

Choosing My Thinking

Whenever someone says or does anything, I can think about it from different perspectives. When we have been raised in an authoritarian way, our minds tend to respond in one of two perspectives.

Imagine each perspective as a chair.

Chair #1	Chair #2
There is a problem and it's YOUR fault.	There is a problem and it's MY fault.

We spend much of our time thinking about who is at fault in each moment. This is not an effective way to change an unpleasant or harmful situation or to strengthen a pleasant one.

Thinking in this way is a response to being raised in a world focused on right and wrong, good or bad. Our brains are doing the best they can to work within the rules of our society. However, this has not been an effective pattern to resolve problems between people with consideration for everyone, nor in creating a world where people build trust and care between groups.

So how else could our minds think about a conflict?

Chair #3	Chair #4
When something is said or done, check inside yourself for your full authentic physical and emotional reaction then find what is really important to you underneath those sensations.	When something is said or done, remember that anything a person does is in support of their Universal human values or needs. Can you be curious about them?
<i>I notice that I am feeling _____ arising from the need(s) of _____.</i>	<i>I wonder if they are feeling _____ because they value _____.</i>

To create change, the first step is awareness of where your thinking is right now. It is not right or wrong to be in any of the 4 Chairs. Honest awareness of where you are is powerful. If you are in Chair #1 or #2, any action you take is likely to lead to disconnection or a continuation of the conflict. You can choose to shift to Chair #3 and #4 by using the processes in this course.

If you are already in Chair #3 or #4, you can use this process to create actions that can be beneficial for everyone.