

Fear Hierarchy

Understanding the activities that cause us fear, anxiety, and panic helps target appropriate Interoceptive Exposure Therapy treatment.

This worksheet considers several situations or activities that may be fear-inducing.

Visualize and consider the following situations or activities and score them (0 – no anxiety/distress and 10 – maximum anxiety/distress). Add others.

Event or activity	Degree of anxiety or distress (0 – 10)
1. Going on holiday	
2. Going shopping	
3. Going to work	
4. Giving a presentation	
5. Going on a date	
6. Meeting friends	
7. Attending an interview	
8. Sitting on your own in a restaurant	
9. Walking into a busy room	
10. Meeting new people	
11.	
12.	
13.	

Choose your top three, i.e., those activities or events that cause you the most distress.

For each one, consider what physical sensations you experience when you close your eyes and visualize being in the experiences:

Event or activity	Physical sensation

The sensations you experience are the ones you will need to focus on as part of Interoceptive Exposure Therapy (Lee et al., 2006; McCabe & Milosevic, 2015).

References

- Lee, K., Noda, Y., Nakano, Y., Ogawa, S., Kinoshita, Y., Funayama, T., & Furukawa, T. A. (2006). *Interoceptive hypersensitivity and interoceptive exposure in patients with panic disorder: Specificity and effectiveness*. BMC Psychiatry, 6(1).
- McCabe, R., & Milosevic, I. (2015). *Phobias: The psychology of irrational fear*. Oxford: ABC-CLIO, LLC.

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