



1051: Proven Technique to Reframe Negative Thoughts With Frank Elaridi

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Katie: Hello and welcome to the Wellness Mama Podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com, and I'm here today with repeat guest and personal friend Frank Elaridi, who you might have remembered before we, he and I did sessions related to the emotion codes, and I will link to those sessions in the show notes. In this episode, we dive into the topic of how to reframe negative thoughts, and he talks about kind of thought patterns we can get into of mind filter, jumping to conclusions, mind reading, and fortune telling.

And how these can lead to negative outcomes, as well as his three step process for questioning and rewriting these negative thought patterns. We also talk about a resource he and I have both found very helpful, called A Course in Miracles that I will link to in the show notes as well, as well as a few book recommendations.

It's always fun to get to chat with Frank and follow his journey. And if you aren't familiar with him, Frank is a four times Emmy winning journalist. He's worked for E News, Good Morning America, Dancing With the Stars, places you've probably heard of. He's covered everything from natural disasters to the Academy Awards, and now he is an energy healing facilitator.

He's done the emotion code and he's now moving into even a new realm of that, which we'll talk about in our next episode together. But without any further wait, let's join him now. Frank, welcome back. It's such an honor to have you here again, my friend.

Frank: Thank you my friend. And honestly, I have to say, I was thinking about it as I was setting up that moms specifically have really been like the cornerstone and the foundation of all the work that I do. They were my first clients. They were the first people that, you know this, but they, once they heal, they want their families to heal.

They want their spouses, their children to heal, their neighbors. So it's really been so special to go on this journey that really started with moms.

Katie: Oh, I love that. I feel deeply grateful and honored to get to speak to moms so often and to be part of that community. For that reason, I feel like moms are an absolute force of nature and that as moms shift and change, so does the whole world. So I love that you brought that up as well.

On that note in this first episode together, we're gonna get to record two, I'm really excited to kind of unpack and excavate around the idea of techniques to reframe negative thoughts because I think that's something that pretty much every human can has had the experience of or has the experience of. So it kind of affects all of us in this human experience. So I know this is a kind of nuanced and deep topic, but let's start with the brain.

Maybe can you explain what's going on in the brain when we're having negative thoughts, and then from there we'll kind of unpack what to do about it.

Frank: So a lot of people know about, you know, the amygdala by now and the fight or flight response that we experience, and we talk a lot about the reptilian brain that there at one point was a saber tooth tiger hiding, and so we had to...

So what happens though is that now when you're, let's say public speaking or you have a job interview or your kids are screaming that same part of the brain signals and says, you know, run or flee or hide or defend yourself. And it was very useful back when we needed it. But now we realize that it's not so useful in a job interview or when you're talking to a client or when you're public speaking.

And so that's the part of the brain that we want to check and investigate and look at when it starts to flag these signals to us.

Katie: Yeah, that makes sense. And it seems like there's a lot of talk about how in the modern world, especially like what was, what used to be like a short term survival response is now almost like a consistent pattern that we get stuck in because of so many of these inputs that the brain interprets as danger or negative, whereas like that way overused metaphor, but it used to be we would encounter the tiger, we would run from the tiger, and then the stress would be gone. But now we're encountering the artificial light and the stress

from work and the overwhelm of home life or all the things, all the time. The, you know, chemicals and everything we encounter, whatever it may be.

So the amygdala is just kind of like getting that on signal all the time.

Frank: And you know what's even like another step further than that too, is that kind of what you said is that it lingers longer, but it's because the mind is what creates suffering. So pain is experienced by the body. So let's say I burn my finger on the stove and for a moment that's pain and it, and it's a good thing.

It's a useful thing. It's telling my body like, Hey, that's dangerous. Don't do that again. But the mind is what creates suffering. So then the mind starts going, well, ugh, why do I have a gas stove? I should have an electric stove. Oh my God, I knew I shouldn't have tried to make this meal so quickly right before my client or before my podcast with Katie.

