

# The 4 C's of Calm: A Framework For Managing Anxiety

Change how you feel

## Understanding Anxious Thoughts

Anxious thoughts can feel overwhelming, but understanding them is the first step towards managing them. Anxiety often manifests as persistent worries, fears, or negative self-talk.

### What are Anxious Thoughts?

They are thoughts characterized by excessive worry, apprehension, or fear about everyday situations or future events. These thoughts can trigger physical symptoms like increased heart rate, sweating, and restlessness.

### Common Thinking Traps That Can Contribute to Anxiety:

- **Catastrophizing:** Expecting the worst possible outcome.
- **Overgeneralization:** Drawing broad conclusions from a single event.
- **All or Nothing Thinking:** Seeing things as only “good” or “bad,” with no middle ground.
- **Mind Reading:** Assuming you know what others are thinking about you without evidence.
- **Fortune Telling:** Assuming you know how the future will turn out—usually in a negative way—without real evidence. For example: predicting we'll fail and/or others will reject us.
- **Personalization:** Believing that you are the cause of negative external events.

## What is Reframing? The 4 C's Technique

**Reframing** is a technique that can help you change the way you view situations, events, ideas, or emotions to find more helpful and balanced alternatives. It doesn't mean ignoring problems, but rather looking at them from a different perspective.

### 4-Steps for Reframing:

1. **Catch and Identify the Anxious Thought:** Write down the specific thought that's causing you to feel anxiety. For example: “What if I mess up?”
2. **Check It:** Ask yourself, 'What evidence supports this thought? What evidence contradicts it?'
3. **Challenge It:** Gently question the validity of the thought. Is there another way to see it? What would I say to someone I care about right now?"

4. **Choose the Thought:** Choose a more helpful thought to focus on. Make sure it's realistic and based on facts and leaves room for possibilities instead of fears.

Example: “What if I mess up?” choose “I might make a mistake, but I can learn from it and still do my best.”

# Practical Tools

## Thought Worksheet:

Create a simple table with the following columns:

**Title:** *Thought Worksheet – Using the 4 C’s of Calm*

| Catch and Identify Anxious Thought | Check the Evidence Supporting the Thought         | Check the Evidence Against the Thought                                | Choose-Alternative, Balanced Thought                                  |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Example: What if I mess up?        | I sometimes feel nervous when speaking in groups. | I’ve successfully shared ideas before and received positive feedback. | I might make a mistake, but I can learn from it and still do my best! |

## Helpful Self-Reflection Questions:

- What is the worst that could happen, and how likely is it?
- What is the best that could happen?
- What is the most realistic outcome?
- What advice would I give to someone I care about in this situation?
- Am I treating a “what if” like it’s a “for sure?”

# Daily Practice and Support

## Daily Practice Tips:

- **Start Small:** Begin with reframing less intense anxious thoughts.
- **Be Consistent:** Practice reframing daily to strengthen your ability to challenge negative thoughts.
- **Be Patient With Yourself:** It can take time to change thinking patterns.
- **Offer Self-Compassion:** Be kind and give yourself grace throughout the process. Acknowledge your efforts and celebrate your small victories.

# Why Does Reframing Matter?

Reframing gives you a tool that you can use to help you become less fearful and build your confidence by helping you develop your skills to manage anxious thoughts and handle stress better. When we can practice shifting our thoughts and perspectives to more balanced thinking, we can calm our mind and body. Reframing gives you a tool to solve problems and shift to more helpful and balanced perspectives to improve how you feel. It can also help you disentangle from anxious thoughts.

## When to Seek Support?

If anxious thoughts are significantly impacting your daily life and relationships consider reaching out to a professional for support. A therapist can provide additional tools and support to help you manage and get relief from anxiety.

## Quick Review:

Reframing is a powerful technique for managing anxious thoughts by changing your perspective. By understanding your thoughts, challenging their validity, and practicing consistently, you can reduce anxiety and improve your overall well-being. Remember to be patient and give yourself grace as you practice this tool and reach out for support when needed.

**Want more support?** Reach out to us at [Salina@CoreConnection.Hush.Com](mailto:Salina@CoreConnection.Hush.Com) and we'll be happy to connect with you.