

A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) creative awareness exercise to help you to manage your fight or flight responses in stressful and challenging situations. This exercise will enhance self-awareness, promote cognitive flexibility, and develop healthier coping strategies. Check out which ones click with you:

1.	Emotional Weather Forecast: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Imagine your emotions as a weather forecast. Describe your current emotional state in terms of weather conditions (e.g., stormy, sunny, cloudy).Explore why you feel this way and what triggered these emotions.Identify patterns where you can use strategies to "forecast" and prepare for emotional storms, like relaxation techniques or positive self-talk.
2.	Storytelling Time Travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recall a past situation where you experienced a strong fight or flight response.Describe the event in detail as if you are telling a story. Include sensory details and emotions.Next: imagine going back in time to that moment with the knowledge and skills you have now, and come up with ways that you would react differently – and what outcomes the new approach would bring
3.	The Thought Balloon Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Draw thought balloons (like in comic strips) on paper..In each thought balloon, write down a thought or belief that typically triggers your fight or flight response.Then, examine and challenge these thoughts, replacing them with more balanced and rational alternatives in new thought balloons.
4.	The Emotional Barometer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a visual "emotional barometer" with a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being very calm and 10 being extremely anxious).Throughout the day, periodically check in with yourself and rate your current emotional state on the barometer. Build emotional awareness and regulation.Think about your triggers for spikes in emotional intensity, and develop self-talk strategies to bring yourself back to a lower level when needed.
5.	Environmental Scavenger Hunt: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Go for a walk, or imagine a familiar environment (e.g., home or workplace).Be mindful and identify objects or elements in the environment that represent sources of stress or triggers for your fight or flight response.Then, brainstorm and practice relaxation techniques or positive self-talk you can use when encountering these triggers in the future. Build your 'toolbox' of tricks..
6.	The Anxiety Playlist: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a playlist of songs that reflect your current emotional state, or situations that trigger your anxiety fight or flight response.Listen to these songs and note how your emotions change.Examine the connection between music, emotions, and coping strategies, maybe you can use relaxing music as a tool for mindful self-regulation.
7.	The Imaginary Safe Haven: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visualise an imaginary safe and calming place in your mind.Pull this visual up in your mind to create a mental safe haven when you start feeling overwhelmed or threatened, building a way to anchor yourself in this peaceful mental space.

These creative awareness exercises can help you to better understand and manage your physical anxiety and fight or flight responses, promoting emotional resilience and healthier coping strategies in a way that your brain will understand and love.