BEHAVIOUR EXPERIMENT LAB

UNDERSTAND THE METHOD / CHOOSE YOUR EXPERIMENT

Curiosity is the starting point

A behavioural experiment is a small, planned activity used in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to examine a prediction. Rather than trying to think yourself out of worry, you gather information from an experience.

THE FIVE LAB STATIONS

01 Thought	02 Predict	03 Plan	04 Observe	05 Learn

01 What might be worth testing?

Choose something small, realistic and safe. Examples include asking a simple question, sending an ordinary message without repeatedly checking it, or taking a short permitted break.

The thought or belief I would like to explore:

02 Predict an observable outcome

Try to make the prediction specific. For example: "They will say my question was silly" is more testable than "Everyone will think badly of me."

My prediction - what I expect to happen:

LAB SAFETY CHECK

Do not test real dangers, another person's consent, health risks or essential safety measures. Keep disability adjustments and necessary support in place. You can stop at any time.

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DESIGN YOUR TEST / COLLECT REAL EVIDENCE

03 Build a manageable experiment

One small, safe action I could try:

WHEN / WHERE:

Support I want available and how I can pause or stop:

A DIFFERENCE WORTH KNOWING

Repeated reassurance or checking might be worth exploring. Medical precautions, reasonable adjustments and communication aids are not safety behaviours you need to remove.

04 Record what you actually observed

What happened? Describe events rather than assumptions about other people:

EVIDENCE THAT SUPPORTED THE PREDICTION

EVIDENCE THAT CHALLENGED IT / UNCERTAIN

ANXIETY RATINGS (0 = calm, 100 = extremely anxious)

Before ____	Highest point ____	After ____

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INTERPRET RESULTS / PLAN WHAT COMES NEXT

05 What did the experience teach you?

Compare the original prediction with what you observed. A belief rating may increase, decrease or stay the same. Each result offers information - not a pass or fail.

ORIGINAL BELIEF STRENGTH	BELIEF STRENGTH NOW
_____ / 100	_____ / 100
Before the experiment	After reflecting on the outcome

What was surprising, difficult, reassuring or different from what I expected?

What did I learn about uncertainty, coping or asking for support?

A balanced belief I can consider, without forcing myself to believe it:

My next step: repeat, adapt, seek support, or stop here?

A note from Maggie

The aim is not to prove yourself wrong. It is to be curious, notice what actually happens and treat yourself with care. A small discovery is still a discovery.

Educational self-reflection resource; not a substitute for personalised clinical support.