

# The Art of Reframing

Instead of focusing on the problem a particular issue creates for you, reframing looks at the benefits or opportunities presented by that difficult issue.

You can use reframes in two ways: they can help you change your perceptions of a stressful situation. Or you can use them to help you cope and recover from a perceived failure.

1. Evaluate your language. Write down any negative words that you use to describe the situation (failure, stupid, worst ever, and so forth).
2. Choose new words. For example, change “failure” to “stumble.” A “relapse” can be made into a “reminder” or even a “chance to start again.”
3. Consider how you can use this experience as a teaching moment. A *teaching* moment means taking a difficult situation and weaving an important lesson into it.
4. Now get a pen or pencil and a stack of 3 by 5 index cards. Write down a valuable lesson that you learned from a particular situation you are currently dealing with or from an earlier experience. Post this card in an easy to see location.

## **Examples of statements you can utilize to encourage yourself to move forward:**

- This is a challenge, not a problem.
- This is a learning experience. It is a great lesson.
- Someday I will laugh about it, and it will be a great story to tell.
- This could be much worse. I have it better than some others do.
- There are more things I like about myself than the one thing I focus on disliking.
- With crisis comes opportunity.

Source: “50 Ways to Soothe Yourself Without Food” by Susan Albers, Psy.D.