And so the mind starts creating suffering, and then it starts beating itself up and goes down this rabbit hole. Whereas I don't think we did that as much. When we were cavemen and cavewomen, right? Like you would experience the danger, it's gone and you're moving on with life. You're looking for food, you're doing whatever else. But now we literally just sit there and create more and more suffering and we can be freed from that suffering. But you need to know the techniques in order to know how to do that.

Katie: That's such a good point. I love that distinction of like pain versus suffering. Actually that's something I experienced this year, and kind of like a dark night of the soul type experience that felt like unsurvivable and unbearable, is I had this moment of clarity of realizing like pain is a thing that happens.

This suffering is coming from my own inability to sit with this pain or to go into whatever this is, and my resistance of it. And in that moment, like it wasn't like the pain went away, but the suffering did. And that was such a paradigm shifting moment for me. And I've also read that like emotion itself, like when we experience an emotion like that happens, but that's actually very short-lived.

I think I even read like 17 seconds or something, is how long an emotion lives in the body. But then it's our story and our interpretation of that that lives on just like the mind creating suffering. And I would guess that would make sense to a lot of people. The question becomes, what do we do about it?

Because it also seems so easy to get stuck in that, that loop.

Frank: You know, one of my favorite lessons from A Course in Miracles is like, if you just do this one thing alone, it's life changing, and it says that love is real. Everything else is an illusion. Everything you experience in life is an illusion, and it says you need not defend

against illusions. You need not defend against illusions. So I think it's when we start experiencing these things and we try to defend against them, we make them more real. We start storing them in the body. Because now we need the story to make it real. And the ego, actually, the ego mind loves that because it makes, it keeps linear time real. Because if there's guilt, if there's shame, if there's any of these things that you're experiencing, those emotions. It makes the past real. Because now there's like that guilt, that shame from the past, and then it makes the future real because there must be a future to atone for that past.

So we're always trying to atone for it, or we think that somebody else needs to atone for it. And then what it also does is it separates you from source, from God, from creator because it says, well, if I'm guilty or if so-and-so is guilty, there must be someone or something to punish for that guilt and that shame. And so then we make the divine separate from us because there must be something separate to punish us. And so, I mean, I went down a tangent, but it's so important to notice that you need to not defend against illusions. And so in those moments, I always will say to myself, and I always tell my clients this too, if we're clearing emotions and you start seeing those kinds of emotions come up again in the future, in that moment, take a pause and say, I can choose peace instead.

I can choose peace instead of this and just kind of reframe the mind, or I need to not defend against illusions. Things like that really help. And then as far as actually, you know, do you want me to get into yet, like reframing those negative thoughts or not yet?

Katie: Yeah. Well, and just to double click on what you said too, like I think it's important to remember like how you framed this as a survival response, that in a sense we kind of have an uphill battle with in modern society, kind of not being in alignment with this, but remembering that. As the survival response, this is still our body being on our side.

This is still our mind doing what it needs to do to protect us. And when we understand that, it seems like we can approach from curiosity and gratitude and find that peace more easily than if we're in a place of judgment, thinking that our normal survival response in and of itself is bad. And you touched on some of these, but I know from researching this, there's several kinds of negative thoughts, including things like the mental filter you mentioned, like mind reading.

Maybe if you could briefly walk us through those so people can identify when they see them in their, their own life, kind of what are some of these categories?

Frank: Let's do that. So I actually had a TEDx talk about this and it was really helpful for people to start being like, oh yeah, I do do that. So one of them is, like you said, the mind filter and that's the mind filter is when you start to see reality from the frame point. So

maybe a certain situation from, it's like a drop of ink in a glass of water and how that one negative thought can just filter your entire reality of that scenario, right? It's like we fixate on that one black drop of ink that can make the entire water fill with darkness. Another thing is jumping to conclusions, which I think everybody knows that one.

It's when even if the facts don't justify what's happening, we jump to a conclusion that's already negative of what, what we think will happen. Similar to that is fortune telling. And fortune telling is when, like let's say I'm coming onto your podcast and already from this morning I'm like psyching myself out saying, oh my God, this is gonna go wrong. That's gonna go wrong.

