



Australia's 2019-2020 bushfire crisis has killed 27 people and destroyed more than 2100 homes.

A wildlife rescuer with a koala at a burnt forest on Kangaroo Island, South Australia.





Donald Trump and President Hassan Rouhani have said neither country wants war.

Picture: AFP Source: AFP





When James and his family returned to their family home in Batemans Bay after the fires, they found ash and rubble.  
*(ABC Life/Supplied: James Findlay)*

He has walled up my way so that I  
cannot pass,  
and he has set darkness upon my  
paths.  
He has stripped my glory from me,  
and taken the crown from my head.  
He breaks me down on every side,  
and I am gone,  
he has uprooted my hope like a  
tree.  
He has kindled his wrath against me,  
and counts me as his adversary.

Job 19:8-11

***Hope is the invention of people too stupid to realise there is NO hope!***

*a cynical counselling client*

***Once you choose hope, anything is possible***

*Christopher Reeve (aka Superman)*

***The miserable have no other medicine but only hope***

*William Shakespeare (Measure for Measure)*

***Hope is a dangerous thing ...***

*“Red” (Morgan Freeman) in Shawshank Redemption*

***Hope is a good thing ... maybe the best of things ... I hope***

*“Andy” (Tim Robbins) in Shawshank Redemption*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_diyX7yNeE&list=RDQnjrClaWdT0&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_diyX7yNeE&list=RDQnjrClaWdT0&index=2)

***Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how'***

*Friedrich Nietzsche*



# Wishing

A wish is an ideal representation of something, a desire put into words. Wishing for something tends to lack expectation because a wish has no real power or substance. Wishful thinking may be an entertaining distraction (maybe that lottery ticket will be *the one* despite the odds against it!), but it rarely serves any greater purpose. In wishing we are pining for what is unlikely, or what simply cannot be.

Our cry is “*if only!*”

# Optimism



Optimism is an attitude, the way we *choose* to see and interpret our situations. Optimism is seeing the glass as being half full rather than half empty.

The prominent psychologist, Martin Seligman, points out that “Positive thinking often involves trying to believe upbeat statements such as ‘Every day, in every way, I’m getting better and better’ in the absence of evidence, or even in the face of contrary evidence. Many educated people, trained in skeptical thinking, cannot manage this kind of *boosterism*... **Learned optimism, in contrast, is about accuracy**”

Optimism is a skill that can be learned. Optimism is about “what really is” (truth, accuracy) rather than a denial of reality or wishful thinking.

Oh this is just G-r-e-a-t.  
Now our plans are ruined

This is *GREAT!* ... now we  
can jump puddles!

