CDI Cards Sort – Brief User Guide

Career Difficulties Inventory – Cards Sort (© S. Rochat, 2019), images@pixabay
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Purpose	Vocational indecision refers to the difficulties a person may experience when making a career choice (Gati et al., 1996). Addressing these difficulties is central to career counseling.
Background	The Career Difficulties Inventory (CDI) is based on: • The taxonomy of career decision-making difficulties developed by Gati et al. (1996), which distinguishes 10 major categories and 32 subcategories. • The model presented in Mapping Career Counseling Interventions, which provides a more detailed framework comprising 64 difficulties grouped into nine broad categories: lack of motivation, indecisiveness, dysfunctional beliefs, lack of information about the decision-making process, lack of information about the self, lack of information about career options, internal conflicts, external conflicts and lack of employability.
Rationale	The CDI aims to support the career counseling process by helping practitioners to: • Identify the specific career decision-making difficulties experienced by the participant. • Tailor interventions to address these difficulties. • Monitor changes in these difficulties throughout the counseling process. Career decision-making difficulties can also be explored using questionnaires or an inventory. However, sorting cards encourages dialogue, collaboration and reflection rather than an assessment-oriented approach.
Process	With reference to the 5As model of career counseling, the CDI is particularly relevant to three phases: • Analyzing obstacles: precisely identifying the difficulties experienced by the participant. • Agreeing on goals: collaboratively defining the objectives of the counseling process. • Accompanying the termination: evaluating perceived changes and documenting progress through a second administration of the cards.
Content	The CDI contains 64 cards, each representing a specific career decision-making difficulty. The cards are numbered according to the chapters of Mapping Career Counseling Interventions, which explain each difficulty in detail and suggest several intervention strategies to address it.
Administration	1. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to the extent to which they consider each difficulty to be a problem for them. 2. Invite the participant to prioritize the difficulties that stand out, deciding which should be addressed first. 3. Explore possible connections between the difficulties together, determine the order in which they should be addressed and identify initial intervention strategies.
Further Reading	• Mapping career counseling interventions • Les 5As du conseil en orientation (Chapters 2.3, 3.1 and 5.3).
References	Gati, I., Krausz, M., & Osipow, S. H. (1996). A taxonomy of difficulties in career decision-making. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *43*(4), 510–526.