

# Strength-Based Beliefs & Terminology

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Life isn't what you see, it's what you perceive!

**Reframing**= involves taking a seemingly negative behavior and “reframing” it in a positive way.

## Pejorative Label

## Positive, Hope-Based Reframe

Obnoxious

Good at pushing people away

Rude, arrogant

Good at affecting people

Resistant

Cautious

Lazy, un-invested

Good at preventing future hurt or failures

Manipulative

Good at getting needs met

Just looking for attention

Good at caring about and loving yourself

Close-mouthed

Loyal to friends and family

Different, odd

Under appreciated

Stubborn and defiant

Good at standing up for yourself

Tantrum, fit, outburst

Big message

Learning disability

Roadblocks

## Strength-Based Practice

### Emphasis is on:

- *Strength building* rather than *flaw-fixing*
- *Doing* rather than *understanding*
- *Believing* in youth – not “believing is *seeing*”

Begins with the belief that every youth have strengths and that past successes can be utilized to stop troublesome behavior.

### Goal:

*Change* rather than *insight and awareness*.

*Solution-focused*, not *problem-focused*.

- Does not assume that ownership of guilt is somehow curative.
  - Does assume that change is inevitable, not uncertain.
- Does not assume that large problems require large efforts for solutions
  - Does assume that small changes can ripple out to bring resolution.

## REFRAMING

**For example:** Youth appears hyperactive.

“You have lots of energy. You can probably do more things in an hour than most of can. I wish I could move like you.”

**A youth who...**

1. is always looking for attention:
2. won't talk about his/her feelings:
3. acts rudely:
4. makes funny noises at the wrong time:
5. acts in a stubborn manner:
6. tattles:
7. frequently swears:
8. is bossy with peers:
9. acts in an antagonistic manner:
10. is difficult to engage:

### **Solution Focused Approaches**

The Language of Hope and Possibility

<b>Historical:</b>	How many kids have been, or are, in a similar situation? How many succeeded? So can you! What steps did they take to succeed? How will we celebrate when you get there?
<b>Qualifiers:</b>	“I hate this subject!” > “So you're saying you hate this subject right now.”
<b>Past Tense:</b>	“I'm stupid!” > “So you haven't been feeling real smart lately.”
<b>When &amp; Will:</b>	“I'll never pass that test!” > “When you do, what will it be like.”
<b>Scaling Questions:</b>	“On a scale of one to ten, ten being you'll be doing well a year from now, one – you won't...what number do you think you are at now? What number will it be in three months?”
<b>Identifying In-Between Change:</b>	“What will be the first sign that you've turned the corner?”
<b>Million Dollar Question:</b>	“How come you're not doing worse?”

## Basic Verbal Interventions

### Supportive Interventions

“You seem really upset.”

### Repeating or paraphrasing with qualifiers (yet, at this moment, now, etc...)

Youth: “I hate this place.”

Adult: “You’re saying you hate this place *right* now.”

### Feelings Update

“How do you feel about that?”

### Sandwich Approach

“You made a bad decision to throw the paper, but I’m really pleased about how you walked away from that area.”

### Praise and Encouragement (praise the action versus the child)

“Way to go!” “That was fantastic!” “I like the colors you selected.”

### Humor (said with a smile)

To a fifteen-year-old: “You’re acting like a teenager.”

### Apologizing

“I’m sorry for raising my voice with you.”

### Reasoning Responses

“What if we let everyone...”

### Connecting Statements

“It’s not me against you. I’m on your side.”

### Empowering Interventions

“What could you have done differently?” “What do you think we should do?”

### Surface Clarifications

“Let me make sure I know why you’re upset.”

### Explorative Responses (psychological)

“You don’t usually get this upset. Could something else be bothering you?”

### Explorative Responses (historical)

“Have you ever completed such a difficult assignment?”

“Have you ever gotten this angry before and not hit someone?”

### Explorative Responses (reflective)

“Is that behavior working for you?”

### Plan Making

“Can we make a plan to handle this situation better next time?”

**Change is inevitable, not uncertain.**