

# Positive Reframing Table - Sample Ideas

This list is for brainstorming only. Some of these ideas, taken from various clients/clinicians, maybe more relevant in particular circumstances or seem repetitive. Make yours as specific as possible to the upsetting event and NT's on the DML. See Dr. David Burns "Positive Reframing Map" in the ebook or workshop handout on Agenda Setting for guidance.

Feeling	Advantages <i>What are some benefits of feeling this way? How will this help you? What is the implication of the opposite?</i>	Positive Values <i>What do these kinds of feelings show about you that is awesome and beautiful?</i>
Sad, down, depressed, unhappy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honest with myself.</li> <li>• Makes me more compassionate</li> <li>• Helps me to be more capable of embracing the pain of others.</li> <li>• I can share in humanity's/Christ's suffering.</li> <li>• Keeps me from being in denial.</li> <li>• An awareness of ____ happening and being important to me. (Life event/loss.)</li> <li>• It marks a precious/important moment in my life (life transition).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I am realistically looking at the problem/loss which has been difficult.</li> <li>• May be appropriate.</li> <li>• Reflects your intense love of ____</li> <li>• Brave/courageous. Shows you are willing to wrestle with the pain rather than being in denial.</li> <li>• Willing to look at my roll in _____, and take responsibility for my part.</li> <li>• Shows I'm not willing to dismiss beautiful things in my life that have passed.</li> </ul>
Anxiety, nervousness, worry, panic, fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protects from danger.</li> <li>• Keeps me vigilant.</li> <li>• Motivates me to get help, seek therapy.</li> <li>• Motivates me to do that best job I can.</li> <li>• Prevents me from becoming complacent.</li> <li>• Prepares me for _____(the future.)</li> <li>• Gives me greater understanding. Helps me be more compassionate for others. (____ specific person)</li> <li>• Provides energy to combat depression.</li> <li>• Helps me see and identify potential risks.</li> <li>• It's a red flag to take stock of what I am thinking. Helps me with being aware of my negative thoughts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I value ____ and would be sad if something happened to them/it.</li> <li>• Shows I care deeply about _____(doing a good job, being responsible, protecting myself/those I love, being ready for unexpected things, etc.)</li> <li>• Shows I am unwilling to just let things happen but would rather get involved to ensure the best possible outcome.</li> <li>• Shows other people's opinions matter to me.</li> <li>• Shows I listen/hear others concerns/criticisms.</li> <li>• Shows I'm not ignorant of risk or arbitrarily jumping into danger.</li> </ul>
Guilt, shame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's like feedback something might be (or is) wrong.</li> <li>• Reminder I am not living up to my values.</li> <li>• Motivates me change, do better next time. Helps me work on and toward new goals to better myself.</li> <li>• Keeps me from making past mistakes in the future.</li> <li>• Helps me examine where I am at now.</li> <li>• It's points me to Higher Source/ God.</li> <li>• Helps me to focus on what's important.</li> <li>• Empowers me to ask for forgiveness and make amends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I care about my standards.</li> <li>• Shows I'm unwilling to settle for less than my standards.</li> <li>• It's appropriate.</li> <li>• Shows I'm willing to look at my own flaws.</li> <li>• I care about how my behaviour affects others.</li> <li>• I don't want to let others down, they matter to me.</li> <li>• I have strong spiritual values/moral code.</li> </ul>

