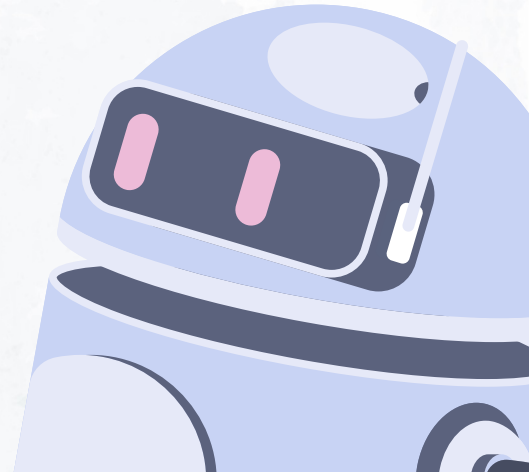


# Using Scripts for motivation and exposure



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# What is an exposure?

- 01 → Face the perceived threat.
- 02 → Respond differently to the fear response.
- 03 → Neutralize/stop the compulsion.
- 04 → Retrain the brain rather than trying to get to the fear to go away.



# What is an exposure script?

- 01 → Writing down the fear in a whole new way.
- 02 → Writing the fear as if it's happening right now.
- 03 → Using certain triggering words to be more engaging.
- 04 → Can be a sentence to a few paragraphs.



# Why we do exposure scripts and how can they help?

- 01 → Helps change the ruminating story in the brain.
- 02 → To take power away from the perceived threat.
- 03 → Easy exposure to remember to do.
- 04 → Can record and listen to the story on the fly.



## Example scripts

# (ROCD) Relationship OCD

**Threat Expectancy** (What I am afraid is going to happen.)

**IF** I marry the wrong person **Then** I will never be happy and my life won't turn out like it should.

**Primary Avoidance** (Things I **don't** do; situations I avoid in order to neutralize the threat).

I don't date people who don't meet all my criteria.

**Secondary Avoidance** (Things I **must** do to neutralize the threat when I find myself in threatening situations.)

I constantly check my feelings to make sure I am still attracted to the person. I end relationships when I am not certain.

### **Script**

I find someone I like. I start dating them. I fall in love. Everyone tells me to trust how I feel. I feel good about my decisions. I get married. At the reception, my new partner screams at me with frustration over a little thing and then tells me I probably shouldn't have married them. I look at my new spouse and see for the first time for who they really are. I am now stuck. I am in a marriage where I have made commitments. I can't disappoint my family and friends. Life gets worse and I can't get out.

## Example scripts

# (SOOCD) Sexual Orientation OCD

**Threat Expectancy** (What I am afraid is going to happen.)

**IF** I look at someone of the opposite sex too closely I might become attracted to them. **Then** I will be rejected by my parents and I won't be able to have the family I always wanted.

**Primary Avoidance** (Things I **don't** do; situations I avoid in order to neutralize the threat).

I vaguely look or speak to people of the opposite sex.

**Secondary Avoidance** (Things I **must** do to neutralize the threat when I find myself in threatening situations.)

I make sure I am not feeling something sexual when I do notice or have to speak to someone of the opposite sex.

### Script

I was dropped off by my dad to a school project group. When I get there no one is there yet except for one person (who of course is of the opposite sex). They start talking to me and ask me about the project. Instantly I feel an attraction. I keep speaking to them. We make more and more connection. By the end of the conversation, that person begins to show interest. I don't stop it.

## Example scripts

# Contamination OCD

**Threat Expectancy** (What I am afraid is going to happen.)

**IF** I am not cautious about touching things lead has touched **Then** I could get lead into my system and my brain will not work the way it should. I also could contaminate others and cause their minds to erode from the lead contamination.

**Primary Avoidance** (Things I **don't** do; situations I avoid in order to neutralize the threat).

Touching anything that has a chance being contaminated with lead. Not touching or allowing others to touch an item that could be contaminated with lead.

**Secondary Avoidance** (Things I **must** do to neutralize the threat when I find myself in threatening situations.)

Being next to my dad who works in a factory that works with lead. Not touching anything he has possibly touched. Needing to categorize any and all threats.

