

EXERCISE 9.2: ACTIONS AND COSTS RELATED TO THE INTOLERANCE OF UNCERTAINTY

Spend a moment reviewing each statement and then score the questionnaire, spotting those aspects that are closer to your experience of worry. As a rule of thumb, if you are scoring 5 or more on an item, you may want to consider setting a goal to change this or consider a behavioural experiment. Because not all the items will apply to you, if an item reminds you of another aspect of your life then write this down. As you read, think about what benefits might come your way if you learn to sit with uncertainty and tolerate it. Second, you can use this as another way of helping you to spot how the intolerance of uncertainty might influence the way you live your life. As uncertainty is everywhere, a huge amount of energy and effort is put into trying to eradicate it: imagine using this energy and effort for other things.

Using the scale below, read each statement, decide how closely each statement matches your actions and then circle the appropriate number.

Very unlike me

Very like me

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Asking for reassurance on a decision you have made, and then feeling stupid for having asked because you knew you were right in the first place.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Overcoming Worry and Generalised Anxiety Disorder

Checking emails, letters or cheques several times before sending them, and then getting behind on other jobs.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Reading all the cinema reviews and then asking your friend to make a decision about what to see because you just can't be sure they will like the film; then feeling disappointed about missing the film you really wanted to see.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Telephoning home while shopping in the supermarket because you just can't decide on what to eat and then feeling indecisive and down on yourself.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Always going to the same shop and buying the same food in case you buy something you or others won't like, but then complaining about the lack of variety in your diet.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Finding excuses why you should not delegate jobs at work; consequently you end up doing everything yourself.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not allowing your kids to do things for themselves in case they don't quite get it right. And then feeling annoyed that you have to do everything yourself.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Pacing the house if your partner is five minutes late home from work and then being stressed out when they arrive.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
You've bought something you have always wanted, but now can't enjoy it because you keep questioning your decision.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Certainty and uncertainty – the broader picture

Asking someone to check your work, even though at the back of your mind you know it's perfectly fine, and then criticizing yourself for lacking confidence.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Wanting to know where everything is, and feeling unsettled if things are out of place, even when you don't need to use them right now.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Wanting to know where important people are and feeling unsettled if they are not where you expect them to be.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Needing to have plans for an evening clearly laid out beforehand and getting upset when things don't go as planned, even though everyone except you is having fun.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Following a daily routine for fear of going off track and then complaining how boring life is.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Taking over driving from your partner because you're worried about them driving; then getting tired and not enjoying the trip.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Avoiding committing yourself to something just in case it might go wrong, and then realizing you have missed out on some or all of it.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Finding good but imaginary reasons for not doing things and then realizing that you have missed out on something you would have enjoyed if you had taken the chance.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Overcoming Worry and Generalised Anxiety Disorder

Procrastinating until tasks become bigger and more problematic.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Finding other tasks to do rather than the one that needs your attention, and then letting other things mount up.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Avoiding (or keeping contact to a bare minimum) people who may act unpredictably, and then missing out on other aspects of their company.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Making snap decisions that you may regret later because, at the time, it feels better than being stuck with not knowing what to do.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Following the crowd and doing things you don't really like to do because it feels less difficult than making decisions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Getting lots and lots of information to help you make a decision, and then not being able to make sense of it all.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7