Positive Reframing Table Sample Ideas – Continued

<p><b>Feeling</b></p>	<p><b>Advantages</b> <i>What are some benefits of feeling this way? How will this help you? What is the implication of the opposite?</i></p>	<p><b>Positive Values</b> <i>What do these kinds of feelings show about you that is awesome and beautiful?</i></p>
<p>Inferiority, defectiveness, worthlessness, inadequacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivates me to work hard and not settle for mediocrity.</li> <li>• Motivates me to seek help, therapy, education, self-improvement courses, life coaching, religion/God, etc.</li> <li>• Helps me examine where I am at now vs where I want to be.</li> <li>• Prevents me from denial and avoiding what I need to do to improve.</li> <li>• Prevents me from overconfidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I have high standards.</li> <li>• Shows I am realistic, since everyone has flaws and shortcomings.</li> <li>• Shows courage – willing to look at my flaws</li> <li>• Shows I’m accountable, since I’m not blaming everyone else.</li> <li>• Shows I’m humble, not arrogant.</li> <li>• My spirituality is important to me.</li> <li>• I value being a positive contributor to others/world.</li> </ul>
<p>Lonely, alone, rejected, abandoned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It motivates me to reach out to people.</li> <li>• Motivates me to connect with _____.</li> <li>• Protects from disappointment if things don’t work out.</li> <li>• Gives me a break from social pressure.</li> <li>• Helps prevent me from giving up on people, I haven’t lost hope in_____.</li> <li>• May help prevent me from becoming bitter because I embrace the sadness.</li> <li>• Can motivate me to make personal changes (lose weight, join a club, improve communication skills, get ‘out there’, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I care about _____.</li> <li>• Shows I value relationships.</li> <li>• Shows I desire more meaningful, deeper relationships.</li> <li>• Shows I’m not satisfied with superficial talk and pointless chatter.</li> <li>• I am holding ____ accountable for their part in being hurtful.</li> <li>• Shows I am not willing to completely give up on _____ (love, person, situation).</li> <li>• Shows I want a connection with _____.</li> </ul>
<p>Humiliated, self-conscious, embarrassed, foolish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prompts me to examine myself.</li> <li>• Motivates me change, do better next time, modify my behaviour.</li> <li>• Keeps me from repeating past mistakes in the future.</li> <li>• Reminds me I am human, keeps me humble.</li> <li>• Protects or prevents me from being foolish, stupid, ignorant, hurtful, _____etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows I am humble</li> <li>• Shows I am honest and realistic.</li> <li>• I am willing to look at myself and my part.</li> <li>• I care what others think.</li> <li>• I value ____’s opinion, they matter to me.</li> <li>• I value responsibility, admit my part.</li> </ul>
<p>Hopelessness, discouraged, pessimistic, defeated  ... continued on next page</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realistic, not Pollyannaish</li> <li>• Protects me from getting angry or disappointed if things don't work out.</li> <li>• Prepares me for the inevitable challenges.</li> <li>• Gives me a break! No expectations. Justified in not to do anything</li> <li>• Surrender without giving up – profound acceptance "I surrendered to ____ but never gave up and I would still_____".</li> <li>• Help me look for my strengths and accept my weaknesses.</li> <li>• Reveals there's something else I need to do.</li> <li>• Eliminates or reduces fear because there is no future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows that I care about something very much even though I can't see how to achieve it.</li> <li>• I value realism. Sometimes things are bad.</li> <li>• Shows I’m willing to surrender, move on to a new facet in life.</li> <li>• Shows I know what hope is,.. if I feel I’ve lost it I must have had it before.</li> <li>• I am intelligent and skeptical. I question and challenge things rather than just going through the motions.</li> <li>• I value truth. Things aren’t always rosy.</li> <li>• I value hope and a brighter future.</li> <li>• I take things seriously.</li> </ul>

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<p>Hopelessness, discouraged, pessimistic, defeated ... con't.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allows me to rest. It allows me to take a break and not be so demanding of myself</li> <li>● It encourages or motivates me to make changes in my life.</li> <li>● It's telling me that I am delicate and need to take care of myself.</li> <li>● It's telling me that I know what Hope looks like</li> <li>● It marks a particular stage of my life and opens the next.</li> <li>● Hopelessness is the beginning of Hope. That I'm at the bottom and the only way is up.</li> </ul>	
<p>Frustrated, stuck, thwarted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Motivates me to find solutions elsewhere since I can't figure them out.</li> <li>● Keeps me from giving up completely.</li> <li>● Motivates me to keep trying.</li> <li>● Helps me re-evaluate what I think is important.</li> <li>● Helps me give up something that is not rewarding or fulfilling (or even harmful).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Realistic, I can see what is and what I'd like things to be.</li> <li>● Shows I have goals I've not given up on.</li> <li>● Shows high standards</li> <li>● Shows I value ____ (what client is stuck about/between).</li> <li>● Show I care about making the right decision.</li> <li>● Show I want something more.</li> </ul>
<p>Angry, resentful, upset, hurt, enraged, furious</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Motivation to change.</li> <li>● Pushes people I don't want to bug me away.</li> <li>● Alerts me when something is wrong/unjust.</li> <li>● Let's me stand up for what's right.</li> <li>● Puts me in control.</li> <li>● It's energizing.</li> <li>● It protects me.</li> <li>● It protects my beliefs and values.</li> <li>● It helps me get my way.</li> <li>● It's better than feeling hurt.</li> <li>● It's empowering.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It's Shows I'm optimistic. (expect good things)</li> <li>● It shows what I hope for.</li> <li>● It shows I have high standards.</li> <li>● Shows I value fairness and justice.</li> <li>● Shows I value kindness, integrity, or ____ (what has been violated).</li> <li>● Shows I care about ____ rather than being apathetic/indifferent.</li> </ul>
<p>Urge to give into habits such as overeating, procrastination, drugs (alcohol, caffeine, smoking, meds I probably don't need, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It's one of my only sources of pleasure/fun.</li> <li>● The reward is immediate.</li> <li>● It numbs the pain/anxiety/guilt/fear, etc.</li> <li>● The reward is intense.</li> <li>● It's comforting.</li> <li>● Helps me connect with others. (Social habits.)</li> <li>● It's easy. I want to!</li> <li>● It help me to ____ (think straight, be more social, creative, etc.)</li> <li>● Helps me avoid negative feelings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shows I have a free spirit and unwilling to conform.</li> <li>● Shows I value connecting with others.</li> <li>● Shows I value self-care (willing to put myself first in that moment).</li> <li>● Shows I desire peace and happiness.</li> </ul>