

Reframing negative thoughts

A practical guide

Name:



Live your life

Common types of negative thinking

Below are some of the most common thinking traps that people fall into, along with everyday examples you may recognise

01

ALL-OR-NOTHING THINKING

Seeing all situations in extremes – everything is either a roaring success or a complete failure, with no middle ground.

Example: You deliver a presentation at work that goes well overall, but because you stumbled over a couple of words, you decide it was a disaster.

02

CATASTROPHISING

Expecting the worst possible outcome, no matter how unlikely it is.

Example: Your partner doesn't reply to a text straight away, so you convince yourself they must be angry with you or that something terrible has happened.

03

MIND READING

Assuming you know what others are thinking – and usually believing it's something negative.

Example: A friend cancels plans and you instantly think it's because they don't enjoy your company anymore.

04

LABELLING

Assigning a negative label to yourself or someone else based on a single incident.

Example: You burn dinner and immediately tell yourself, "I'm useless in the kitchen."

05

PERSONALISATION

Blaming yourself for events outside of your control or influence.

Example: Your child is upset after school, so you assume it must be because of something you did or didn't do.

06

OVERGENERALISING

Drawing broad, negative conclusions from one isolated experience and applying them to all future situations.

Example: You have one awkward date and decide that you'll "never meet the right person."

How to reframe negative thoughts

Stop unhelpful thinking patterns and change perspective

Notice the thought

Ask yourself: What is going through my mind right now?



Name the thinking trap

Ask yourself: Am I catastrophising, overgeneralising, or assuming what others think?



Check the evidence

Ask yourself: What's the proof that this is true? What's the proof it might not be?



Real-life examples of reframing

Here are a few common negative thoughts, alongside how they might be reshaped into more balanced, constructive ones



Consider another angle

Ask yourself: How else could I see this situation? What would I say to a friend in my position?



Choose a more balanced response

Ask yourself: What's a more helpful way to put this?

Real-life examples of reframing

Here are a few common negative thoughts, alongside how they might be reshaped into more balanced, constructive ones.

SITUATION	NEGATIVE THOUGHT	REFRAMED THOUGHT
Work	"That meeting didn't go well. I always mess things up at work."	"That didn't go as well as I'd hoped, but I've learned what to do differently next time."
Texting	"They didn't reply to my message - they must be upset with me."	"There could be lots of reasons they haven't replied yet. I'll wait and see before assuming the worst."
Meeting new people	"I'm terrible at meeting new people, I always say the wrong thing."	"Meeting new people makes me nervous, but I can still take small steps to feel more comfortable."
Failings	"I failed once, so of course I will fail next time."	"Last time didn't work out, but that doesn't mean it will be the same every time."

Reflect on your progress

By doing this daily, it keeps your reframing skills active and will help form a habit.

How do i feel about my progress today?



What challenges did i face?



What helped me stay on track?



Other notes



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