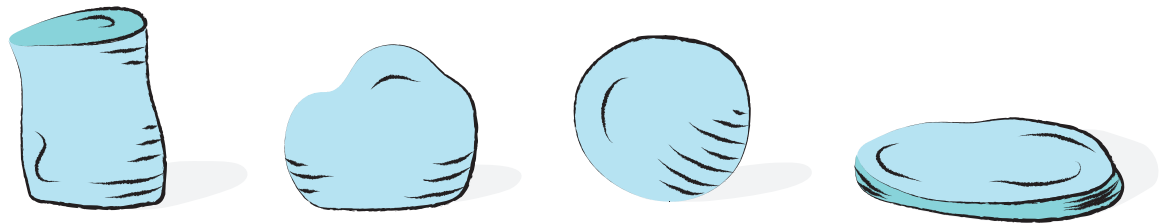


# - ADAPTABILITY -



## WHAT

Being adaptable means you can adjust your thoughts, feelings, and actions in response to new, changing, or uncertain situations.

## WHY

A large percentage of students today will have jobs that don't even exist yet so it's impossible to prepare students for every eventuality. The solution is to teach students adaptive strategies so they learn how to respond to new situations, challenges and change. Staying open to trying new things, being willing to use a trial-and-error approach and taking risks allows us to stay flexible and grow.

## HOW

One of the best strategies to learn how to adapt is called REFRAMING. Students with a Flexible Mindset use 'I CAN' messages to reframe their thoughts, feelings and actions so they stay open to asking questions, making mistakes and taking risks for learning.

1. Teach students what it means to REFRAME our thoughts, feelings and actions using 'I CAN' messages (see the chart below with examples).
2. Create unexpected situations and change things up without notice. (e.g. change the timeline for a task, change the task requirements, add an additional problem to solve, etc.)
3. Practice using different messages in these unexpected situations. Listen for students saying some version of "I can't do this" or "I'm stuck" and suggest a way to reframe in a way that encourages them to adapt.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Reframing is not simply switching negative messages to positive ones. It's about asking ourselves if what we are saying is helpful or unhelpful. For example, is saying "I suck at math" helpful or unhelpful? Reframes need to be genuine so that eventually students will want to find their own language that fits for them. The examples in the chart are intended only as a starting point.

SITUATIONS WHEN WE CAN LEARN TO ADAPT	REFRAME WITH 'I CAN' MESSAGE EXAMPLES <i>(what is a helpful message that would encourage you to take a step forward)</i>
When we are afraid we might fail or make a mistake	"What can I learn from this?" "What or who can help me face my fear?" "All I can do is my best." "Figuring out what I don't know is how I learn."
When we encounter a problem or need to overcome a challenge (be resilient)	"I haven't done this YET." Think of some reasons WHY you want to solve the problem/overcome the challenge.
When we need to manage emotions in the face of change (self-regulate)	"I've done hard things before. I can do this." "What tool can I use to help me stay calm?" "What can I see, hear, touch, smell and taste right now?" <i>(staying in the present moment helps us self-regulate)</i>
When we feel stuck	"I wonder what would happen if..." "What else can I try?"