I bet my audio is not gonna work. Whatever else. That's all fortune telling. And it's like, even if the facts don't validate, you're still jumping to that, like, I know it's gonna go wrong. There's so many more. There's like also one where we, where we think we know what somebody is thinking is a very common one too. So people sometimes will just give themselves anxiety over what we think it's called mind reading, what we think somebody is thinking, or how we think they're going to react, even if the facts don't validate. So we could easily just take out our phone and text and be like, Hey, how are you feeling about this? But instead, a lot of times people will just come up with ideas of what they think this person is going to react.

Katie: Yeah, that makes sense. And I would guess most people listening can think of examples from their own life of all of those categories at different times and how easy it is to fall into those. And what I love about this is every time I've worked with you and every time we have conversations, you have these amazing like reframes to help like shift things in real time.

And even that's some of the work I've gotten to do with you has been so profoundly helpful in that. So I'd love to kind of really deep dive into your process for this because I think to your point, if we can like learn to make this shift within ourself, it can be absolutely life changing.

Frank: And you know, Katie, to be honest, like, you know, my personal journey and where I'm at right now. Even working with the mind or identifying with the mind or these thoughts is not at all where I am now from my vantage point, but I know that the people listening are still in the mind. And so I'm like, I'm more meeting the audience where they're at rather than from the vantage point of where I am. Because from the vantage point of where I am, I am not the mind. I'm not the body. Neither are you. Because if I'm not, you can't be either, and so I don't even ident, like if I see the thoughts arise, I literally just watch a thought. Talking to

itself, like I would not argue with a 4-year-old, right? It's the same thing, like I don't argue with my mind.

I let it, it's talking, but it's talking to itself. It's not talking to me, the witness of the mind and like the pure infinite awareness. And so, but if you do catch yourself in those mind thought patterns, there's a very simple three step process that people listening can do. And the first step is really the most simple, but, easier said than done, because when you're really in it, it's hard to do this, but catch yourself having the thought instead of getting trapped in it. Just notice, oh, I'm mind reading right now. Right? I'm fortune telling, I'm jumping to conclusions. So now you've caught the thought. You realize it's happening and then you write it down.

That's step two, because when you write it down, and this is actually, you know, it's been proven by Harvard and all kinds of labs now, where if you write it down, you're actually engaging a different part of your brain, so you're able to look at the thought in a different way as well. And then the third step is the most important, and it's to investigate the thought, so to say like for example. Okay. Let's say you got laid off from a job at work and your mind is telling you you're a failure. You'll never find another job again. You're not qualified. These things start to come up.

You look at the thought, you write it down, and then you start to investigate. Is it true that I am a total failure? Well, I've had steady jobs in the past. I might've had my own companies in the past. There are plenty of opportunities out there. So yeah, this is a letdown, but it's not the end of my story. It's just a little road bump, and it might even be the perfect thing to take me to the next phase of my life. So once you start to investigate the thought and really look at it, it really just unravels itself and it disappears a lot of times.

Katie: Yeah, I think that's so profound and I've even noticed that with physical pain and how it seemingly our instinct is like if we experience pain to resist it, and then that kind of prolongs it because we're like giving it energy by resisting it. And I think of the Anthony de Melo idea of like whatever we renounce we now become attached to versus if even with physical pain, if we can go into it with our awareness and feel it often it will lessen or go away because we're not resisting it.

And I think like to your point, this applies to our emotions as well. And you mentioned A Course in Miracles, I will link to it online because I love this as a resource as well. But can you, for people who aren't familiar with it, just kind of mention what A Course in Miracles is. I know that's been profoundly impactful for you and for me as well.

