

UNIT 1, 2, 3 & 4

# iChoose

UNIT 1 & 2

# iDo



# Content

## **iChoose 16 values**

Connects Values and Leadership

1. Choices
  2. Growth
  3. Attitudes
  4. Commitment
  5. Relationships
  6. Character
  7. Forgiveness
  8. Self-worth
  9. Responsibility
  10. Courage
  11. Initiative
  12. Priorities
  13. Teachability
  14. Self-Discipline
  15. Resilience
  16. Influence
- 

## **iDo 8 values**

Connects Actions and Leadership

1. My Questions Influence My Actions
  2. My Values Influence My Actions
  3. My Priorities Influence My Actions
  4. My Thoughts Influence My Actions
  5. My Friends Influence My Actions
  6. My Experiences Influence My Actions
  7. My Growth Influence My Actions
  8. My Pain Influences My Actions
- 

# Lesson 1: Choices



*“One of the greatest gifts you will ever receive is the gift to make choices.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

## LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

### HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



### THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:

## Make good choices and practice them.

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Legend:** (synonym is caption) Definition: The words written on or next to a picture, map, coin, etc., that explain what it is about or what the symbols on it mean.
2. **Prompts:** (synonym is instructions) Definition: A set of directions.
3. **Review:** (synonym is analysis) Definition: To think or talk about something again, in order to make changes to it or to make a decision about it.
4. **Reflect:** (synonym is review) Definition: To think carefully, especially about possibilities and opinions.



## 01

# Choice is a Gift



### THE BENEFITS OF CHOICE

You have freedom.

You are in control of your life.

You have the ability to make your life better.

You have the possibility to reach your potential.

You can change the direction of your life.

*Value choice as a gift!*



..... Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you.  
What benefit did you circle? Why?



## 02

# Life Begins with No Choices



In some areas of our lives, we have no choice. You don't choose where or when you are born. You don't choose your parents. You don't choose your race, your personality type, or your genetic makeup.

You must live with the conditions you find yourself in. But! The longer you live, the more your life is built upon and shaped by the choices you make.

Since life begins with no choices, life doesn't begin equally for all people. What happens if others are ahead of you in the beginning of life? How will you catch up? The next section will answer those questions.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Potential:** (synonym is talent) Definition: To think carefully, especially about possibilities and opinions.
2. **Desirable:** (synonym is beautiful) Definition: Worth having and wanted by most people.
3. **Race:** (synonym is ethnicity) Definition: One of the main groups to which people are often considered to belong, based on physical characteristics that they are perceived to share such as skin color, eye shape, etc.
4. **Genetic-makeup:** (synonym is hereditary) definition: Relating to the biological process by which the characteristics of living things are passed from parents to children.
5. **Built upon:** (synonym is improve) Definition: To increase or become larger or stronger, or to cause someone or something to do this.

## As Age Increases, the Gift of Choice Increases



*“You can’t go back and make a new start, but you can start right now and make a brand new ending.”<sup>1</sup>*

**JAMES R. SHERMAN**

Choices give everyone the potential to change their circumstances and embrace limitless possibilities. As you get older, you get to make more choices. In the beginning, that can be scary! We are tempted to not open the gift of choice. If that happens to you, then it is important to know that “No choice is a choice!” Choosing not to choose is to let someone else make that choice for you. The result? You lose control of your life. You give your gift of choice to someone else! When you fail to choose your own life plan, the odds are high that you will fall into someone else’s life plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much!



To encourage you to get started in making choices, it is important for you to know that very few choices are final. In other words, the choice you make today can be reversed. Everybody has made wrong choices at some point in their life. That’s the bad news. Want the good news? Those choices can be changed.



### **REFLECTION:**

Think about a choice you can make. How does it make you feel to think about making it?

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing, and take a minute to share with the group why it was important to you.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Valuable:** ( synonym is treasures) Definition: Worth a lot of money.
2. **Hurt:** ( synonym is injure) Definition: To cause emotional pain to someone.
3. **Opinion:** (synonym is point of view) Definition: A thought or belief about something or someone.



04

## The Value of Making Good Choices

*“There is a choice you have to make in everything you do.  
So keep in mind that in the end, the choice you make, makes you.”*

JOHN WOODEN



Life is full of choices! All day, each and every day. You not only have to make choices, you are made by them. Choices powerfully shape your life.

*Everything in your life is a  
reflection of the choices you  
have made.*

The beauty of choice is that if you want a better result, all you have to do is make a better choice.



**REFLECTION:**

**HOW MY CHOICE AFFECTS ME**

How have you seen a choice that you've made shape your life? Describe whether your choice had a positive or negative effect. ....

[Empty text box for reflection]

What is one thing you can do to remind yourself to make positive choices? An example might be writing yourself a note.

[Empty text box for reflection]

~~~~~  
**Today I will make good choices that positively affect me.**  
~~~~~

## Choices are the Best Way to Change Your Life



By now you have learned, you don't get better by chance, you get better by choice. So, where do you start? With yourself! Often we are tempted to want to change others, especially those who are close to us. We say, "If they would get better, my life would be better." That is not true. If you get better, your life will be better! Don't wait to discover the following:



### **I WANTED TO CHANGE THE WORLD**

"I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town, and as an older man, I tried to change my family.

Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation, and I could indeed have changed the world."

**UNKNOWN MONK 1100 A.D.**

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Discover:** (synonym is find) Definition: To find information, a place, or an object, especially for the first time.
2. **Suddenly:** (synonym is instantly) Definition: Quickly and unexpectedly.
3. **Indeed:** (synonym is truly) Definition: Used to express that something is correct.



06

## Making Good Choices Benefits Others



One of the best ways to do this is to add value to people daily. Every day I choose to...

**1. Value people.**

I value myself and others because we are all created by God.

**2. Make myself more valuable.**

Making choices can either help me or hurt me. Making good choices helps me and helps others.

**3. Do things that other people value.**

Asking people questions or asking their opinion shows that you value them.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Valuable:** (synonym is treasures) Definition: Worth a lot of money.
- Hurt:** (synonym is injure) Definition: To cause emotional pain to someone.
- Opinion:** (synonym is point of view) Definition: A thought or belief about something or someone.



**REFLECTION:**

What is one choice I can make to value people? An example might be listening to a friend who needs to talk.

What is a choice I can make to make myself more valuable? An example might be helping a friend or family member.



**HOW MY CHOICES AFFECT OTHERS**

What is a choice I can make to help me do things other people value? An example might be asking someone questions about their interests.

---

**Today I will make good choices  
that will positively affect others.**

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*“One of the greatest gifts you will ever receive is the gift to make choices.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE USING THE GIFT OF CHOICE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Scale:** ( synonym is ranking): definition: A set of numbers, amounts, etc., used to measure or compare the level of something.

2. **Rating:** ( synonym is grade) Definition: A measurement of how good or popular someone or something is.

# Lesson 2: Growth



*“The only guarantee that tomorrow  
will get better is that you grow today.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



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**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Know how to be the gardener of your  
personal growth by planting and growing  
your values and strengths.**

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## 01 Growth is a Choice



Growth can easily be compared to a garden. Gardens don't just happen. Growing a garden requires an intentional decision and action. The gardener creates the right environment that will provide nourishment for the seeds, which over time, grow and provide food. Creating the right environment will provide you a beautiful garden you can be proud of.

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## 02 Growth Must Be Intentional



The first question to ask when starting a garden is, "What seeds do I sow?" In other words, what kind of garden do I want? That question is important because the seeds you choose to sow will determine the harvest you will receive! This is also true in your personal growth. In what areas do you desire to grow? Values and strengths are great areas to begin your personal growth garden. Values will give you growth on the inside. Before you can be great externally, you have to grow internally.

Sowing value-based crops will reap you internal growth. Your values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live your life. Personal growth is a value. By intentionally sowing growth, you are embracing a value that will allow you to have an unlimited future. The only guarantee of tomorrow getting better is your choosing to grow today.

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### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Intentional:** ( synonym is knowing) Definition: Planned.
2. **Nourishment:** ( synonym is nutrition) Definition: Food that you need to grow and stay healthy.
3. **Embrace:** ( synonym is hug) Definition: To accept something enthusiastically.



You can outgrow your yesterdays and grow into your tomorrows! You want to grow through life, not just go through life. As you choose to grow in each of the values of the iChoose program, you will discover that your growth on the inside will fuel your growth on the outside.

Strengths will give you growth on the outside. Your strengths are your abilities — the things you do naturally well.

**REFLECTION:**

What do you think your top two strengths are? Write them down.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Circle your top strength, and share it with others. ....



The road to success is knowing your strengths and developing them. Growth sets you apart from others. Working on your strengths establishes deep roots, allowing you to grow stronger, taller, and further.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Outgrow:** (synonym is out match) Definition: To develop from something that happened or existed before.
2. **Fuel:** (synonym is power) Definition: A substance that is used to provide heat or power, usually by being burned.
3. **Sets apart:** Definition: To show someone or something to be different or special.



# Growth Thrives in the Right Environments



For a garden to grow, it needs the right environment. Planting seeds into the ground is not enough. The soil must be prepared and watered. There will be weeding and hoeing. It takes a lot of work to provide the right environment for growth.

### FIVE ESSENTIAL FACTORS FOR A GROWTH ENVIRONMENT

A growth environment is a place where...

**1. Others are ahead of you.**

This allows you to see what you can become.

**2. Others encourage you.**

Find friends that bring out the best in you.

**3. You are out of your comfort zone.**

When is the last time you did something for the first time?

**4. Failure is not your enemy.**

Growth allows you to “fail forward.”

**5. Others are growing.**

The growth journey together is most rewarding.



### REFLECTION:

..... You have three main areas in your life: home, school, and friends. From the list of environmental essentials above, pick the one you need most for your home, for your school, and for your friends. Write the number in the boxes below.

**HOME**

**SCHOOL**

**FRIENDS**

### Definition of difficult words on this page

- 1. **Thrive:** (synonym is flourish) Definition: A well development of a child, animal, or plant.
- 2. **Weeding:** Definition: Remove unwanted plants from an area of ground.
- 3. **Hoeing:** Definition: Using a hoe to dig ground or thin out or dig up unwanted plants.
- 4. **Comfort zone:** Definition: A situation where one feels safe or at ease.
- 5. **Fall forward:** Definition: The acceptance of failure as a stepping stone to future success.

## 04

# How My Growth Affects Me



The secret of your success is that you choose to grow daily. When we take small steps of growth every day, over time we start to see progress. If you string together enough days of consistent growth, you begin to change as a person. You become better, stronger, and more skilled. When you change yourself, you can change your circumstances.



By committing to growing yourself every day, at the end of the year, you will be able to say to others,

*“If you know me based on who I was a year ago, you don’t know me at all. My growth game is strong. Allow me to reintroduce myself.”*

### REFLECTION:

What growth goal do you want to accomplish? List two ways you can accomplish your growth goal.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Today I will make good growth choices that positively affect me.**

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **String:** (synonym is rope) Definition: material consisting of threads of cotton, hemp, or other material twisted together to form a thin length.

## Growth Requires Time



Any gardener knows you can't pull on the plants and expect them to grow faster. In other words, you can't force a seed to grow faster than nature intended it to, so you can't make trees bear fruit on demand. You may grow every day, but it will not show every day. You must weed and feed yourself every day. Weed out the negative influences, such as friends or habits in your life that do not help you to grow. Nourish the positive influences in your life. Whatever you feed will grow. Faith or fear? Confidence or worry? Belief or doubt?

Think about it: growth in the natural world is all about looking forward. A sapling becomes a mighty oak by growing slowly over time. An infant grows into a child and eventually an adult. Hope is the same way. It looks forward. When we plant hope, we can imagine a better future. And happiness is not just wishing for things that might be. It's the firm belief that you have and choose to grow a bright future.

### REFLECTION:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing, and take a minute ..... to share with the group why it was important to you.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Pull on:** (synonym is drag) Definition: To move something towards yourself, sometimes with great physical effort.
2. **Intended:** (synonym is planned) Definition: To have as a plan or purpose.
3. **Bear:** (synonym is support) Definition: To accept, tolerate, or endure something, especially something unpleasant.
4. **Influence:** (synonym is control) Definition: The power to have an effect on people or things.
5. **Sapling:** (synonym is seeding) Definition: A young tree.
6. **Mighty oak:** (synonym is charmas tree) Definition: A large tree common northern countries, or the hard wood of this tree.



## 06

# Benefits of Growth



- You will unlock and achieve your potential.
- You will feel good about yourself.
- Your values and strengths will become stronger.
- You will grow in humility and self-awareness.
- You will become more so you can do more.
- You will be an example for others to follow.



..... Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you.  
What benefit did you circle? Why?

