



Overcome Divisive Thinking

Our brains take in millions of bits of information every day. As we compartmentalize our thinking, it can have an impact on how we process everyday things. This can make us more susceptible to thinking in ways that aren't as inclusive as we'd like to be. Check out these reframed thoughts that can help you and those you care for in the food allergy community think more inclusively.

What I may be thinking...

- I understand everything about food allergic reactions because I have experienced or managed them.
- Why don't they just go to an allergist instead of dealing with a pediatrician?
- They are too cautious. My family eats out as long as we ask questions and carry our medications. They limit themselves too much.
- My child has one allergy, so that is the only thing I am considering at their party because others don't have to come if it's too much for them.
- My child is too strict with their kid's diets. We ate everything back in my day. It's not fair they don't bring them to see me just because I don't believe in this food allergy stuff.
- I'm a medical professional, educator, certified childcare professional etc. and I know about food allergies.

What I could be thinking...

- Though I have experienced or managed reactions, it is important to remember each person may experience food allergies differently.
- Not everyone understands the significance of having food allergies managed by a board-certified allergist. Sometimes costs or availability are barriers to access. Or they may not know what to do. Maybe we can discuss benefits of working with an allergist.
- It's ok for people to have different safety tolerances. Just because I feel comfortable eating out doesn't mean others have to. Differences are ok. The goal is for us all to be safe. Their number of allergies, history of reactions, and other issues are things I don't know about. It's not fair to judge them.
- Let me consider my child's feelings about friendships and relationships with others while I plan this party. My child deserves to have his/her/their friends or family by their side while celebrating their special day. I want to make this safe for everyone. I should contact parents individually, so everyone is included.
- Even if I don't fully understand food allergies, the safety of my grandchildren comes first. Spending time with them is more important than trying to be right because times have changed. I can change too.
- Things change all the time. The way people managed food allergies 10 years ago is not the same now. Treatment methods change. I should rely on information from the person's emergency plan to help me stay informed about how to deal with them while in my care. Even though I am in 'xyz' profession, I don't specialize in food allergy so I'm open to learn.