

WILL AMERICANS EVER REALLY CHANGE? IMPLICIT THEORIES ABOUT STABILITY AND CHANGE

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?							
		1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
1	Under certain circumstances, the nature of the conflicts between "Red" and "Blue" Americans can be changed.						
2	The inherent characteristics of the "Red" vs. "Blue" conflicts in America cannot be changed since their nature is deep and embedded.						
3	The "Red" vs. "Blue" Conflicts in America may seem at times like they could be resolved, but their true underlying nature will never change.						
4	As much as I hate to admit it, you can't teach an old dog new tricks—most groups can't really change their basic characteristics.						
5	Groups can do things differently, but the important parts of who they are can't really be changed.						
6	Groups that are characterized by hostile tendencies will never change their ways.						
7	Republicans and Democrats have basic moral values and beliefs that can't be changed significantly.						



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REFLECT

 Review your answers. How often did you endorse items that suggested that change is not possible? How often did you endorse items that suggested that change is possible? Why do you think that may be?
If you tended to endorse more fixed views—views that Americans can't change—than malleable views—views that American's can change (and have)—perhaps it is time for an intentional reevaluation of your "implicit theories" around stability and change
Believe in change.
Research on more intractable conflicts has found that when disputants believe, implicitly, that people and situations do not ever <i>really</i> change, they tend to disengage from the other side, give up, and cling to the status quo. So, of course, things are less likely to change.
However, when people believe that groups and situations are mutable and sometimes can change, they are much more likely to work to do so.

Making this simple shift in mindset helps make it conceivable to see and realize possible solutions to problems where others see inevitable dead ends. The consequences of this simple difference have been shown by decades of research to be profound.