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## Anxiety Exposure

Anxiety is a normal part of everyone's life, however for some people their anxiety is more *frequent, intense, and persistent* than "normal." The anxiety may come about as a response to a specific thing (such as a phobia) or it can be more general to include fears and worries about everyday situations. Feelings of anxiety can interfere with daily life by leading people to *avoid* the negative feelings by *avoiding* everyday situations.

However, the only way to reduce fear and anxiety is to deliberately *approach* (rather than avoid) the fear. We call this process *exposure*. Confronting fears in this way does two things: 1) it disproves distorted thoughts and beliefs about situations, and 2) it proves that the fear is not as unbearable as you may have expected.

Today's Exposure

Event: \_\_\_\_\_

### Before

Feeling: \_\_\_\_\_ Intensity (0-10): \_\_\_\_\_

Automatic thoughts about the exposure event:

Possible alternative, balanced thoughts about the exposure event:

### During

Be aware of your thoughts and feelings and *do not try to avoid them*. Remind yourself that facing the fear is the only way to reduce it. Review the balanced thoughts you came up with.

Emotions experienced during the exposure: \_\_\_\_\_

Most intense level of distress during the exposure (0 – 10): \_\_\_\_\_

### After

Intensity of distress after the exposure (0 – 10): \_\_\_\_\_

New thoughts and beliefs about the exposure event: