

## Self-exploration exercise: Mindsets

**Purpose:** *Building self-awareness*

1. List some mindsets you have (you can use the list on the next page as a prompt) – be as specific as possible.
2. How does this mindset affect your behaviour? Be specific.
3. How long have you had this mindset? How strong is this mindset? (i.e., how does it control/influence you? How automatic is it?)
4. How does this mindset serve/help you? (i.e., how did it first get started? what did/do you get from it?)
5. What does this mindset stop you from seeing, or doing about yourself? About others etc.?
6. As you step back from this mindset what new prospects does this open up for you?

Mindsets are not good or bad, they just are.

They act as a filter, so your mind doesn't have to process tons of information all the time. In essence, they are like little computer programmes designed to keep you safe. They run in the background, so your brain can focus on the 'important stuff'.

The only problem comes when they start to take all of your brainpower and stop you from doing what you really want to do. Kind of like an anti-virus that has become obsolete but sucks all of your CPU (excuse the geeky analogy, but I hope you get what I mean!).

Identifying your unconscious mindsets gives you a chance to decide what is useful or not. And it frees up energy for you to use on what really matters to you.



### Here are some examples of potential mindsets

<p><b>Work</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Work comes before play or work should be serious not fun</li><li>2. Work is meant to be hard and exhausting</li><li>3. Success doesn't come easy, you have to work hard for it</li><li>4. I won't be taken seriously if I can't sit still/focus for long periods of time</li><li>5. A manager/leader should have all the answers and never doubt/be afraid...</li><li>6. Emotions are not acceptable at work</li><li>7. You have to be ruthless to get ahead</li><li>8. You have to work extra long hours in order to get promoted</li><li>9. People who work part time are not serious/committed to their career</li><li>10. As a [woman/black/Asian/young person... fill the blank], I have to work extra hard to show I deserve my role/pay/promotion</li></ol>	<p><b>Personal/emotional</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fulfilling your own needs before others is selfish, i.e. bad</li><li>2. I am not supposed to want anything for myself</li><li>3. Anger is bad</li><li>4. Saying no to someone is bad/unkind (so I have to have a very good reason to do it)</li><li>5. I am not [strong/ clever/ pretty/ deserving/ confident/...fill the blank] enough</li><li>6. Messy/disorganised people are incompetent</li><li>7. Organised people are inflexible</li><li>8. Talking about your achievements makes you arrogant</li><li>9. Being inactive is lazy</li><li>10. Admitting my insecurities makes me look weak</li></ol>
<p><b>Money</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Money doesn't grow on tree, i.e. you have to work hard to earn</li><li>2. If you have more, you are responsible for others having less</li><li>3. It's bad to spend money you don't have</li><li>4. Having lots of money makes you entitled/evil/selfish/...</li><li>5. You can't be spiritual and caring if you have lots of money</li><li>6. It's wrong/greedy to want lots of money</li><li>7. Rich people are arrogant/snob/tight/...</li><li>8. If I make more money, my friends or family will turn on me</li><li>9. Being rich makes you the target of attack or other people's jealousy</li><li>10. I don't deserve to have lots of money</li></ol>	<p><b>Relationships</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Other people should know what I need without me having to explain</li><li>2. No one can possibly understand me</li><li>3. Relationships are hard work</li><li>4. Relationships are meant to be easy</li><li>5. Other people's needs are more important than mine</li><li>6. I have to give more than I receive otherwise people won't like me</li><li>7. Good relationships never last</li><li>8. Everyone is after something from me</li><li>9. Relationships always take more than they give</li><li>10. I don't need anyone / I am better off on my own</li></ol>