

# WORKBOOK

## Chapter Four

# REFRAMING

Rather than “Why is this happening to me, ask  
“What is this trying to teach me, what can I learn from this?”

Here are some useful catchwords for reframing, think of these as little mental “flags” that remind you to pause and see differently:

- Yet → adds possibility to limitation.
- Learning → turns mistakes into progress.
- Choice → reminds you of your power.
- Growth → reframes struggle as expansion.
- Practice → takes pressure off perfection.
- Temporary → helps soften the weight of challenges.
- Resilient → reminds you of your bounce-back – or forward - ability.
- Curious → shifts fear into exploration.

Using the catchwords will help you, here are some examples:

Limiting thought → Reframe with catchword

1. “I can’t do this.”
2. → “I can’t do this yet.”
3. “I failed at this.”
4. → “This was a learning experience.”
5. “I have no control.”
6. → “I always have a choice in how I respond.”
7. “This is too hard.”
8. → “This is how I grow stronger.”
9. “I should be perfect at this by now.”
10. → “It’s all practice — I’m improving each time.”
11. “This will never change.”
12. → “This is temporary; things can shift.”
13. “I’m broken.”
14. → “I’m resilient, and I’ve survived every challenge so far.”
15. “What if I mess up?”
16. → “Let’s get curious and see what happens.”

*“The moment you have a certain thought and believe it, you will  
experience an immediate emotional response.  
Your thought actually creates the emotion.”*

David D Burns MD



# BOUNDARIES

## Releasing the Need for Approval

### Step 1: Awareness

Ask yourself: “Where in my life am I still waiting for someone else’s approval before I feel worthy?”

Write down the areas - work, relationships, appearance, choices. Notice without judgment.

### Step 2: Reframe

For each area, complete this sentence:  
“Even if my parent(s) never approve, I choose to...”

This reclaims your agency and begins to separate your worth from their opinion.

### Step 3: Self-Approval

Stand in front of a mirror, look into your own eyes, and say:  
“I approve of myself. I am enough as I am.”

Repeat daily. It may feel awkward at first, but over time, it rewires your sense of worth.

### Step 4: Anchor in Freedom

Close your eyes, place a hand on your heart, and imagine yourself living freely without needing anyone’s permission.

What does that life look like? What emotions arise? Write down one action you can take this week that honours that vision.

*“Love yourself enough to set boundaries. Your time and energy are precious. You get to choose how you use it. You teach people how to treat you by deciding what you will and won’t accept”.*

Anna Taylor



# MY BOUNDARIES

STRONG

FRAGILE

HOW I CAN MAKE MY FRAGILE BOUNDARIES STRONGER

# NOTES

*"True courage comes when we decide to take a risk without knowing the outcome. It means showing up and letting yourself be seen, despite the risk. When you show up in this way, you open yourself up to joy and connection, but you can only do it by accepting that there could be pain." Brene Brown*

# SELF-CARE

Self-regulation and self-care are about learning how to notice what you're feeling - in your body, your mind, and your emotions - and gently guiding yourself back to a place of calm and safety. It means looking after your energy, making choices that support your well-being, and responding in ways that help you feel more peaceful, connected, and in control. My top tip about self-care?

Believe that you are worthy of it in the first place.

Am I ready to take myself seriously? (If I don't, others won't either.)

Yes.      No.      Not yet.      Nearly.

When I treat myself with kindness and compassion, I send a message to others that I am worthy of being treated with respect.

How ready am I? (On a scale of 1 - 10.)

Revisit in one month's time - how ready am I now?

*“With every act of self-care your authentic self gets stronger, and the critical, fearful mind gets weaker. Every act of self-care is a powerful declaration: I am on my side, I am on my side, each day I am more and more on my own side.”*

Susan Weiss Berry



MASTERING MENTAL TOUGHNESS

# VULNERABILITY

Affirmation:

I am safe. I am growing. I can feel vulnerable and still move forward with love.

Write down 4 things which make you feel vulnerable.

Two personal and two about work - or anything other than personal.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please look at the journaling prompts on the next page, and write your answers with compassion.

We can talk about these at our next one-to-one. In the meantime, use the tools such as breathwork (page 9) and self-talk to help you.

*“Vulnerability is not a weakness, it's a strength. And I think it's the strength of connection. It's the strength of intimacy. It's the strength of empathy. It's the strength of our ability to be human.”*

Brené Brown



# VULNERABILITY

## Practicing Vulnerability with Courage

### 1. What vulnerability looks like:

- Saying what you really think or feel.
- Asking for help instead of pretending you're fine.
- Taking a risk - sharing an idea, showing your art, telling someone you care.
- Admitting when you don't know the answer.

