



EXPERIENTIAL AVOIDANCE

WORKSHEET 2: PATTERNS & PERSPECTIVE

Name: _____

Date: _____



We all use strategies to avoid uncomfortable experiences. These patterns may have helped in the past, but often they keep us from living fully in the present. Let's explore your patterns and consider a new way forward.

1 AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

Read the list below and check the strategies you have used to avoid difficult experiences.

- ☐  Worrying about it
- ☐  Trying not to think about it
- ☐  Trying to distract myself
- ☐  Staying busy
- ☐  Finding other things to do
- ☐  Dwelling on the past
- ☐  Catastrophizing about the future
- ☐  Fantasizing about escaping the situation
- ☐  Imagining revenge
- ☐  Blaming myself
- ☐  Blaming others
- ☐  Blaming the world
- ☐  Substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.)
- ☐  Overeating or not eating
- ☐  Addictive behaviors (gambling, worrying, etc.)
- ☐  Other: _____

2 REFLECT & EXPLORE



Did any of these strategies work in the long run?



Did any of these strategies actually make things worse instead of better?



If you were able to live in the "now" instead of in the mind trap, how many of the things you were trying to get rid of would still be a problem?

3



EXPERIENCE IN THE NOW

Choose one thing from your lists on Worksheet 1 that you would like to get rid of. Take a few deep breaths, ground and center yourself, and allow yourself to fully experience it in this moment—without judging, fighting, or trying to change it. Just be with it.



Did this change your experience? By accepting it instead of trying to avoid it, do you look at it in a different way?

