

Try Sharon's reframing exercise and see how it can change your perspective:

1. Print out a copy of the reframing table shown below.

5 Personal Characteristics	Psychological Opposites	Your reframed perspective
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

2. List five of your own personal characteristics in the first column. For example, you may be calm and helpful.

3. For each, fill out what your psychological opposites could be in the middle column. For calm and helpful, the opposite characteristics may be uptight and self-centred. Once, you have completed this step, take a look at the psychological opposites column. Do the words describe anyone in your life? Chances are, they will describe a person who instils anger or frustration in you. Most people see their soon-to-be ex partner!

4. Now, take a second look at the words you listed in the "psychological opposites" column and ask yourself why a person would be that way. List those words in the reframed perspective column on the right.

As an example, your exercise may look like this:

5 Personal Characteristics	Psychological opposites	Reframed perspective
1. Calm	Uptight	Overwhelmed or stressed
2. Helpful	Self-centred	Burdened
3. Curious	Rigid	Scared
4. Intelligent	Ignorant or stupid	Uneducated
5. Positive	Negative	Depressed

In this case, a person you describe as uptight and rigid can now be seen as overwhelmed or stressed and scared. That realization will help you see the person or your conflict with them in a different light.

Once you have a reframed view of the person, you can choose a different response to them. That way, you can live consciously with appropriate responses rather than reacting emotionally.