

Are You Anxious About Job Interviews?

Objective

To help you identify your anxiety related to job interviews and rate your level of related distress.

You Should Know

Whether you're looking for a job for the first time or embarking on a job change or a career change, the interview process naturally raises your anxiety and stress level. It's perfectly normal to have some anxiety before and during job interviews. In fact, a 2013 survey conducted by Everest College found that 92 percent of the respondents were afraid of at least one aspect of the job interview process.

But if you have social anxiety, the process can be especially hard. You must interact with strangers who are authority figures and who are, like it or not, evaluating you. In addition, you are expected to be "on," upbeat, and to present yourself as successful and knowledgeable. How intimidating is that?

The good news is that it is possible to learn some solid skills that will help you in your efforts. But first, this worksheet will help you assess the problem and to what degree your fears and anxiety about job interviews are causing you difficulties. In subsequent related worksheets, you will explore mental and physical strategies that can lower your anxiety; and learn "exposure" techniques that can help you feel more and more comfortable with the process.

What to Do

What are your fears about what might happen during a job interview? Here is a list of common fears:

- Shaking, trembling
- Dry mouth
- Sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- Dizziness
- Nausea, gagging, vomiting
- Stumbling with your words, being inarticulate
- Brain freeze, losing your train of thought
- Worry about being the center of attention
- Rambling or oversharing because you're nervous
- Not knowing the answers to questions
- Not knowing what questions to ask the interviewer
- Worry about your appearance
- Coming across as ignorant or stupid

Note your top ten fears and/or symptoms on the lines below (add your own as needed) and then rate their severity according to the SUD (Subjective Units of Distress) Scale:

SUD Scale

- 0: Totally relaxed
- 1: Somewhat relaxed
- 2: Minimal anxiety/distress
- 3: Mild anxiety/distress, doesn't interfere with performance
- 4: Mild to moderate anxiety
- 5: Moderate anxiety/distress, can continue to perform
- 6: Moderate to quite anxious
- 7: Quite anxious/distressed, interfering with performance
- 8: Very anxious/distressed, can't concentrate
- 9: Extremely anxious/distressed, feeling desperate, unable to handle it
- 10: Highest level of distress/fear/anxiety that you have ever felt, can't function

1. _____ SUDS Rating _____

2. _____ SUDS Rating _____

3. _____ SUDS Rating _____

4. _____ SUDS Rating _____

5. _____ SUDS Rating _____

6. _____ SUDS Rating _____

7. _____ SUDS Rating _____

8. _____ SUDS Rating _____

9. _____ SUDS Rating _____

10. _____ SUDS Rating _____

Reflections on This Exercise

1. What situation or symptom causes you the most distress related to the job interview process?

2. What situation or symptom causes you the least distress related to the job interview process?

3. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = not at all, 10 = highly motivated), how would you rank your motivation to work on one of the *lower-rated items* on your list (5 or under) in the coming weeks by using “exposure therapy” (practicing and role-playing) techniques? Explain.

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What could you do differently to make progress in this area?
