Reframe Stress & Adversity

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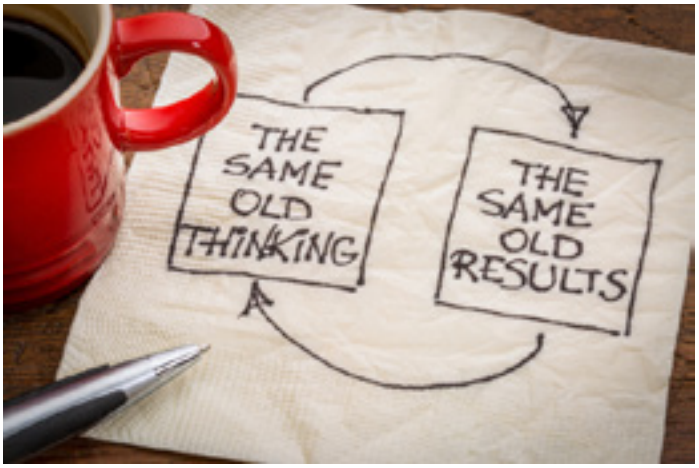
Lawyers spend years learning, and then practicing how to "think like a lawyer." Professionally, lawyers are responsible for doing all of the due diligence in a matter, analyzing what could go wrong in a situation and steering their clients away from negative impact. That's important when lawyers are engaged in the practice of law; however, when lawyers practice looking at issues through such a pessimistic, rigid lens 12-14 hours a day, that thinking style becomes harder to turn off when it's not needed. Ultimately, it can undercut leadership capabilities, interactions with clients, colleagues, and family and cloud the way life is viewed generally.

This skill will help you think more flexibly about stressful situations.



STEP 1:

Think of a situation you are struggling with or frustrated about, and write it in the space below:

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STEP 2: LIST…

The aspects of the situation you can control or influence:

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The aspects of the situation you can't control or need to accept:

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The specific action steps you can take to make the situation better:

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(Based on the work of Drs. Martin Seligman, Karen Reivich, & colleagues).

RESOURCES

Contributed by Anne Brafford

Book Recommendations

- Martin Seligman, Learned Optimism
- Karen Reivich & Andrew Shatte, The Resilience Factor
- Shirzad Chamine, Positive Intelligence: Why Only 20% of Teams and Individuals Achieve Their True Potential
- Kelly McGonigal, The Upside of Stress

Videos

- Kelly McGonigal, **How to make stress your friend** (www.TED.com)

Web Resources

- www.happify.com
- www.superbetter.com
- **Mood Gym** is a subscription-based online application created by academics to teach cognitive reframing—a key to mental health and resilience.

Smart Phone Apps

- A growing number of smart phone apps are available to teach cognitive reframing and other psychological tools to manage stress and reduce depression and anxiety. Examples include **Pacifica, Betterhelp,** and **Ginger.io**.