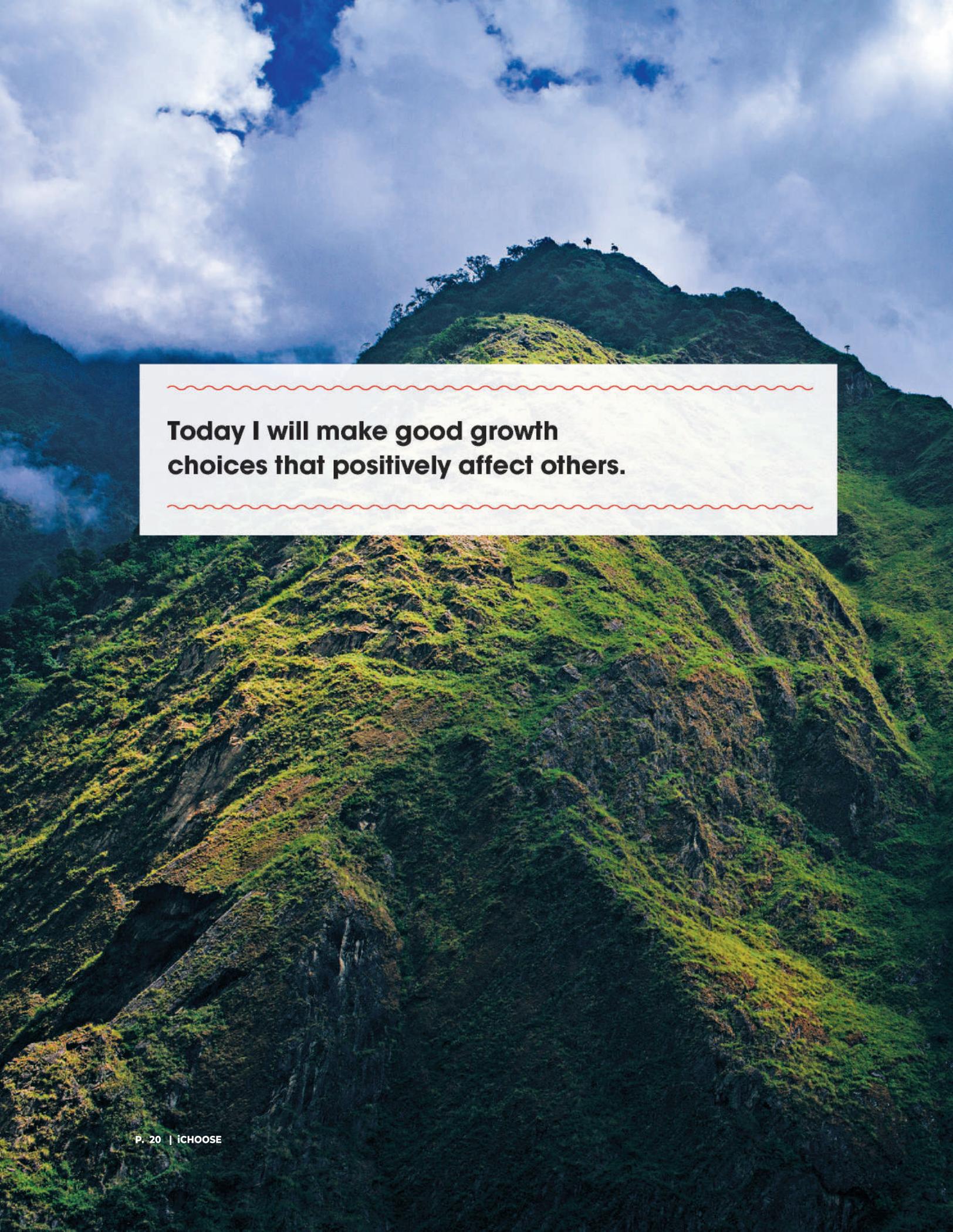


### REFLECTION:

..... What is the most important lesson you've learned about the value of growth? How can you apply what you've learned in this lesson to your family and friends? Share with others.  
What will you do daily that will have a positive effect on others?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Humility:** ( synonym is modesty) Definition: The quality of not being proud because you are aware of your bad qualities.
- Self-awareness:** ( synonym is soul-searching) Definition: Knowing and understanding yourself very well.



**Today I will make good growth  
choices that positively affect others.**

*“The only guarantee that tomorrow will get better is that you grow today.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO GROWING YOURSELF ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 3: Attitude



*“Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. It is like the mind's paintbrush.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Take the paintbrush of your mind,  
and paint a beautiful attitude.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Paintbrush:** (synonym is thicket) Definition: A brush used for putting paint on a surface.
2. **Attitude:** (synonym is frame of mind) Definition: The way you feel about something or someone, or a particular feeling or opinion.



## 01

# Attitude is a Choice



To be an artist, it takes a lot of practice and giftedness. This lesson will help you become an ‘attitude artist.’ Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. It’s like the mind’s paintbrush. It can paint everything in bright, vibrant colors, creating a masterpiece — a picture that is attractive to others. Or, it can make everything dark and dreary — something unattractive.

If you look at the lives of people who have achieved success, you will find that they possess a positive outlook on life. Their mental paintbrush colors life with brightness and vibrancy.

Life is the canvas you paint on. Your attitude is the paintbrush. You get to choose the colors.

Just as you would choose the colors for your picture, you get to choose the painting of your attitude for others to see. You can be known as the ‘attitude artist’ that attracts people to see the masterpieces of your life.



## 02

# Your Attitude is the Difference Maker



Since attitude is a difference-maker in your life, it is very important. The good news is that you get to choose your attitude! Something so vital to your success is a choice that you can make. You can’t control many of your circumstances, but you can control your response to them. When you choose to have a good attitude during a bad time, you are now taking control of your life instead of letting life control you. A good attitude helps you develop a positive life outlook.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Vibrant:** (synonym is shaking) Definition: Energetic, exciting, and full of enthusiasm.
2. **Masterpiece:** (synonym is classic) Definition: A work of art such as a painting, film, or book that is made with great skill.
3. **Dreary:** (synonym is bleak) Definition: Boring and making you feel unhappy.
4. **Outlook:** (synonym is thinking) Definition: A person’s general attitude or way of thinking about something.
5. **Canvas:** (synonym is sailcloth) Definition: strong, rough cloth used for making tents, sails, bags, strong clothes, etc.

**A PICTURE OF A POSITIVE LIFE OUTLOOK**

Life is filled with good and bad.  
Some of the good and bad I can't control... that's life.  
Some of the good and bad will find me.  
If I have a positive life outlook, the good  
and bad will become better.  
If I have a negative life outlook, the good  
and bad will become worse.  
Therefore, I choose to have a positive life outlook.

**REFLECTION:**

What is the difference between a positive life outlook and a negative life outlook?

Fill in the blank.

If I have a positive life outlook, the good and the bad will become

---

If I have a negative life outlook, the good and the bad will become

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Worse:** ( synonym is bad) Definition: More unpleasant, difficult, or severe than before or than something else that is also bad.



## Your Positive Attitude Helps You Overcome Difficulties



Life is not easy. Every day something negative will happen to you. A friend will disappoint you. A test was more difficult than you expected, and you did poorly on it. A promise was made but not kept. You may get knocked down at times, but a positive attitude will respond with courageous words that say,

*“It’s not what happens to me. It’s what happens in me that counts!”*

Read the following story of the donkey in the well, and learn how to have an overcoming spirit within you.

### **DONKEY STAY DOWN**

One day, a farmer’s donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn’t worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey didn’t realize what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone’s amazement, he quieted down. A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well.

He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing.

He would shake it off and take a step up. As the farmer’s neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **A well:** ( synonym is hole) Definition: A structure created in the ground by digging, driving, or drilling to access liquid resources, usually water or oil.
2. **A Shovel:** ( synonym is spade) Definition: It is a tool used for digging, lifting, and moving bulk materials, such as soil, coal, gravel, snow, sand, or ore.
3. **Astonished:** ( synonym is amazed) Definition: Greatly surprised or impressed.
4. **Trotted off:** ( synonym is escape) Definition: To leave, depart something or somewhere.

**REFLECTION:**

Like the donkey...

1. Have you ever had dirt thrown on you? Yes or No? (Circle one)
2. What kind of dirt was it? Write your answer below.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. When there was a problem, did you act like the farmer and try to cover it up, or did you act like the donkey and rise above it?

**HOW MY ATTITUDE AFFECTS ME** .....



As problems arise, there is a time to cry, reflect, strategize, and a time to act.

What is one problem you are facing that you will handle with a positive attitude?

~~~~~

**Today I will make attitude choices  
that will positively affect me.**

~~~~~

## 04

# Forgiveness Gives You Healing and Health

Attitudes don't automatically stay good. When things don't go our way, it is easy for our attitude to slip and start to become negative. When that happens, do the following things to adjust your attitude:

### *1. Take responsibility for your attitude.*

With each choice comes responsibility. Only you can choose a right attitude, and only you are responsible for it. So when your attitude gets negative, don't look for others to blame, and don't expect others to help you fix it. Own it, and adjust it.

### *2. Give yourself a timeline to fix your attitude.*

Since you are in control of your attitude, you can determine how long you will allow a bad attitude to hurt you. Start practicing the '24 Hour Rule.' Give yourself 24 hours to feel sorry for yourself. Complain about life. Wish life would be better. Then, after the 24 hours, think positive thoughts, say positive words, and do positive things. Positive actions allow you to overcome negative feelings.

### *3. Manage your attitude daily.*

Maintaining a right attitude is easier than adjusting a wrong attitude. How do you do that? Starting the day with a positive outlook will help you end the day with a positive outlook.



#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

- Slip:** (synonym is slide) Definition: To slide without intending to do it.
- Blame:** (synonym is criticize) Definition: To say or think that someone or something did something wrong or is responsible for something bad happening.
- Adjust:** (synonym is modify) Definition: To alter or move (something) slightly in order to achieve the desired fit, appearance, or result.

#### 4. Feed your positive attitude, and starve your negative attitude.

Everyone has positive and negative thoughts. Your goal is to increase the positive, and decrease the negative. Your most prominent way of thinking will control your attitude. You need to consume positive mental 'food' into your life. Read books that encourage a positive mental attitude. Develop friendships with others who live a positive lifestyle. Have conversations that are uplifting. Do good things for others.



#### REFLECTION:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing, and take a minute to share with the group why it was important to you.