Frank: I'll get into it because I love A Course In Miracles, but I also wanna say about the pain. I love the way you just put it because, you know, I was on a podcast maybe a month

ago now, and she asked me to give some kind of, you know, meditation or breath work or something that can help people when they feel pain. And I was like, look, I can, and normally in the past I would've, I would've just been on a morning show or on a podcast and given some kind of little breath work technique. But in that moment I realized I'm not serving people by doing that. So I said, look, I can give you a little breath work or whatever, but why do you want to pacify the pain? And more importantly, who is it that's experiencing the pain that's part of this investigation? Who is experiencing pain right now? Investigate. You know, so for me, my teacher told me, you are not the body. You are not the mind. Find out who you are, and I can't tell you who you are because it's changeless.

It's formless, it's without odor, it's without color. You need to find out who you are. I'm telling you, you're not the body, you're not the mind. Find out who you are. And I did. And so I ask people in that moment now, find out who is experiencing the pain. Right, because then you realize the body's experiencing it.

You're not the body. You're witnessing it happen. It's signaling something. And then the way through the pain is the pain itself. That is the way through the pain, right? Like you said, sit with the pain. But when you try to fight it, when you try to defend against it, you're making it more real now. You're making it, you're giving it a whole story.

Your mind starts creating an entire thing, a narrative around this pain. So instead of trying to pacify the pain, just sit with the pain, experience it. And then as far as A Course in Miracles, you know, I've listened to the biggest gurus in the whole world. I've been with them one-on-one in private, and it always goes back, like everything they've ever said, I can trace back to something in A Course in Miracles. And I see A Course in Miracles is such a beautiful framework because it really, for people who don't know, it was a channeled text.

And it's written in very Christic terminology, but very mystical, like kind of more of what the gnostics in Christianity were teaching. And it's more that you are not the body, you are not the mind, and that you are the infinite consciousness that creator, that God is, and that we are actually seeing this entire world through a filter, the filter of the ego mind, rather than seeing the world as it really is, as it really appears.

And so, a miracle, for example, is not necessarily that something happened, it's that you got out of the way and then what was always there, what is really reality without the filter that we put onto reality, then that just reveals itself. So even now, like, you know, I was at the gym yesterday and I used to be a, I used to be a backstage host at Dancing With the Stars back when I was a journalist and I saw one of the dancers from Dancing with the Stars there, and we started chatting for a little bit and he was like what's so different about you? He was like, when did you become enlightened? Because he hasn't seen me in years, you

know? And I said, look, even the idea of enlightenment is bondage, like even that you want to transcend. Because when you're sitting there meditating and you think that there's something to attain that's bondage, there's nothing to attain.

You're already that. Now just get out of the way and be that. And so, A Course in Miracles is such a great teacher to show you how to do that in a very practical way. I was really lucky to, you know, I'll just give one advice because I know you're gonna share this book with your audience. And link to it.

I've done the entire thing now three times and the third time, which right now I'm like almost done with the third time is really like the first time I've ever done it because the first two times I read the entire book from the perspective of Frank Elaridi from the body, from this persona. The third time, because I had already met the guru and I had realized that I'm not the body and not the mind. I read it from that perspective, and I'm doing the lessons from, it's not talking to Frank, it's talking to me as a disembodied witness to this world. And when you read it from that framework and you approach it from that framework, it's like reading it for the first time.

Everything changes from that perspective. In fact, I would say when you're listening to any spiritual teacher out there and a real one, and I hate, I don't want to like talk badly about anybody, but a lot of the spiritual teachers there now, the ones that are selling out stadiums are mistaking ignorance for knowledge and they're spreading ignorance and calling it knowledge. But if you listen to a real spiritual teacher and you just listen to it twice, once from the perspective of I am Katie Wells, and once from the perspective of the witness, and it changes everything when you hear it from that perspective.

Katie: Oh, so many beautiful things in what you just said, and I know that there's even a free online workbook up, A Course in Miracles, because it's something that they wanted to get out to everyone. So I'll make sure that's linked as well. Like you, I also have the physical book, which I think is beautiful to be able to go through.

