

Exercise

Professional Version | US English

Exposure And Response Prevention



Description

Exposure And Response Prevention (ERP) is one of the recommended treatments for obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). In simple terms ERP involves exposing yourself to a trigger for your obsessions and refraining from performing your usual compulsions. This can involve tolerating considerable anxiety, and you are encouraged to record the pattern of this over time as you complete ERP.

Instructions

The technique of exposure and response prevention should only be carried out in the presence of a clear shared formulation of why it is expected to be helpful.

The basic steps involved in ERP are:

1. Expose yourself to the trigger.
2. Resist performing the compulsion.
3. Record distress (or urge to perform compulsion) over time.

References

Abramowitz, J. S. (1996). Variants of exposure and response prevention in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder: A meta-analysis. *Behavior therapy*, 27(4), 583-600.

Boersma, K., Den Hengst, S., Dekker, J., & Emmelkamp, P. M. (1976). Exposure and response prevention in the natural environment: A comparison with obsessive-compulsive patients. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 14(1), 19-24.

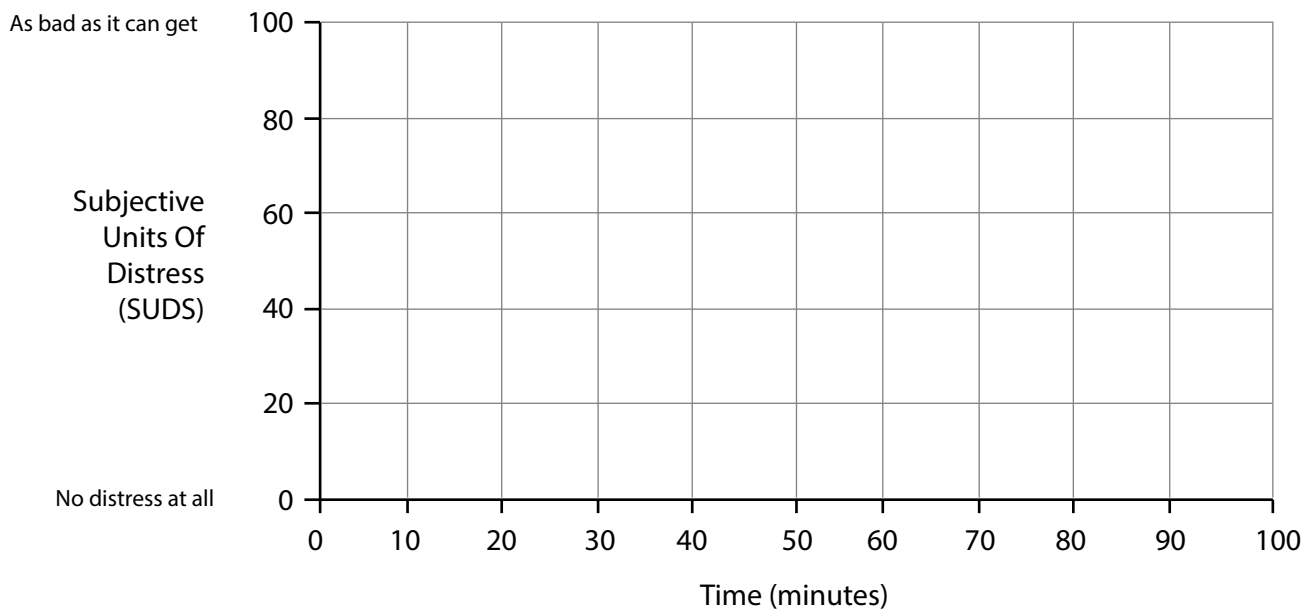
Exposure And Response Prevention

Exposure and Response Prevention is about exposing yourself to a situation that triggers your obsessions or compulsions (exposure), and then deliberately resisting the urge to carry out the compulsion that would normally relieve your anxiety (response prevention).

Situation / Trigger What situations trigger my obsession?	Obsession What is the thought, image, urge or impulse that bothers me?	Compulsion What do I do to make myself feel better when I get the obsession?
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EX/RP Instructions

1. Expose yourself to the trigger.
2. Resist performing the compulsion.
3. Record how distressed you feel over time using the graph below.
4. If you do perform the compulsion, expose yourself to the trigger again.



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Situation / Trigger

What situations trigger my obsession?

Seeing dirty things –
worst things are used
diapers or band-aids.

Obsession

What is the thought, image, urge or
impulse that bothers me?

Image of my family
getting ill – it would be
my fault.

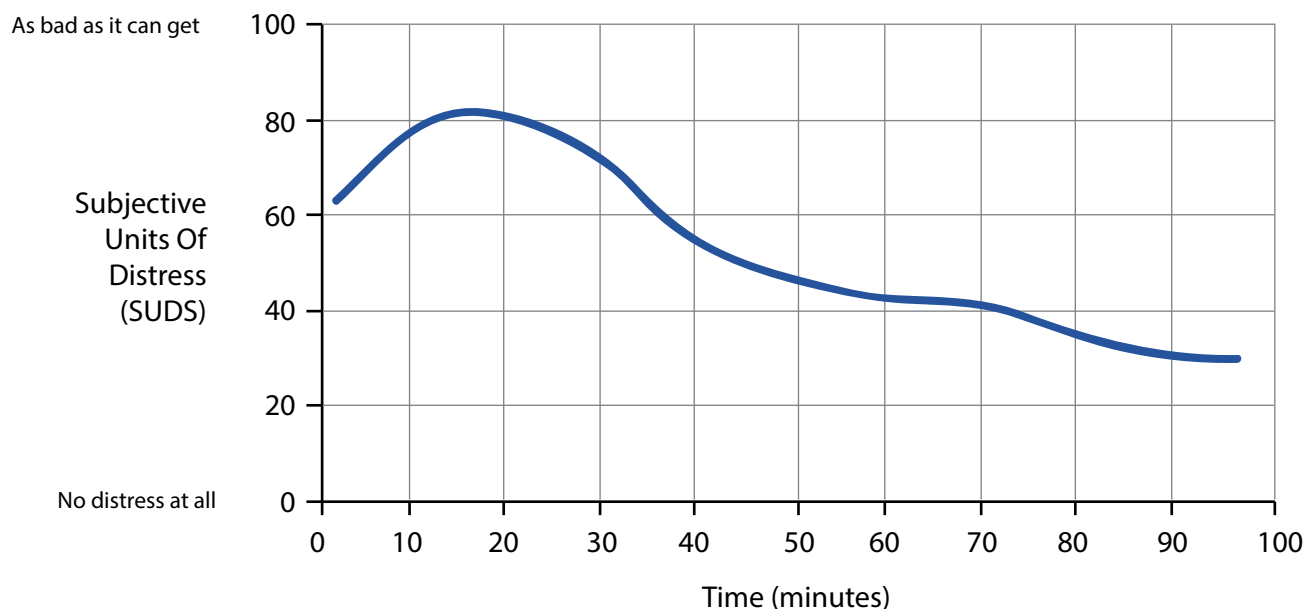
Compulsion

What do I do to make myself feel better
when I get the obsession?

Clean myself and
anything my family
might touch.

EX/RP Instructions

1. Expose yourself to the trigger. – Hold a used diaper.
2. Resist performing the compulsion. – Not wash my hands.
3. Record how distressed you feel over time using the graph below.
4. If you do perform the compulsion, expose yourself to the trigger again.



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