### Reflection prompt:

Where in your life right now could vulnerability open the door to more connection or growth?

### 2. Small steps to practice:

1. Share something honest with someone safe.
2. Name an emotion out loud.
3. Ask for support.
4. Take one small risk this week.
5. Reframe mistakes as lessons.

### Action step:

Circle ONE of these that feels doable for you this week. Write down when and where you'll do it.

### 3. Building courage through mental toughness

- Vulnerability isn't about avoiding pain - it's trusting yourself to handle it.
- Mental toughness gives you resilience when things don't go as planned.
- Together, they make it possible to be bold, authentic, and connected.

### Anchor statement:

Write your version of this phrase and repeat it before you take a risk:

“No matter the outcome, I can handle it because...”

### 4. Reflection after action:

After you've practiced vulnerability this week, ask yourself:

- How did it feel in the moment?
- What did I learn about myself?
- Did I experience new connection, joy, or relief?
- What will I try next time?

Remember: Vulnerability and mental toughness are partners. One opens your heart, the other holds it steady. Together, they help you create deeper connections and a stronger sense of self.

# BREATHWORK

The breath is closely linked with our emotions - when you learn to control your breath, you control your responses so much better. Breath into your belly rather than your chest.

In scientific terms controlled breathing practice cuts into stress hormones, connects with our nervous system, and regulates the oxygen, CO<sub>2</sub>, and pH levels in our blood. It has therapy potential to deal with depression, anxiety and PTSD.

## BOX BREATHING

Box breathing, also referred to as square breathing, is a deep breathing technique that can help you slow down your breathing. It works by distracting your mind as you count to four, calming your nervous system, and decreasing stress in your body. Slow, stable breathing calms the heart, blood pressure, and helps you to think clearly.

- Inhale through the nose for 4 seconds. Feel your lungs gradually fill with air.
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Once your lungs are filled with air, hold your breath.
- Exhale for 4 seconds.
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds.
- Continue for 60 seconds or more.

## HRV/HEART RATE VARIABILITY/COHERENCE BREATHING

Count to 5 in and 5 out, through your nose.

Richly tested by scientists, it's one of their favourites.

Breathing slowly and deeply soothes nervous system, softens/corrects nervous system and/or blood pressure, helps with stress and anxiety.

If practised regularly strengthens the heart and can help with heart health.

No contra indications.

## KAPALBHATI PRANAYAMA

Detoxifying, energising, helps correct low blood circulation, strengthens lungs, aids digestion.

Contra indications: high blood pressure, heart problems, pregnancy, hernia, wheezing, period, stomach surgery.

Blow nose first, sit comfortably, relax shoulders and face.

Short, sharp exhales through the nose, allowing breath to come back in naturally through the inhale. Repeat the short, sharp exhales. Exhale not by blowing out but by tensing your tummy/abs. Put a hand on your abs to feel this.

Begin and end with a slow breath fully in, hold a few seconds, relax on the final slow exhale.

Begin with twice a day for 30 seconds minutes, morning and evening, build up to 5 minutes.

# ANXIETY CONTROL

Being mentally tough doesn't mean we don't have feelings, especially around things we can't control. Sometimes we need to take time out, cry, rant, let it out - and then the best thing you can do is practice relaxation techniques, one of which is to BREATHE, slowly and deeply from the diaphragm.

*"This too will pass."*

Claire Rayner was taught this by her grandmother, to be used at all times in life.

When things are spectacularly dreadful, absolutely appalling; when everything is superb and wonderful and marvellous and happy - say these four words to yourself. They will give you a sense of perspective and help you make the most of what is good - and be stoical about what is bad.

Practise saying it aloud to yourself sometimes:

*"This too will pass."*

# EMPOWERMENT PRACTICE

Every day for the next twenty-eight days, with the attitude of gratitude, write down in your workbook one thing you truly like and appreciate about yourself - about your appearance, your personality, your life, your family and friends - even your positive thoughts about your future!

Write in the present tense so these notes go into the brain and begin to change your neural pathways.

1	15
2	16
3	17
4	18
5	19
6	20
7	21
8	22
9	23
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28

*“The past is a place of reference, not a place of residence;  
the past is a place of learning, not a place of living.”*

Roy T Bennett



MASTERING MENTAL TOUGHNESS

