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# Lower ego, better wisdom

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Wisdom is the word we often hear and even talk about across our life span, as it is passed from generation to generation as knowledge of how to live in every culture [1]. Becoming wiser is the desire of many people because it is generally believed to provide them with better capability of problem-solving, reasoning intelligence, and sagacity. Knowing when to listen to others, being adaptable in dealing with others, and considering long- and short-term consequences are examples of sagacity [2].

So, are there any direct ways to improve our wisdom?

Wisdom cannot be acquired only from knowledge accumulation but requires some cognitive facets to be achieved. They are [3]:

- Intellectual humility or recognition of limits of own knowledge
- Appreciation of perspectives broader than the issue at hand
- Sensitivity to the possibility of change in social relations
- Compromise or integration of different opinions

Researchers have conducted many studies to directly explore factors that can enhance these cognitions. As a result, low ego is discovered as one of such factors. The experiment of Kross and Grossman [4] found that ego-decentering thinking could enhance wise reasoning (dialecticism and intellectual humility), attitudes (cooperation-related attitude assimilation), and behaviors (willingness to join a bipartisan group). Ego-decentering thinking is the reasoning process using an observer perspective rather than the ego-centric perspective. The enhancing impacts of ego-decentering thinking on wisdom were later

confirmed to be generalized across younger and older adults [5].

This insightful “tip” is helpful not only for us in our daily life but also for the collective human as a whole. Many global issues that we are facing right now need smart thinking to be solved, like climate change and biodiversity loss. Therefore, it is time for us to rethink our human-centric mindset and adopt new core values that consider humans just a part of natural systems [6,7].

## References

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