I haven't been through it three times yet, but it has been so beautiful to go through and I like, I've had similar small experiences of that realizing like, I'm not the body, I am not the mind. And I realized as I've gone on that journey that the things I think I believe to be true, there are fewer and fewer of them. And it's, I find more and more comfort in not knowing all the answers and that being completely okay. And that like having only certainty about a few things like that love is or, and things like that. And that being perfectly fine. I would love to even go a little bit deeper into that investigative, asking questions part because I also know it can be disorienting when you start doing this and when you first get that glimpse of, wait,

what am I actually, if I'm not, these things I always thought I was and who is experiencing the pain?

Who am I if I'm not the body and the mind? Like what led to that path for you? How did you initially start to ask those questions?

Frank: What I love about you so much, Katie, is your willingness and like even A Course in Miracles always says, all I need from you is willingness. Just the willingness. That's what the course says. And I love that because it's so true. And for me that's what it was. I was just so willing. And, you know, I don't know because it's just in my nature.

Like I don't do anything else. There's, you know how in certain places, like in Asia, in Africa and India and more in the rural areas where the women carry the baskets on their head and they're not using their hands and they're walking and they're getting the water, and then they take it back home. When they come across each other like a friend, they stop and they chat and they're talking just like you and I are talking, but their attention is always here on the basket. And that's how it is, for me, and it's the only way I can describe it, where I'm, it appears that I'm doing things. I talk to people.

I go to the gym. I'm making my food, I'm hanging out with friends, whatever. I'm working with clients every day. But my attention is always on my forehead. It's always on my, on the, I am. And the only true statement that there is, the only true statement I or anybody can make in this world is I am I exist.

That's the only thing that's real. I am. And as far as like the investigating and going further into that, you know it's so important to say, to sit with that every day of just, who am I, who is experiencing the pain? And there comes a point, and I went through about three or four months of what you said, so disoriented like, am I going crazy even?

You know, like am like, am I losing my mind? And if I didn't have certain teachers or certain people, healers or whoever in my life. Reaffirming and confirming and showing me things, I would've absolutely thought I was going crazy. You know, the just the detachment from self, from what I thought was myself. So what I would say in that moment, when that starts happening is two things. One is realize like who is it that feels disoriented? Right? Who's sad. Because it's actually very sad too.

Like there was deep sadness of like, wow, I'm not this body, I'm not the story, I'm not my family. All of these things that I always thought. Even past lives, even karma, all of it is bondage created in the mind that at any moment you can be free of that bondage. But it's really difficult. It's not an easy thing at all, and that's why most people avoid it. And I can understand why, because it's so sad. Like there's a, there's really a sad grief, but I would

rather go through that grief now before death comes. Because in that moment it's so scary, right? For a lot of people because they feel like I'm, oh my God, what happens next?

Where do I go? But there's that famous quote, if you die before you die, you won't die when you die. If you know that that's coming anyway, it's like if you see a tiger or a bear, I live in California. If you're hiking and there's a bear, look, you can, If you just stand there and get killed, that's definitely happening. But if there's a chance to fight or to run or whatever, you're gonna take that chance.

So why not right now? You know, death is coming. You know it's coming. Why not right now? Give yourself a fighting chance and start to dissolve your attachment to the body and to the mind, which you know it has to happen eventually. And so I would say like, yeah, it's sad and it's disorienting, but for me it's like I really want to just abide in self, my real self. The second thing I would say is like, when it starts to become really disorienting, like those were the moments where I was like, okay, you know what, two days, three days, I'm not even thinking about spirituality about myself.

I'm gonna watch cartoons, I'm gonna go on a hike. I'm gonna really ground right? Like really ground, because this is becoming very disorienting. So, you know, there is like listen to yourself and where you're at and be gentle with yourself through the process too, but also like be consistent and adamant because the mind will try so hard to loop you back in, even with the most dangerous illusion of all, which is like, oh, I'm so spiritual.

Other people will never understand the state that I'm in, the things that I experience because that's its final, that's the final thing it can do to hold onto you because it's like, well, at least I'll still give him a persona that he thinks he's, you know, the spiritual thing or whatever else but it, that's its last grasp to keep you in the illusion. It's a very lofty and beautiful illusion, but it's still an illusion even that needs to be transcended.

