

## If only He did what I want him to do": Liberate Your Thought Patterns with a little Reframing

Have you ever had the fantasy that everything would be just fine if people acted the way you wanted them to act? If you are a nurse who has had this fantasy, and you work in a contemporary healthcare environment inhabited by a diverse work force, the last thing you are going to find are other nurses acting in a way that matches your particular fantasy. Luckily, there is a solution called reframing; reframing allows you to transform self-limiting thought patterns into a more expansive mode of interpretation.

Here's a sample of common fantasies with accompanying reframes that will serve you well if you find yourself in a downward spiral of self-limiting thoughts:

**Fantasy:** If only she would move faster, I wouldn't be so anxious.

**Reframe:** She moves at a different pace than me, so I will do something else until she is ready.

**Fantasy:** I just wish he would do what I want him to do, and then everything would be OK.

**Reframe:** He is not doing the procedure the way he was taught to do it; I wonder if I need to explain the process to him again so he could do it correctly the next time.

**Fantasy:** The charge nurse is so busy, but she should know that I want her attention.

**Reframe:** The charge nurse is so focused on her tasks, I can't expect her to know that I want her attention; I need to tell her I want to talk to her when she has a minute.

**Fantasy:** He should jump in and help me without being asked.

**Reframe:** I need to remind him to help me when it's really busy on the floor.

**Fantasy:** Why am I always the only one that bad things happen to?

**Reframe:** Like a lot of people, I have days where things don't turn out the way I want them to turn out.

There are many more examples of fantasies that keep the psyche trapped in a state of chronic dissatisfaction. If you find yourself with similar self-limiting thought patterns, try to incorporate some reframing; it may feel strange, perhaps artificial at first, but it could become a liberating experience with some practice.

When you allow yourself to think and feel more expansively about the people and circumstances in your life, the more open you will become to various interpretations: reflective thinking and empathy replace narcissism and your responses will be more heartfelt and thoughtful. And that is a recipe for satisfaction and peace of mind.

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