## 05

### Benefits of a Positive Attitude

- You enjoy life more.
- You inspire others.
- You attract others that have positive attitudes.
- You show gratitude for people and life.
- You become more successful.



Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you.  
What benefit did you circle? Why?

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Starve:** (synonym is cease) Definition: To (cause someone to) become very weak or die because there is not enough food to eat.
2. **Prominent:** (synonym is well known) Definition: Very well-known and important.
3. **Mental:** (synonym is brain) Definition: Relating to the mind, or involving the process of thinking.



### HOW MY ATTITUDE AFFECTS OTHERS



..... What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of a positive attitude?

How can you apply that lesson to your family and friends?

What attitude will you display that will positively affect others?

~~~~~  
**Today I will make good attitude  
choices that will positively affect others.**  
~~~~~

*“Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. It is like the mind's paintbrush.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 4: Commitment



*“Victory is given to the one who finishes,  
not the one who starts.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



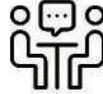
First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



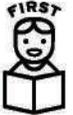
Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Learning how to be committed to  
finish what you started.**

---



## 01

# Commitment is a Choice



Everyone starts; few finish. The difference can be described in one word: ‘commitment.’ That’s the difference between a ‘day dreamer’ and a ‘dream achiever.’ Dreams are free, but the journey isn’t. Your mind can take you anywhere you want to go and allow you to have anything you want, but only action will allow you to achieve what your mind desires. Nothing is easier than saying words, and nothing is harder than living them out. Commitment is measured by action. At the starting line, runners talk about what they are going to do. At the finish line, runners show you what they did. Crossing the finish line is a commitment with a payoff. At the end of this lesson, you will discover that payoff.

People that demonstrate commitment begin with the end in mind. The finish lines of your life will define and underline your commitments.



### REFLECTION:

..... What is one thing you have started that you would like to finish?



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Day- dreamer:** Definition: A person who often thinks about doing something else or being somewhere else, instead of paying attention to what is happening where they are now.
2. **Payoff:** ( synonym is succeed) Definition: To result in success.
3. **Demonstrate:** ( synonym is to show ) Definition: To show or make something clear.

## Starting is Easy; Finishing is Not



At the beginning of the race, there are many starters. The longer the race, the more commitment is required. Commitment separates starters from finishers.



Starters want immediate gratification. They don't want to wait for their reward. They want the finish line to be close to the starting line. It never is. They are always asking, "how long will this take?" If the answer is not immediate, they stop.

Finishers are willing to stay committed until they cross the finish line. They know that the finish line is far from where they start. They are always asking, "how far can I go?" They accept or make no excuses. They do more than show up to the race. They stay in the race.

Starters often think that life should be easy. They think life is downhill; it's not. They think they should be good at their first attempt, but they are not. They think to dream is enough; it's not. They think success is luck; it's not. Success is not easy; it's sweaty.

Finishers know that life is difficult. They know that life is uphill; it is. They know that they will not be good at their first attempts; they are right. They know that a dream is not enough. They must work for it; they are right. They know that success is not easy, and they are right.

### REFLECTION:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. ....  
Take 1 minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Gratification:** ( synonym is joy) Definition: Pleasure or satisfaction, or something which provides this.
2. **Show up:** (synonym is to appear) Definition: To arrive somewhere in order to join a group of people, especially late or unexpectedly.
3. **A slope:** (synonym is slant) Definition: A surface that lies at an angle to the horizontal so that some points on it are higher than others.



## 03

# The First Test of Commitment is Action



Motion causes friction. When you try to achieve something, no matter how small, you will encounter plenty of obstacles and opposition. There will be times when your commitment is the only thing that will keep you going. Perhaps you want everything to be perfect before you are willing to commit yourself. You want to know that things will work out before you start. If that is the case, you will never enter the race.

Everyone gets a chance, but not everyone takes it. Everyone gets knocked down, but not everyone gets back up. Everyone wants to quit, but not everyone does. What is the difference? There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you are interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient and everything works out. When you are committed to do something, you do it regardless if it is convenient and does not work out.



### REFLECTION:

#### HOW MY COMMITMENT AFFECTS ME

Think of the times you have not finished. Can you identify the reason? Often we allow our feelings to keep us from finishing. Which kind of person will you become? A feeler or a finisher?

"Feelers" want to feel good in order to finish.

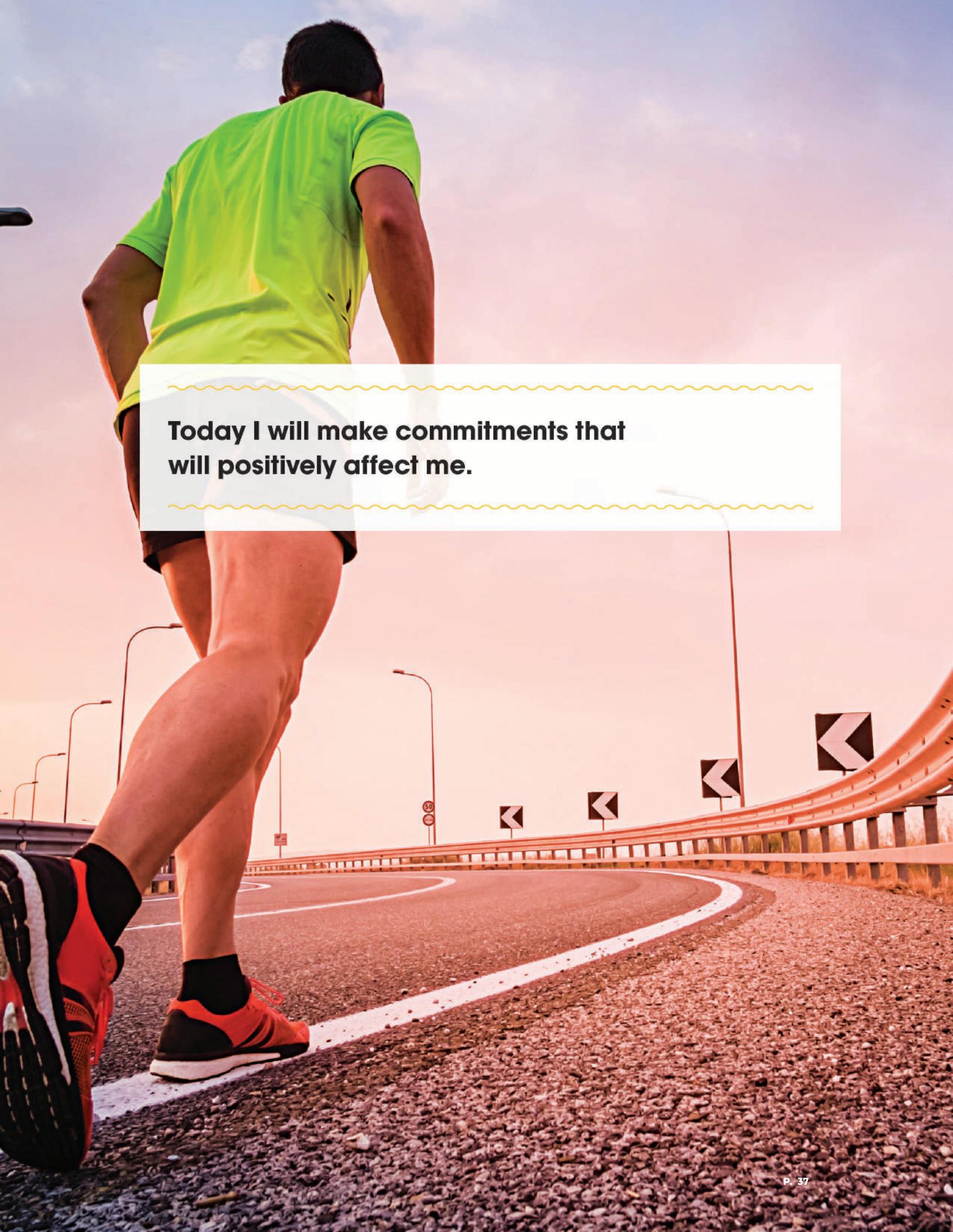
"Finishers" want to finish in order to feel good.

