Emotion Regulation Interview


Note: This interview is for use by researchers and clinicians to assess emotion regulation strategy usage in patients and healthy controls. You may modify the interview for different patient populations and types of emotions. Please keep the description of the emotion regulatory strategies similar to the descriptions below.

Emotion Regulation Interview

Patient ID: __________  Interviewer: __________________  Date: ________________

What I would like to do now is to have you think about times when you have felt socially anxious. When you are in situations that make you feel socially anxious, what -- if anything -- do you do to try and decrease your anxiety?

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Overall, on a scale from 0 to 100, how successful do you feel you are at decreasing your anxiety when you want to, with 0 being not at all successful and 100 being completely successful? ______________

Thank you. Now I will ask you about a number of strategies that different people use to decrease their anxiety. There are no right or wrong strategies to use; by asking the following questions, I hope that they will guide us in obtaining a full picture of what you do in life when you attempt to reduce your anxiety.

Situational stems to ask about:

Speech Task: To start off I am going to ask you what you did to regulate your anxiety during the speech task we just did. (Go to Frequency of Attentional Deployment questions below…)

Idiographic situations: Now I’d like to ask you about situations in which you have felt social anxiety in the past month. Is there a situation that has occurred a few times in the past month where you felt social anxiety at a 60 or above on the SUDS scale? The subject can choose the situation they just gave a speech about. Choose a specific situation that is highly anxiety producing that has happened a few times in the last month (and that you think is likely to happen in the month before the post-CBT assessment). Now please call to mind the best example of __________ that you feel captures how you typically respond in those situations, and answer the following questions by thinking of this prototypical situation. (Go to Emotion Regulation Questions below…)

Situation #1

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Situation #2

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Emotion Regulation Questions:

Fear/Anxiety: How much fear or anxiety did you feel while ______________________ on this SUDS rating scale with 0 being no anxiety and 100 being the most anxiety you have ever felt? Please rate your peak anxiety level for that situation.

Idiographic 1 __________

Idiographic 2 __________
**Frequency of Situation Selection:** What percent of the time do you avoid the situation in order to avoid the anxiety it would have made you feel? By this I mean, what percent of the time do you not go to__________ when you otherwise would have done so? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you always go to ______ and 100% meaning you always avoid. (Additional Example: Have someone else take your place?)

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2

**Frequency of Situation Modification:** When you were in ___________ what percent of the time did you try to modify the situation to reduce your anxiety? By this I mean, how much did you change some objectively observable feature, like turn the lights down, or turn your body? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you spent no time modifying the situation, and 100% you spent the whole time actively modifying the situation. (Additional Example: Rearrange chairs?)

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2

**Frequency of Attentional Deployment:** When you were ______________ what percentage of the time did you try to distract yourself to reduce your anxiety? By this I mean, how much did you look around the room or think about something unrelated to the situation to reduce your anxiety? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you spent no time distracting yourself and 100% meaning you spent the whole time distracting yourself. (Additional Examples: How much did you change your focus to reduce your anxiety? How much did you think about or look at something else outside of the conversation to reduce your anxiety (doing laundry list in head)? Focus anywhere but what is causing the anxiety: visual, auditory or distracting thoughts.)

Speech

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2

**Frequency of Cognitive Change:** When you were ______________ what percent of the time did you try to think about the situation differently to reduce your anxiety? By this I mean, how much did you stay focused on the social situation but tell yourself things to make yourself less anxious? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you spent no time changing how you were thinking, and 100% meaning you spent the whole time changing how you were thinking. (Additional Examples: Think about the positive side or think objectively. Tell yourself that this situation is not that important (minimizing). Reframe or change the meaning of the material. After CBT, say: “Dispute your thoughts”)

Speech

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2

**Success of Cognitive Change:** When you tried to change how you were thinking in order to reduce your anxiety in this situation, how successful were you at reducing your anxiety? Please rate your success from 0 to 100 where 0 is completely unsuccessful (still just as anxious) and 100 is completely successful (no longer anxious) [If they did not report using cognitive change in this situation, ask them how successful they think they would have been if they had tried.]

Speech

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2

**Frequency of Suppression:** When you were ______________ what percentage of the time did you try to hide the visible signs of your anxiety? By this I mean, how much do you try and look calm on the outside so that no one can tell how nervous you are? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you spent no time hiding your anxiety, and 100% meaning you spent the whole time trying to hide your anxiety. (Additional Examples: Hold your face, arms and hands still so that people don’t see you twitch. Make sure that others cannot tell how anxious you are?)

Speech

Idiographic 1

Idiographic 2
**Success of Suppression:** When you tried to hide your anxiety so that others couldn’t tell that you were anxious in this situation, how successful were you at appearing calm? Please rate your success from 0 to 100 where 0 is completely unsuccessful (you looked just as nervous as you felt) and 100 is completely successful (you looked perfectly calm on the outside even when you felt anxious on the inside) [If they did not report using suppression in this situation, ask them how successful they think they would have been if they had tried.]

**Frequency of Relaxing Body:** When you were ___________ what percentage of the time did you try to relax your body to reduce your anxiety? By this I mean, how much do you try and do things like take deep breaths, unclench your jaw, or relax your shoulders? Please answer with a percentage with 0% meaning you spent no time trying to physically relax, and 100% meaning you spent the whole time trying to relax your body.

**Open-ended Response:** Is there anything else you do to try to decrease your anxiety when you are in ______________ that we have not covered? What percentage of the time do you use this strategy ___________ when you are in ___________ social anxiety situation? (If you run out of time, just ask once at end)

**Acceptance:**

**Frequency:** So far I have asked you questions about how you would change your situation or change your feelings to reduce your anxiety. Another thing that people sometimes do is to just completely accept their feelings of anxiety and let them wash over them and not try and change them in any way. When you are in social anxiety situations what percent of the time do you just accept your anxiety and not try and change? By this I mean, how much do you just let the feelings be and not try to resist them in any way? (Additional Examples: You don’t try and push your anxiety away. Just let the feelings be. How much do you just notice it?)

**Success:** When you try to just accept your feelings and not resist or change them while, how successful are you at doing that, with 0 being not successful at all and 100 being fully successful? [If they do not report using acceptance, ask them how successful they think they would have been if they had done so.]