

Modifying your emotional state

Use this exercise, for example, if you face disappointments in your job search or career. The aim of this exercise is to help you change your interpretation of a situation to a more positive one. This enables new feelings, that serve you better, to emerge from the situation. These new emotions open new alternative courses of action for you to take. With practice, you will find that you become more in control of your emotions.

1. Choose a situation and describe it

Choose a situation that has triggered unwanted emotions for you. Describe what happened in that situation.

- *What did you think about yourself or about others in the situation at the time?*
- *How did you interpret the situation?*
- *Now that you think about it, what beliefs do you find guided your thoughts and interpretation?*

2. Evaluate your feelings and reactions in the situation

- *What emotions did you experience as a result of your interpretation of the situation?*
- *What physical reactions did you feel in your body?*

3. Evaluate your action in the situation

- *How did you act?*

4. Redefine the situation

Think again about the same event you described earlier.

- *What other, alternative ways could you have interpreted the situation?*
- *What other, more positive and empowering beliefs could have guided your actions in this situation?*
- *How could you have thought differently about what happened?*

5. Re-evaluate your feelings and reactions

- *What emotions does this alternative, more empowering interpretation of the situation evoke in you?*
- *What physical reactions does this alternative, more empowering interpretation of the situation evoke in you?*

6. Notice your alternative action

- *What new alternative action does this new sensation enable you to take?*

Continue to the next page.

If you are successful in making an alternative and more empowering interpretation of the situation, you will find that your emotional state is automatically changed by your interpretation.

If you are still stuck in the original situation, do the redefinition again, paying particular attention to the positive alternative beliefs. If this seems difficult, ask a trusted friend for help and discuss it with them.

Remember that your own perceptions and beliefs are, at best, only partial or one side of the truth. You may feel that your original interpretation is the only right one and modifying it is manipulation. This is quite common, but don't let your old beliefs take over. Pay active attention to your interpretations. Identify and modify them as shown above, so that the new way of thinking becomes automatic for you.

More information about emotional skills:

Listen to your emotions - NYTYI ry:

<https://www.nyyti.fi/en/for-students/learn-life-skills/listen-to-your-emotions/>

Emotional skills – FSHS/YTHS:

<https://www.yths.fi/en/health-information/mental-health/emotional-skills/>