WORKSHEET 05 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My compass

Choosing an action guided by your values, despite anxiety

AIM

Help the person identify what matters to them in one area of their life and choose a small committed action, even with anxiety, instead of waiting for it to go away.

WHO IT IS FOR

Avoidance due to anxiety, life “on hold”, loss of meaning. Useful after the defusion and anchoring worksheets.

DURATION

20 min in session, follow-up over 1-2 weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Choose an area of life in which anxiety leads the person to give things up (work, relationships, health, leisure…).
2. Explore values: “What kind of person do you want to be in this area?” A value is a direction, not a goal you reach.
3. Identify what anxiety pushes them to do (avoid, put off, seek safety) and what the value invites them to do.
4. Choose a small, concrete, dated action, making room for the anxiety that will come with it.
5. At the next session, review what happened without judging the outcome: moving towards the value counts more than the anxiety felt.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t confuse values with obligations (“I should”). Keep the action really small: the aim is to get the person moving again, not to confront them with their greatest fear.

REFERENCES

Wilson, K. G. & Murrell, A. R. (2004). Values work in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: Setting a course for behavioral treatment. In S. C. Hayes, V. M. Follette & M. M. Linehan (Eds.), Mindfulness and Acceptance: Expanding the Cognitive-Behavioral Tradition (pp. 120-151). Guilford.

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 05 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My compass

Anxiety often says “wait until you feel better”. Your values, on the other hand, point in a direction. You can move forward with anxiety in your pocket.

1. The area of my life that matters most to me right now: _____.
2. In this area, I would like to be someone who is… (3 words): _____ · _____ · _____.
3. What anxiety pushes me to do: _____.
4. One small step towards my compass this week (what, when, where): _____.

Day	Did I do it? (yes/no)	Anxiety during /10	What I learnt

What changed with this small step, even a little?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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