

# Worksheet

US English

# Identifying The Meaning Of Body Sensations



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## Description

Some forms of anxiety, such as panic disorder and health anxiety, are particularly concerned with body sensations and symptoms. According to the cognitive-behavioral conceptualisations of these conditions it is not the symptoms themselves that cause distress, but it is the sense (or meaning) we make of them. Individuals with high levels of anxiety sensitivity are particularly prone to making anxious or catastrophic predictions, which further exacerbate anxiety. The *Identifying The Meaning Of Body Sensations* worksheet helps clients to capture some of their anxious thoughts and predictions. It contains some worked examples as illustration.

## Instructions

This worksheet can be used as a thought record to capture (anxious) cognitions regarding bodily symptoms.

## References

Barlow, D. H., Craske, M. G. (2007). *Mastery of your anxiety and panic* (Fourth edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lee, K., Noda, Y., Nakano, Y., Ogawa, S., Kinoshita, Y., Funayama, T., & Furukawa, T. A. (2006). Interoceptive hypersensitivity and interoceptive exposure in patients with panic disorder: specificity and effectiveness. *BMC Psychiatry*, 6(1), 32.

# Identifying The Meaning Of Body Sensations

## Body Sensation

What did you notice?  
Where in your body did you notice it?  
What were you doing when you noticed it?

## Emotion

e.g Fear, Anger, Sadness,  
Disgust

## Meaning

What went through your mind when you noticed this sensation?  
Were you worried that anything in particular might happen?  
What might happen if that body sensation carried on?

# Identifying The Meaning Of Body Sensations

Human beings aren't bothered by things or events, they are bothered by what that thing or event means. We automatically think about things that happen to us, and automatically appraise whether we think the consequences will be good or bad. It is common for our minds to automatically make predictions about what will happen if those body sensations carry on.

If certain body symptoms have become a problem for you keep a record of what sensations you feel, how they make you feel emotionally, and what goes through your mind when you feel those sensations.

<p><b>Body Sensation</b></p> <p>What did you notice? Where in your body did you notice it? What were you doing when you noticed it?</p>	<p><b>Emotion</b></p> <p>e.g. Fear, Anger, Sadness, Disgust</p>	<p><b>Meaning</b></p> <p>What went through your mind when you noticed this sensation? Were you worried that anything in particular might happen? What might happen if that body sensation carried on?</p>
<p>Cough. Bunged up nose. Sneezing.</p>	<p>Frustration.</p>	<p>I'm too ill to go to work today, but if I call in sick I'll be letting other people down.</p> <p>(Someone else, who didn't like their work, might feel the same symptoms but think "great, I can have a day off" and might feel happy)</p>
<p>Whooshing noise in my ear. Noticed it when climbing up stairs.</p>	<p>Fear - scared.</p>	<p>Something's wrong with my ear If I can hear the blood pumping then the blood must be under high pressure - I'll have a stroke. (Prediction)</p>
<p>Dizziness I was walking by a busy road and suddenly felt dizzy. I have also felt it in a supermarket.</p>	<p>Fear - scared. Disappointment.</p>	<p>I'm going to fall - I'll fall in traffic. (Prediction) I won't be able to pick up my children. Not this again! I had it before but it went away.</p> <p>meanings are consistent with emotions.</p>

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