

Health and Wealth Resources

Coaching, Emotional Health, Therapies

REFRAME YOUR LIFE IN SIX EASY STEPS



I was reading a story the other day about some Prisoners in America who had found a way of accessing the outside world. When found out, the Police Chief had reported that the men did not seem to want to leave prison and escape; it was more that they were just interested in making life more comfortable in prison by bringing in stuff from the outside. My immediate reaction was why would they choose to stay in prison rather than have their freedom, were they mad?

It reminded me of a time in 2002 when I was facilitating a 4 hour programme on "Change" in the local prison. There were 18 men in the room that day and two guards. They strolled in, some curious, some not wanting to be there, some showing off, until they were told to sit down and shut up by the guards. As the room settled into silence, I introduced myself and asked the prisoners to think of one positive thing about being in prison. Food, safety, comfort were just some of the words shouted out; when I asked "what else", there was silence. What I was looking for was "time". They had something that sometimes I wish I had more of, but what were they doing with it. What responsible actions were they taking to use the time they had on their hands to prepare for the outside world once they had left prison. The statistics show us that 80% of offenders return to prison, what is going wrong? Even being in prison and locked up, having time on your hands can be **reframed** into an opportunity for learning. One of the things I love the most about NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) is what we call the Reframe. NLP teaches us that the meaning of any experience depends on the **frame** we have around that experience, or the context of the experience.

Reframing is the process of making a shift in the nature of a problem. It is the process of changing a negative statement into a positive one by changing the "frame" or reference used to interpret the experience. If all meaning is context dependant, and if you change the context or content, then you will change the meaning. All content is reframable simply by changing the structure, the process, or the context. Having been a Coach for many years, I have found helping a client to learn to reframe a situation, especially in a "relationship" context, has transformed their personal relationships, work relationships, and the way they communicate overall with whoever they meet.

I quite often ask my clients "what would have to change for you to start to feel better about the situation you are in?" the answer is quite often "I don't know". The next question is "What if you did know". Small changes can have a huge impact. Just by **imagining** you have a special pair of glasses for instance, which you can use to look at a situation in a different way (reframe), can help get you unstuck. Have you ever admired a friend's sunglasses and tried them on, and noticed the way everything changes, usually because of the colour of the lenses. However, most of us go around living our life as though our glasses have been covered over with tape! We create our own prisons of worry, guilt, bitterness, anger, regret, fear which stops us from tapping into our own gifts and the potential of a happy, passionate and fulfilling life. Our beliefs can create our own prisons, keeping us from a life of purpose, freedom and authenticity.

Take a situation you may be struggling with or resisting, and then go through the following steps. Try it! Let me know what happens.



Reframe your Life in Six Simple Steps.

1. **REFRAME** - Change the way you see a potential problem situation. Look at it from another perspective. If another person is involved, try looking at the situation from their point of view for example.
2. **INTERRUPTION** - Cut short and change the behaviour that initiates the problem.
3. **RESOURCES** - What resources have you already got? Remember a time when you did something really well and had a good result. Acknowledge this and use the same resource to get you through challenges as they arise.
4. **PRACTICE** - Once you know what works for you, DO MORE OF IT!
5. **VISIONING - (MAKING A MOVIE)** - Imagine your self in a movie acting out the solution. See what you see, hear what you hear, feel what you feel.
6. **DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT!** If what you are doing isn't working, **DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT! TRY AGAIN!**

Changing the frame or the context around a specific experience immediately changes the meaning of that experience. The process of learning how to effectively change the frame of any experience is called **Reframing**.

For example:

- Using the “**as if**” frame, you imagine that something has already happened or been achieved, this can encourage creative problem solving by mentally going beyond apparent obstacles to desired solutions.
- Using “**Purpose**” frame, “what is the purpose for taking this action?” “What purpose does it serve?” asking these questions can ensure you get the outcome you expect from your actions.
- Using “**What if**” frame, “What would happen if I did?” This can help you think things through before taking action, and keeps your options open.

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters

Compared to what lies within us

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~