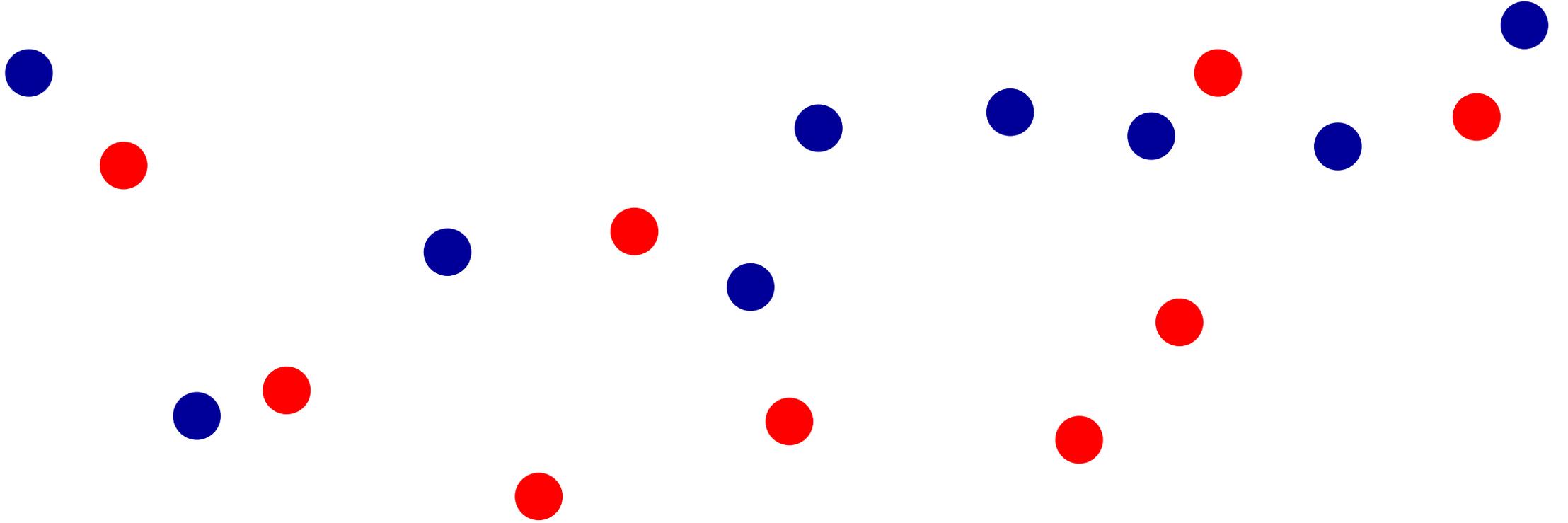


Same situation.  
Different response.  
We may not be able  
to control the  
situation, but we  
can choose our  
response.

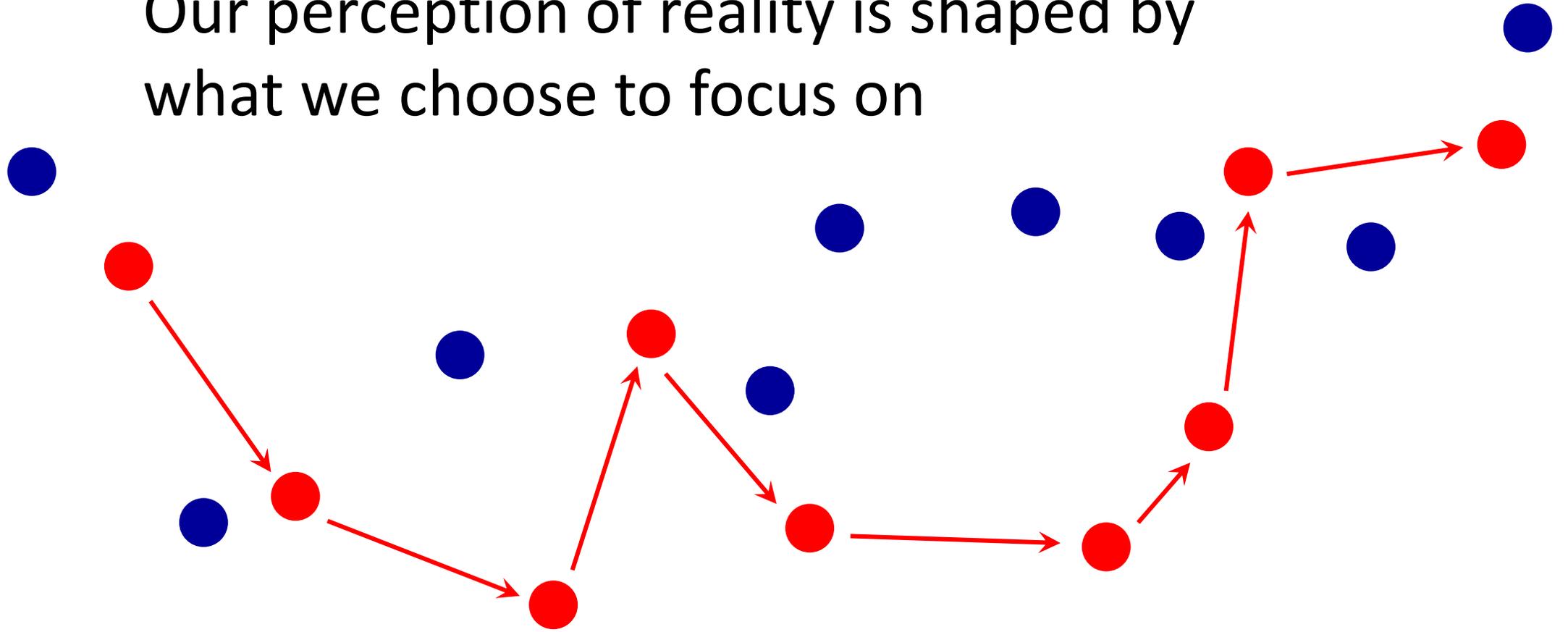
*When life hands you a  
lemon, make lemonade!*

