

Reappraise your current situation

Most people are faced with stressful, challenging and painful events in their lives, which create extremely negative emotions. Although no one goes through life without experiencing negative emotions, we can make them more tolerable, by infusing them with a positive meaning.

In this activity, you will practice using your thoughts to regulate the negative emotions you experience due to your unmet desire for children. All situations involve some positive and some negative aspects and the aspects we pay attention to often determine the way we feel. One way to decrease the negative aspects of a situation is to reframe them as more positive.

For example, let's say that you forgot your lunch at home and have nothing to eat. A positive thing you can tell yourself is that this gives you the opportunity to try the new cafe or restaurant that just opened, or to invite a colleague to have a quick bite. This reappraisal is not a negative appraisal.

Negative events can have different positive repercussions. They may allow you to

- Grow as person
- Learn something new
- Experience something good

We want you to apply this reappraisal technique when you experience negative emotions that result from your unmet desire for children. For instance, while many people find fertility treatment challenging, they often think that it strengthens their partnership. With time, those who end treatment without children come to appreciate their ability to travel or focus on work.

Let's practice

It is because of your unmet desire for (more) children that you are reading these materials. They may trigger many negative emotions related to this aspect of your life.

How can you reappraise this situation as more positive?

How does this new appraisal make you feel?

To do at home

- Start everyday by thinking about one positive aspect of the fact that you do not have (more) children.
- Try to use this technique when you face situations that trigger negative emotions related with your unmet child desire.