with people you trust what is going on in your life. Expressing your thoughts can sometimes already help you to put a problem in perspective and reverse the thinking process. Also, engagement of a social support network, including your partner, friends or family, is very important in preventing relapse. They can support you to maintain the gains you made in coping with your anxiety, also when facing recurring anxiety situations or new challenges. Furthermore, socializing in general can be very enjoyable and will help you stay engaged in pleasant and fun events.

#### **3. Professional support network**

Apart from your social network you should also invest in a good professional environment. It is very important that you have a doctor that you trust, and with whom you can discuss your concerns and your needs with respect to both your physical AND mental health. Make sure your doctor knows how you feel and what is going on in your life. This way you can keep an active role in coping with your anxiety or other health concerns and in making decisions about treatment options.

#### **4. Realistic expectations**

Even though you may have made many improvements during therapy, this does not mean that you will never encounter problems again in the future. Slip-ups in progress can happen at any time and are often unexpected. Having a down day, however, does not automatically mean that you are 'back to square one'. Everything you learned and achieved has not disappeared. In fact, you can use the skills you learned to challenge the bad day and cope with unpleasant situations, or you can simply let it pass and try again the next day. Remember that most people have 'ups-and-downs' every now and then, and that they are simply just part of life.

#### **5. Remember the progress you have already made**

Sometimes we have the tendency to focus on things that do not go well and forget where we came from. Be kind to yourself and do not blame yourself if things do not go as planned. Try to focus on the things you have already achieved so far and use possible setbacks as an opportunity to learn something new about yourself.

#### **6. Rewarding yourself**

Managing anxiety is challenging and hard work. Remember that any progress you have made and are still making is due to your own efforts. It is important to take the time to reward yourself for all the work you are doing, which at the same time can be motivating to continue with your efforts. A reward might be going out for a nice meal, taking some time to relax, or buying yourself something nice, as long as it is something that you enjoy!

### ***Dealing with down days and preventing a relapse***

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You have already done a lot of work to reduce your anxiety symptoms. We want to make sure that you hold on to these positive changes in the long-term. As mentioned before, it is normal to expect some bumps or lapses along the way. Luckily, there are ways to deal with slip-ups (lapses) and prevent them from becoming a relapse.

It is important to know the difference between a lapse and a relapse.

- A *lapse* or slip-up is a brief return of old and unhelpful habits. It is normal to occasionally have a down-day in everyday life. You might be feeling more physically or mentally stressed. When you are feeling physically unwell or tired, problems might seem more challenging and you might find it difficult to cope with them.
- A *relapse* is a complete return to all of your old ways of thinking and behaving when you are anxious. This means that you react the same way to stressful situations as before you started treatment.

When you experience a down-day, do not see this as a sign of failure or as if you should start all over. Even when it feels as if you are 'back at square one', remember all the things that you have learned during treatment and did not know prior to this treatment. You now know how to cope with stressful situations and that you are able to control them. Using the skills you learned during your treatment sessions can help you cope and prevent a lapse from becoming a major relapse. The self-management plan can help you:

### **Identify early warning signs**

The first step is to look at your own early warning signs that things are not going as well as they have been. You are less likely to have a lapse if you know when you're more vulnerable to having one. Some common examples include such things as..

- Spending an increased amount of time worrying about things
- Reverting back to using strategies that are not helpful, such as avoiding a problem
- An increase in the physical symptoms of anxiety, especially tension.
- Major life changes, both positive and negative (e.g., moving to a new home, death of a family member/friend)

### **Revise skills**

In case you notice any warning signs or encounter a situation which is a potential problem for you, think about the new skills you have learned during treatment. What were the most helpful ones in terms of reducing your level of worry (e.g., progressive muscle relaxation; imagery; or sleep hygiene). Make use of the handouts to help you practice those skills some more.

### **Social and professional support**

If you feel worried or unbalanced, share your concerns with people from your social network, and if desired, also with your doctor. Sharing your problems or worries with people around you can prevent them from piling up and becoming too stressful.

