# Cognitive Reframing Reference Guide

## 📝 Quick Reference Guide

Use this guide to quickly identify and shift unhelpful thoughts using Cognitive Reappraisal and Contrastive Thinking.

### 🔹 Cognitive Reappraisal (Emotion-Based Reframing)

- \*\*Goal:\*\* Change the emotional meaning of a thought.

- \*\*Best For:\*\* Emotional regulation, reducing anxiety, self-perception shifts.

- \*\*How to Use:\*\*

1. 1. Identify an emotional reaction to a thought or situation.
2. 2. Ask: ‘How else can I see this?’
3. 3. Reframe the meaning: Find an empowering or neutral interpretation.
4. 4. Reinforce the new interpretation by internalizing it.

✅ \*\*Example:\*\* ‘I failed’ → ‘I learned something valuable for next time.’

### 🔹 Contrastive Thinking (Logic-Based Reframing)

- \*\*Goal:\*\* Compare an assumption to an extreme opposite to challenge its accuracy.

- \*\*Best For:\*\* Breaking limiting beliefs, logical problem-solving, shifting perspective.

- \*\*How to Use:\*\*

1. 1. Identify a limiting thought or assumption.
2. 2. Ask: ‘Compared to what?’ or ‘What if I took the opposite perspective?’
3. 3. Compare the thought with an extreme opposite or an alternative view.
4. 4. Shift focus to the most accurate and empowering perspective.

✅ \*\*Example:\*\* ‘I’m not making progress’ → ‘Compared to someone who hasn’t started, I’m already ahead.’

## 🛠️ Step-by-Step Guide for Thought Reframing

Use this process to analyze and shift thoughts in real time.

### \*\*Step 1: Identify the Thought\*\*

- Recognize a thought that is causing doubt, stress, or hesitation.

- Ask: ‘Does this thought support my goal?’ If not, move to Step 2.

### \*\*Step 2: Analyze It\*\*

- Determine whether the thought is emotion-based or logic-based:

* - If it affects how you feel → Use Cognitive Reappraisal.
* - If it is based on an assumption → Use Contrastive Thinking.

### \*\*Step 3: Reframe the Thought\*\*

- \*\*For Emotional Thoughts (Cognitive Reappraisal):\*\* Change the meaning of the situation to a more empowering one.

- \*\*For Logical Thoughts (Contrastive Thinking):\*\* Compare it to an extreme opposite to challenge its accuracy.

### \*\*Step 4: Reinforce the New Thought\*\*

- Repeat the reframe until it becomes automatic.

- Use it as a default response when encountering similar thoughts in the future.

### \*\*Example Application:\*\*

- Thought: ‘I’m not smart enough to figure this out.’

- \*\*Analysis:\*\* This is a limiting belief, so I use Contrastive Thinking.

- \*\*Reframe:\*\* ‘Compared to someone who never tries, I’m already ahead. Intelligence is about persistence, not innate talent.’

- \*\*Reinforcement:\*\* ‘I might not have the answer yet, but I am actively learning and improving.’