

STRESS TO STRENGTH: STEP FOUR – THOUGHT CHANGING

*Thoughts can add stress, and lead to bad feelings. Name and tame (aka reframe) the thoughts to lower stress.
The big picture will get clearer. Try these three steps to name and tame thoughts.*

1) NAME AND RATE THE THOUGHT(S). Catch the most negative, exaggerated versions for best results.
Write out the Thought(s): *(negative, stinkin' thinkin', critical, automatic, distorted or sad/anxious thoughts.)*

Rate how strongly you believe the thoughts, and the strength of your feeling.

How strongly do I believe these thoughts? 1-10, 10 highest: **BELIEF Strength** _____

What emotion does that thought make me feel? **FEELING:** _____ **Strength:** _____

(Rate belief and feelings on the 1-10 scale, 1 is very low, and 10 is the highest)

2) CHALLENGE THE THOUGHT: Ask these questions, and answer yes or no.

Is it true/accurate? Yes or no _____

Is it helpful? Yes, or no. _____

Why is this thought off base, incomplete, or unhelpful? What's really true here?

Challenge the thought, while naming what is true.

3) REFRAME THE THOUGHT, THEN RERATE YOUR BELIEF AND FEELING STRENGTH.

How could the truth of the thought be stated in a more helpful way? That is your 'reframe'.

Reframe #1: _____

Reframe #2: _____

Reframe #3: _____

*** Rerate how strongly you now believe the thoughts in #1 above.** Rerate how strong the emotion is now.

BELIEF in #1 Thoughts: _____ **A) FEELING Strength now** _____

You may want to put the "reframe" on a post it note; put it where you will be reminded of this reframe work. The brain repeats itself, but the reframe will serve to redirect that fearful voice. "Thanks worry brain, we covered this already."

Resources to learn more:

Dr. David D. Burns, Ten Days to Self-Esteem, and The Feeling Good Handbook

David A. Clark, Aaron T. Beck, The Anxiety and Worry Workbook: The Cognitive Behavioral Solution

Denise Barnes, Stress to Strength: A Therapist's Guide to Empower Clients