

Distress Intolerant Beliefs

Regardless of how a person's distress intolerance emerged, we take the view that this intolerance keeps having a hold over people's lives due to certain beliefs they have developed about experiencing negative emotions. These beliefs tend to centre on the notion that negative emotion is bad in some way, unbearable, unacceptable, or will lead to disastrous consequences. These beliefs tend to make any negative emotion that we may feel, become a highly distressing emotional experience. Below are some of the common beliefs that people with distress intolerance have when they start to experience negative emotion:

*I can't stand this
It's unbearable
I hate this feeling
I must stop this feeling
I must get rid of it
Take it away
I can't cope with this feeling
I will lose control
I'll go crazy
This feeling will keep going on forever
It is wrong to feel this way
It's stupid and unacceptable
It's weak
It's bad
It's dangerous*

Let's try to uncover your common **Distress Intolerant Beliefs**. Firstly, do any of the statements above ring true for you? If so, jot down the statements relevant to you. Secondly, ask yourself the following questions:

What does it mean to me when I start to feel uncomfortable emotions? What do I think will happen if I let myself feel distressed? What must I do when I feel any emotional discomfort?

