



## FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY

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Most human beings like certainty in their life. Yet, crises come into our lives no matter how much we try and avoid them. And so, as creatures preferring the familiar, we try and restore our lives to the order that it was before. Which, while understandable, may not be the best thing. In fact it may not even be possible. Sometimes your life just cannot go back to what it was before. And sometimes that is a great thing. Because the chances are your life could have benefited from some improvements. Are your relationships, health, career all perfect? Being forced to make changes may be the best thing that happened to you, which you will see with hindsight.

So most people don't like crises. And most people will try desperately to cling onto what they know. Yet crises are going to happen - most probably in all parts of your life - relationships, health, career, and finances. So how about finding a better way to tackle crises. And that means learning to see them as opportunities without having to go through all the initial angst.

One of the biggest factors influencing our level of happiness and success in life is our perceptions. How we choose to perceive what is happening around us and why it is happening. If we learn to reframe crises we can change our stance from one of victims trying to hold onto the familiar to ones of victors looking for the as yet unseen benefits in overcoming the crisis.



Easier said than done, I hear you say. And yes, that is so. However there are always some pointers to bear in mind or get out and read and reflect on when a crisis strikes. So read on!

1. Start each day right. That means the very first task for your day is to get your headspace right. Remind yourself that not all that looks like a mess is one. In that chaos is opportunity. The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius wrote the following to himself to serve as a reminder every day.

- "Objective judgement, now at this moment".
- "Unselfish action, now at this moment".
- "Willing acceptance - now at this very moment - of all external events"

2. Keep a cool head. If you are battling to do so then leave the crisis and go and do something to work off the emotion and come back to the crisis when you do have a cool head.

3. Look at everything as an opportunity to learn. For every setback or crisis, ask yourself, "What is there for me to learn?"

4. Think differently. Think laterally. Ignore the usual responses you tend to give and seek out alternatives.

5. Illuminate the crisis. Before you go straight into solving the problem, shine a light on the problem from all sorts of angles. Really understand the problem. Are you focusing on the loss or the opportunity? A mishandled opportunity can become a crisis and a well-managed crisis can become an opportunity.

6. Think about what is going right in your life. Perhaps there is something that is going well that can serve as an answer to the problem. Perhaps you can build on what is going well to solve the problem.

7. Similarly, remind yourself of your strengths. What strengths of yours can you call on to help you turn this crisis into an opportunity?

If you perceive a crisis you will be run by fear and uncertainty and doubt. If you treat it as an opportunity you will be bold and courageous enough to get the situation to work in your favour. Crises are not all bad. Sometimes a crisis is a much needed wake up call to get us back on a path we should be on.

