# FACE AVOIDANCE

KEEP LEARNING

CONNECT

## QUICK EXPLANATION

Often a symptom of struggling with anxiety or other mental health difficulties is avoidance. This can be due to the worries you might have about your own ability to cope in a given situation or imagining the worst-case scenario. These worries are often unwarranted and false but can cause you to change your behaviours. This activity encourages you to face your fears in a safe way, and to help you find ways to overcome avoidance.

If you feel that your avoidance is severely impacting your functioning, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Wellbeing Service.

## AIM

To provide a simple technique to help you overcome avoidance.

## INSTRUCTIONS

If you are avoiding something e.g. a seminar or joining a society, there are ideas that will help you FACE your avoidance that you can work through in your own time.

- **Find & identify goal:** What is it you are avoiding and would you like to change. Start with something small, and least distressing. For example, if it is speaking in a seminar, the first step could be simply attending and sitting at the back.
- **Action to take:** Make a plan of action using who, what, where, when and how – so that you know exactly what you need to do.
- **Coping strategies:** Think through what normally helps you to cope. This could be support networks, breathing techniques, mindfulness, or anything that works for you.
- **Evaluate:** It's important to evaluate what you did. It is also OK if you don't succeed, Making changes is about learning and seeing what works or doesn't work for you. Look at what went well? What could go better next time?

**Source:** https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/face.htm

## RESOURCES

Worksheet

# WORKSHEET: FACE ACTION PLAN

| YOUR GOAL: | |
|---|---|
| **FIND YOUR GOAL** | What situation would you like to stop avoiding? |
| **ACTION PLAN** | Who? What? When? How? Why? |
| **COPING STRATEGIES** | What works for you when you are stressed? What could you try to reduce your anxiety? |
| **EVALUATE** | What went well? Is there anything you would do differently next time? |