



POSITIVE REFRAMING

# POSITIVE REFRAMING

RESILIENCE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME FOR STUDENTS 

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WHAT DOES 'FAILURE' MEAN TO YOU? WRITE DOWN 3 WORDS THAT IMMEDIATELY COME TO MIND

- Go to...

[www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)



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TWO PEOPLE ARE IN A TRAFFIC JAM.  
ONE IS HAPPY, ONE IS ANNOYED

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WHY?

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TWO STUDENTS GET 62% IN AN ASSESSMENT

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One feels like this

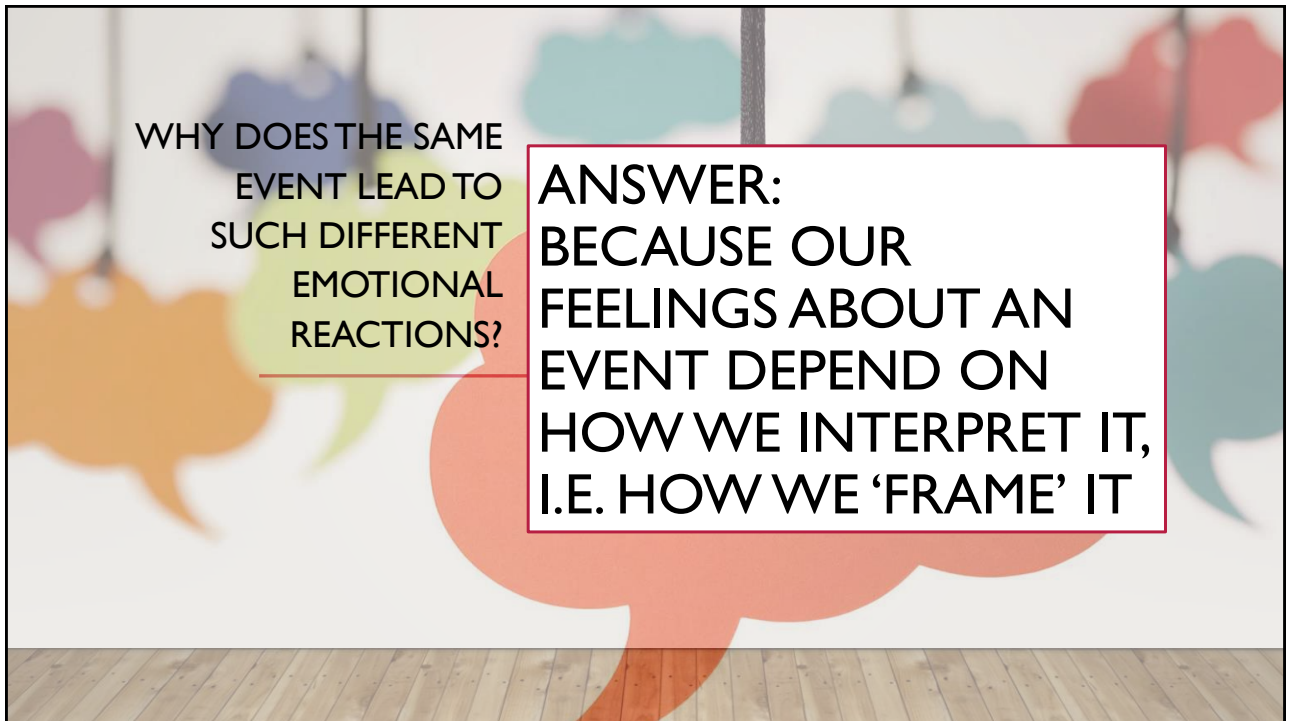


One feels like this

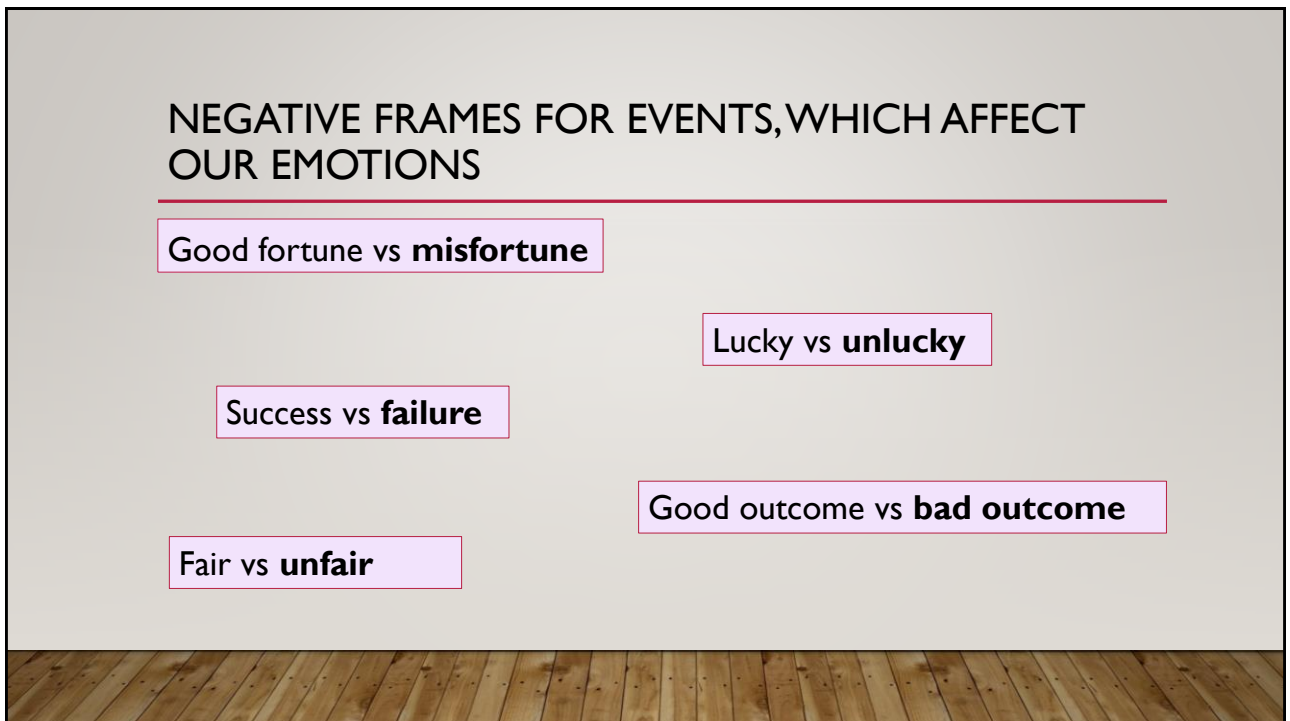


WHY?

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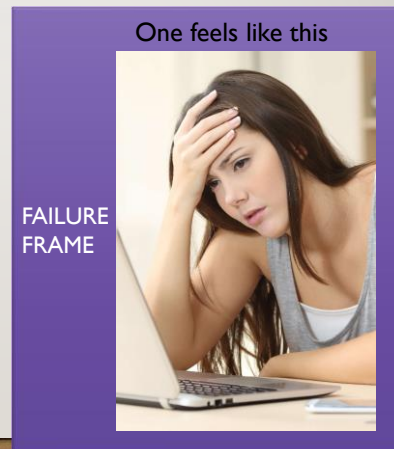
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## SO GOING BACK TO OUR TWO STUDENTS WHO GOT 62%

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## WHAT INFLUENCES THE FRAME?

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- **Goals.** E.g. from student example: One student had the goal of getting 60% or more. The other student got 70% or more.
- **Perceived implications:** e.g. from traffic jam example. One person may perceive very negative implications for being late, another person may have no concerns about the implications of being late.
- **“Automatic associations”**, which are due to years and years of learnt habit
  - Some people will have very negative and fearful associations with failure, some people will not.
- **Timeframe:** An event that is immediately framed negatively can be switched to a positive frame when viewed over a longer timeframe. And vice versa.

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## IMPORTANT: THERE IS NO “CORRECT” OR “INCORRECT” FRAME

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- What we are not trying to suggest here is that you should always view everything positively
- Negative frames are inevitable and often appropriate – so why would we try to change them?
- How do you know if a frame that you are holding around an event is a problem for you? If you find the emotion that is associated with it to be holding you back or making you unwell
- The aim of learning positive reframing is to be given the choice to respond differently

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## TASK: THINKING OF AN EVENT THAT CAUSED YOU A PROBLEMATIC LEVEL OF DISTRESS?

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- Write down the event
- What was the negative frame (or frames) that you put around it? **misfortune, failure, unlucky, bad outcome, unfair**
- Task for you: think...
  - (a) given that everything in your life is built on everything that happens before, did the event lead to positive outcomes over time?
  - (b) if it did not happen, do you know what other consequences would have occurred in that ‘other’ reality? Could something much worse have happened?

