ERP for adults

Exposure and response prevention for OCD

Purpose

This worksheet is used to map OCD patterns, plan ERP exercises and review completed exercises.

The aim is to practise a new response to OCD: facing what OCD reacts to without carrying out the usual compulsion, avoidance, reassurance seeking or mental neutralisation.

The worksheet is a clinical tool for discussion and treatment planning. It is not a diagnostic tool.

Instructions

1 Map the OCD pattern

Write down what triggers OCD, what OCD urges you to do and what you do to obtain short-term relief.

2 Make an ERP plan

Choose specific exercises and agree which rituals, checks or safety strategies you will refrain from using.

3 Practise and review

Complete the exercise, notice any pitfalls and adjust the next step.

Completed by

Name _____

Date _____

Clinician _____

OCD theme _____

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Step 1: ERP compulsion diary

Before beginning ERP, the OCD pattern needs to be mapped. The diary helps identify what triggers OCD, which response OCD urges you towards and what maintains the pattern.

Record

Date | **Distress 0-10** | **Situation**

What triggered OCD?

What thought, impulse, feeling or bodily sensation came up?

What did OCD tell me to do?

What did I do to obtain short-term relief or certainty?

- ☐ Checked
- ☐ Washed or cleaned
- ☐ Repeated something or did it again
- ☐ Asked for reassurance
- ☐ Mentally analysed the situation
- ☐ Checked my body or how I felt
- ☐ Searched for information or googled
- ☐ Avoided or postponed
- ☐ Asked other people to help
- ☐ Tried to get a just-right feeling
- ☐ Performed a ritual afterwards
- ☐ Something else

What happened shortly afterwards, and how can the response maintain OCD?

What different response could I practise next time?

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Step 2: ERP plan

The plan turns the mapping into specific ERP exercises.

Which OCD pattern are we working with?

What is the most important thing to practise?

Which response needs to change?

Who will provide support?

Part A: ERP hierarchy

ERP step	Situation or exercise	Expected distress 0-10	Which compulsive response will I refrain from?	When will I practise it?

Part B: Response prevention plan

Response prevention is not only about refraining from visible actions. Hidden rituals, mental analysis, reassurance seeking, bodily checking and neutralising afterwards can also maintain OCD.

When OCD is activated, this is what I usually do

Visible rituals

Hidden rituals

Mental analysis

Checking my body or feelings

Reassurance from others

Googling, reading or searching for information

Avoidance

Neutralising afterwards

During the exercise I will refrain from

After the exercise I will refrain from

If the urge becomes strong, I will do this instead

Supportive statement

Example of a supportive statement

"I do not need to resolve the thought right now. I am practising allowing it to be there without completing the OCD work."

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Step 3: ERP exercise

This sheet is used to record a specific ERP exercise and assess whether OCD found its way into the exercise.

Date

Exercise

What was I exposed to?

Which response did I refrain from?

Distress before the exercise 0-10

Highest distress during the exercise 0-10

Distress after the exercise 0-10

How long did the exercise last?

What did OCD do to make me stop?

Which rituals did I refrain from?

What did I learn?

What should I adjust next time?

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Pitfall checklist

- [ ] Did I do the exercise to obtain complete certainty?
- [ ] Did I carry out the exercise in an overly perfect or controlled way?
- [ ] Did I check my body or feelings during the exercise?
- [ ] Did I ask other people directly or indirectly?
- [ ] Did I avoid the most important part of the exercise?
- [ ] Did I perform a ritual afterwards?
- [ ] Did I use the exercise as a test of whether I felt right?
- [ ] Did I switch to another ritual?
- [ ] Did I try to prove that what I feared would not happen?
- [ ] Did I analyse mentally during the exercise?
- [ ] Did I seek reassurance before, during or afterwards?
- [ ] Did I search for information to obtain short-term relief?
- [ ] Did I distract myself to escape the distress?
- [ ] Did I postpone the ritual instead of refraining from it?
- [ ] Did I try to make the thought feel right?
- [ ] Did I get other people to accommodate OCD?

What went well?

Where did OCD find its way in?

What needs to change next time?

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