

An Open and A Closed Mind

“Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open.” James Dewar

To create the life that you want, growing as a human being and regularly experiencing a prosperous lifestyle, you will need a mind open to other people, possibilities, ideas and opinions around you. When you have an open mind you allow yourself to attract and follow up on opportunities. When you work with the power of the conscious and subconscious mind you will attract opportunities that will bring you what you need; for what you radiate you will constantly attract. When you are prepared to become creative you will create a vibrant life, while eliminating negative and unwanted situations.

Most people think they already listen to others with an open mind, merely by paying close attention to what is being said. In fact, keeping an open mind is not easy to do if you are happy with the way you are doing things and do not see the point of changing. We all have moments, however, when we do listen with an open heart and mind, for example, we are more open to listening to someone we trust.

An open mind is an understanding mind which will develop a genuine appreciation for people. When you take the trouble to think of other people's feelings, their viewpoints and their desires you are saying “people are important”.

An open mind will accept other people unconditionally. It requires the letting go of likes and dislikes and other similar emotions. When you do this you discipline your emotions and you allow people to be who they are with all their idiosyncrasies, differences and irritations.

When you are communicating with others there can often be misunderstandings and these can lead to failure in your relations with others. We expect others to react and respond and come to the same conclusions we do over a given set of facts. Unfortunately, no one reacts to things as they are but to their own mental images; they are responding appropriately to what they see as the truth about the situation. An open-minded person will ask themselves “How does this appear to that person?” or, “How does that person interpret the situation?” and they will try to understand why someone might act differently to the way they expected.

Many small business owners have faced extinction because they thought they knew it all and were not prepared to have an open mind and listen to others who had been down that path before them. When you are open minded you are always prepared to be teachable, to learn something new and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves. An open mind is the doorway to expansion of ideas.

When you open your mind you are not compromising your ethics and values. It just means that you begin to practice *a greater sense of awareness* and in doing so you are

prepared to look at your world a little differently. Test opportunities that are presented to you and examine where the message is coming from. It may be from a friend, a neutral party or from a source about which you are sceptical. If you are not sure, instruct your subconscious mind to guide you by simply saying, “I am making the right decision.” Focus on what you want, not on what you don’t want.

A Closed Mind

“A closed mind is like a closed book; just a block of wood. – Chinese Proverb.

We have all been given the power to develop ideas and exercise free will. Unfortunately too often those ideas die as a seed and people use their free will to close their mind to the tremendous opportunities surrounding them. This stubbornness prevents them from achieving the goals that they want for themselves and so the opportunity for success is greatly decreased.

In our formative years we grow and develop egos that maintain very particular ideas about ourselves in relation to the world around us. Your ego is your conscious mind, that which controls your behaviour and tries to give meaning to your external, material reality. It is powerful and can control your life if you allow it. Your external reality is a direct result of your mental and spiritual self so if the latter two are not where you want them to be your external and material self will suffer. The ego cannot improve the quality of your mental and spiritual life.

When you close your mind you essentially become stubborn and become a victim of the ego mind which says, “My attitude is right despite what anyone else has to say”. The ego mind, although it thinks it knows better than anyone else, is never prepared to leave its comfort zone and so is not open to new ideas nor will it welcome others into its world. This kind of attitude shuts you off from the process of life and nature which is about growing and experiencing new possibilities. Think about how many times you were resistant to trying something new only to eventually give in and discover that you really enjoyed the process.

Limitations are the jail of the mind so if you can throw off the shackles and open your mind to new and exciting ideas, your possibilities become limitless. When the mind is shackled and limited it affects every part of your life, for example, work presentations can lack innovation and impact and even every-day conversations are less productive and rewarding. Conversations often become defensive as the mind closes off to what is being said by others.

Society today gives out a negative message that everyone is out to ‘take you down’ and that if it ‘looks to good to be true, it probably is’. This causes many to close their minds to everything beyond their current knowledge. An open mind is a mind that is aware that the current knowledge is not all there is to know and will eagerly investigate possibilities.

When you have a closed mind to new and exciting possibilities you essentially tell yourself that you are not willing to go the extra mile – that you are not willing to grow

and experience new things. You have now switched off the power within you and there can be no change and no progress in life and things will never improve. Such people become very introspective and weak. The old recordings of the past can, however, be changed. If you choose, you can wipe the old record clean, put on a new record and make a decision to activate the positive thoughts which lead to a relaxed and open view of the world. Remember, the past explains how you got to the present but where you go from here is your responsibility.

In his book *A Vision of Power & Glory*, John Kehoe gives a Zen parable about two monks who are on a journey together when they come to a river. By the river there is a beautiful woman. The woman asks them, "Please will one of you monks carry me across the river? The river is too wide and the current too swift."

The two monks look at one another, because they have taken a sacred vow to not so much as even touch a woman. Then, abruptly, the older monk picks up the woman, carries her across the river and puts her down on the other side. They continue on their journey.

The younger monk is flabbergasted. He can't believe it. An hour goes by and not a word is spoken between them. Two hours. Three hours. And finally, after four hours, he turns to the older monk and blurts out, "How could you have done that? How could you have carried that woman?" "Oh?" responds his companion, "Are you still carrying her? I put her down four hours ago."

John Kehoe goes on to say, "How much are we still carrying around inside us that should have been put down a long time ago? Disappointments; regrets; failures; grudges. How much junk are we carrying around inside us and how long are we going to carry it? All our life?"

If you want to change and improve your attitude to life then it is imperative that you keep an open mind. That is not to say you will be taken in by every 'fly-by-night' scheme that may be put before you. An open mind is curious and investigative and examines new things. Your creative power system uses your conscious and subconscious mind to attract, explore and check out new opportunities so that you can begin achieving your goals and creating the life you want. Don't limit yourself; learn how to attract new possibilities and make the right decisions by developing the power of your mind and heart.

If you move in your community with an open mind and an open heart you can learn to accept others. You don't have to agree with them, but accept who they are and feel free to express yourself.

I remember a friend of ours who has passed on now, who was well-known and well-liked in community affairs. He met many people as he moved around and sometimes in a gathering he would be heard to say, "There's a fellow over there I met recently and I didn't like him; I must go over and get to know him better". He would always come away with a new-found friend; now that's an open mind and open heart.