Even if you feel like you are experiencing a major relapse, remember that you can always get back on track. It might take some time and practice, but try to think of it as an opportunity to learn something new about yourself and as a challenge to deal with new situations. Remember where you came from and most importantly: remember that you *are* capable of doing this because you have done it before!

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**Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 1**

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**Education about anxiety**

Read the handout on education about anxiety from session 1. Use the marker to underline any sections or topics you would like to discuss further during the next session. Write any questions you have on the worksheet.

**Anxiety symptoms and motivation for change**

Try to further reflect on which (other) anxiety symptoms you wish to tackle during treatment and your motivation for change. Make notes about this on the worksheet.

**Treatment goals**

Following the discussion about treatment goals, try to write down potential individual treatment goals on the worksheet.

***Practice Exercises: Week 1***

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

***Education about anxiety***

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Write down any questions or comments you have about the material on education about anxiety:

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***Anxiety symptoms and motivation for change***

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Write down which (other) anxiety symptoms you wish to tackle during treatment and your motivation for change:

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***Treatment goals***

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Write down your treatment goals. What would you like to achieve with following this therapy program?

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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 2

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

**Practice Exercises: Week 2**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

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*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

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*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 3

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Self-management**

Try to be aware of any habits that may influence your level of anxiety (such as nutrition, alcohol, caffeine, sugar, exercise, or sleep hygiene). Which of these do you wish to maintain or improve? Try to think of ways to do this, see what works and does not work for you. Use the sleep diary to get more insight into your sleep routines and habits. One part should be completed in the morning, the other at the end of the day. It only takes a few minutes each day.

*Try to write down your experiences in a way that makes it easy for you to recall and review them with your therapist during the next session.*

**Practice Exercises: Week 3**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

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*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

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*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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## ***Self-management***

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Have you noticed any habits that influenced your anxiety complaints? Indicate whether this habit had a positive or negative effect on your anxiety. Not all habits may apply to you.

- Nutrition: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Stimulants: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Exercise: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Sleep hygiene: \_\_\_\_\_

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Which of these habit(s) did you want to change/improve?

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What did you do to change the habit(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you notice any other habits that influenced your level of anxiety?

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If so, which habit(s) and what could you do to change it?

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Sleep diary:

Complete this form in the morning after you wake up

<b>Day of week:</b>							
What time did you go to bed last night?							
What time did you wake up this morning?							
Did it seem to take a long time to fall asleep?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
How many times did you wake up during the night?							
What woke you up?							
How did you feel when you woke up this morning?  1 – wide awake 2 – awake but still tired 3 – sleepy							

Adapted from NIH Medline Plus Magazine (Summer, 2012; <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/magazine/>) and Havas et al., 2014.



Complete this form in the evening before you go to bed

<b>Day of week:</b>							
I consumed caffeinated drinks (e.g. coffee, tea, cola drinks) in the (M)orning, (A)fternoon, (E)vening, How many?	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____	Yes / No M / A / E _____
Have you had any alcohol today? If so, how much?	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____
Did you have any naps today? If yes, for how long?	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____
Did you do any exercise today? If yes for how long?	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____	Yes / No _____
During the day, my mood was 1 – very good 2 – good 3 – neutral 4 – bad 5 – very bad							
How sleepy did you feel during the day today?  1 – not at all 2 – a little bit 3 – very sleepy							

Adapted from NIH Medline Plus Magazine (Summer, 2012; <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/magazine/>) and Havas et al., 2014.



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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 4

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Self-management (Optional)**

Try to be aware of any additional habits that may influence your level of anxiety (such as nutrition, alcohol, caffeine, sugar, exercise, or sleep hygiene). Which of these do you wish to maintain or improve?

### **Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness**

To practice these relaxation skills, you can imagine yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or practice the skills in everyday situations as they happen. In both cases, follow the steps from your 'Anxiety management I' handout or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skills were helpful to you. Try to practice both skills at least twice a day for approximately 2-3 minutes.

