

Let's hop in the balloon and explore how *seeing things differently* can improve our psychological well-being!

Exploring makes us see beyond appearances. Underneath what we know, like the orange on the flyer's cover page, can be found another reality.

Exploring broadens our mind, makes us discover new points of view, just like travelling by hot air balloon can open new horizons.

DISCOVERING OURSELVES DISCOVERING OTHERS, DISCOVERING DIFFERENCES

BY OURSELVES

When we know our strengths, our limitations, our motivations and our values, we can take them into account when going through change. Self-knowledge has an influence not only on how we view ourselves, but also the way we interpret and react to events.

Here is an online test to figure out your main strengths¹: viacharacter.org.

What are your main strengths?

Self-discovery can produce a wide range of emotions, both pleasant or not, like excitement, anxiety, happiness, fear and others. But it's possible to learn to control those emotions, little by little. Just like peeling an orange: one layer at a time.

Do you have examples?

Opening to others is the basis for life in society. However, self-discovery is also part of the equation.

WITH OTHERS

Diversity is all around us. However, the unknown can make us feel insecure, whether it be ideological, cultural, religious, physical, sexual orientation, place of birth (in a city or in the country, for instance) or other differences. However, diversity brings so much added value, regardless of the situation.

Discovering others, their strengths, stories and passions help us go beyond appearances and to develop mutual respect. Sometimes, all you need to do is ask questions and to listen to the answers to eliminate certain prejudice. Too often, we ask someone we just met what they do for a living.

What other original questions could we ask instead of that one?

DID YOU KNOW?

Psychology studies have shown that between two people with the same skillset, the one that is certain to have the capacity to begin change will be better at problem-solving, will feel less stress and will be able to complete challenges in a more efficient way².

SWITCHING FROM I TO US

Here are some examples of collective projects that are the perfect way to discover, develop and recognize the strengths of others.

Each year, June 21 marks the cultural contribution of the First Nations, the Inuits and the Métis by celebrating the National Indigenous People Day. For the occasion, La Fabrique culturelle offers the opportunity to meet artists and artisans that showcase Indigenous People's cultures and ancestral knowledge in order to ensure that they are not forgotten³.

Les Maisons des grands-parents is setting up projects that valorize elders and allows them to share their experiences.

Do you know of others?

THE BENEFITS OF CURIOSITY

BY OURSELVES

Our brain has the capacity to produce new neurons when we are exposed to new situations. It's what we call *neuroplasticity*. Keeping your curiosity alive helps keep your mind sharp⁴.

What new situation have you lived this week to stimulate your neurons?

Curiosity should be a daily thing. Being curious can take many forms: exploring your community (i.e.: visiting farms or cultural festivals); trying new activities (i.e.: boxing, knitting, fishing); getting informed (i.e.: through different media, at the CLSC, by networking); or trying out new ways to do things (i.e.: trying out a new recipe, take a class).

What have you discovered this month?

DID YOU KNOW?

"By adding spice to our lives, curiosity makes our existence much more interesting and satisfying", writes Todd Kashdan, psychologist. "Curious people feel more in control of their lives and consider that they have a purpose in life. Their curiosity forces them to explore – which opens a world of possibilities to them – and take actions that are meaningful to them⁵."

WITH OTHERS

Curiosity and social commitment bring many benefits, like making intergenerational friendships, unravels prejudices, breaks solitude, and helps develop communication skills and empathy. Exchanging with others helps sharing new points of view and encourages mutual respect.

SWITCHING FROM I TO US

Curiosity can stimulate creativity in numerous ways.

Some people collectively develop ways to express their indignation. Therefore, representatives of different community groups shoveled snowbanks with spoons in order to illustrate their lack of resources and ask for a bigger budget.

Some citizen workshops allowed them to participate in designing streets and alleys.

Do you know any other example?



MOUVEMENT
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Promouvoir. Soutenir. Outiller.

