

Shifting Deficit-Thinking Worksheet

Sample Deficit-Thinking Phrases

| Deficit-Based Thoughts | Identify Deficit Trait(s) | Unlearn Deficit-Based Thoughts: Consider re-defining the problem as not solely the population, but also the structural inequalities. |
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| Students of color from disadvantaged homes just seem to show a lack of initiative. | | E.g., students of color from disadvantaged homes are disproportionately being suspended and receive limited access to enrichment, and thus are challenged to show initiative |
| Disadvantaged students generally do not have the abilities necessary to succeed in the classroom. | | |
| Students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not value education as much as other students. | | |
| It is important that students of color assimilate so they can succeed in mainstream American culture. | | E.g., it is important that schools understand and embrace the cultural assets of students of color so that they can learn how to have cross-cultural experiences in schools and society. |
| Unfortunately, for many people of color, education is just not a real priority. | | |
| Schools cannot be expected to overcome the disadvantages of race and poverty. | | |

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| There is not much schools can do to close the achievement gap. | | |
| Trying to be culturally responsive all the time is nice in theory, but the reality is that a teacher does not have time to be all things to all students. | | |
| I am frustrated by how hard it is to be politically correct in our more diverse society. | | |
| The values and beliefs shared by those in disadvantaged neighborhoods tend to go against school values and beliefs about what makes up a good education. | | E.g., continuous social experiences of discrimination and structural disadvantage make it hard to believe that merit will result in success. |
| As an educator, I'm very limited in what I can do when students from disadvantaged neighborhoods hold negative beliefs about their education. | | |
| Racial / ethnic minority children from disadvantaged neighborhoods do not have the role models they need to be successful in school. | | |
| Although I am hesitant to say so publicly, I believe that racial differences in intelligence may have a hereditary or genetic component. | | |