



Perspective Shifts for Positive Growth

Introduction – As we gain experience, one thing that happens to almost everyone who grows and matures mentally is that we broaden our perspective. The more that we see in life with time and experience, the greater the range of our perspective can grow. Granted, some more closed-minded people may prevent their perspective from growing by consciously avoiding new viewpoints, but people who are interested in self-improvement use their experiences as lessons for adjusting and changing for the better.

Discuss how your perspective may have changed with time, experience, and maturity

Complete the following sentences and discuss. Answers can be about any topic

When I was a kid, I believed....

- But now I know....

When I first became a teenager, one thing that I felt strongly about was...

- But now instead I think....

Just a few years ago one way I used to see things was....

- However now I see things....

If you change the
way you look at things,
the things you look at
change.

-Dr. Wayne Dyer





Past & Present: To the best of your ability complete and discuss the following grid about changing viewpoints in a variety of life areas. Try to choose things that you've adjusted with experience or increased knowledge. You may not be able to answer all of them which is okay just do as many as you can. This is not about judging whether views are "right" or "wrong" but instead focus on how we can change or adjust our views over time. You can pick any time in your life for "Past Beliefs" it is up to you. Examples provided for the first two to help:

Topic	Past beliefs/views/thoughts	Current viewpoint
Entertainment and "Fun"	<i>I used to believe it was not possible to have fun without getting wasted</i>	<i>I am learning to have fun without getting high and it's great because I remember what happened</i>
Family	<i>Only reached out to family when I needed something or was in trouble</i>	<i>My family is a priority and I try to be there for them today</i>
Dating, relationships, sex		
Habits		
Money and spending		
Meaning, Purpose and Spirituality		
Self-care, diet, exercise and health		
Priorities (What comes first)		
Mental Health and Happiness		
Substance Use		
Other – Anything else you have adjusted your beliefs?		



Sudden Perspective Shifts: Life Changing Events

Some perspective changes are gradual, but others are sudden and often attached to a life changing event. An accident, job loss, family concern, health issue, natural disaster, relationship change, can have an impact that can trigger a sudden perspective change

Some examples

- When the person I loved finally left me...
- When I lost my job...
- When I found out I was diagnosed with...
- When I was in that accident...
- When I had to go to jail...

Discuss – What were some life experiences that triggered a perspective shift for you? Also included how these experiences have changed you?

There is a lesson in every experience – What is one thing learned from your experience (even if the experience itself was negative what are you doing today to improve and grow in spite of this event?)

(For example: I was bullied as a child which was an awful experience but now one thing, I am making sure to do is to have compassion for others and even protect and support others when I see them being bullied or teased)

Final – Closing it Out with the Group

Perspective shift is part of the change process. It is important to be open to exploring new views and possibilities otherwise we cannot grow. Even when we have firm beliefs it is important to be open to exploring our beliefs to keep them firm

With this in mind: Discuss the following:

What is some advice about substance use recovery that you learned that you are willing to consider? – If you can't think of anything, ask the group and counselor what they think

What is some advice about mental health that you learned that you are willing to consider? - If you can't think of anything, ask the group and counselor what they think

What is some advice about life in general that you are willing to consider? If you can't think of anything, ask the group and counselor what they think