

**Not rigid in thoughts**



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### ***What is rigid thinking?***

When a person is unable to consider alternatives to the current situation, alternative points of view or innovative solutions to a problem, then we are talking about rigid thinking.

Thinking rigidly means not being able to change your mind when all the signs indicate a change of mind. People with rigid thinking see life with blinders on, perceiving only one out of the countless nuances there are. They rigidly reject new information before considering it. A rigid person continues a course of action even when life's feedback suggests the original plan is in need of changes.

### ***Characteristics of Rigid Thinking***

Rigid thinking is a kind of destructive life skill and it is rooted in experiences of abuse or deprivation, which lead to a fear-based relationship with the outside world. Rigid thinkers stick tightly to preconceptions and generalizations, and often react with fear or hostility in the face of unexpected change or challenges.

People who are “flexible” are able to see different perspectives, consider different options, and able to easily adjust their plan when things don't go as expected. When we make decisions, we make those decisions based on the information we have at that moment in time. When we become aware of new information, it requires us to re-evaluate. Sometimes the decision and

actions we choose will remain the same but sometimes the new information presents the situation in a different light and requires us to alter our course of action.

### ***Dangers of Rigid Thinking***

Rigid thinking is so rigid that anything that doesn't meet the expectations gives people anxiety.

It makes us feel like we're constantly messing up because we're not conforming to the ideas in our mind. Thus, we feel guilty. This type of thinking often leads the person to apply rigid rules in situations that require variability and flexibility.

#### **Rigid thinking leads to:**

- Anxiety.
- Misreading situations.
- Out of place behaviour.
- The need to control all situations to match their expectations.
- Anger or meltdowns when things don't go as planned.

#### ***Rigid thinking leads to challenging behaviours such as:***

- Actively resists any form of change.
- Attempts to control all situations.
- Resistance to following the lead of others – viewed as strongly oppositional behaviour or pathological demand avoidance.
- Repetitive self-stimulation.
- Insistence on following strict, ritualistic routines.
- Difficulty moving on from strong negative feelings.

#### ***How to reduce rigidity and improve flexible thinking?***

- Consider new information.
- Don't be threatened by other's opinions.
- You have to have the ability to alter their original plan of action.
- Try to listen to other people.
- Understand, that they are not always right.
- Actively seeks to see a situation from many different perspectives.
- Enjoy people.
- Do not take things personally.
- Be a part of the diverse social group.
- Move toward solutions and away from problems.



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