

Carers' Self Advocacy Toolkit

# Optimist or pessimist?



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Answer the following questions and see where your tendencies lie around positive and negative thinking. In each case, which option is *nearest* to the response that you would *tend* to give in these situations? The quiz is not scientific and is designed as a quick tool to give a general pointer on your thinking process.

You can't find your wallet in the usual place:

- You think someone has pinched it 1
- You ask yourself if you left it in an unusual place 2

Some of your numbers have come up on the lottery. Your first thought is:

- I've misheard the numbers 1
- What shall I buy? 2

You hear yells coming from next door. Do you think:

- Someone's in trouble 1
- They have their TV on too loud 2

You see a bird flying towards an oncoming car. Do you:

- Shut your eyes and wait for the thud 1
- Wait to see how the bird takes care of itself 2

You are arriving at the railway station two minutes before your train is due to leave. You see your train is sitting at the platform. Do you

- Run to the train 1
- Walk to the train 2

You watch the TV news about a dangerous person at large last seen fifty miles from where you live. Do you:

- Decide not to go out unless you have to 1
- Forget about it as the risk is so small 2

You are driving to an important appointment in 15 minutes time when the traffic comes to a standstill one mile before your destination. Do you think:

- I'd better phone to say I'm going to be late 1
- Relax, the traffic will move soon and if I'm late, they'll wait for me 2

You have just changed your dental surgery and it's the day of your check up. The receptionist is a bit short with you when you arrive. Do you:

- wish you'd never changed your dentist, this is going to be a nightmare 1
- assume she's having a bad morning 2

It's Sunday afternoon and the phone starts ringing when you are watching TV. Do you:

- Leave it for the answer machine, it's probably another telesales call 1
- Answer it, it could be your best friend phoning for a catch up 2

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**Mainly 1s**

You may have a tendency to think the worst. You may have low self-esteem and confidence. Perhaps you also find it difficult to trust in the outside world. People with a tendency for a negative mindset can be tricky to collaborate with as they are seen as putting up barriers to solutions and being critical and difficult to please.

**Mainly 2s**

You are generally optimistic about your life and your trust in the outside world outweighs the more negative experiences you may have. You are in some ways easier to interact with than a pessimist, but your expectations sometimes need managing. It's possible that you overlook the odd risk here and there, which may sometimes lead people to think you haven't thought things through.

See the section of the Guide on 'Disputing negative thoughts'.