

Describing your goals

Next, you need to write a description of your goals relating to the problems that you have described and the values you have identified. Start with short-term goals, which are easier to tackle, and set yourself a realistic timetable by which you intend to move on to the next set of goals.

SAMPLE GOAL LIST

Progress rating: 0–10 (Where 0 = no progress and 10 = total improvement)

Goals Progress rating

Short term

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 To stop repeatedly checking my body and instead get to work on time | 1 |
| 2 To stop investigating symptoms on the Internet and instead spend at last an hour a day with my children. | 8 |

Medium term

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 To resume my social life by meeting up with friends outside my home twice a week | 3 |
| 2 To go to the gym three times a week | 5 |
| 3 To go out to local shopping centre once a week | 5 |

Long term

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 To be a good partner and spend time doing things together | 3 |
| 2 To learn to play the piano and practise daily | 4 |

Try to make your own goals as specific, observable and realistic as possible.

Some individuals with health anxiety have forgotten what is normal or healthy. To help generate ideas for healthy alternative behaviors, consider the following questions:

- What did you do before you had a health anxiety?
- If you had a twin, who was the same as you in every respect but without health anxiety, what would they do?
- What would a role model of yours do?
- What would someone who inspires you do?

You will need to ask yourself these questions for goals in the short, medium and long term. You can then monitor your progress towards your goals on a scale of zero to 10, where zero is no progress at all towards the goal and 10 means the goal has been achieved and sustained. Remember to make sure that your goals relate to your valued directions in life and tackle what you have been avoiding.

EXERCISE 3.3: LIST OF GOALS

Progress rating: 0-10 (Where 0 = no progress and 10 = goal completely reached)

Short term

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Medium term

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Long term

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____