⠼ **Tool:** Eye Contact Assessment and Strategy Builder

Eye Contact Comfort Assessment

This tool is designed to help you reflect on your comfort levels with eye contact in different situations. By identifying patterns, you can better understand when and why eye contact feels manageable or overwhelming, allowing you to develop strategies that work for you.

Instructions:

- Reflect on your recent interactions or typical scenarios.

- Rate your comfort level on a scale from 1 to 5:

  > **1**: Very uncomfortable

  > **2**: Somewhat uncomfortable

  > **3**: Neutral

  > **4**: Somewhat comfortable

  > **5**: Very comfortable

- Note any triggers or factors that impact your rating.

- Use the additional prompts and strategy section below to develop actionable steps for managing eye contact more comfortably.

Scale Template

Scenario	Comfort Level (1–5)	Triggers/Comments
Making eye contact with close friends or family		Example: "I feel okay unless the topic is emotional or intense." •
Maintaining eye contact in small group discussions		Example: "I feel pressure to split my focus between everyone in the group." •
Holding eye contact in professional settings		Example: "Feels manageable if the conversation is casual, but stressful in interviews." •

Scenario	Comfort Level (1–5)	Triggers/Comments
Glancing at strangers in public settings		Example: "I avoid this because I'm worried they'll interpret it as confrontation." •
Making prolonged eye contact during intimate conversations		Example: "It feels too personal and like I'm exposed." •
Eye contact during public speaking		Example: "I look slightly over their heads because direct eye contact with an audience feels overwhelming." •
Situations with unpredictable interactions (e.g., networking)		Example: "I don't know where to look because I'm unsure of their expectations or reactions." •

Action Plan: Developing Strategies to Make Eye Contact More Comfortable

Use your Eye Contact Comfort Assessment results to identify patterns, triggers, and scenarios where eye contact feels easier or harder. For challenging situations, refer to earlier in the chapter for ideas on how you can adapt to mitigate the discomfort.

Scenario	Comfort Level (1–5)	Triggers/ Comments	Adaptation
Example: Maintaining eye contact in small group discussions	2	Example: "I feel pressure to split my focus between everyone in the group."	Alternate your gaze between different points in the group, such as focusing on the area between someone's eyebrows or glancing at a neutral spot like a table or an object in the room. Pair this with verbal affirmations ("That's a great point") to show engagement without the need for prolonged direct eye contact.

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