### Script

My parents dropped me off at a new friend's house. He asks me if I wanted to eat something. We go in and make lunch. The sandwiches were a bit off, but I didn't think anything of it. They had a bit metallic taste. As I put the last piece in my mouth I look over at part of the counter that I had not noticed. There was a can of lead dust that was partially spilled over in my direction. I start to notice there is this led dust everywhere. My mother walks through the door to hand me a jacket I had forgotten in the car. As she hands me my favorite jacket she touched the counter and then rubbed her nose. There was a black mark where she touched her face. You don't say anything. You then go home and don't take a shower, you don't wash your hands. The dust is touching everything you own.

## Example scripts

# False Memory OCD

**Threat Expectancy** (What I am afraid is going to happen.)

**IF** I'm not sure if I sent an inappropriate email **Then** I could get arrested, lose my job, and ruin my future.

**Primary Avoidance** (Things I **don't** do; situations I avoid in order to neutralize the threat).

I don't use my email unless others are in the room. I deleted my social media apps.

**Secondary Avoidance** (Things I **must** do to neutralize the threat when I find myself in threatening situations.)

I ask for reassurance from others. "Did I sent you an email?" - I review my sent emails throughout the day to see if I sent anything.

### Script

It's late at night. I start having intrusive thoughts. I open my email and start writing these out to some of my friends, co-workers, and parents. Before I could even think, I push send. Now they all know what kind of thoughts I have. It's going to be hard getting employed anywhere. Now everyone thinks I'm a fraud.



## Example scripts

# Religious OCD (scrupulosity)

**Threat Expectancy** (What I am afraid is going to happen.)

**IF** I am not honest **Then** others may misunderstand and not have responded the way they would have had I said it correctly. I then will lose people or opportunities from my life.

**Primary Avoidance** (Things I **don't** do; situations I avoid in order to neutralize the threat).

Talking openly to others.

**Secondary Avoidance** (Things I **must** do to neutralize the threat when I find myself in threatening situations.)

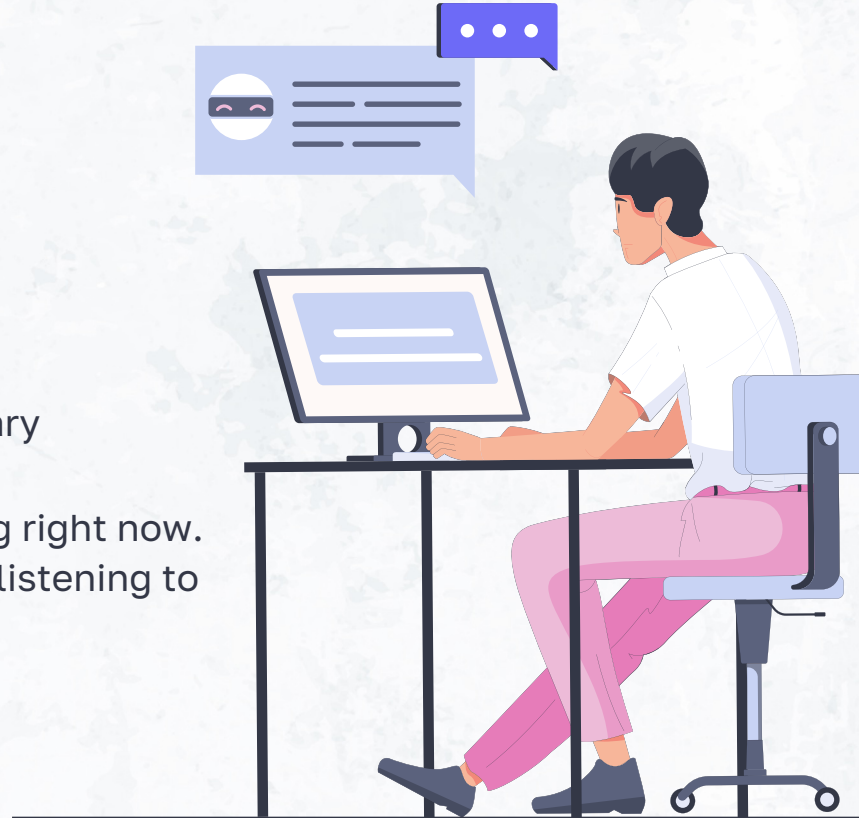
Will have to think through everything I will say before I say it. I will also make sure others understand what I said so there is no chance of dishonesty.

