

Adapting to Change

Excerpt Ch 8 Adaptability and Flexibility Essential Retirement Planning for Solo Agers- Sara Zeff Geber, PhD

The wiser mind mourns less for what age takes away than what it leaves behind. - William Wordsworth

Change and Adaptability Quiz Self-Assessment

Circle the letter that best describes how you would feel or react in the following situations:

- 1. Your next-door neighbors just put their house on the market. In addition to feeling sad that they are leaving, what else do you feel?**
 - A. Shocked they would abandon the neighborhood and the house they call home.
 - B. Very concerned the new neighbors might be noisy or careless about the property.
 - C. A little anxious but ready to welcome the new people when they move in.
 - D. Excited about having new people on the block.

- 2. A new colleague was just hired to work on your team. What do you do?**
 - A. Keep interacting only with the old team members, whose personalities and roles you know.
 - B. Ignore her until she asks for your guidance or advice.
 - C. Welcome him cordially and then leave him alone.
 - D. Welcome her, ask how you can help her feel included, offer to show her around the building, ask her to share lunch.

- 3. The city is doing street repairs, so you need to find a new route for your daily walk. How do you feel? What do you do?**
 - A. Angry your routine was disrupted. You stop walking until the repairs are finished.
 - B. Somewhat discombobulated because you don't know where to walk while the repairs are under way. You stop walking for a few days, then reluctantly find a new route.
 - C. Motivated to find a new route. You immediately do so.
 - D. Excited you will now get to experience new sights and activities during your walk (of course you didn't walk the same route every day to begin with.)

- 4. A new supermarket with a reputation for excellent produce and competitive prices has just moved into town. You...**
 - A. Ignore the new market and keep on shopping at the same store where you have always shopped. The old grocery has served your needs just fine and you believe in loyalty.
 - B. Go once to check out the new store, but return to your old store because you know where to find everything there.
 - C. Check out the new store right away to determine which you prefer, now that you have options.
 - D. Embrace the new store, shopping there exclusively for six months and encouraging all your friends to the same. You want to make sure the new store succeeds, giving you permanent options.

- 5. You are doing an important task with a self-imposed deadline. A friend calls to share some important news and is eager to get your feedback. You...**
 - A. Ignore the ringing phone, listen to the message, go back to your task.

- B. Ignore the ringing phone, listen to the message, then call your friend to make an appointment to chat later.
 - C. Determine the task can wait 15 minutes, answer the phone, and listen to the friend's news, giving her as much feedback as you can, but cutting the call short to return to the task.
 - D. Determine the task can wait, answer the phone, and have a 45-minute chat with your friend.
6. **Your doctor has just given you a diagnosis of high blood pressure and advised you to purchase a blood pressure cuff, measure your blood pressure twice a week, and cut your salt intake to one teaspoon a day. You are most likely to...**
- A. Ignore the warning, tell no one and continue your lifestyle as before.
 - B. Think about the advice for a few months, then begin to share the information with a few close friends or spouse and start looking at cuffs in pharmacies.
 - C. Purchase the cuff right away, then put it in a nearby drawer for regular use, and begin gradually using less salt.
 - D. Purchase the cuff at a pharmacy on the way home from the doctor's office, set it up in the bathroom for regular use; upon returning home, dump out all the salt shakers, and resolve to buy no more heavily processed foods.
7. **You are waiting at the gate to board your flight to Europe. The gate agent announces they have changed aircraft and everyone will need a new seat assignment. When your turn arrives to talk to the agent about your seat, you...**
- A. Express your distress about the aircraft switch and ask to have your same row and seat.
 - B. Express your concern that you may not get the aisle seat you had reserved and ask to be given a seat as similar as possible to the one you originally reserved.
 - C. Ask the agent what available on the new plane and select a new seat from the options you are given.
 - D. Take whatever seat the agent assigns you, looking forward to meeting your new seatmates.
8. **A friend offers you last-minute tickets to an event he knows you will enjoy. You had made plans to answer some emails that evening and watch two new TV shows you had recorded. You...**
- A. Thank him and tell him it's too late to change your plans for that evening.
 - B. Thank him and tell him you will take the tickets only if you are his last resort.
 - C. Thank him, accept the tickets, and hurry home to at least get the emails done before the show.
 - D. Thank him and eagerly accept the tickets, then call a companion to accompany you. The heck with the emails; they can wait.
9. **You arrive with a friend at a restaurant on a Saturday evening only to discover they have no record of your reservation you made a week ago. Now they have no table for you and the waiting list is already lengthy. You...**
- A. Get upset and show them the evidence on your phone that you called a week ago.
 - B. Sigh, take a place on the waiting list and sit in the bar to await a table.
 - C. Let your friend decide what to do.
 - D. Turn to your friend and say, "Now we can try the new place down the block."

10. Your dentist has just retired and sold his practice to a young dentist you have never met. You...

- A. Are sad and upset he has abandoned you and fearful you will never find another dentist you trust.
- B. Are upset you will have to find a new dentist. You go two years without seeing any dentist at all, then ask for referrals from others.
- C. Are somewhat dismayed at this turn of events, but immediately start asking for referrals for someone your friends like and trust.
- D. Send a congratulatory note to your dentist and look forward to finding a new dentist---maybe the one who bought the practice. He's probably fresh out of school and up-to-date on all the latest dental technology.

11. You are out with a few friends for dinner. The plan was to have an early dinner, then see a movie at the nearby cinema. However, the evening is warm and beautiful and one friend suggests you abandon the movie idea and go to a nearby park for a walk to watch the sunset. You respond by...

- A. Saying no, you prefer to keep the original plan; you are programmed for a movie no matter how spectacular the sunset promises to be.
- B. Telling the group you are uncomfortable changing plans at the last minute.
- C. Keeping silent and going along with what the rest of group decides.
- D. Saying yes, thinking you can see the movie another time; beautiful evenings are to be cherished.

12. Just before leaving for a party, your cat/dog had an accident on the shirt you were planning to wear. You...

- A. Call the party hostess and let her know you won't be able to attend.
- B. Spend an hour getting the stain out of the shirt---putting it through a short wash cycle, drying it and ironing it---and then put the shirt back on, arriving at the party quite late.
- C. Toss the shirt in the laundry basket, stain and all, put on a different outfit, and head to the party.
- D. Decide you can live without the shirt, toss it in the trash, find another outfit and head to the party.

Scoring: Give yourself

- 1 point for every A you selected _____
- 2 points for every B _____
- 3 points for every C _____
- 4 points for every D _____

YOUR TOTAL _____

12

24

36

48

Very resistant to change; not very adaptable

Moderately adaptable

Very adaptable; reacts well to change; spontaneous