

# Mood Management

**\*The following tool was adapted from materials used in the Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH) VA Program.**

## RESCUE



Resources & Education for Supporting Caregiver's Understanding & Empowerment

## Optimism

- Optimism is a way of thinking about the best in a situation.
- It is often called “staying positive”.
- Finding ways to stay positive will help you feel better and improve your mood.



# Thoughts and Feelings

- Thoughts can be very powerful.
- Thoughts bring up feelings.
- These feelings cause us to act in certain ways.
- Identifying your thoughts about a situation or person, will help you to understand your feelings.



Image by [\\_WhiteBook](#)

# Types of Thoughts

- Several types of thoughts cause us to feel sad.
  1. All or Nothing
  2. Awfulizing
  3. Focusing of Negatives

Let's look at these types of thoughts in detail.  
Do you have any of these types of thoughts?

# All or Nothing Thoughts

- These thoughts involve extreme words such as “always” and “never”.
- Thoughts like these make things extremely good or extremely bad.
- These thoughts can lead to sadness. They don’t leave any room for compromise, which can lead to feeling hopeless.

# All or Nothing Thoughts

Thought	Feelings
“My husband always needs me to care for him. No one else can care for him. I will never get a break.”	Trapped Angry
“I will never get to go to my exercise class again.”	Frustrated Hopeless

# Awfulizing Thoughts

- These thoughts focus on the worst possible outcome of a situation.
- These thoughts can be harmful. They add stress and worry that is not needed.
- These thoughts train your brain to think of the worst outcome and believe it will happen.



Image by: [David Takes Photos](#)

# Awfulizing Thoughts

Thought	Feelings
"If I have a maid come to clean my house, she will steal my money and valuables."	Terrified Angry
"If my husband goes to respite care, they will neglect him and he will catch the flu."	Helpless Anxious

# Focusing on Negatives

- These thoughts focus on only negative things.
- You may dwell on, or list all the negative things in your life.
- These thoughts lead to sadness.
- This thinking prevents you from seeing the positive parts of your life.



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# Focusing on Negatives

Thought	Feelings
"I got a flat tire because I have terrible luck and bad things are always happening to me."	Sadness Frustration
"The doctor didn't call me back yesterday because she doesn't care and just wants to get rid of me."	Hopeless Defeated

# The Good News...

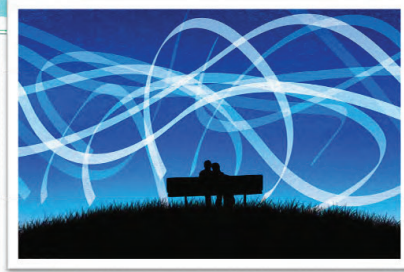


Image by: [Mark Sebastian](#)

- You have the power to change your thoughts!
- You can replace a negative thought with a positive thought.
- Practice having the positive thought.
- At first, you will need to stop yourself when you have a negative thought. And, then replace the negative thought with the positive one.
- After a while, it will become automatic.

## Negative vs. Positive Thoughts

Negative	Positive
"I will never get to go to my exercise class again."	"I can go to my exercise class again when my sister can come over to take care of my husband."
"If my husband goes to respite care, they will neglect him and he will catch the flu."	"My husband will be cared for by trained people who will keep him safe. I will have time to care for myself."
"The doctor didn't call me back yesterday because she doesn't care and just wants to get rid of me."	"The doctor must have had a busy day yesterday. I will wait until noon today and then call again."

# Thought Diary

- When you have unpleasant feelings, stop and think. What are the thoughts that cause those feelings?
- Write down your thoughts and the feelings you get from them.
- Then write down positive thoughts to replace the negative ones.
- Practice saying these positive thoughts out loud.
- When you notice a negative thought, say the positive one to yourself.

# Remember

- You can change how you think and feel.
- It takes practice
- Replace a negative thought with a positive one.



Image by: [D. Sharon Pruitt](#)