"Feelers" place feeling above finishing.

"Finishers" place finishing above feelings.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Friction:** ( synonym is discord) Definition: The force that makes it difficult for one object to slide along the surface of another or to move through a liquid or gas.
2. **Encounter:** ( synonym is to meet) Definition: To meet someone unexpectedly, or to experience, esp. something unpleasant.
3. **Plenty:** ( synonym is full) Definition: The state of having enough or more than enough, or a large amount.
4. **Convenient:** ( synonym is suitable) Definition: Suitable for your purposes and needs and causing the least difficulty.
5. **Feelers:** (synonym is antenna ) Definition: Feelers wants to feel good in order to finish.

A photograph of a runner from a low-angle, rear perspective. The runner is wearing a bright neon green short-sleeved shirt, white shorts, and orange and black running shoes. They are standing on a gravel shoulder next to a paved road that curves to the right. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the distance, there are several black and white directional road signs pointing left, and a speed limit sign for 50. The overall mood is one of determination and forward movement.

**Today I will make commitments that  
will positively affect me.**

## 04

# The Final Test of Commitment is Completion



Life is constantly testing us for our next level of commitment, and life's greatest rewards go to those who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to run until they finish. The commitment question: how do we run until we finish?



### *1. Learn and follow the Cycle of Commitment.*

The cycle of commitment is Test, Fail, Learn, Improve, and Re-Enter. This cycle never stops. Commitment is a result of always trying (Test), often failing (Fail), always learning (Learn), working on getting better (Improve), and then getting back into the race (Re-enter).

#### **REFLECTION:**

Circle the area where you do best in the Cycle of Commitment:

Test   Fail   Learn   Improve   Re-enter

Check the area you need to improve in the Cycle of Commitment. Share with others. ....



- 1. Test
- 2. Fail
- 3. Learn
- 4. Improve
- 5. Re-enter

Share with others the area in which you need to improve. ....



## *2. Know what you want to achieve.*

It is hard to commit yourself to something if your finish line is far away. To stay consistent in your commitment, practice the following:

### *Advance Attraction*

When you know what you want to be committed to...

Your eyes will see things that will help you achieve what you want.

Your mind will think things that will help you achieve what you want.

Your heart will feel things that will help you achieve what you want.

Your mouth will say things that will help you achieve what you want.

Your body will do things that will help you achieve what you want.

### *Make Today Count*

All we have is today. There will never be another now. Stay committed one day at a time. The secret to finishing the race is to do your best today. At the end of each day, ask yourself, "Am I moving closer to my dream?" If the answer is "yes," be encouraged and do the same thing tomorrow.

*The secret to your success  
is determined by your  
commitment today!*

JOHN C. MAXWELL

---

#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Consistent:** (synonym is harmonious) Definition: Always behaving or happening in a similar, especially positive, way.
2. **Attraction:** (synonym to appeal) Definition: Something that makes people want to go to a place or do a particular thing.

05

## Share your Commitment to Others



Thomas Edison was a great inventor. When he had a good idea for an invention, he would call a press conference to announce it. Then he'd go into his lab and invent it. Make your plans public, and you will be more committed to follow through with them.



Share your commitment with people who believe in you and love you. Surround yourself with like-minded people who will encourage you. Becoming accountable to your commitments will mature and grow you as a person.



06

## Benefits of Commitment



You will experience increased confidence in yourself.

You will achieve more as you take consistent steps towards your goals.

You will be considered reliable because you do what you said you will do.

You will be seen as purposeful and capable.

You will stand strong in the face of adversity.



Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you. ....  
What benefit did you circle? Why?



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Inventor:** ( synonym is creator ) Definition: Someone who designs or creates something that did not exist before.
2. **Press Conference:** (synonym is meeting) Definition: A meeting at which a person or organization makes a public statement and reporters can ask questions.
3. **Accountable:** (synonym is responsible) Definition: Someone who is accountable is completely responsible for what they do and must be able to give a satisfactory reason for it.
4. **Reliable:** ( synonym is responsible) Definition: Someone or something that is reliable can be trusted or believed because he, she, or it works or behaves well in the way you expect.
5. **Adversity:** (synonym is hardship) Definition: A difficult or unlucky situation or event.



**REFLECTION:**

**HOW MY COMMITMENT AFFECTS OTHERS**

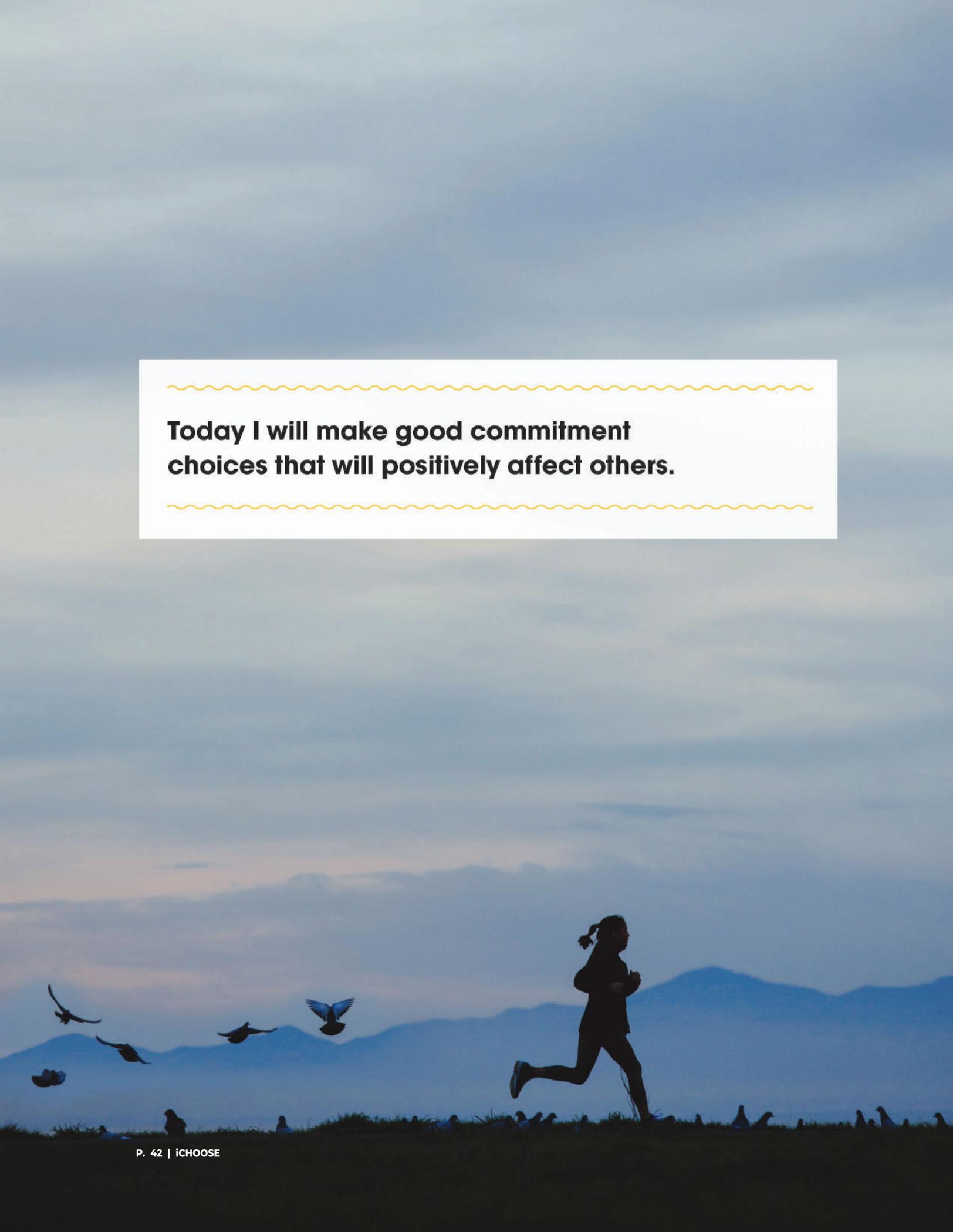
What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of commitment?



