

Identifying Automatic Thoughts



To review, *automatic thoughts* are spontaneous, negative, often irrational thoughts that are related to your anxiety and create physical symptoms, negative emotions, and drive avoidance-based behavior. For instance, you may say to yourself, “I’m going to have a heart attack” after feeling a twinge in your chest at work. These thoughts are frequently **not** reality based, contain errors in thinking, and are a culprit for full-blown panic and avoidance.

Monitor your thinking over the next week, and document as many *automatic thoughts* as you can remember. Try and write-down *exactly* what you were thinking at the time. If it helps, you can carry this worksheet with you. Next to the *automatic thoughts*, write-down the *subjective unit of distress* (SUDS) that this thought created. That is to say, on a scale of 1-100 (100 being highest) how much anxiety did this thought generate?

AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS	SUDS (0-100)
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____
12. _____	_____
13. _____	_____
14. _____	_____
15. _____	_____