

# Cultivating Humility

## Objective

To identify ways to develop the trait of humility.

## What to Know

Humility is freedom from pride or arrogance, and for many, humility is one of the hardest traits to develop. It starts from a recognition that you are not always right, and you do not have all the answers. It requires full acceptance of yourself and the knowledge that you are not infallible. Humility is viewing your own importance on a realistic scale and understanding everyone has a place in this world. No one is “more important” than another person. It is a personal strength, and it fosters community, generosity, and compassion for yourself and others.

To become humble, or actively develop the trait of humility, try one or more of these activities.

**1. Spend time listening to others.** Genuinely value what others have to say and allow them to express themselves. Spend more time listening than talking, trying to understand others’ values, feelings, and points of view. Actively learn from others, while avoiding solving their problems, giving your opinion, or offering advice (unless they ask for it). Proactively listen, try to understand, and respond in a tactful and compassionate way.

**2. Be present and practice mindfulness.** Accept what is rather than judging and commenting on it. This includes accepting yourself with all your faults, rather than judging yourself for your shortcomings. You can strive to improve areas of weakness – but do so in a positive way instead of berating yourself about perceived negative qualities.

**3. Be grateful for what you have.** Focus on the good in your life and practice being appreciative and thankful. Acknowledging all that you have. It can be easy to want more but take time to stop and remember what you do have – and how fortunate you are.

**4. Ask for help.** There is a form of pride in being able to solve your own problems. Humility lies in recognizing when you need help and asking for it.

**5. Seek feedback.** You can gain a lot from hearing what others think of you or your performance, so ask others to provide feedback. Let them know you welcome their opinions, and their feedback will help you make changes for the better.

**6. Reduce behaviors that reflect pride, arrogance, smugness, snobbery, and vanity.** To cultivate humility, reflect on your feelings or behaviors and ask, “Was I being a bit vain?”, or “I was smug, and I might need to apologize?” or “Maybe I acted arrogant toward my co-worker. How could I have addressed the problem differently?” Be honest with yourself.

**7. Prioritize personal growth.** Admit fault, take responsibility, recognize your shortcomings, and focus on doing better and being better. Be open to learning and expanding your mind by considering others’ point of view.

When you think of humility or being humble as a strength, you can better contribute to the greater good. This worksheet will help you develop humility.

### **What to Do**

Think of someone in your life that you admire that is humble or regularly exhibits humility. What traits do they have?

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Do you sometimes get wrapped up in your own importance and sense of righteousness? Describe a situation where this occurred.

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What was the outcome?

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What are some ways you can practice humility? Use examples from the above list or come up with your own ideas below.

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For one month, use the chart on the following page to record activities that will help you practice humility. In order to cultivate humility, you must practice! Note the date, the activity or situation where you practiced humility, who was involved, and describe the outcome.

Date	Activity/Situation	Who was involved?	Outcome

Did this exercise help you cultivate humility? Why or why not?

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### Reflections on This Exercise

How helpful was this exercise? \_\_\_\_\_

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?

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