

Sunday Scaries

Anticipatory anxiety management

Printable worksheet · 5 parts

Name _____ Date _____

Sunday Scaries: Understanding and Overcoming Pre-Workweek Anxiety

This comprehensive assessment helps identify and develop effective responses to the "Sunday Scaries" - periods of heightened anxiety, dread, and rumination that often occur as the weekend draws to a close.

Instructions: For each statement, choose the option that best describes your experience.

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Contents

- Part 1 · Understanding Sunday Scaries
- Part 2 · Part 1: Recognizing Sunday Scaries Patterns
- Part 3 · Part 2: Responding to Sunday Scaries
- Part 4 · Assessment Results
- Part 5 · Action Planning & Interventions

PART 1 OF 5

Understanding Sunday Scaries

The "Sunday Scaries" – that creeping sense of dread and anxiety that emerges as the weekend draws to a close – is a phenomenon experienced by countless individuals across professions and positions. This comprehensive workbook offers evidence-based strategies for understanding and addressing this common challenge.

Key Understanding Points

- Sunday anxiety is rarely one-dimensional, manifesting through multiple interconnected dimensions
- Physical symptoms often include tension, digestive issues, and sleep disruption
- Cognitive patterns involve rumination, catastrophizing, and anticipatory worry
- Behavioral changes include avoidance, procrastination, and compensatory coping
- Work environment concerns often center on specific dynamics rather than general work resumption

The Experience

It begins with a subtle shift, almost imperceptible. Sunday afternoon stretches before you—theoretically still a full day of weekend freedom—yet something has changed in the quality of your thoughts. The golden light of afternoon seems to carry a warning rather than warmth. You're physically present but mentally divided, one part engaged in the moment, another part already seated at your desk tomorrow morning.

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PART 2 OF 5

Part 1: Recognizing Sunday Scaries Patterns

Anxiety Onset and Progression

I notice my mood beginning to shift downward on Sunday afternoon.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I experience a sense of dread as Sunday evening approaches.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I find myself counting down the hours remaining in my weekend.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I struggle to stay present during Sunday activities due to work thoughts.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I feel a physical tension or discomfort in my body as Sunday progresses.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely

- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Rumination and Cognitive Patterns

My mind repeatedly reviews upcoming work tasks on Sunday.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I mentally rehearse difficult conversations or meetings for the coming week.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I catastrophize about potential work problems that might occur.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I compare my Sunday feelings to how others seem to experience their weekends.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I find it difficult to redirect my thoughts away from work concerns.

- ☐ Never

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Work-Life Boundary Erosion

I check work emails or messages on Sunday even when not required.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I begin working on Monday tasks during Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I spend time Sunday organizing or preparing for Monday instead of relaxing.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

My Sunday conversations with others frequently turn to work topics.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I feel an obligation to "get ahead" on work during Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Sleep Disruption

I experience difficulty falling asleep on Sunday nights.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I wake up during the night with work-related thoughts on Sundays.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I have stress dreams or nightmares about work on Sunday nights.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I set my alarm earlier than necessary on Monday to prepare mentally.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I experience more sleep anxiety on Sunday than other nights.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Weekend Enjoyment Impairment

I find it difficult to fully enjoy Sunday activities due to upcoming work thoughts.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I avoid making Sunday evening plans to prepare mentally for Monday.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I notice my engagement with family or friends decreases as Sunday progresses.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I experience guilt when trying to relax on Sunday evenings.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often

☐ Always

I feel a contrast between my weekend self and my anticipation of my work self.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

Work Environment Concerns

I worry about specific interactions with colleagues or supervisors.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I mentally review unresolved problems from the previous work week.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I experience anxiety about my workload or pending deadlines.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I feel apprehension about organizational politics or workplace dynamics.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I question my career choices or workplace fit as Sunday progresses.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Avoidance and Coping Mechanisms

I use alcohol or other substances to manage Sunday evening feelings.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I distract myself with excessive media consumption (TV, social media, etc.) on Sunday.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I procrastinate on Sunday self-care to avoid acknowledging Monday's approach.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I oversleep on Sunday or take naps to escape anxiety feelings.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I engage in stress eating or other compensatory behaviors on Sunday.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

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Part 2: Responding to Sunday Scaries

Intentional Transitions

I create specific rituals to mark the transition from weekend to workweek.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I prepare for Monday in an organized way earlier in the weekend to free Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I schedule enjoyable activities specifically for Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I consciously reflect on positive aspects of my work or purpose at week's end.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I set clear boundaries around when weekend ends and work preparation begins.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely

- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Thought Management Practices

I notice and name anxious thoughts about work without being controlled by them.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I practice redirecting rumination to present-moment awareness.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I challenge catastrophic thinking about the upcoming week with realistic assessment.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I maintain perspective about work challenges through self-talk or journaling.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I distinguish between productive preparation and unproductive worry.

- ☐ Never

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Physical and Environmental Strategies

I engage in physical activity specifically on Sunday to reduce anxiety.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I practice relaxation techniques (deep breathing, meditation, etc.) on Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I create a pleasant Sunday evening environment (lighting, music, scents, etc.).

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I prepare physically for the week in ways that reduce Monday morning stress.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I prioritize sleep hygiene practices especially on Sunday night.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Connection and Support

I share Sunday anxiety feelings with others rather than suffering alone.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I maintain meaningful social connection specifically on Sunday evening.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I participate in Sunday activities that provide a sense of community.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I seek support from others who understand work-related anxiety.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I practice compassion toward myself when experiencing Sunday anxiety.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Meaning and Perspective Practices

I reflect on accomplishments and gratitude at the week's end.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I connect with personal values and meaning beyond my work identity on Sundays.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I engage in spiritual or contemplative practices that provide larger perspective.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I review the positive impacts or purpose of my work as the week approaches.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often

☐ Always

I maintain reminders of the temporary nature of work stressors.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

Monday Momentum Preparation

I plan specific aspects of Monday that I can look forward to.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I prepare a Monday morning routine that energizes rather than depletes me.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I organize Monday tasks in advance to reduce morning decision fatigue.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I schedule buffer time on Monday morning to ease the transition.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I arrange my Monday to begin with achievable tasks that create momentum.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Workplace and Structural Changes

I communicate with supervisors about workload issues that create Sunday anxiety.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I negotiate modifications to Monday schedules when possible (late start, remote work).

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I advocate for reasonable work expectations and boundaries.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

I explore job modifications or alternatives when Sunday anxiety persists.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

I coordinate with colleagues to make Monday transitions more supportive.

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

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Assessment Results

Sunday Scaries Vulnerability Score

Questions 1-35

Sunday Scaries Management Score

Questions 36-70

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Action Planning & Interventions

Sunday Evening Redesign

Create an intentional Sunday evening routine that supports transition:

3:00 PM - Transition Ritual:

Activity to acknowledge weekend ending (e.g., gratitude practice, nature walk)...

5:00 PM - Preparation Time:

Limited work preparation (e.g., review calendar, set priorities)...

7:00 PM - Connection Time:

Social or meaningful activity (e.g., family dinner, call friend)...

9:00 PM - Wind-Down Routine:

Sleep preparation activities (e.g., bath, reading, meditation)...

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