How can you apply this lesson to your family and friends?



What commitment will you make that will positively affect others?



**Today I will make good commitment  
choices that will positively affect others.**

*“Victory is given to the one who finishes,  
not the one who starts.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:**

Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....

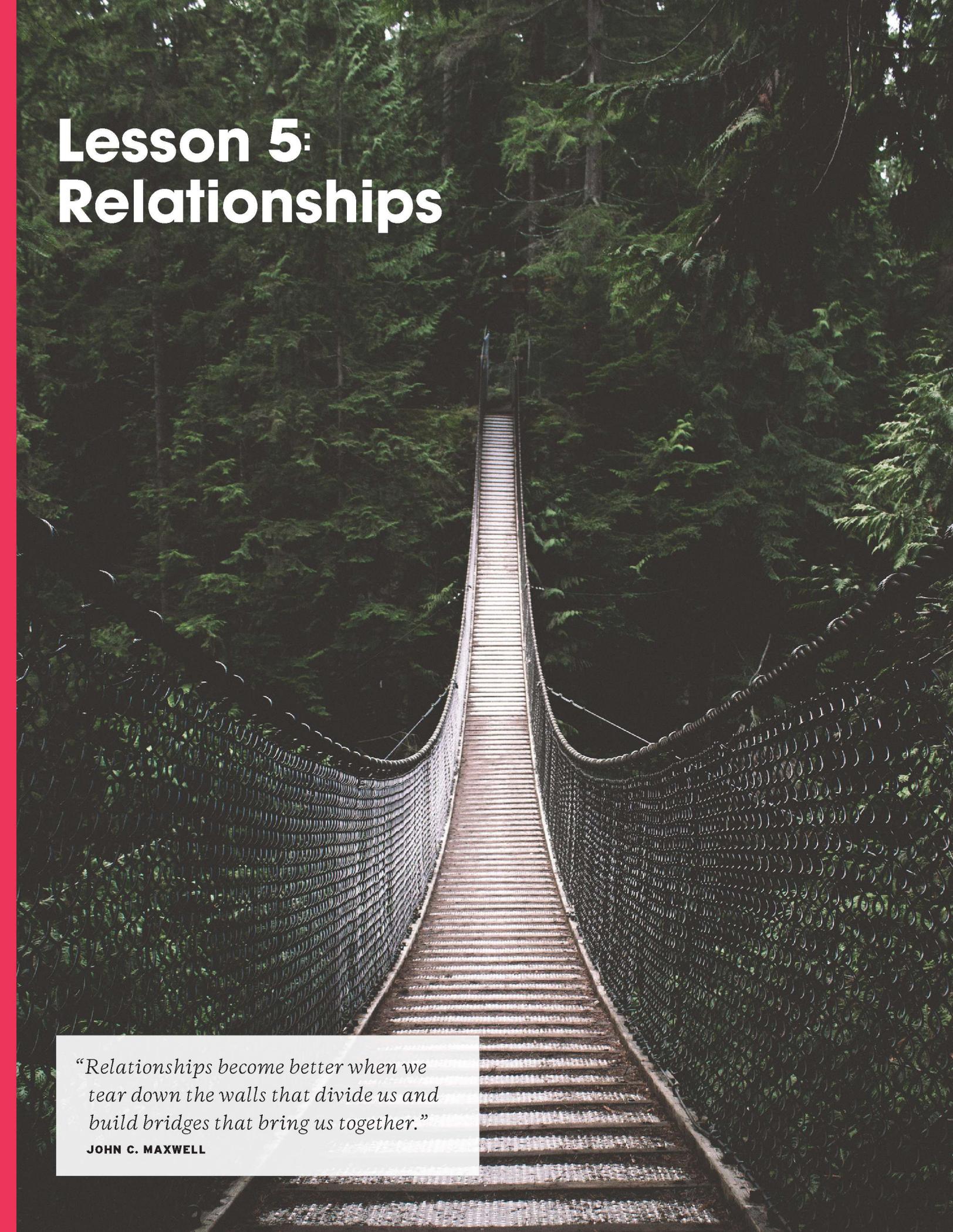


**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 5: Relationships

A long wooden suspension bridge with chain-link railings stretches through a dense forest. The bridge is made of wooden planks and is supported by cables. The forest is lush and green, with many trees and ferns. The bridge leads from the foreground into the distance, disappearing into the trees.

*“Relationships become better when we tear down the walls that divide us and build bridges that bring us together.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to build bridges to increase your friendships and build better relationships.**

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Bridge:** (synonym is crossover): Definition: A structure that is built over a river, road, or railroad to allow people and vehicles to cross from one side to the other.



## 01

### Relationships are a Choice



All bridges have one thing in common —they take you from where you are to where you want to go. In this lesson you will discover that relationships are like bridges:

1. Bridges take effort to build.
2. Bridges bring people together.
3. Bridges make life better.

The question you must ask yourself is this, “Am I building walls or bridges?” Walls separate us from others. Bridges bring people together. Relationships are a choice. Wall or bridge? People can usually trace their successes and failures to the relationships in their lives. Building bridges to others and for others is the best way to have good relationships with others.

---



## 02

### Bridges Take Effort



Every time you cross a bridge, remember it took effort to build it, and it takes effort to maintain it. That is also true with relationships. Social media is a bridge to initiating relationships. It's a good place to start; it's not a good place to stay. There is no strong commitment from either person and often it has a passive approach to others. Social media relationships have little potential to reward a person with great depth. Once you understand people, you will also understand that it takes great effort to become a good friend to them.

**REFLECTION:**

**TEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PEOPLE**

Select which things you provide people.

	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	<b>FACE TO FACE</b>
People are insecure.... Give them confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People like to feel special... Sincerely compliment them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People look for a better tomorrow... Show them hope.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People need to be understood... Listen to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People lack direction... Navigate for them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People are selfish... Speak to their needs first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People get emotionally low... Encourage them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People want to be associated with success... Help them win.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People desire meaningful relationships... Provide community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People seek models to follow... Be an example.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which one of the 10 areas do you excel in? .....  
Which one of the areas do you need to improve in?

Check the areas that you will give more effort to improve your relationships:

- 1. I will think about the other person first.
- 2. I will think the best of my friends' behavior.
- 3. I will be a giver more than a taker.
- 4. I will try to connect in person more than by social media.

**HOW MY RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT ME**

What extra effort will I make to improve my friendships?

**Today I will tear down the walls in my relationships and start building bridges.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

- 1. **Compliment:** ( synonym is accompaniment): Definition: A remark that expresses approval, admiration, or respect.
- 2. **Navigate:** ( synonym is guide): Definition: To find your way through a difficult place.
- 3. **Emotionally low:** ( synonym is depressed): Definition: A person has difficulty recognizing and understanding their emotions and those of others.

## Bridges Bring People Together



Bridges allow us to leave our space and go explore another's space. One of the best ways to connect with others is to ask people to share their story with you. This brings the conversation toward the person you are building a bridge with. Their story may include their interests, dreams, disappointments, uniqueness, and journey. While they are enjoying the personal attention, you are listening and gaining insight into their life. Personal stories help build bridges of connection, bringing people together.