**Practice Exercises: Week 4**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

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*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

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*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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**Self-management (Optional)**

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Have you noticed any habits that influence your anxiety complaints? Indicate whether these habits had a positive or negative effect on your anxiety.

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Which habit(s) did you want to change? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you do to change the habit(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

Was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness**

---

*Deep breathing*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	

*Mindful Awareness*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	



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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 5

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness**

To practice these relaxation skills, you can imagine yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or practice the skills in everyday situations as they happen. In both cases, follow the steps from your 'Anxiety management I' handout or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skills were helpful to you. Try to practice both skills each day for approximately 2-3 minutes.

### **Changing thoughts**

Try to practice changing thoughts once daily by applying each of the REACT skills on one of the thoughts that you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise. Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts. For an overview of the REACT skills, check the 'Changing thoughts' handout.

**Practice Exercises: Week 5**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

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*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

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*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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**Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness**

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*Deep breathing*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	

*Mindful Awareness*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	

**Changing thoughts: REACT**

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**R = Recognize:** Which anxiety-related thought did you use?

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**E = Evaluate:** Please check what errors apply to the thought listed above

- All-or-none Thinking       Overgeneralization       For Sures  
 Big Deals                       Shoulds                       My Faults

Now, try to change this thought by using the following skills:

**A = Alternative thoughts:** What would be a more realistic/helpful thought?

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**C = Coping statement:** Which coping statement did you use?

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---

<b>T = Thought stopping</b>	Yes	No
Did you try thought stopping?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___

Please check which skill(s) was/were most useful to you for this specific thought?

- Alternative thoughts       Coping statement       Thought



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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 6

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness**

To practice these relaxation skills, you can imagine yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or practice the skills in everyday situations as they happen. In both cases, follow the steps from your 'Anxiety management I' handout or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skills were helpful to you. Try to practice one of these skills each day for approximately 2-3 minutes.

### **Anxiety management II: Progressive muscle relaxation and Imagery**

To practice these relaxation skills, follow the steps from your 'Anxiety management II' handout or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skills were helpful to you. Try to practice both skills (if possible) once daily in a relaxing environment.

### **Changing thoughts**

Try to practice changing thoughts once daily by applying each of the REACT skills on one of the thoughts that you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise. Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts. For an overview of the REACT skills, check the 'Changing thoughts' handout.

**Practice Exercises: Week 6**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

---

*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

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*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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***Anxiety management I: Deep breathing & Mindful awareness***

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*Deep breathing*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	

*Mindful Awareness*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
How many times did you practice this skill in total today?	_____	

***Anxiety management II: Progressive muscle relaxation and Imagery***

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	Yes	No
Did you practice progressive muscle relaxation today?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice imagery today?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___

**Changing thoughts: REACT**

---

**R = Recognize:** Which anxiety-related thought did you use?

---

**E = Evaluate:** Please check what errors apply to the thought listed above

- All-or-none Thinking       Overgeneralization       For Sures  
 Big Deals       Shoulds       My Faults

Now, try to change this thought by using the following skills:

**A = Alternative thoughts:** What would be a more realistic thought?

---

---

**C = Coping statement:** Which coping statement did you use?

---

---

**T = Thought stopping**

Yes    No

Did you try thought stopping?

\_\_\_    \_\_\_

Was it helpful?

\_\_\_    \_\_\_

Please check which skill(s) was/were most useful to you for this specific thought?

- Alternative thoughts       Coping statement       Thought





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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 7

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Anxiety management:**

You have learned and practiced several anxiety management techniques, including deep breathing, mindful awareness, progressive muscle relaxation and imagery. Perhaps you already found out which skill(s) work best for you. Continue to practice relaxation skills as often as needed, by imagining yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or in everyday situations as they happen. You can follow the steps on the handouts or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skill was helpful to you. If desired, you can practice more than one skill each day.

### **Changing thoughts**

Try to practice changing thoughts once daily by applying each of the REACT skills on one of the thoughts that you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise. Alternatively, you can use anxiety-producing situations as they occur throughout the week. Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts. For an overview of the REACT skills, check the 'Changing thoughts' handout.

