Anxiety or Accommodation Worksheet

Dr David Ruttenberg, PhD

Purpose:

Help individuals, clinicians, or managers distinguish whether stress indicators suggest a need for environmental accommodations or therapeutic intervention.

How to use this worksheet:

- For individuals, apply the worksheet to clarify the source of anxiety and track the impact of interventions.
- For clinicians or managers, use as a structured intake and accommodation-planning aid, combined with ongoing clinical judgment and employee feedback.
- **This tool does not replace medical or psychological evaluation but enhances the objectivity and personalization of anxiety management and accommodation planning.**

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PART 1: Self-Monitoring & Data Gathering

Instructions: For one week, record the following during periods of elevated anxiety or discomfort. Use a wearable device if available or fill out manually.

Date/Time	Location or Context	Trigger/Event	Physical Signals	Subjective Stress (0–10)	HRV/EDA Data (if available)

Physical signals to monitor:

- Increased heart rate (HR)
- Sweaty palms/increased skin conductance (EDA spike)
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle tension
- Stomach discomfort
- Other: _____

References: Dao et al., 2024; Lazarou & Exarchos, 2024

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PART 2: Pattern Recognition

1. **Environmental Pattern**

    - Do anxiety or physiological signs mostly occur in specific environments (e.g., office, during meetings, certain social settings)?
        - [ ] Yes: Environmental pattern noted
        - [ ] No: No clear situational pattern

2. **Relief With Environmental Change**

    - Do anxiety signals or physical symptoms decrease after moving to a different environment or changing the setting (quiet room, reduced noise, adjusted lighting)?
        - [ ] Yes: Rapid improvement with environmental change
        - [ ] No: Symptoms persist across environments

References: Dao et al., 2024; Lazarou & Exarchos, 2024; Ong et al., 2021

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PART 3: Decision Flow — Accommodation or Anxiety?

A. Pursue Accommodations First If:

- Triggers/stress are *environmental*
- Symptoms resolve after environmental changes
- Anxiety is event- or situation-specific

Recommended actions:

Noise-canceling headphones, flexible breaks, remote work, lighting/space adjustments

B. Pursue Clinical/Therapeutic Intervention If:

- Symptoms persist across all environments
- Chronic low HRV or high EDA regardless of context
- Anxiety is present even during rest or outside stress-triggering environments
- Significant daily disruption or distress

Recommended actions:

Consult a clinician for therapy, biofeedback, or cognitive-behavioral interventions

References: Dao et al., 2024; Lazarou & Exarchos, 2024; Sahu et al., 2018; Ong et al., 2021

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PART 4: Track & Reassess

Implement one change (accommodation or regulation skill) for two weeks and track outcomes:

Date/Change Made	Impact on Symptoms/Physiology (better/worse/unchanged)	Subjective Wellbeing (0–10)

Repeat and refine as needed. This tool is intended to support, not replace, professional evaluation.

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References

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