



RESHAPE YOUR PERCEPTION

Reality is the mind's interpretation of an event – not the event itself. One event will have a different effect on each individual experiencing that event, which has to do with each individual's perception of the event.

PERCEPTION

Life is full of events that are beyond our control. The thing we do have control over is our perception of those events, which will determine how we react and are affected by that event. The brain automatically begins interpreting an event seconds into the experience. Emotions and the body react according to the brain's interpretation. It is not the events of our lives that shape us, but our perception of those events.

FACTORS THAT SHAPE PERCEPTION PRIOR TO EVENT

Beliefs

Beliefs form as a result of generalizations we make from our interpretation of our past experiences and information we gotten from other people, media, or our imagination. Most beliefs are not based on fact. Once we form a belief, we forget it is just an interpretation, not reality. Once we accept our beliefs as real and no longer question them, then they become very powerful influences over our lives.

Emotional State

The state of the emotional center (EC) of the brain will affect perception of an event. Here's how it works. When the EC in the brain is in a natural positive state, it is cooler than the rest of the brain. When it is in a negative state, it is warmer than the rest of the brain. If the EC of your brain is cool, you will naturally perceive an event with a more positive perspective. If the EC of the brain is warm, you will naturally perceive an event with a more negative perspective.

Keeping the EC of your brain cool and positive requires that you become conscious of your thought patterns and intentionally focus your thoughts on the positive. For more ideas about how you can focus on the positive, see *Think Positive* on the *Positive Patterns for Life, Thrive*

page at <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive>.

Attitude

Our attitude determines how we view and respond to life's challenges. Choosing a hopeful, cheerful view and looking at the bright side of life's challenges will positively impact outcomes.

Preconceived Ideas of an Expected Event

The preconceived ideas of an expected event strongly influence your perception of the event and your brain/body's stress response and reaction to the event. This is called self-fulfilling prophecy.

AFTER EFFECT OF THE EVENT

After an event is over, emotions and body will remain in the state established during the event. If the brain interpreted a positive experience, emotions and body will be in an uplifted, relaxed state.

If the brain has interpreted a negative experience, it will negatively impact emotions and body. Thank goodness initial interpretations can be modified. There is good that can come from every event that occurs in our lives. Seek out and focus on the good. Use assertive self-talk to point out the bright side and down play the dark side of a situation. Modifying a negative perception can take minutes or it can take several days. It depends on the size and intensity of the experience. It is well worth the effort to modify these negative perceptions, because they will become part of your belief system. Remember, belief systems affect perceptions, and perceptions affect the brain/body's stress response. Big stress reactions have greater potential to negatively impact mental and emotional health.