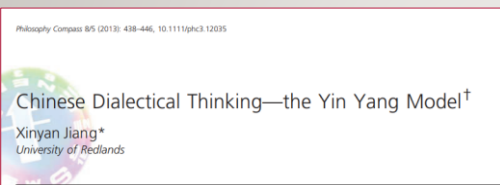
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# FRAME-FLIP STORIES

A WAY OF EXPLORING HOW NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE INTERPRETATIONS ARE  
RELATIVE TO TIMEFRAME

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## STORY NUMBER 1: FROM ANCIENT CHINA



“Misfortune is what fortune depends on, while  
fortune is where misfortune is hiding.”

The frame that used to interpret the man  
losing his horse as good fortune or  
misfortune depends on WHEN it is applied.

- Event 1: Once upon a time, there was an old man on the frontier. He lost his horse.
  - Frame?
- Event 2: The horse came back to him and brought another horse with it.
  - Frame of Event 1?
- Event 3: Then his son rode the horse and got badly injured.
  - Frame of Event 1?
- Event 4: Then all young men were called up to join the army. Since his son was injured, he could not be called up and was safe.
  - Frame of Event 1?

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## STORY NUMBER 2

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- Event 1: A woman buys a couple of Lottery scratchcards and wins £100,000 on one of them
  - **Frame?**
- Event 2: She runs out of the shop to phone a friend to tell her she has won, but runs into the street by mistake and gets knocked down by a car.
  - **Event 1 frame now?**
- Event 3: She is taken into hospital with a broken rib and leg. In hospital, she meets a doctor who in the future becomes her husband.
  - **Event 1 frame now?**

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Think up a story about the twists and turns of fortune:

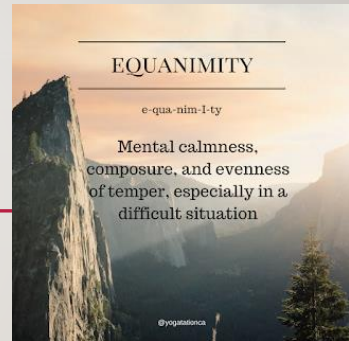
**Include at least three turns:**  
 good fortune > misfortune > good fortune  
 misfortune > good fortune > misfortune

You can use an example from your life, but put it in the third person

**NOW YOUR TURN**

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WHEN YOU DEEPLY REALISE THAT LABELS LIKE 'LUCKY/UNLUCKY', 'GOOD OUTCOME/BAD OUTCOME', 'GOOD FORTUNE/MISFORTUNE' ARE JUST RELATIVE TO A PARTICULAR PERSPECTIVE AND POINT IN TIME, THIS FREES YOU UP TO RESPOND IN WAYS THAT ARE HELPFUL TO YOU



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“You never know what worse luck your bad luck has saved you from” Cormac McCarthy

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# RE-FRAMING FAILURE

CHANGING THE AUTOMATIC ASSOCIATIONS AND PERCEIVED IMPLICATIONS

Re-show the failure word cloud

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## THE SILVER LINING OF FAILURE

- **Success** = you feel good and move on to the next thing, doing things the same way
- **Failure** = a **great opportunity to reflect and learn – it is a trigger for CHANGE**



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## HOW RESPOND PRODUCTIVELY TO FAILURE?

1. **PAUSE** – wait for automatically triggered emotions to subside
  
2. **LOOK BACK**: Review and reflect on what happened
  - a) Work out **what** went wrong (seek help if needed)
  - b) Work out **why** it went wrong (seek help if needed)
  
3. **LOOK FORWARD**: Set a goal and make a plan
  - a) Work out **what** to work on for improvement in the future
  - b) Make a plan of **when and how** you will bring this improvement about

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## WE CAN SEE THIS THROUGH THE LENS OF A 'FRAME FLIP' STORY

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- Event 1: A student gets 48% in an essay and this is far below what he wanted. He is upset.
  - **Frame?**
  
- Event 2: He emails his tutor to find out why he got a low mark, and the tutor explains that he did not structure or evidence his argument clearly. He decides to learn about how to develop an argument in an essay by watching online tutorials and attending study skills sessions
  
- Event 3: Thanks specifically to the learning he achieves inspired by the low mark in the essay, he achieves over 60% for all remaining assessments, which is in line with his goal
  - **Frame of Event 1 now?**

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## EXERCISE: WHAT DOES 'FAILURE' MEAN TO YOU? RE-FRAMED

- Again, think of the word failure
- Now, into Menti, write down words around it that relate to the good things that perceived failure can bring
- How does this make you feel?



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# ANY QUESTIONS?

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