Katie: Oh, I love that. And yeah, it seems like a very important and valid. Like that spiritual pride seemingly, like, can be very tricky and sticky kind of in that part of the journey. And also speaking to what you've said, because I think we've had a little bit similar paths and like I'm sure different stepping stones along the journey.

But for me it was like a journey through initially like stoicism and that initial idea of like memento mori, like remember you will die. So that, like you said, you can prepare for this before the moment of death when it then becomes clear that you are not your body and you have to like wrestle with this eventuality in the moment.

And then through, like I mentioned, the works of Anthony de Mello I love his book Awareness and I'll link to that in the show notes. But also something I've been thinking a lot about lately is to the note of like pain and suffering is realizing I can look back in hindsight

and see that everything I in the moment defined as hard or painful in my life eventually led to beautiful things and not that only because of those beautiful things was it a valid experience, but I'm able to see like, oh, in time there's beauty in everything. So what if instead of judging things as painful in the moment, I could have gratitude for them already without knowing what those beautiful things would be. And what if I could even find enjoyment without categorizing these things as good or bad?

And just leaning into that idea of love and what love is. And I'm definitely by no means perfect. And this year has been a trial by fire in that in some ways. But I'm just curious if you have any things like that that have helped you along the way, like things that you remember that kind of like recenter you.

Frank: Well, you know, before even getting into that, I'll say like, what you said is so beautiful, but pleasure is of the body and happiness is what you are. And so pleasure always has a cause. So if we are chasing pleasure, only body can experience pleasure, body, and so when we, if you think about when people experience pleasure, it's always associated with the body. I was at the beach, I had a great meal, good sex, an amazing partner, whatever it is, all of that is pleasure of the body.

And so pleasure has a cause and always will have a cause. But happiness is just what you are when you step out of the way. Happiness is actually the essence of you. And somebody said, one of my clients was like, but Frank, you know, being a saint is hard because all the saints have suffered, so many saints have suffered. And I said, did the Saint tell you that?

Or are you saying that? Because a saint will not say that they suffered, a saint does not experience suffering because for the man or woman who has denounced pleasure, there is no pain. And so they'll experience the pain of the body, but they're not creating suffering. Suffering is of the mind. So when people say, oh, so many saints have suffered, I doubt the Saint ever told you that. And if they did, then you know, that was not a saint. And so I think it's really important to notice that too, and that when you stop chasing pleasure and attaching to the idea of pleasure. Then happiness. You discover happiness is what you've always been, and it is not reliant on any experience whatsoever. And even when you say like, and I look back and it's a beautiful thing to look back and realize those things, but who is looking back?

So again, always back to the self-inquiry. Who is it that's looking back? Who is it that has a past and a future? Not Katie. I mean, yes, Katie. But you're not Katie, You were never born. You never die. What you really are. So go find that. And when you find that everything else disappears.

Katie: I love that. And I'm curious because I know in the past, like we've gotten to talk about, and I'll link to our past episodes in case people wanna hear them. But for this one, I feel like this podcast like stands alone in kind of its teaching and its ability to reach people, but is there anywhere you online you would want people to connect with you or find you or be able to keep interacting with you?

Frank: I think the best place is my website, frankelaridi.com and through there you can find everything else. So whether it's the Instagram and that's where you want to connect, or if you want to book an energy clearing session that's there. If you want to learn about my program for other healers that's there.

Everything is on frankelaridi.com.

Katie: Amazing. Well, I'll put that link in the show notes as well as your Instagram. And if, everybody stay tuned. We're actually gonna get to record another episode about more of the healer side and awaken the healer within, and I'm personally excited for that episode as well. But Frank, as always, it is such a joy.

Thank you so much for everything you've shared in this episode, and I look forward to our next conversation.

Frank: Thank you, Katie. Thank you for your willingness and your friendship.

Katie: And thank you as always for listening, and I hope you will join me and Frank on the next episode of the Wellness Mama podcast.