

Excerpt from Elements of Wisdom and Folly
DARE TO BE FLEXIBLE AND OPEN MINDED

by Ernest Kinnie, PhD
<http://www.wisdomfolly.net>

Abstract

Two experiences. One to explore the effect you have on yourself and others by doing the opposite of your usual. And the second, to sharpen your rhetorical skills and to greatly increase your ability to understand both sides of an argument.

Key words

psychology, self-help, self-heal, growth, strategy, technique, method, break-out, increase repertoire, contrarian

Pull a George

In the Seinfeld sitcom, George was the ultimate loveable loser. Everything he did turned out bad, so one day he decided to stop what he usually does and do the opposite. Worked great but by the next show, loser that he was, he forgot all about his wonderful insight. So, what do you have to lose....Pull a George. Explore the effect you have on yourself and others by doing the opposite of your usual. If you notice that you usually talk in a soft voice, up the volume. If you don't smile much, smile. Or start scowling if you smile a lot. If you have a rep for stinginess, blow \$20, and shock your friends by giving away roses. If you're shy and holding back...be outgoing and stick your hand out there first.

Confuse Friends and Enemies

Start a modestly heated argument with a friend. Present your position with enthusiasm and power. And...in the middle of the argument, suddenly shift your position to your opponents and begin to vigorously argue his side. Terrible thing to do to a friend. Diabolical against an enemy. Be a bit careful though. People sometimes don't take kindly to being "tricked"...especially enemies. Use good judgment, as you need to do for all of the experiences, methods, strategies and techniques in this book. If you feel uncomfortable as you read the description of what to do, pass on, and try the next one.

And even more fun when you and your friend do it together in front of other people. Agree in advance that on a signal you'll both start arguing the other's side. Notice long it takes for your audience to catch on. Excellent practice to sharpen rhetorical skills and your ability to understand both sides of an argument.

Taken from [Elements of Wisdom and Folly \(click here\)](#) available in the Real Psych Solutions Store.

I suggest you write down what happens to you as you move through the book. The words **WHAT I FOUND** will be the cue to do so. Seriously consider keeping a journal to record what you find, as the writing down itself adds to the experience, and you will continue to learn about yourself as you later read what you wrote. With a little courage and imagination you can have some really interesting experiences...and add some useful behaviors to your repertoire.

WHAT I FOUND

About Ernest Kinnie, PhD

I'm a retired PhD clinical psychologist with many years experience as professor, therapist, consultant and supervisor. Wrote THE MAGIC THEATER, the psychology of adjustment, published by Harper and Row, long ago, and now have the time to revise and enlarge, using what I have learned over the years. You are invited to explore the insights, adventures and strategies that have been most useful in my life, and in the lives of friends, students and patients.

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