



# OPEN-MINDEDNESS

VIA Survey calls this strength Judgment

**Parent virtue: Wisdom and Knowledge.** Strengths of wisdom and knowledge are cognitive strengths related to the acquisition and use of information. Strengths comprised in this virtue are creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning and perspective.



THE  
POSITIVITY  
PROJECT

## WHAT DOES OPEN-MINDEDNESS MEAN?

*You like to consider new ideas and try new things. You examine things from all sides and don't jump to conclusions.*

Open-mindedness is the willingness to actively search for evidence that goes against one's favored opinions, plans, or goals. Open-minded individuals are able to weigh all evidence fairly, when it is available. They see the other side and fight the tendency to have a bias for their own views. And, rather than favoring the socially dominant views, they give attention to those that are less dominant.

This character strength helps individuals build knowledge about specific issues or points of view – and provide sound recommendations and advice. Open-minded people do not jump to conclusions. Instead, they seek out and examine all of the available evidence before forming an opinion.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Individuals with the character strength of open-mindedness are more likely to make accurate decisions – and decisions that they won't regret. This is because they think through all sides of a problem and actively fight "myside bias," which happens when people generate evidence, evaluate evidence, and test hypotheses in a manner biased toward their own prior opinions and attitudes.

Open-minded individuals are often good listeners and called upon to provide a balanced viewpoint. Both listening and the ability to deliver reasonable and practical advice are marks of good friends and confidantes. This strength helps individuals form meaningful and lasting relationships.

On a group level, open-mindedness is crucial in counteracting groupthink. Individuals with this strength help their group identify the correct goals, evidence, possible alternatives, and final decisions to a given problem.

## Individuals with this strength might be described as:

- Reasonable
- Critical Thinker
- Sensible
- Rational
- Impartial
- Logical

## Individuals with this strength are likely to think, feel, or behave in the following ways:

- I always look at evidence that goes against my opinions and take it into consideration.
- People should revise their opinion when provided with new evidence.
- Changing your mind is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of character and intelligence.
- I like to understand and consider other people's points of view.
- Evidence, not just intuition, is the best guide for making a decision.

## QUOTES ON OPEN-MINDEDNESS

*"A mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work if it is not open."*

**-FRANK ZAPPA**

*"The measure of intelligence is the ability to change."*

**-ALBERT EINSTEIN**

*"The illusion that we understand the past fosters overconfidence in our ability to predict the future."*

**-DANIEL KAHNEMAN**

*"It is not primarily our physical selves that limit us but rather our mindset about our physical limits."*

**-ELLEN J. LANGER**