### Script

I go to my spiritual leader to get advice. During this conversation, they ask me about a few critical questions that could question my honesty. I quickly share my thoughts. They provide comfort and advice. After leaving, I realize I left out critical information and wonder if they really understood what I was saying and if they would change their perception about me. Because of this, their advice and demeanor would likely change. Unfortunately, I'm not able to have another conversation with the spiritual leader because they moved out of the country the following day. Because of this the trajectory of life is set on a different path. I will never know for sure if I'm following my true potential.

# What makes a script exposure successful?

1. Identify your fear.
2. Identify and list out **Primary** Avoidances.
3. Identify and list out **Secondary** Avoidances.
4. Add your fears and make sure Primary and Secondary Avoidances are incorporated.
5. Be detailed. Write in first person as if it's happening right now.
6. You should feel triggered when writing, reading or listening to your script.



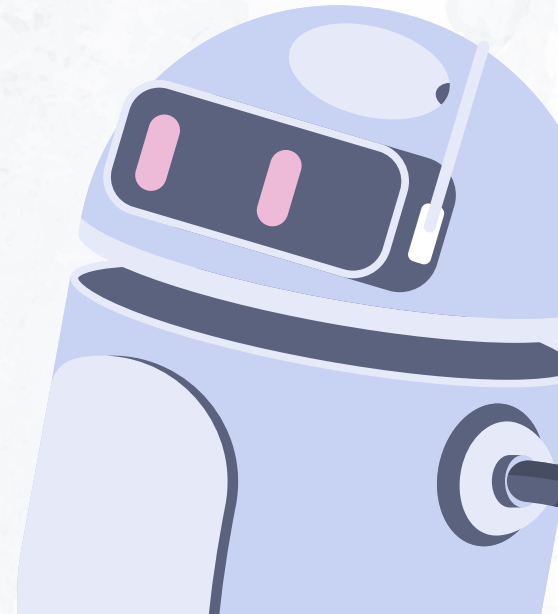
# Script Cheat Sheet

## COMPLETE THESE STEPS BEFORE DESIGNING EXPOSURES:

- Identify the threat (what does the alarm in your head believe is dangerous?) and write out your expectation(s).
  - What are you afraid is going to happen?
    - IF \_\_\_\_\_, THEN \_\_\_\_\_.
    - For example: *IF I get contaminated, THEN I will get sick and die.*
- Complete a Neutralizing Behaviors Worksheet.

Threat Expectancy (What are you afraid is going to happen?)	Primary Avoidance (Things you <u>don't</u> do, situations you avoid in order to neutralize the threat)	Secondary Avoidance (Things you <u>must</u> do to neutralize the threat, when you find yourself in threatening situations)
<p><i>Example: If I get contaminated, then I will get sick and die.</i></p> <p>IF</p> <hr/> <p>THEN</p>	<p><i>Example: I don't shake people's hands.</i></p> <p>The situations you list under primary avoidance can give you some great ideas for <b>exposure</b> situations!</p> <p><i>Remember: Exposures involve intentionally placing yourself into situations where you are vulnerable to the perceived threat.</i></p> <p><i>Exposure Example: Shake people's hands.</i></p>	<p><i>Example: If I shake people's hands, then I must wash my hands carefully and thoroughly before touching anything else.</i></p> <p>The behaviors you list under secondary avoidance give you a sense of what sort of <b>response prevention</b> you might need!</p> <p><i>Remember: Response prevention involves intentionally blocking, preventing, interrupting, or resisting your neutralizing behaviors.</i></p> <p><i>Response Prevention Example: Picking up a piece of candy with your now contaminated hand, and eating that piece of candy.</i></p>

# Let's Practice Writing Scripts!





# Questions?

