

WHAT I'M WORKING TOWARD

WHY IT MATTERS TO ME

My Avoidance Ladder

Small, steady steps toward what matters

THE FEAR OR SITUATION I'M FACING

STARTED ON

easier · start here

harder · the goal

Step 1

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 2

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 3

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 4

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 5

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 6

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 7

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

Step 8

THE SITUATION

EXPECTED DISTRESS

/ 100

TRY BEFORE PEAK ✓

1

2

3

← lower expected distress

Build the ladder with your therapist, then practise between sessions. Move up only when a step feels more manageable.

higher expected distress →

Distress guide

0 25 50 75 100

calm uneasy clearly very the most I
anxious distressed can imagine

Rate before you start and at the peak. Distress doesn't have to fall for the practice to work.

How to climb

- **Start low:** choose a step that feels challenging but doable.
- **Test the fear:** before each try, note what you expect to happen.
- **Drop the extras:** gradually let go of safety behaviours.
- **Repeat and vary:** different times, places and people.
- **Be kind:** a harder day or a step back is part of the process.

What I'm learning

STEP	WHAT I FEARED	WHAT HAPPENED	WHAT I LEARNED