

Developing Flexible and Compassionate Thinking

Do you have rigid and set ideas about others? Do you categorize people as “good” or “bad?” Do you have an unchanging negative view of many people? Inflexible views about others typically lead to unhappiness and social isolation. An inflexible attitude towards those around you can lead to unneeded suffering in your life.

On the other hand, flexible thinking can make you more open-minded and compassionate towards others as well as towards yourself. When you develop the habit of flexible thinking, you will likely find yourself feeling more in control of your emotions. You will feel calmer and happier with a greater sense of satisfaction about your life. A flexible and compassionate attitude towards others can greatly improve your relationships with family, friends, and co-workers.

This worksheet can help you think about whether or not you have a flexible and compassionate attitude towards others. Rate each statement on a 1-5 scale, with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Be honest about how you rate yourself. There are 100 possible points. If you score under 75, you should consider finding ways to think and act with more flexibility and compassion towards others.

1. ____ I am willing to see different sides of an argument.
2. ____ I consider how my behaviors affect others.
3. ____ I consider the consequences of my actions on the people around me.
4. ____ When making a choice, I think about how it will affect the people I care about.
5. ____ I consider the feelings of others when I’m talking.
6. ____ When making choices, I look ahead to what might happen.
7. ____ I learn from my mistakes.
8. ____ I try to be non-judgmental, even when I disagree with someone.
9. ____ When I’m in a social situation, I take into account the needs of others.
10. ____ Even when I am upset with people, I try to see their point of view
11. ____ I am open to having several ideas at once and comparing them, even when they seem contradictory.
12. ____ I am willing to change my mind when evidence supports another point of view.
13. ____ If I do something that upsets someone, I try to understand what happened.
14. ____ I apologize if I have hurt someone’s feelings.
15. ____ If people are upset, I ask questions to understand how they feel.
16. ____ I try to make people feel better about themselves if I can.
17. ____ I look for good things about people, even when I don’t always like what they say or do.
18. ____ I am willing to compromise when I disagree with someone.
19. ____ I don’t feel like I always have to win an argument.
20. ____ I am willing to keep my thoughts to myself when I feel they may hurt others.

____ Total Points