



Positive Reframing Tips

In challenging situations, ask yourself these questions:

1. What is the **opportunity** in this situation? What lesson/skill can I learn?
2. What empowering **meaning/attitude** can I choose?
3. What **thoughts and actions** will help me move forward and thrive?
4. What greater **problem** did I avoid?
5. How can I **prevent** this from happening again?
6. What can I **control** in this situation?
7. What am I **grateful** for despite this?
8. What's **funny** in all of this?
9. **If someone hurt you:** What might they be going through? How can I react based on my values, not emotions? How might my interpretation be wrong? How can I not take it personally?

Reframing Examples

“We suffer not from the events of our lives, but by the meaning we give them.” - Epictetus

Every situation that ever happens has an opportunity in it, no matter how terrible, traumatic, or devastating, if we choose to look for it. You can have a **“life happens to me,”** or a **“life happens for me,”** attitude. Which one will help you achieve your dreams, be happier, and improve your community? **The choice is yours.**

Stimulus	Negative Frame	Positive Reframe
Someone is rude to you, disappoints or frustrates you	<i>I can't believe they did that! I want to teach them a lesson! Why are people so mean! That's not fair! I'm going to show them! All people are cruel! I would never do that to anyone! People should be nice!</i>	<i>This reminds me of who I don't want to be. I'm grateful everyone isn't like that. I hope he/she finds peace soon. I wish them well. They're projecting some issues. It's them, not me. They're having a bad day. They need kindness.</i>
A traumatic childhood experience	<i>You don't understand what I've been through and that's why I can't ... That experience took everything from me. I'll never be the same. I'm a victim who will never recover. Why me? They better fix this!</i>	<i>That event will not define me. I'll write the next chapter. I'll help others overcome similar setbacks. I'm a victor who chooses to thrive! That event made me stronger! It was their fault, but I own my healing! I'm worthy of love!</i>
Someone teases you or puts you down	<i>Are they right about me? That offended me! I'm so angry! That must be true. I want to hurt them! They deserve to be hurt! I'll get back at them! Maybe I am dumb or unworthy. It's their fault I feel this way!</i>	<i>I'm confident in who I am. They want a reaction from me, but I'm better than that. I respond based on my values, not temporary emotions. I'll tell them to stop, because I value myself & my peace. I choose how to feel.</i>
Someone criticizes you or gives you negative feedback	<i>Why are they attacking me? I must be dumb if the teacher gave me feedback. I can't do anything right! I knew I should have... Maybe I'm not good enough. I hate feedback, it's uncomfortable and I feel like I'm being picked on! Feedback is painful.</i>	<i>I love feedback. I want more! It makes me stronger. I love learning and improving. Even when criticism stings, it can still have some great advice if I don't let my ego/pride get in the way. Criticism doesn't hurt my self-worth. I'm self-compassionate with my weaknesses.</i>
Death of a loved one	<i>I'll never be happy again. I can't move on. Why them? Life's not fair! I'll never be the same! I can't do this without them. Life has no more meaning. This will affect every part of my life and I won't be able to recover. I loved them so much and to show my care and loyalty, I will suffer in honor of them. It's my fault. If I only... I should have... God is unfair. Life is unfair!</i>	<i>Their spirit guides me and gives me strength. They wouldn't want me to be sad, but thriving, improving, and living life! I'll see them again one day. It's ok to cry and tomorrow will be better. I'll never forget them. I'll appreciate those alive even more. I can help others cope with this too! He/she was a hero and he/she taught me... It's an opportunity to strengthen my faith... I'll honor them with my actions!</i>
Stress, fear, or tough challenges	<i>You're/this is stressing me out! I can't handle this! I'm not capable... I wish it were easier! I wish it was like the good old days! It's too difficult, maybe I'm not smart enough. If it's my passion/purpose shouldn't it be easier? I'd rather be... than doing this. I'm afraid I will ... I must avoid it at all costs!</i>	<i>I'll gain a new skill, learn something, or change my attitude. How can I face this in small steps? How can this make me stronger? What is the opportunity? How can I get better! On the other side of fear & hard work, is power! If it doesn't challenge me, it doesn't change me. Fear fuels me to prepare: the antidote to fear.</i>
Setbacks, failures, mistakes	<i>It wasn't my fault. If only he/she/they... I would have, but... They need to start...! They better...! I guess I'm not good enough. Only dumb people make mistakes and fail. It has to be perfect! What if I fail? I'm gonna mess up. They'll laugh at me. The system wants me to fail! It wasn't meant to be.</i>	<i>Failure and mistakes are a part of learning. Successful people have made the most mistakes. Every expert was once a novice. The only failure is quitting or not trying. There is no failure, just results and if I don't like them, I can change them. I'm in charge of my destiny, not my past or circumstances.</i>