

Social Interaction Log

If you have social anxiety, you probably avoid situations that cause or increase your distress. Sometimes the fear is mild, but other times it might feel paralyzing. You might already be practicing strategies to overcome your fears. You might have heard of “exposure therapy,” which means you “expose yourself” to the people, places, and situations you fear to overcome your anxiety.

Tracking social interactions can be helpful for several reasons.

Awareness and Self-Reflection. By tracking your social interactions, you gain a clearer understanding of your own patterns, triggers, and responses in social situations. This self-reflection helps you become more aware of the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that contribute to your social anxiety. It allows you to identify specific situations or interactions that are more challenging for you, enabling you to focus on them and develop strategies to cope effectively.

Identifying Progress. Tracking your social interactions provides a way to measure your progress over time. You can look back at previous interactions and assess how you handled them compared to the present. This helps you recognize small steps of improvement, which can be encouraging and motivating. Celebrating even minor successes can boost your self-confidence and reinforce positive changes.

Identifying Triggers and Patterns. By consistently tracking your social interactions, you may start noticing patterns or common triggers that worsen your social anxiety. These triggers could include certain people, social environments, or topics of conversation. Understanding your triggers allows you to be more proactive in managing your anxiety and develop targeted strategies to cope with challenging situations.

Challenging Negative Thoughts. Social anxiety is often accompanied by negative self-perceptions and distorted thinking patterns. Tracking your social interactions helps you challenge these negative thoughts by examining the evidence objectively. You can review your interactions and assess whether your perceptions align with reality. This practice enables you to reframe negative thoughts and replace them with more realistic and positive ones.

Developing Coping Strategies. Tracking your social interactions helps you identify the strategies and techniques that work best for you. You can observe which coping mechanisms are effective in reducing anxiety or helping you navigate social situations more comfortably. This knowledge allows you to refine and develop a personalized toolkit of strategies that you can rely on in challenging social scenarios.

Seeking Support. Tracking social interactions can provide valuable information to discuss in session. It gives your therapist a clearer understanding of your experiences, enabling them to provide targeted guidance and support. Sharing your tracking log can facilitate more productive conversations and help tailor your treatment plan to your specific needs.

Tracking social interactions should not add to your anxiety or become an obsessive process. Approach this task with a compassionate and non-judgmental mindset. Focus on using the

information you gather to better understand yourself, make progress, and develop effective strategies for managing your anxiety.

Use the following chart to track your social interactions. Make a copy of the log if you require additional space or want to track for more than two weeks. Write down the date and describe the situation. Note the duration in minutes of the interaction, and your SUDS (Subjective Units of Distress) before and after the interaction. Write down thoughts you have about yourself or anyone else involved in the interaction. Finally, describe your physical sensations and what you did to cope.

Use SUDS to rate your interactions:

- 0: Totally relaxed
- 1: Alert and awake, no real signs of distress
- 2: Minimal anxiety/distress
- 3: Mild anxiety/distress, does not interfere with performance
- 4: More aware of anxiety than you used to be
- 5: Moderate anxiety/distress, can continue to perform
- 6: Increasingly aware of anxiety and how it affects you
- 7: Quite anxious/distressed, interferes with performance
- 8: Very anxious/distressed, cannot concentrate
- 9: Extremely anxious/distressed, feeling desperate, unable to handle it
- 10: Highest level of distress/fear/anxiety that you have ever felt, cannot function

