

## Outline for Review and Redo.

(This is adapted from a talk I gave in Helsinki in Jan 2019 to health care professionals who worked on rapid resuscitation teams in hospitals.)

If we have handled a difficult situation well, then can improve our ability to do so in the future using the “review” technique. The review technique is a form of mental rehearsal. The review technique enables us to practice using our skills effectively without having to wait for the situation to occur again. We can use the review frequently to over-learn important skills and be less affected if unease is high when we need to use them.

### Review Effective Responses

1. Recall the situation in which you needed to apply your skills. Use your memory and imagination to perceive details. Allow yourself to feel any unease you had about the outcome. It is OK if this feels “stressful”.
2. Use your memory to review the actions you used to obtain an effective outcome. Use your imagination to highlight the relevant details. The effective responses may have been how you used a reset and refocus. They might include how you changed your choice of words, your tone of voice, or choosing to listen. The effective actions may also have been how you positioned your body or specific movements you made.
3. As you review the situation and come to the successful completion feel the pleasure or satisfaction that comes from the success. This is very important. The pleasure at successfully completing something successfully is what tells our brain to learn what we did to create the success.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 a few times, perhaps 5-10 times.

When you are familiar with the process, the review technique can be done in much less time than the actual situation took. A situation that may have taken minutes can be reviewed in less than a minute. This allows you to review the situation multiple times. Each time you review the effective responses your brain learns to apply them more automatically.

### Redo Ineffective Responses.

The redo technique is similar to the review technique with one exception. In the redo technique we use our imagination to create a more effective response than what we actually did. Sometimes it is obvious what a more effective response would have been. However, it often takes some effort in order to figure out one or more effective response. The open-mind thinking processes can be helpful here.

Once we have created a more effective response then we need to memorize it, sometimes by writing it down. Once we have memorized the more effective response, then we are ready to

proceed. Sometimes people balk at using the redo because they say “you can’t change the past.” That is true, but the purpose of the redo is not to change the past. It is to imagine a more effective response as having occurred in the past in order to change the future. And it is possible to change the future.

Here is the sequence for the redo.

1. Use your memory, imagination and thinking skills to create a more effective response to the situation and a more helpful outcome. If several more effective responses come to mind then you can use all of them, but redo only one at a time.
2. Choose one of the responses from step 1 and commit it to memory, writing a description down if you need to.
3. Use your imagination to rehearse the situation using the more effective response from step 2.
4. As you complete the effective response feel a sense of satisfaction from doing so. It is very important to feel a sense of satisfaction or pleasure at using the more effective response as this tells the brain to learn the more effective response.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 multiple times until the process is automatic.

The redo technique can also be done quickly. Because we are using it to train a response that we did not actually do, the redo usually requires more repetition than the review.

An example of a review is when I have someone who needs to avoid alcohol for health reasons. The person has an experience of being offered wine at a friend’s house and declining, asking for a non-alcoholic beverage instead. This is a success for them and I have them review it 5-10 times per day for several days, feeling the sense of satisfaction at having done so. The review itself takes only a few seconds because the time period being reviewed is just the few seconds of being offered the wine, feeling the desire to have the wine, then declining the offer, feeling some disappointment at not having the wine, and then feeling the satisfaction at having declined the offer. I usually have the person use their imagination to increase that sense of satisfaction to increase the effectiveness of the learning.

What if the person had taken the glass of wine instead of refusing it? Then we use the redo. We create polite ways of refusing the drink. We create ways of communicating with the friend before the event so that the friend would have offered a non-alcoholic beverage. This can take some work because these responses are not automatic. Once the person has created responses they feel would be effective and satisfying, then we pick each response in turn and use the redo technique.

The review and redo can be used to train even subtle responses. I use them to train myself to speak calmly and patiently with family members about difficult topics even if I am tired or upset. When I have used a calm tone of voice and patient words and effective listening skills then I review those behaviors a few times. This takes only a few seconds.

If I have not spoken as calmly or been as patient as I would have liked, then I redo those situations, perhaps imagining a reset and refocus, or choosing different words, or even asking to talk about the situation later when I am rested. The redo takes a bit longer than the review, but still only a minute or so. And it reduces the chance that I will need to redo the situation in the future.