

REFRAMING – How to transform meaning

- We experience events in our lives in different ways
- What one person describes as **exciting**, another may think of as **frightening**
- Often descriptions are **positive** or **negative, specific** or **general**
- Same event....different description
- We each see things differently
- The way we describe experiences to ourselves is the **frame** we put around them
- If you look for and become aware of the **habitual frames** you use in describing your experiences, you can learn to change them
- Changing the frame can literally change the experience and the meaning
- Describe the same experience to yourself in a different way
- Ask yourself.....
 - “What else could this experience mean?”
 - “What is the positive value of this experience?”
 - “How else could this experience be described?”
 - “What aspect of this experience could provide a different meaning?”
 - “Is there a larger frame in which this experience would have a positive value?”
- By asking questions like these and being open to the idea that your personal experience can be described in different ways, you can change what you think, feel and do
- Learn how to change your habitual ways of describing your experiences, from negative to positive, and from general to specific
- Change how you view the intentions and motives of others in the same way
- Say to yourself.....
 - “That’s one way to look at it, how else could I describe it?”

13 WAYS TO RE FRAME

“Learning how to change makes me anxious”

1. Model of the World

“That’s one way of looking at it, perhaps I’m feeling anxious generally”

2. Apply to self

“I make myself anxious by thinking that”

3. Elicit values / criteria

“What’s important about that for me?” “How is that a problem for me?”

4. Positive consequences

“So that will make me try harder”

5. Negative consequences

“So I might give up?”

6. Set a further outcome

“It’s not being anxious that matters, it’s what I actively do to help me change”

7. Tell a metaphor

“It’s just like learning to drive a different car.... you’re anxious at first but soon get used to it”

8. Redefine

“I’m not anxious, just excited about learning new things”

9. Be specific

“Learning how to change how I think makes me anxious”

10. Be general

“Learning makes me anxious”

11. Counter examples

“Have I ever been anxious when I wasn’t learning how to change?”

“Have I ever learned how to change without being anxious?”

“Have I ever learned anything without being anxious?”

12. Positive intention

“Being anxious shows that I am changing”

13. Change the time frame

“I am anxious now, but I will become calmer over time as I learn to change and become more confident”