ERP for children and young people

When we practise not doing what OCD says

Purpose

This worksheet is used with an adult. It helps the child or young person notice what OCD says, make a plan and practise doing something other than what OCD demands.

The child or young person should not face the distress alone. The adult should support them without supporting the OCD pattern.

Instructions

1 Find out what OCD does

Write down what OCD says, what OCD wants you to do and what you do to obtain short-term relief.

2 Make a practice plan

Choose small, specific steps and agree what you and the adult will do differently.

3 Practise and talk afterwards

Complete the exercise, notice where OCD found its way in and choose the next small step.

Complete together

Name _____

Date _____

Adult _____

OCD theme _____

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Step 1: What does OCD do?

Before we practise, we need to find out what OCD says and what it gets the child or young person and the family to do.

Record

Date	Difficulty 0-10	Situation

What did OCD say?

What did OCD want me to do?

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

- ☐ asked again
- ☐ checked
- ☐ washed
- ☐ repeated it or did it again
- ☐ avoided it
- ☐ got an adult to answer
- ☐ tried to feel completely certain
- ☐ went back to make it feel right
- ☐ performed a ritual afterwards
- ☐ something else

What did the adult do?

What happened afterwards?

What can we practise next time?

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Step 2: My ERP plan

Here, the child or young person and the adult make a plan for what to practise.

The OCD pattern we are working with

What OCD wants me to do

What I will practise

How the adult will help

What the adult will not do because it helps OCD

ERP steps

Step	What will I practise?	Difficulty 0-10	What will I not do?	How will the adult support me?	When will we practise?

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Response prevention plan

When OCD puts pressure on me, I will practise not doing the OCD work.

I am practising not:

- ☐ asking again and again
- ☐ checking
- ☐ washing
- ☐ repeating
- ☐ doing it again
- ☐ avoiding
- ☐ getting the adult to do the OCD work
- ☐ going back to make it feel right
- ☐ something else

Supportive statement

"I can feel OCD, but I do not have to do what OCD says."

Adult's statement

"I can see that OCD is pushing hard right now. I am staying with you, but I am not helping OCD by answering again."

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Step 3: My OCD exercise

Date

What did I practise?

What did OCD say?

What did I not do even though OCD urged me?

How difficult was it before the exercise 0-10?

How difficult was it at its hardest 0-10?

How difficult was it afterwards 0-10?

What did the adult do to support me?

What did the adult not do because it would have helped OCD?

What did I learn?

What will I practise next time?

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Pitfall checklist

- [ ] Did OCD get me to ask again?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to do the exercise again?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to ask an adult to answer?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to perform a ritual afterwards?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to do the exercise in an overly perfect way?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to check in secret?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to try to feel completely certain?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to avoid the hardest part?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to go back and check how it felt?
- [ ] Did OCD get me to make the adult do the work?

For the adult

Support the child or young person by remaining calm, clear and present.

Avoid repeated reassurance and do not complete the exercise for the child or young person.

Keep any frustration directed at the OCD pattern rather than at the child or young person.

Help the child or young person return to the agreement when OCD puts pressure on them.

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