

# REFRAMING

## What is it?

**Reframing**, also known as **cognitive reframing**, is an exercise used to shift your mindset so you're able to look at a situation from a different perspective. When you have negative or anxious thoughts, you can transform them into something that feels less intense and stop yourself from spiraling.

## How does it help?

Negative thoughts can lead us to act against our own self-interests. Reframing has been shown to reduce stress and mental distress. It allows you to challenge your negative thoughts, creating a more positive and supportive mindset for our mental health.

## Example:

<b>Event</b>	You make a mistake
<b>Negative thought</b>	"I can't do anything right."
<b>Negative belief</b>	You are not capable
<b>Negative emotion(s)</b>	Shame, fear, distress
<b>Dysfunctional behavior</b>	Refusing to try again

Speak to yourself with the same kindness you show to a friend.

**You can change the negative thought to *"I realize where I went wrong, and I can do better next time."***

Now you view the mistake as a learning experience, and you have set yourself up to succeed in the future.

# REFRAMING EXERCISE

**Describe a situation or event that is making you feel bad. What is a common negative thought you struggle with?**

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**Even though the situation is hard, is there something you have learned from it? Is there another way of looking at it? Consider a healthier thought you can have.**

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**Additional questions to ask yourself when reframing:**

- How would someone else think about the situation?
- Are there other explanations I haven't considered?
- Am I leaving out the positives or exaggerating the negatives?
- Are my thoughts based more on how I feel than the actual facts?
- Am I holding myself to unrealistic standards that I would never expect other people to achieve?
- Am I overestimating how much control or responsibility I have in this situation?
- Am I considering everything I can do to deal with the situation?

**The more you practice healthier thoughts, the more naturally it will come to you!**

Reinforce your reframed thoughts with physical reminders like written messages on sticky notes.