

# Now Body Wellness: Cognitive Reappraisal Worksheet

## What is cognitive reappraisal?

Cognitive reappraisal is similar to cognitive restructuring. The difference is that cognitive restructuring is applied to unrealistically negative thoughts, whereas the latter is applied to realistically negative thoughts. With both, the goal is to reinterpret negative stimuli. It is not merely “positive thinking,” but instead a reality-based way of reappraising the situation.

## Why should I work on reappraising my thoughts?

Cognitive reappraisal affects emotion-related outcomes by regulating the intensity of emotional responses (Gross, 2010) and stress responses, such as shifting negative stress states (Jamieson et al., 2013). When athletes successfully regulate their emotional experiences, it can enhance one’s perceptions of personal competence (Bandura, 1977a,b). Cognitive reappraisal is found to “promote self-confidence by improving emotional experiences and consequently affect sport performance” (Wang et al., 2022)

## Step 1: Let’s walk through what happened.

**Describe the difficult or stressful situation.**

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**What was I feeling during the time?** \_\_\_\_\_

**On a scale of 0 (no feeling) to 10 (the most intense feeling possible), how intense were my emotion:**

A. During the event: \_\_\_\_\_ B. Now: \_\_\_\_\_

**What were my thoughts during the experience?**

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**What consequences/behaviors arose during this time ?**

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**Step 2: Let's dig deeper!**

**What are alternative explanations?**

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**What's the worst that could happen?**

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**What do you think this situation means about you as a person?**

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**Step 3: Let's reappraise the thought.**

**What are some alternative explanations/phrases?**

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**How would having this thought instead impacted my behavior during the time?**

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## Step 1: Let's walk through what happened.

**Describe the difficult or stressful situation.**

I was super late to practice today. There was lots of traffic from some unexpected  
construction. Both me and my teammate came late and my coach was irritated.

**What was I feeling during the time?** panicked, frustrated, and irritated

**On a scale of 0 (no feeling) to 10 (the most intense feeling possible), how intense were my emotion:**

A. During the event: 8 B. Now: 3

**What were my thoughts during the experience?**

How did I not check the traffic before we left? We could have taken an alternative route.  
My coach is going to be so mad at me. I'm not going to be able to fit in everything I need  
to practice today. Now I won't be prepared for the next competition.

**What consequences/behaviors arose during this time ?**

I started hyperventilating in the car and getting really upset. My teammate kept saying that  
it was fine because we already let the coach know via text. I couldn't stop spiraling on how  
I wouldn't be prepared for the upcoming competition and then struggled during practice.

## Step 2: Let's dig deeper!

**What are alternative explanations?**

My coach understands why I am late. Maybe my coach is stuck in the same traffic. It  
won't actually impact my performance in the future and I'll make up the practice time.

**What's the worst that could happen?**

My coach gets angry with us. I am not going to fit everything in today that I need to. This  
will impact my performance at the next competition.

**What do you think this situation means about you as a person?**

I guess it doesn't really mean anything about me as a person... It could mean that I'm not prepared or that I don't think ahead. I think it says something about my anxiety considering my teammate isn't worried at all.

### **Step 3: Let's reappraise the thought.**

**What are some alternative explanations/phrases?**

The traffic is out of my control. I will get to practice as soon as I can.  
Regulate my emotions by doing some deep breathing.

**How would having this thought instead impacted my behavior during the time?**

I wouldn't have been as escalated, distracted, and frazzled during practice. I would have been able to regulate my emotions and thoughts.