**Response to Adversity**

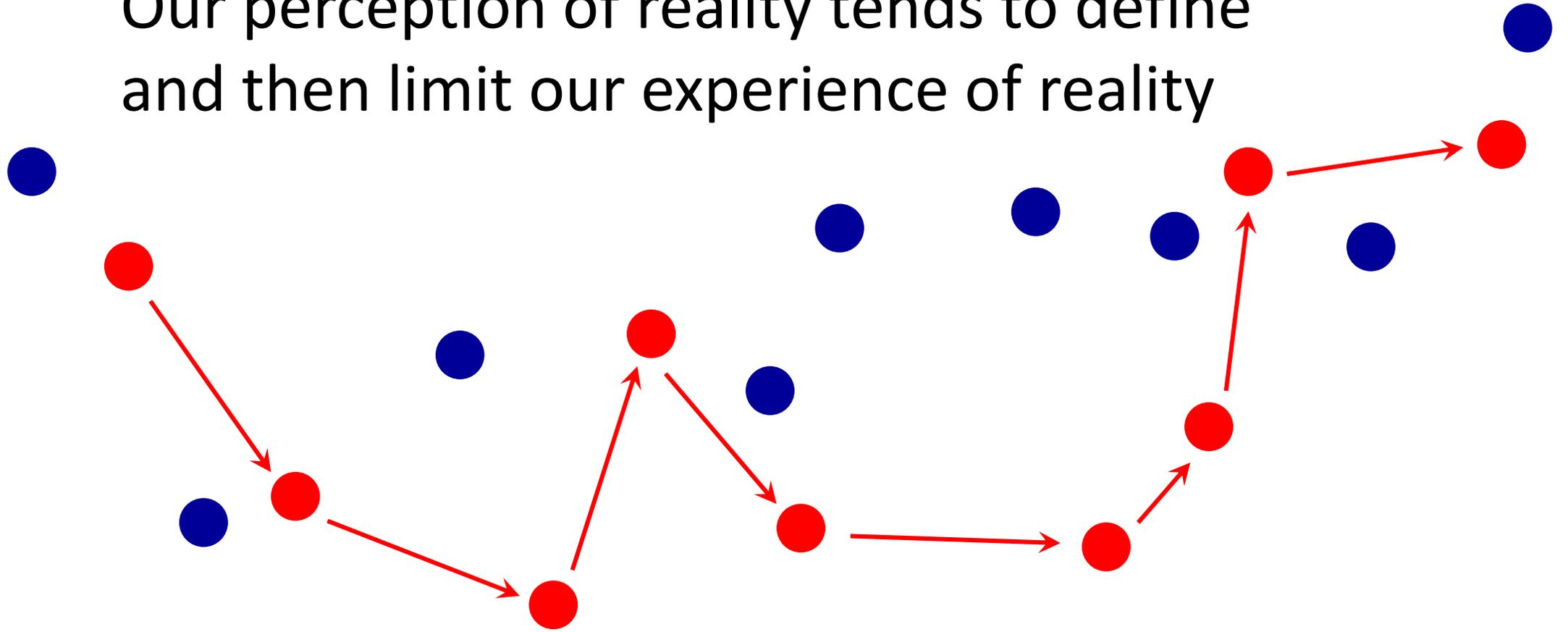
Reality



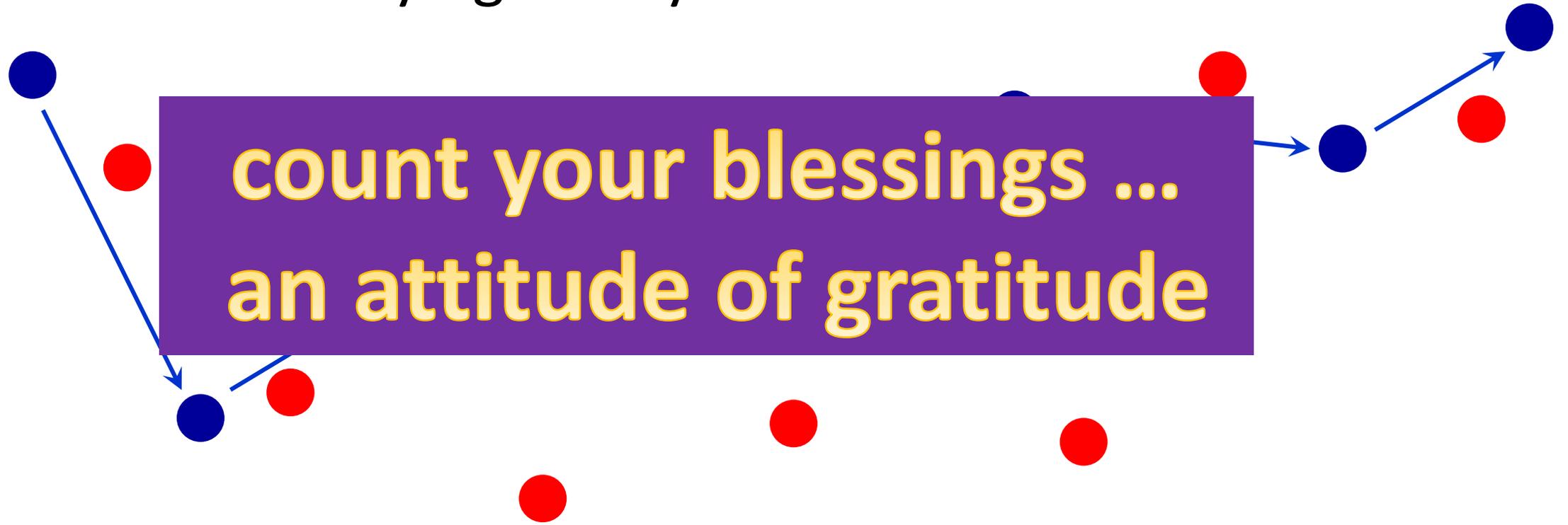
Our perception of reality is shaped by what we choose to focus on



Our perception of reality tends to define and then limit our experience of reality



We can create a new interpretation of our reality  
without denying reality ...



by accepting both the good and the bad, while focussing  
on the good (optimism) rather than the bad (pessimism)



# Hope

## **Hope is a confident expectation of the future**

Our way of understanding life is the key factor in how hope is maintained in our lives. Hope has little to do with our present circumstances. This is a most important point. If we look at our present circumstances as the primary guide for our well-being we are going to be severely limited. Hope in the form of optimism comes when we are positively expectant about the future. ***Hope can then help us to see and move beyond our present circumstances.***

Maxwell Maltz was a psychologist who studied people living in aged care facilities in the United States. He observed that people were much less likely to get sick or die around those times when they were looking forward to a special anniversary (such as birthdays) or a meaningful event (such as family coming together for Christmas). **Maltz concluded that having hope and seeing purpose or meaning in life gives people strong incentive to live.** He mused that people were like bicycles: *We're OK as long as we are moving forward with purpose, but we will quickly lose balance and topple over once we stop moving.*

**For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.**

Romans 8:24-25

# Hope and Promise (trust)

... looking beyond ourselves (to the transcendent: something or someone greater than ourselves) as the source of promise ...

*Think of a five-year old who has been told by her father that he is going on a trip and when he returns, he will bring her a present. The little girl is promised something, and she is confident she will get it. It sets up in her a confident expectation, an excitement about the future. She knows that something good is going to happen. Hope is really no more complicated than that.*

At least this will be so if the little girl's father has previously proven to be trustworthy ... that his promise has substance and credibility.



# Romans 8

<sup>18</sup> I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup> for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; <sup>23</sup> and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience ...

# 8 Romans

<sup>31</sup> What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.