

When we successfully reframe public discourse, we change the way the public sees the world. We change what counts as common sense. Because language activates frames, new language is required for new frames. Thinking differently requires speaking differently.

Reframing is not easy or simple. It is not a matter of finding some magic words. Frames are ideas, not slogans. Reframing is more a matter of accessing what we and like-minded others already believe unconsciously, making it conscious, and repeating it till it enters normal public discourse. It doesn't happen overnight. It is an ongoing process. It requires repetition and focus and dedication.

To achieve social change, reframing requires a change in public discourse, and that requires a communication system. Conservatives in America have developed a very extensive and sophisticated communication system that progressives have not yet developed. Fox News is only the tip of the iceberg. Progressives need to understand what an effective communication system is and develop one. Reframing without a system of communication accomplishes nothing.

Reframing, as we discuss it in this book, is about honesty and integrity. It is the opposite of spin and manipulation. It is about bringing to consciousness the deepest of our beliefs and our modes of understanding. It is about learning to express what we really believe in a way that will allow those who share our beliefs to understand what they most deeply believe and to act on those beliefs.

Framing is also about understanding those we disagree with most. Tens of millions of Americans vote conservative. For the most part they are not bad people or stupid people. They are people who understand the world differently and have a different view of what is right.

All Politics Is Moral

When a political leader puts forth a policy or suggests how we should act, the implicit assumption is that the policy or action is right, not wrong. No political leader says, "Here's what you should do. Do it because it is wrong—