

Reframing Thoughts

When stressed, our thinking often becomes narrow and critical. **Reframing techniques** help us see things from a fresh perspective.



Examine the evidence.

Most of the time we accept a thought as true only because it was first. But when we stop and reflect, we find that many negative thoughts lack evidence.

Slow down and review the evidence:

- What's the evidence for and against the thought?
- Are you relying on feelings or guesses, rather than facts?
- Are you exaggerating the importance of any evidence?



Zoom out to see the big picture.

Our minds are like a camera that can zoom in and out. When we're stressed, we often zoom in on negative details and forget there's a bigger picture.

Imagine zooming out of your situation:

- What positive or neutral aspects of your situation are you ignoring?
- Are you seeing the negatives as the entire reality?
- When you look at the big picture, are the negatives as important as you thought?



Find the silver linings.

Many difficult situations have upsides. Maybe you wouldn't choose your situation, but what can you make of it now that it's here?

Look for the positives:

- What are some good things that can come from your situation?
- What beauty or meaning can you find in your experience?
- Can you find humor in your situation?

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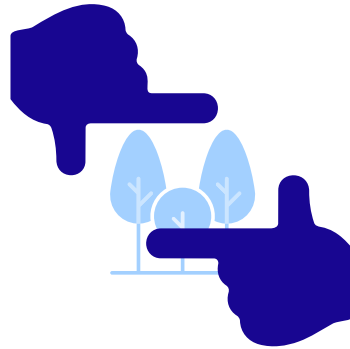


Be a friend to yourself.

When a friend faces a problem, we praise their strengths and treat them with compassion. But when we have a problem, we're often self-critical.

Imagine a close friend in your situation:

- How would you feel about your friend?
- What would you say to them?
- How do things seem different when you imagine your friend in your situation?

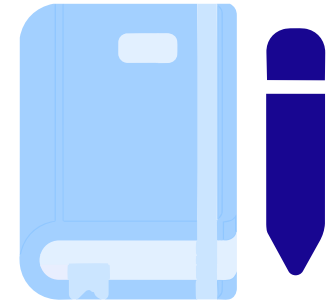


Put things in perspective.

When you're in the thick of a problem, it's easy to lose perspective about what really matters. Taking a step back, you often see the problem is manageable.

View your problem on a longer timeline:

- Will this problem still be as important in a month? A year? Five years?
- Looking back, how have you overcome something like this before?
- When you think about what matters most, how important is this problem?



Look beyond the problem.

Sometimes it's undeniable that a situation is bad, and reframing won't change that. Even so, it's important not to lose sight of other things in life.

Look at other areas of your life:

- What is something in your life that's going well?
- What is a small pleasure you'll still enjoy?
- What's something you can look forward to?