“In order to find out how much discomfort or anxiety certain situations cause you, we will use a scale that we call the SUDS scale, which stands for Subjective Units of Discomfort. It’s a 0 to 100 scale. A SUDS rating of 100 indicates that you are extremely upset, the most you have ever been in your life, and a 0 indicates no discomfort at all or complete relaxation. Usually when people say they have a SUDS of 100, they may be experiencing physical reactions, such as sweaty palms, palpitations, difficulty breathing, feelings of dizziness, and anxiety. So 100 indicates very extreme fear or anxiety. But because people are different, what makes one person feel 100 SUDS may not be troublesome at all for someone else. This is why we call it a subjective scale. For example, imagine that you and I are standing near a deep pool, and someone pushes us both in the water. If I cannot swim, I will feel a SUDS level of 100 immediately. But if you can swim, or are not afraid of deep water, you may be a 0. Make sense?

In order to make this SUDS scale fit you and your particular fears, we will now find out what situations represent different SUDS levels on the scale. So, in what situation that you’ve been recently have you had a 0 level of discomfort—what makes you feel a 0? In what situation have you been a 100—the most distressed, upset, and terrified you’ve ever been? Now what is a 50 for you? A 50 is a moderate level of distress, halfway between the way you feel when [Insert the “0” anchor situation] and [Insert the “100” anchor situation]. How much discomfort are you feeling now as we are talking? What was your SUDS level when the trauma was over?

We are going to be using SUDS ratings to monitor your progress during the imaginal and in vivo exposures. We will use this scale during exposure exercises to monitor change in your anxiety.”

**Fidelity Checklist:**

 ✓ When introducing SUDS to your patient, make sure you select anchor points at 0, 50 and 100.

Use this script to help you explain SUDS to your patient.