WORKSHEET 07 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The observation diary

Noting moments of anxiety and rumination throughout the week

AIM

Collect concrete data on the frequency, intensity and contexts of anxiety, to identify triggers and track progress.

WHO IT IS FOR

Any anxiety or rumination, at the start of treatment and to measure progress.

DURATION

5 min in session; a few minutes a day for 1-2 weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain what it is for: memory summarises badly (“I’ve been anxious all week”); the diary shows the variations.
2. Show a completed example and explain that entries are made as close to the moment as possible, in a few words.
3. Agree on the 0-10 scale (0 = no anxiety, 10 = the strongest imaginable).
4. At the next session, look together for what repeats: times, places, people, thoughts.

POINTS TO WATCH

> If writing things down increases anxiety (checking, rumination), reduce it to one entry a day. Value the diary even if it is incomplete: perfection is not the aim.

REFERENCES

Beck, J. S. (2020). Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Basics and Beyond (3rd ed.). Guilford.

Clark, D. A. & Beck, A. T. (2010). Cognitive Therapy of Anxiety Disorders: Science and Practice. Guilford.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 07 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My diary for the week

Note the moments when anxiety or looping thoughts appear, as soon as possible and in a few words. This diary is not an exam: even if it is incomplete, it is already useful.

1. The day and time.
2. The situation: where, with whom, doing what.
3. The main thought, in one sentence.
4. The intensity from 0 to 10 and what you did afterwards.

Day / time	Situation	Main thought	Intensity /10	What I did

Rereading the week, what do I notice?

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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