Experimenting with Avoided Foods

Strict food rules are often based on assumptions or predictions rather than facts. To better understand your eating disorder and loosen your food rules, it can help to test out your predictions about your avoided foods. Follow the steps below to test your predictions about the foods you avoid.

1. Choose a food from the left hand column of the list overleaf – one rated about 3-4 out of 10

   **Food:** ___________________________ Rating: __/10

2. What are you afraid will happen if you eat this food?

   ____________________________________
   ____________________________________

3. How will you test this prediction?

   Plan how you will do this:

   **When:** __________________________________
   **Where:** _______________________________
   **What do you need to do?** _______________________

4. Record your subjective level of distress before, during and after the experiment (rate 0-10):

   **Before:** _______________________ Rating: ___/10
   **During:** _______________________ Rating: ___/10
   **After:** _______________________ Rating: ___/10

5. What actually happened (when you tested the prediction)?

   ____________________________________
   ____________________________________
   ____________________________________

6. What does this mean for your new, balanced view about this food?

   ____________________________________
   ____________________________________
   ____________________________________

You’re now ready to move onto other foods on the list.

Remember the key is to break things down into manageable steps. Begin with foods that you avoid a little and work your way up to foods that you avoid a lot. If a particular food is very challenging, you may need to break this into smaller steps. E.g., if a regular sized chocolate bar is 10/10 you may need to start by eating a funsize bar and then work up to the regular bar.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods I avoid <strong>a little</strong></th>
<th>Foods I avoid <strong>a lot</strong></th>
<th>Foods I avoid <strong>completely</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g. Avocado (in salad)</em></td>
<td><em>e.g. Peanut butter (on toast)</em></td>
<td><em>e.g. Chocolate</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
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