A QUÉBEC-WIDE PRESENCE THROUGH THE MOUVEMENT
AND THE REGIONAL MEMBERS:

SMQ – Bas-Saint-Laurent • SMQ – Chaudière-Appalaches
SMQ – Côte-Nord • SMQ – Haut-Richelieu
SMQ – Lac-Saint-Jean • SMQ – Rive-Sud
SMQ – Pierre-De-Saurel • ACSM – Filiale de Québec
ACSM – Filiale Saguenay • CAP Santé Outaouais
Comité Prévention Suicide L-s-Q • PCSM • RAIDDAT

The Mouvement Santé mentale Québec (MSMQ)
is a grouping devoted to create, develop
and strengthen mental health.

WE THANK:

Le ministère de la Santé
et des Services sociaux

Défi Santé



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DISCOVERING THROUGH CHANGE

BY OURSELVES

Keeping an open mind when facing certain events helps maintain creativity and flexibility between letting go and acting, and allows to keep an open mind towards the existing options.

Some changes can be planned, like moving to a new place, breaking up with your significant other, or starting a new job. Other changes are out of our control, like a death, a decrease in welfare benefits, a disease, getting laid-off.

What can we do to help us navigate through these changes?

- Giving ourselves time to compose with our new reality and grief.
- Recognizing our emotions: anger, joy, sadness, etc.
- Taking a step back (getting some entertainment, going out, spending time with friends, procrastinating) before facing a hard situation again can give us temporary relief.
- Finding a positive element in change, no matter how small it is, can reduce frustration, disappointment, anxiety.
- Tolerating the situation and the discomfort it brings to give yourself time to choose the appropriate ways to act.
- Increase your resources to improve the situation or reduce the problem's impact (informative videos, group meetings, readings, psychotherapy, etc.).
- Resist⁶, when possible and necessary, while respecting your strengths, limits and values.

Hop in the balloon and broaden your horizons. Choose a situation and make a list of multiple possible solutions, from the most probable ones to the wackiest ones.

Resilience is made of different components, including the “capacity to adapt, to actively resist, to bend without breaking or to bounce back and recuperate”⁷.

— Iliia N. Karatsoreos

WITH OTHERS

Let's discover the ways to live out change together.

- Exchange with a person who has lived a similar to ours can give us landmarks or inspiring references.
- Sharing our experiences with others can help us improve our solutions-finding skills and reduces solitude (i.e.: join a support group for grieving people, refugees, or join discussion groups on different social media).
- To act collectively gives us more power to change an unbearable situation.

Let's all hop together in the balloon. Together, choose a situation and create a list of multiple possible solutions, without commenting on the suggestions of others. You can choose afterwards.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children and adults that can think of solutions on the spot usually live less negative emotions when stressful situations occur⁸. These strategies aim at making obstacles more tolerable, or to reduce stress and negative emotions. Let's discover them!

Any change, planned or not, big or small, fun or painful, provokes stress and resistance. When we are faced with a new situation, we produce stress hormones.

SWITCHING FROM I TO US

When a tragedy occurs, the community quickly gets organized and adapts rapidly to change while keeping it together and maintaining communications with the rest of the world. Once the rescue service has been deployed, the community keeps on going, keeps on functioning, developing and thriving. It tries to improve the daily lives of the people touched by disaster by being solidary of one another (i.e.: the Saguenay floods in 1996, the Ice Storm in 1998, the Lac-Mégantic Fire in 2013). That's what is known as *community resilience*⁹.

Early on, social changes provoke fear and resistance, because changes have an impact on people's daily lives. Changes demand that we learn to live with a new reality. Gay marriage or including recycling in your daily habits are two prime examples.

What social changes have you enjoyed, even if they needed a certain adaptation time?

DID YOU KNOW?

Mental health is an essential component of our overall health. It represents a dynamic balance between the various aspects of our life: social, physical, economical, spiritual, emotional and mental. Mental fitness helps us take action, live up to our potential, cope with day-to-day difficulties and engage in our community. It is influenced by our living conditions and by the dominant values in our society, as well as our own individual ones. Being mentally healthy allows us to enjoy life.



Note: The bibliography is available online.

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EXPLORING MEANS SEEING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

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TOOLS FOR ADULTS
AGED 18 TO 128