### **Problem solving**

During session 7 you and your therapist have discussed steps to solve a problem. Start practicing this skill by reviewing these steps (problem 1). Then try to apply the learned strategies to one additional anxiety-related problem from today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise (problem 2). You do not have to select a new problem every day, but you are of course free to apply any of the steps to other problems that you encounter during the week. For an overview of the SOLVED skills, check the 'Problem solving' handout.

**Practice Exercises: Week 7**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

---

*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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---

*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

---

---

*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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---

*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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## **Anxiety management**

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**Exercise selected:**

*Deep breathing / Mindful awareness / Progressive muscle relaxation / Imagery*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___

### **Changing thoughts: REACT**

---

**R = Recognize:** Which anxiety-related thought did you use?

---

**E = Evaluate:** Please check what errors apply to the thought listed above

<input type="checkbox"/> All-or-none Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> Overgeneralization	<input type="checkbox"/> For Sures
<input type="checkbox"/> Big Deals	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoulds	<input type="checkbox"/> My Faults

Now, try to change this thought by using the following skills:

**A = Alternative thoughts:** What would be a more realistic thought?

---

**C = Coping statement:** Which coping statement did you use?

---

<b>T = Thought stopping</b>	Yes	No
Did you try though stopping?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___

Please check which skill(s) was/were most useful to you for this specific thought?

<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/> Coping statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Thought stopping
---	---	---

**Problem solving: SOLVED**

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Please write down the steps taken to solve problem 1:

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**S** = Select a problem: Please describe problem 2:

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**O** = Open your mind to all possible solutions:

- A. \_\_\_\_\_  
B. \_\_\_\_\_  
C. \_\_\_\_\_  
D. \_\_\_\_\_

**L** = List the Pros and Cons of each solution

Solutions	Pros	Cons
A		
B		
C		
D		

**V** = Verify the best solution and create a plan

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**E** = Enact the plan: which steps can be taken this week to solve the problem

---

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**D** = Decide if the plan worked: was your solution effective?

Yes       No



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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 8

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours.

### **Anxiety management:**

You have learned and practiced several anxiety management techniques, including deep breathing, mindful awareness, progressive muscle relaxation and imagery. Perhaps you already found out which skill(s) work best for you. Continue to practice relaxation skills as often as needed, by imagining yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or in everyday situations as they happen. You can follow the steps on the handouts or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skill was helpful to you. If desired, you can of course practice more than one skill each day.

### **Changing thoughts**

Try to practice changing thoughts in anxiety-producing situations as they occur throughout the week. Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts. For an overview of the REACT skills, check the 'Changing thoughts' handout.

### **Problem solving**

Try to practice problem solving in anxiety-producing situations as they occur throughout the week. For an overview of the SOLVED skills, check the 'Problem solving' handout.

### **Changing anxiety behaviour**

Use the situations or behaviours addressed in session 8 for practicing changing anxiety behaviour. Make sure to record afterwards on the form which relaxation or coping skills you used when facing the situation or behaviour and whether this was helpful.

**Practice Exercises: Week 8**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

---

*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

---

---

*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

---

---

*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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---

*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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**Anxiety management**

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**Exercise selected:**

*Deep breathing / Mindful awareness / Progressive muscle relaxation / Imagery*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___

**Changing thoughts: REACT**

---

	Yes	No
Did you use REACT to change your anxious thoughts?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___
Which skill(s) did you use for this specific thought?		
___ Alternative thoughts	___ Coping statement	___ Thought stopping

**Problem solving: SOLVED**

---

	Yes	No
Did you use problem solving to solve anxiety-related problems?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___

## Changing anxiety behaviour

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Which situation(s) or behaviour(s) did you practice this week?

