

Therapy worksheet for avoidance

Protective avoidance

These are actions aimed at protecting yourself from physical harm or risks. They include actions such as washing hands, compulsive cleaning, and perfectionism. These actions help our inner selves feel better and safer. Most Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder behaviors fall within this category.

Cognitive avoidance

Involves the intentional avoidance of distressing thoughts and memories. This is achieved through distracting oneself, daydreaming, and minimizing thoughts.

Somatic avoidance

Involves staying away from situations that can activate an unwanted reaction, such as anxiety or stress. For example, staying away from the ocean because it can activate feelings of fear, and staying away from a rollercoaster because of inducing a rapid heartbeat and vomiting.

Situational avoidance

Is the deliberate avoidance of people, places, things, activities, and situations that can activate fear, unwanted memories, and stress. Phobias and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder behaviors of avoidance fall within this category.

Substitution avoidance

Involves replacing thoughts or feelings with other thoughts or actions. For example, replacing sadness with anger or alcohol and substance, gambling or risky sexual behavior to cope with sadness.