

## **Building Resilience: Mental Model Reframe Workshop Facilitator Guide**

### **Overview**

This wellness workshop is designed to help participants gain more awareness of their thoughts and mental models (the lens through which we interpret the world). The skills participants learn through this workshop can help transfer their resilience from a survival state to a thriving one. The workshop is based on coaching tools that have been shown to decrease residents' burnout and increase self-compassion.

The workshop takes 90-120 minutes to deliver depending on how the session is facilitated.

The workshop content is broken up into four segments:

1. A video about problematic mindsets, cognitive distortions, mental models and metacognition.
2. Time for the participants to complete a worksheet about their own mental models.
3. Group discussion and reflection of new insights into their mental models
4. Group exercise of mental model reframing

**By the end of the workshop, learners should be able to:**

1. List and describe common problematic mindsets and cognitive distortions
2. Describe what mental models are
3. Describe the process of mental model reframing

### **Rationale and Premise**

The way we think about situations in our lives has a great impact on how we experience the world. We have circumstances in our lives; these are neutral facts that everyone in the world agrees on. For example, it is 80 degrees outside (not that it is hot outside). Circumstances are facts and are neutral. We then chose to have thoughts about these neutral facts "it is hot outside"; "it is a nice day to go to the beach", etc. These thoughts can then drive our feelings: "annoyed", "excited". Our feelings then drive our actions (or inactions) which creates our results. Many of us have unintentional thoughts and we are not aware of how these thoughts create the results we have in our lives. The goal of this exercise is to increase awareness of the impact our thoughts have on our experiences and to learn how to have intentional thoughts that serve us and create the results we want. To start to learn these skills of metacognition (thinking about our thinking) we will start by exploring our mental models.

Mental models are the lens by which we interpret the world. We all have core mental models that have contributed in some positive ways to who we are today. However, some of these mental models may also have negative impact on our lives, such as creating perfectionistic tendencies, fear of trying new things due to fear of failure, difficulty delegating or trusting others, etc.

The mental model reframe exercise is helpful in multiple ways. First it allows the participant to have better insight and understanding of why they feel and act in certain ways. For example, if a core mental model is "I must be perfect," the participant might have a fear of failure and a fear of trying new things because that would put them in a vulnerable situation. Thus, the first step of rating how frequently we use some mental models is an assessment tool that helps participants gain insight into their beliefs.

Second, working to reframe some of these mental models help learners keep the aspects of the thought process that help them, but reframe the aspects that are resulting in negative impact in their lives

This tool is only helpful if there are in fact negative aspects to our thinking. If a mental model is only beneficial, reframing is not necessary.

### **Materials Needed**

Worksheets:

- One mental model worksheet per participant: to be handed out after the video
- One mental model reframe worksheet per participant: to be handed prior to practicing mental model reframing

### **Guide:**

1. Group: Participants watch the recorded video as a group: explain that the video will discuss problematic mindsets, cognitive distortions, mental models and metacognition.
2. Individual time: Give them 5 minutes: Ask participants to complete the worksheet on their own
3. Group: Discuss as a group any new insight learned from completing the worksheet. Remind them they should feel no embarrassment or shame if they rate themselves high on these mental models. You can use cueing questions, such as: What are some of the common mental models people have? Were you surprised by some of these mental models?
4. Group: Ask for 1-2 volunteers to practice mental model reframing. It is important to make sure all participants know they should share only if they are comfortable sharing. To reframe a mental model, ask participants to list 3-5 upsides to having this mental model, then list 3-5 downsides. Lastly, ask them to try to reframe the mental model in a way that keeps the positive aspects but minimizes the negative (examples of mental model reframing are discussed in the video).
5. Individual time: encourage participants to practice mental model reframing on their own during the workshop if time allows.

### **Important notes:**

1. Establish psychological safety at the beginning of the session. Everything that is shared in the workshop should not be shared with others.
2. This is a no judgment place
3. As a facilitator, approach this with a coaching framework. You are a thought partner. Do not lead the conversation. Do not offer advice.
4. Mental models need to be reframed only if they are not serving the participant. If a mental model has no downside, there is no need to reframe it.
5. Reframing need to be done by the participant in their own voice.
6. Feel free to share your perceptions of any mental models by which you yourself have been challenged. Participants appreciate this vulnerability.

Please contact me if you have any questions about the workshop. If any participants need more debriefing or coaching, they can reach out to me as well:

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