

How to Use This Deck



The Anxiety and Stress Solution Deck offers practical strategies to manage stress and anxiety. Each card offers a quick **Tip**, followed by a **Tool**, a short activity to put that Tip into practice, and a Takeaway.

The deck is divided by four color-coded focused areas of CBT, which I call the 4 C's:

Challenge Your Thoughts

Change Your Behaviors

Clarify Your Feelings

Create Calmness

These cards can be a tool for therapists working with clients individually, in groups, or for those who are looking for self-help skills. You can select one or more cards a day to focus on or pick them randomly to practice managing stress and anxiety. Revisit the cards as often as you need.

Uncover Your Core Beliefs



Tip: When you identify your core beliefs, you can challenge and change them.

Tool: The model below will help you to uncover the core beliefs at the root of your anxiety.

At meetings I am afraid to speak up.
If that was so, what does that mean to me?

I don't want to be wrong.
If that was so, what does that mean to me?

People will think I'm a loser.
If that was so, what does that mean to me?

That would mean I'm a loser.

***Stop core beliefs from
sabotaging your life!***

CHALLENGE YOUR THOUGHTS

Cope with Coping Cards



Tip: You can keep calm by using healthy reminders in difficult times.

Tool: Using 3 x 5 inch cards, write calming thoughts that you can carry and refer to in times of stress.

Coping Cards can include:

- affirmations
- positive sayings or reminders to keep you on track
- irrational thoughts (written on one side) with a more positive alternative (written on the other)
- inspirational quotes

You deserve some words of encouragement!

Separate Feelings from Thoughts



Tip: Confusing our thoughts with feelings gives us little control over both, causing anxiety and stress.

Tool: Write down at least five statements about what causes you anxiety, starting with “*I feel...*”

Look at your list and, see if there are any statements that are thoughts and not feelings. “*I feel like I am going to fail*” and “*I feel like I can't do anything right!*” are thoughts, not feelings.

The feelings would be anxiety, sadness and stress.

Separate thoughts from feelings, and manage your stress instead of carrying it!

Distance Yourself from Anxious Thoughts



Tip: One calming mindfulness strategy is to look **AT** your thoughts instead of looking **FROM** them.

Tool: Imagine that you are sitting in a movie theater and observing your thoughts on the screen. Imagine continuing to move a few more rows back and distancing yourself from the anxious thoughts, until you are in the very back of the theater.

When you observe your disturbing thoughts, you can detach from the anxiety and stress that is associated with those thoughts.