HEALTH ANXIETY

AN EXAMPLE HIERARCHY

Here's how a hierarchy might look for someone living with health anxiety. Your own list will look different, but feel free to borrow ideas from the situations below. The scores are only there to show the idea.

THE FEAR I'M WORKING ON: *Health conditions*

#	SITUATION, TRIGGER OR ACTIVITY	DISTRESS (0-100)
1	Say feared words aloud, such as "cancer", "heart attack", "tumour" or "MS".	25
2	Read an article about a feared condition.	45
3	Watch a short medical scene on TV without checking symptoms afterwards.	55
4	Look at the NHS website for a feared condition, without searching any further.	80
5	Listen to someone talk about illness and resist checking yourself for symptoms.	65
6	Keep watching a health advert instead of muting or leaving the room.	30

HERE IS HOW THOSE WORK AS A "FEAR LADDER"

TOP STEPS 70 to 100	6	Look at the NHS website for a feared condition, without searching further.	80
MIDDLE STEPS 40 to 69	5	Listen to someone talk about illness and resist checking yourself for symptoms.	65
	4	Watch a short medical scene on TV without checking symptoms afterwards.	55
	3	Read an article about a feared condition.	45
STARTING STEPS 0 to 39	2	Keep watching a health advert instead of muting or leaving the room.	30
	1	Say feared words aloud, such as "cancer" or "tumour".	25

↑ START YOUR EXPOSURES AT NUMBER 1 AND WORK UPWARDS