Requesting a person's story says, "You could be special." Remembering a person's story says, "You are special." Reminding a person of his or her story says, "You are special to me." Repeating a person's story to others says, "You are special to them." The result? You become special to the person who shared their story with you.

**REFLECTION:**

Each person take 1 minute and share with others what is special about your story. ....





## Bridges Make Life Better



Bridges allow you to go to those who have positive, healthy relationships with you. They also allow you to walk away from negative, unhealthy relationships. You can choose which friendships to move toward and which ones you need to move away from. Knowing how to maximize the positive relationships and minimize the negative ones in your life is key to living a happy and satisfying life. Having a clear picture of positive relationships will enable you to make those decisions.

### **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS...**

1. Encourage you to grow and succeed.
2. Give you support during tough times.
3. Increase your sense of purpose in life.
4. Enable you to collaborate and work together.
5. Allow you to attract more positive relationships.
6. Create feelings of pleasure and joy.



### **REFLECTION:**

1. What positive relationship do you need to move toward?

2. What negative relationship do you need to move away from?

### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Pleasure:** (synonym is happiness): Definition: Enjoyment, Happiness, or Satisfaction, or Something that gives these.
2. **Collaborate:** (synonym is get together): Definition: to work with someone else for a special purpose.



### HOW MY RELATIONSHIP AFFECTS OTHERS

What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of relationships?

How can you apply this lesson to your family and friends?

What relationship choice will you make today that will positively affect others?

---

**Today I will be the friend to others  
that I would like to have myself.**

---

*“Relationships become better when we tear down the walls that divide us and build bridges that bring us together.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 6: Character



*“The value of a balloon is that it brings joy to people’s lives as it becomes bigger on the inside.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Understand that the character choices you make today are building blocks for your character tomorrow.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Character:** (synonym is personality): Definition: The particular combination of qualities in a person or place that makes them different from others.
2. **Blocks:** (synonym is brick): Definition: To decide officially to stop something from happening or continuing.



# Character is a Choice



Often, balloons are a part of festive activities. They may be different in color and how they are displayed, but they all have one thing in common: they are filled with air. Before the party, effort is made to make sure that the balloons are full on the inside so they look good on the outside. A balloon that is empty on the inside is not attractive on the outside. The inside of the balloon determines what the outside looks like.

That is true of our character. What is on the inside of us, our character, determines what we become on the outside. The Greek philosopher Socrates said, “The first key to greatness is to be in reality what we appear to be.” Who we really are is our character. Who we appear to be is our reputation. People of character are bigger on the inside than they are on the outside. The result? They become bigger on the outside.

## *What does it mean to be bigger on the inside than the outside?*

- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means that your character is greater than your reputation.
- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means that your walk speaks louder than your talk.
- Being bigger on the inside than on the outside means your attitude is better than your circumstances.
- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means you do what you ought to versus what you want to.

Strive today to focus on your inside development more than your outside — your character more than your reputation.

---

### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Balloons:** (synonym is gasbag): Definition: A very large balloon that is filled with hot air or gas and can carry people in a basket (= open container ) hanging under it.
2. **Reputation:** (synonym is fame): Definition: The general opinion that people have about someone or something.

### REFLECTION:

What needs to be inside of me? Check what is inside of you right now.

- 1. Kindness
- 2. Courage
- 3. Reliability
- 4. Trustworthiness
- 5. Authenticity
- 6. Forgiveness

## 02

# Character Choices



We don't get to pick our talents or IQ; they are gifts we are born with. But we do choose our character. In fact, we create our character every time we make choices.



### *Character choices such as...*

- To do what is right or to do what is easy.
- To follow your heart or to follow the crowd.
- To honor your word or not to honor it.
- To value people or devalue them.
- To be honest or to be dishonest.

Making the right character choices makes you bigger on the inside. Making the wrong character choices makes you smaller. It's your choice.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Reliability:** ( synonym is dependability): Definition: The quality of being able to be trusted or believed because of working or behaving well.
2. **Trustworthiness:** (synonym is credibility): Definition: The quality or fact of being trustworthy (= able to be trusted).
3. **Authenticity:** ( synonym is genuineness): Definition: The quality of being real or true.
4. **IQ:** ( synonym is mental capacity): Definition: Intelligence quotient: a measure of someone's intelligence found from special tests.
5. **Crowd:** ( synonym is throng): Definition: A large group of people who have come together.
6. **Honor:** (synonym is respect): Definition: great respect for someone, or the feeling of pride and pleasure resulting when respect is shown to you.



## 03

# Character is More Than Talk



Anyone can say they have integrity, but behavior is the real indicator of character. The outside reveals what is on the inside. When the inside gets right, the outside becomes right. How do we get the inside right? Fill your mind with good thoughts instead of bad ones. Think about the best in others, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to compliment, not things to curse. Your thoughts determine your choices. Your choices determine your actions.

*Your actions reflect  
your character.*

What you do speaks louder than what you say. Your talk talks and your walk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.



### **REFLECTION:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take 1 minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



**REFLECTION:**

**HOW MY CHARACTER AFFECTS ME**

Is there a place in my life where my reputation is in conflict .....  
with my character?



Character is what we are on the inside. Reputation is what people think we .....  
are on the outside. Are you stronger in your character or reputation? Why?



~~~~~  
**Today I will live a life of character  
that will positively affect me.**  
~~~~~



## All Character Needs Improvement



Nobody is perfect. Therefore, developing our character is a continual effort. Our attitude often needs adjustment. Our motives need to be managed. Our thoughts need to be checked.



A person with good character will not be good all the time but will have the desire to get better. The openness to admit wrongdoing with a change of behavior is the beginning of good character. The desire to do right is the mark of good character. A willingness to make positive changes is the root of good character.

Life is filled with continual choices between doing right and doing wrong. Good character may start off down the wrong path, but it will quickly turn around when it realizes a bad choice was made. Authenticity, not perfection, is what good character strives for.

### REFLECTION:

Why does developing your character require continual effort? .....



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Perfection:** (synonym is excellence ): Definition: The state of being complete and correct in every way.
2. **Off down:** (synonym is relax): Definition: If an amount of something is down, it has decreased and is at a lower level than it was.
3. **Wrong path:** ( synonym is astray): Definition: A path that you take is a particular course of action or way of achieving something.
4. **Strive:** ( synonym is endeavor): Definition: To try very hard to do something or to make something happen, especially for a long time or against difficulties.



## You Cannot Rise Above the Limitations of Your Character



The size of your inside determines the size of your outside. Lack of growth on the inside stunts our growth on the outside. If I think wrong thoughts on the inside, soon my choices will cause me to behave wrongly on the outside. If I am a dishonest person, my actions will be dishonest. The result? People will not trust me. That puts a limitation on my relationships and my potential. How do you remove those character limitations? You remove them by thinking about doing the right things and choosing to do them.



### REFLECTION:

..... In what ways do you think your character might be holding you back – with friends, at home, or at work?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Stunts:** ( synonym is impede): Definition: Something that is done to get attention for the person or people responsible for it.
2. **Dishonest:** ( synonym is lying): Definition: Not being honest.

## Benefits of Good Character

Your growth on the inside will show on the outside.

You are appreciated because you strive to do what is right.

Your inside and outside live in harmony.

You remove character limitations from your life.

You increase the odds of making good choices.

You feel good about yourself because you live true to who you are.

Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you. ....

What benefit did you circle? Why?



### REFLECTION:

#### HOW MY CHARACTER AFFECTS OTHERS

What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of character?

What character choice will you make this week that will positively affect others?

**Today I will make character choices  
that will positively affect others.**

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Harmony:** (synonym is unity): Definition: A situation in which people are peaceful and agree with each other, or when things seem right or suitable together.
- Positive affection:** (synonym is passion): Definition: Refers to the extent to which an individual subjectively experiences positive moods such as joy, interest, and alertness.

