

## **Panic attacks: Interoceptive exposure practice**

### **Sensations that trigger my panic attacks or are linked to my panic attacks:**

Rapid Heart Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Dizziness/lightheadedness: \_\_\_\_\_

Breathlessness: \_\_\_\_\_

Trembling or Shaking: \_\_\_\_\_

Nausea: \_\_\_\_\_

Derealization/dissociation: \_\_\_\_\_

Pounding heart: \_\_\_\_\_

Increased sweating: \_\_\_\_\_

Choking/ gag reflex: \_\_\_\_\_

Tightness in throat: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Interoceptive Exposure Practice**

### **Sensation: Rapid heart rate/pounding heart/increased sweating**

- Run on the spot or up and down stairs for 1 minute then take a 1 minute break. Do this sequence 8 times.

### **Sensation: Breathlessness or smothering feelings**

- Hold breath for 30 seconds, then breathe normally for 30 seconds. Do this 8 times.
- Breathe through a narrow, small straw with nose plugged for 2 minutes, then 1 minute breathe normally. Do this 5 times.
- Sit with head covered by a heavy coat or blanket.

### **Nausea**

- Eating 2-day-old leftovers
- Leaving gum at home on a high-anxiety day
- Eating quickly
- Drinking a full milkshake or can of soda
- Eating just past the point of being full.

### **Sensation: Choking feelings, gag reflex**

- Place tongue depressor on the back of the tongue (a few seconds or until inducing a gag reflex). Do this repetitively for 15 minutes. Do this a couple of times throughout the day.

### **Sensation: Trembling or Shaking**

- Tense all the muscles in the body or hold a push-up position for as long as possible (ideally for 60 seconds) then rest 60 seconds. Repeat 8 times.

### **Sensation: Sweating**

- Sit in a hot stuffy room (or sauna, hot car, small room with a space heater)
- Drinking hot beverage while wearing a warm jacket

- Exercise with a lot of clothing on

**Sensation: Dizziness or lightheadedness**

- Spin slowly in a swivel chair for 1 minute and then take a 1 minute break. Do this sequence 8 times.
- Shake head from side to side for 30 seconds, then take 30 second break. Do this 8 times.
- While sitting, bend over and place head between legs for 30 seconds, then sit up quickly. Do this 8 times
- Hyperventilate (shallow breathing at a rate of 100 to 120 breaths/min for 1 minute) then normal breathing for 1 minute. Do this 8 times.

**Sensation/symptom: Derealization, dissociation**

- Stare at a light on the ceiling for 1 minute, then try to read for 1 minute. Repeat 8 times.
- Staring at self in a mirror for 3 minutes, then 1 minute break. Repeat 3 times.
- Stare at a small dot (the size of a dime) posted on the wall for 3 minutes. Take a 1 minute break and repeat 3 times total.
- Stare at an optical illusion (rotating spiral, "psychedelic" rotating screen saver, etc.) for 2 minutes, then break for 1 minute. Repeat 5 times.

**Sensation: Tightness in throat**

- Wearing a tie, turtleneck shirt, or scarf tightly around the neck for 5 minutes, then take a 1 minute break. Do this 3 times.

**Below, please list the exercises you will practice at least once per day. Underneath the line, please write down any problems your mind expects will happen if you do the exercise. For example, "I will not be able to handle it.... I will suffocate..... I will lose control.... I will have a heart attack."**

**1.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Expectancy:**

**2.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Expectancy:**

**3.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Expectancy:**

**4.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Expectancy:**