

## Implicit Bias - Self-Reflection

A bias is a prejudice, either for or against a particular thing, person, or group, often viewed as unfair. Most biases are unconscious (implicit); they serve as “mental shortcuts” that our brain uses to make quick judgments without considering all the facts.

This self-reflection guide offers insights into the biases that shape decisions and relationships. Recognizing these helps us make better choices.

### **Scoring Instructions:**

For each of the 12 biases described below, rate yourself on a scale of **1 to 5** based on your honest self-perception of how often you operate or think in that way.

### **Rating Scale:**

- **1 (Almost Never):** I seldom think or act this way; I am usually aware of this trap.
- **2 (Occasionally):** I recognize this tendency in myself but usually catch it quickly.
- **3 (Sometimes):** I operate this way fairly often, especially when I'm tired or rushed.
- **4 (Frequently):** This is a noticeable habit; it often influences my judgments.
- **5 (Almost Always):** This thinking pattern is a dominant factor in my decisions.

To ensure the reflection process accurately captures your awareness of strengths and areas of caution, apply the following rule:

- Use the highest score (5) for at least **two** biases.
  - Use the lowest score (1) for at least **two** biases.
  - Use the remaining scores (2, 3, 4) for the other eight biases.
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Type of Bias	Description	Score (1-5)
1. The Echo Chamber Trap	<b>Sticking to Your Story:</b> Only seeking facts or friends that agree with what you already believe, making it difficult to recognize when you might be wrong.	
2. The Double Standard	<b>Judging Quick, Forgiving Slow:</b> Assuming someone's mistake, like being late, means they're a bad person, but when you're late, it's usually because of bad traffic or a good reason.	
3. The Lost Time Trap	<b>Chasing Bad Money:</b> Continuing to invest time or effort into something (like a failed relationship or a bad plan) simply because you've already committed a lot to it, even though it's obvious it's not working.	
4. First Impressions Fix	<b>The Sticker Price Snare:</b> Allowing the very first piece of information you hear, such as the initial offer or rumor, to shape your entire view permanently, even after receiving better information.	
5. Media Fear Filter	<b>The Headline Hype:</b> Believing something is more likely to happen because you saw a dramatic news story or a viral video about it instead of actually looking at the real statistics.	
6. The Overconfident Novice	<b>Talking the Talk, Not Walking the Walk:</b> Being loud and confident about a topic you only know a little about, while truly skilled people often speak quietly because they realize how much they still need to learn.	
7. The "Our Side" Shield	<b>Us vs. Them Mentality:</b> Automatically trusting, defending, and favoring people in your immediate circle (your school, your block, your crew) while distrusting anyone outside of it, even if they haven't done anything wrong.	
8. The Follower Flow	<b>Going with the Crowd:</b> Changing your beliefs or actions just to fit in because "everyone else is doing it," instead of thinking critically about whether it's right for you.	
9. The Last Event Lie	<b>What Happened Yesterday is Everything:</b> Giving too much weight to the most recent event, while ignoring everything that happened before. (e.g., one bad grade last week makes you feel like a failure, even if you had straight A's all semester.)	
10. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) Reversed	<b>Clinging to What You Have:</b> Being afraid of losing something you already have, like a secure job or a good grade, to the point where you avoid taking a calculated risk that could lead to a much bigger reward.	
11. The "Me Too" Assumption	<b>Mind Reading Gone Wrong:</b> Assuming that everyone else feels, thinks, or cares about the same things as you do, especially when you're stressed or focused on something specific.	
12. The Shine Trap	<b>The "Good Kid" Blind Spot:</b> Allowing one great quality (like being attractive or funny) to blind you to a person's serious flaws, or letting one negative trait permanently shape your opinion of them.	

## Interpretation and Next Steps

### 1. Areas of Strength (Scores 1 and 2):

These suggest you have a good level of self-awareness. It's positive that you're likely aware of these thinking patterns.

- **Action:** Leverage these strengths to help **others**. If you notice a friend or colleague falling into these traps, use your understanding to engage with them and, if appropriate, gently guide their thinking.

### 2. Areas of Caution (Scores 4 and 5):

The biases rated 4 or 5 are patterns you should watch for in your thinking, as they pose the greatest risk of poor decisions in relationships or finances.

- **Action:** Choose one bias rated 5. For the next week, actively pause before making any decision related to that bias and ask: "**Am I thinking this way because it's true, or because it's easy or familiar?**"

### 3. Address Conflicts and Relationships:

Biases #2, #7, and #11 can be underlying causes of conflict. Take a moment to review your score on **The Double Standard** bias (#2). If you have a high score, consider intentionally seeking out the situational context before forming judgments about others. This small step can make a positive difference in how you relate to those around you.