



# Do you have an open mind?



John Locke, a 17th century philosopher, said: "New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not common." We now live in a time where we are exposed to new ideas at every turn. Is your mind open or closed to them? Take this quiz to find out. **BY MARICRIS SIMPAS**

1. You supplement your lessons with other material that is not found in the textbook.  
A. Usually    B. I want to try this    C. There's no time!
2. When you read or hear about a new teaching technique, you think about how you can use it in class.  
A. Usually    B. I want to try this    C. There's no time!
3. You ask other teachers for help when you do not understand something, or are having difficulty with a lesson.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. Hardly ever
4. You monitor how your students react to your techniques in class, and then adjust based on their reactions.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. Hardly ever
5. When you don't know the answer, you are quick to admit it.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. Hardly ever
6. You encourage discussion among your students and take on the role as facilitator, allowing them to air opinions that may oppose yours.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. Hardly ever
7. You take time to see if a slow student has a learning difficulty, and try to find ways to help remedy it.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. There's no time!
8. If students are arguing, you hear out all the sides.  
A. Usually    B. Sometimes    C. There's no need
9. Would you try out a new recipe you saw in a magazine?  
A. Sure, why not?    B. Maybe    C. Probably not
10. You're in a crowd that's very different from you. Will you talk to the other people around?  
A. Sure, why not?    B. If I'm in the mood    C. Probably not

**HOW TO SCORE:** Give yourself 2 points for every A answer and 1 point for each B answer. C answers get no points.

- 14-20 points**—You're a broad-minded person. Instead of being afraid of unfamiliar things, you take these on as a challenge. You probably welcome change and are also not afraid of showing your emotions. Your adventurous spirit allows you to enjoy all your life experiences.
- 6-13 points**—You are getting there. You are open to new ideas but tend to stick to what is conventional or tried-and-tested. You probably don't mind listening to others, but still think you're right. You are more cautious to embrace change, allowing others to go first and try it out. Challenge yourself a little with new experiences and have a little fun!
- 0-5 points**—You are probably very hesitant about trying new things. "If it's not broken, don't fix it" is your motto. You may be afraid of being judged by others, and you yourself are quick to judge. Change stresses you out. It's time to be a little more tolerant; give things and people a chance before passing judgment!

## OPEN UP!

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BE AN OPEN-MINDED TEACHER?**

- 1) You let the creative juices flow. When you are open, you won't be afraid to let your imagination run wild. You become more creative and animated in your lessons.
  - 2) Your students will also be more open. Students can easily sense a teacher's moods and emotions. When you listen to them and respect their ideas, they will surely return the favor.
  - 3) You become friendly and approachable. The teaching profession deals with many different people with varied opinions. When you have an open mind, you listen to, appreciate and respect other people's views.
- Remember, openness is not that difficult; it is simply a state of mind. The Dalai Lama said that "If one has a positive mental attitude, then, even when surrounded by hostility, one will not lack inner peace. On the other hand, if one's mental attitude is more negative, influenced by fear, suspicion, helplessness, or self-loathing, then, even when surrounded by one's best friends, in a nice atmosphere and comfortable surroundings, one will not be happy."



# DEAR TITA LITA

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## Should I Work Abroad?

**DEAR TITA LITA,**  
I am 36 years old with 11 years of teaching under my belt. But I'm now thinking about working abroad as a caregiver. My husband doesn't earn that much and we want to give our children (ages 11, 9 and 5) a better future. Some of my former co-teachers are now earning a lot in the USA, Hong Kong, and even Rome. Many people are encouraging me to apply. But I'm scared about leaving my family behind. Do you have any words of advice?



Imagine for a moment that while you are abroad, your 11-year-old is seeking counsel for a "puppy love" affair, while your 9-year-old has difficulty in reading and Math, and the 5-year-old cries at night craving for the sweet, tender and loving care of a dear Mommy. On top of all these, you have a father who would spend most of his leisure time at happy hours with his barkada to fill the emptiness and to forget that he misses his wife, the light of his home...although it's a figment of the imagination, it can be a true-to-life scenario.

But we must accept the fact that the joy and satisfaction of a family is strongly affected by the income of the couple. American psychologist Abraham Maslow has a well-publicized "Theory of Human Needs," which states that the biological and material needs of human beings (such as food, clothing and shelter) must be met before our "higher" desires, such as self-fulfillment and spiritual growth. Material needs, unfortunately, don't come for free; we must work and strive for them. This, of course, is why so many "families of migrants" exist in present-day Philippines.

You are thinking about joining their ranks, precisely for the survival of your family. Your decision to leave your family for greener pastures may make your relationship with your spouse and children either stronger, or leave a trail of bitterness. It can make or unmake your family.

My advice to you is to make an assessment of your family's financial as well as emotional needs. Many affluent families are now severely tried by broken homes, divorce or separation, in the unbridled search for personal satisfaction. Many "families of migrants" are affected by such trials because of the distance between the family members.

While OFWs serve as the much-needed economic stopgap for our beleaguered economy, the migrant

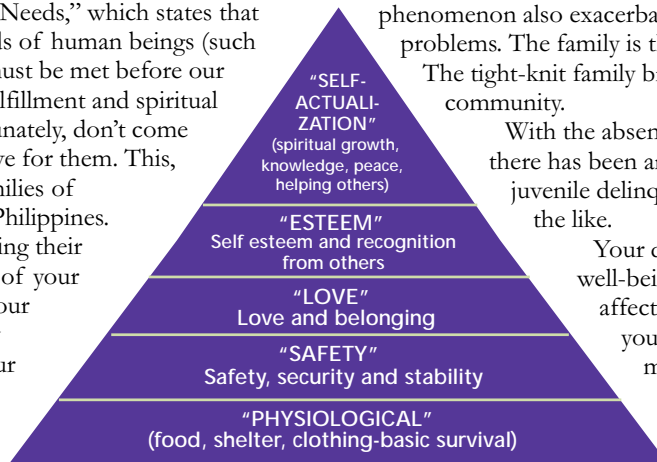
phenomenon also exacerbates our country's social problems. The family is the basic unit of our society. The tight-knit family brings strength to the community.

With the absence of one or both spouses, there has been an increase in problems like juvenile delinquency, marital breakups, and the like.

Your desire to improve your family's well-being shows your concern and affection for all its members. But as you make your decision, bear in mind that while money brings options, it does not necessarily add value to your life.

You must also base your decision on your family's emotional and spiritual happiness, not just on the dollars you will earn.

Good luck!



Let US psychologist Abraham Maslow's "Heirarchy of Human Needs" guide you in making your decision. Maslow's studies and research show that human beings are motivated by needs. It is only when they have met their "baser needs" (the bottom portions of the triangle, like bodily needs and security) that they can successfully move towards "higher aspirations" (like love, self esteem, and spiritual growth). At what plane do the needs of your family fall?

### DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?

Write to Tita Lita! Send your letter to:  
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