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Did you use relaxation skills to reduce your anxiety? Yes    No  
\_\_\_\_\_

If so, which one(s):  Deep breathing       Mindful awareness  
 Muscle relaxation       Imagery

Was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you use any coping skills to reduce your anxiety? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, which one(s):  REACT       Problem solving

Was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_



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## Instructions and Practice Exercises: Session 9

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*Remember: The more you practice the better you will get at reducing and controlling your anxiety*

### **Practice times**

Choosing a regular time once a day for practice may be helpful. When could your practice times be? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anxiety monitoring**

Just think of a recent situation that made you anxious, and use the practice form to write down the situation and any associated feelings, physical signs, thoughts, and behaviours. Try to monitor one situation per day.

### **Anxiety management:**

You have learned and practiced several anxiety management techniques, including deep breathing, mindful awareness, progressive muscle relaxation and imagery. Perhaps you already found out which skill(s) work best for you. Continue to practice relaxation skills as often as needed, by imagining yourself back in the anxiety situation you described in today's 'Anxiety monitoring' exercise and/or in everyday situations as they happen. You can follow the steps on the handouts or use the audio instructions. Make sure to record afterwards on the form whether the skill was helpful to you. If desired, you can of course practice more than one skill each day.

### **Changing thoughts**

Try to practice changing thoughts in anxiety-producing situations as they occur throughout the week. Try to determine which of the REACT skills are most useful for various types of thoughts. For an overview of the REACT skills, check the 'Changing thoughts' handout.

### **Problem solving**

Try to practice problem solving in anxiety-producing situations as they occur throughout the week. For an overview of the SOLVED skills, check the 'Problem solving' handout.

### **Changing anxiety behaviour**

Use the situations or behaviours addressed in today's session for practicing changing anxiety behaviour. Make sure to record afterwards on the form which relaxation or coping skills you used when facing the situation or behaviour and whether this was helpful.

### **Self-management plan**

Try to reflect on and/or fill in the sections of the Self-management plan. In addition, read the handout of session 10 for the next session.

**Practice Exercises: Week 9**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anxiety monitoring**

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*1. Situation:*

When/where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

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*2. Feelings*

What feelings did you have?

---

---

*3. Physical signs*

How did your body feel?

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---

*4. Thoughts*

What thoughts or worries did you have?

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*5. Behaviours*

What did you do at the time? How did you cope with the situation?

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*6. Effect*

What was the effect of your behaviour? Would you have preferred another way of dealing with the situation?

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## **Anxiety management**

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### **Exercise selected:**

*Deep breathing / Mindful awareness / Progressive muscle relaxation / Imagery*

	Yes	No
Did you practice this skill when you imagined an anxiety situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___
Did you practice this skill today in an everyday situation?	___	___
If so, was it helpful?	___	___

### **Changing thoughts: REACT**

---

	Yes	No
Did you use REACT to change your anxious thoughts?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___
Which skill(s) did you use for this specific thought?		
___ Alternative thoughts	___ Coping statement	___ Thought stopping

### **Problem solving: SOLVED**

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	Yes	No
Did you use problem solving to solve anxiety-related problems?	___	___
Was it helpful?	___	___

## Changing anxiety behaviour

---

Which situation(s) or behaviour(s) did you practice this week?

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Did you use relaxation skills to reduce your anxiety? Yes    No  
\_\_\_    \_\_\_

If so, which one(s):  Deep breathing       Mindful awareness  
 Muscle relaxation       Imagery

Was it helpful? \_\_\_    \_\_\_

Did you use any coping skills to reduce your anxiety? \_\_\_    \_\_\_

If so, which one(s):  REACT       Problem solving

Was it helpful? \_\_\_    \_\_\_

**Self-management plan**

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Which of the acquired skills were most useful to you in coping with or reducing anxiety?

- Anxiety monitoring       Deep breathing       Mindful awareness  
 Muscle relaxation       Imagery       REACT       Problem solving

Which of these skills do you intend to keep using in everyday life and/or in future anxiety-producing situations? And in what way?

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What were your original treatment goals? What gains have you made? What progress is still needed?

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Are there other changes related to anxiety thoughts or behaviour you wish to make? What steps are needed to realize these changes?

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Did you find the treatment worthwhile? Which parts did you like, and which parts were less useful to you?

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How do you feel about terminating this treatment?

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