*“The value of a balloon is that it brings joy to people’s lives as it becomes bigger on the inside.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE BENEFICIAL CHARACTER ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

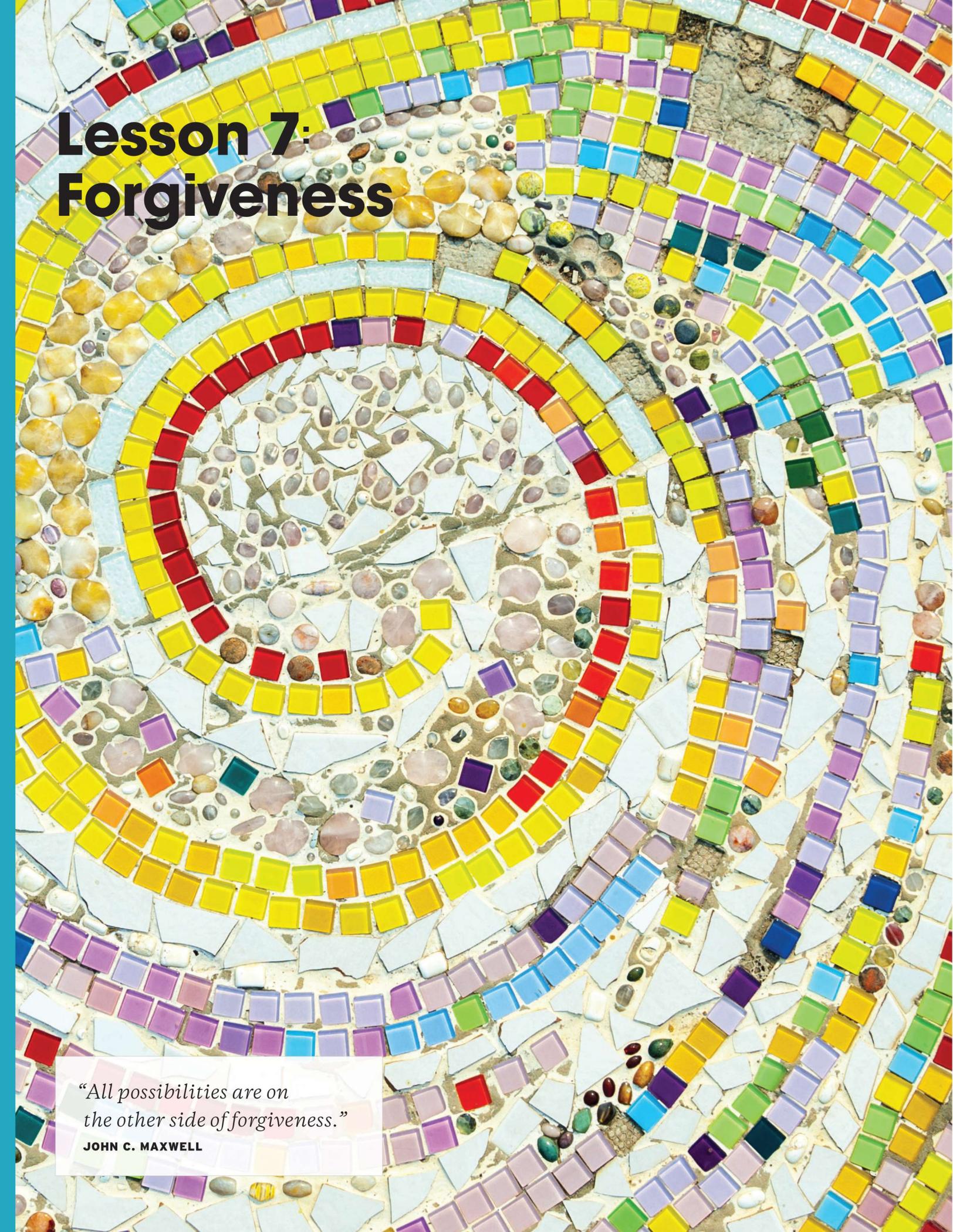
Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



A vibrant mosaic artwork featuring concentric circles. The innermost circle is composed of light-colored, irregularly shaped stones and tiles. Surrounding this are several layers of small, square tiles in various colors including red, yellow, orange, purple, blue, and green. The outermost layer consists of larger, smooth, rounded stones in shades of yellow, orange, and brown. The overall effect is a rich, multi-layered circular pattern.

# Lesson 7: Forgiveness

*“All possibilities are on  
the other side of forgiveness.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to allow forgiveness to make  
a beautiful mosaic of your life.**

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Mosaic:** (synonym is montage); Definition: Something that forms a pattern consisting of many small colored areas.



# Forgiveness is a Choice



Everyone needs forgiveness. The humanity in our lives causes us to not always do the right thing. All of us at some time have wronged others. That action separates and damages the relationship. It causes a brokenness between ourselves and others. The result? Over time, we become broken people.

Forgiveness is like a mosaic. A mosaic is a decoration made up of small, usually colored pieces of inlaid stone, glass, or tile. These small broken pieces are put together in such a way that they display a fragile beautiful picture for others to see. Sense has been made out of brokenness. Beauty is a result of it. That is a picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness takes the brokenness of our lives and allows us to choose to create something of beauty from it.

**REFLECTION:**

What did you underline that was important to you?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Humanity:** (synonym is mankind): Definition: People in general.
2. **Brokenness:** (synonym is break): Definition: A condition in which something is badly damaged and unable to continue or work correctly.

## Forgiveness is Not...



To make a beautiful mosaic of your life, you need to have a clear picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice to not hold something against another person, in spite of what he or she has done to you. Forgiveness is not...

- ***Forgiveness is not approving of what they did.***

It's not saying, "Well, it's okay. Nobody's perfect. Everybody makes mistakes. It's no big deal." It is a big deal; what they did hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not denying what was done.***

It's not saying, "It didn't happen. I forgot all about it. I just moved on. I didn't let it affect me." It did happen, and it hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not waiting for an apology.***

You may say, "I'll forgive them as soon as they say they are sorry." Don't wait. Some people will never apologize.

- ***Forgiveness is not forgetting.***

Often people say, "Forgive it and forget it." It's impossible to forget if you were raped, molested, abandoned, beaten, or abused. "Forget it?" Impossible!

- ***Forgiveness is not ceasing to feel the pain.***

The wrongs committed toward you may always hurt. It's okay for that to bother you. Just because it hurts doesn't mean you can't forgive. It may not eliminate the pain, but forgiving will lessen it.

- ***Forgiveness is not a one time event.***

Forgiving someone doesn't mean they stop doing wrong. They may need forgiving again. Forgiveness is a process.

---

### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Raped:** (synonym violation): Definition: To force someone to have sex when they are unwilling, using violence or threatening behavior.
2. **Molested:** (synonym is abuse): Definition: To touch, push, etc. someone violently.
3. **Abandoned:** (synonym is leave): Definition: To leave a place, thing, or person, usually forever.
4. **Abused:** (synonym is misuse): Definition: To use something for the wrong purpose in a way that is harmful or morally wrong.

• *Forgiveness is not a matter of trust.*

Forgiveness does not mean trust. Forgiveness is a choice — a gift to others and yourself. Trust must be earned over time. To forgive someone immediately does not mean to trust a person immediately. Trust is built slowly based upon behavior, not words.

• *Forgiveness is not reconciliation.*

Just because you have forgiven someone does not always bring closeness or compatibility. Forgiveness is the choice of one person. Reconciliation is the choice of two.

Without forgiveness you remain broken, detached, and jagged. With forgiveness, you become an image of beauty within brokenness, inclusive and peaceful.



**REFLECTION:**

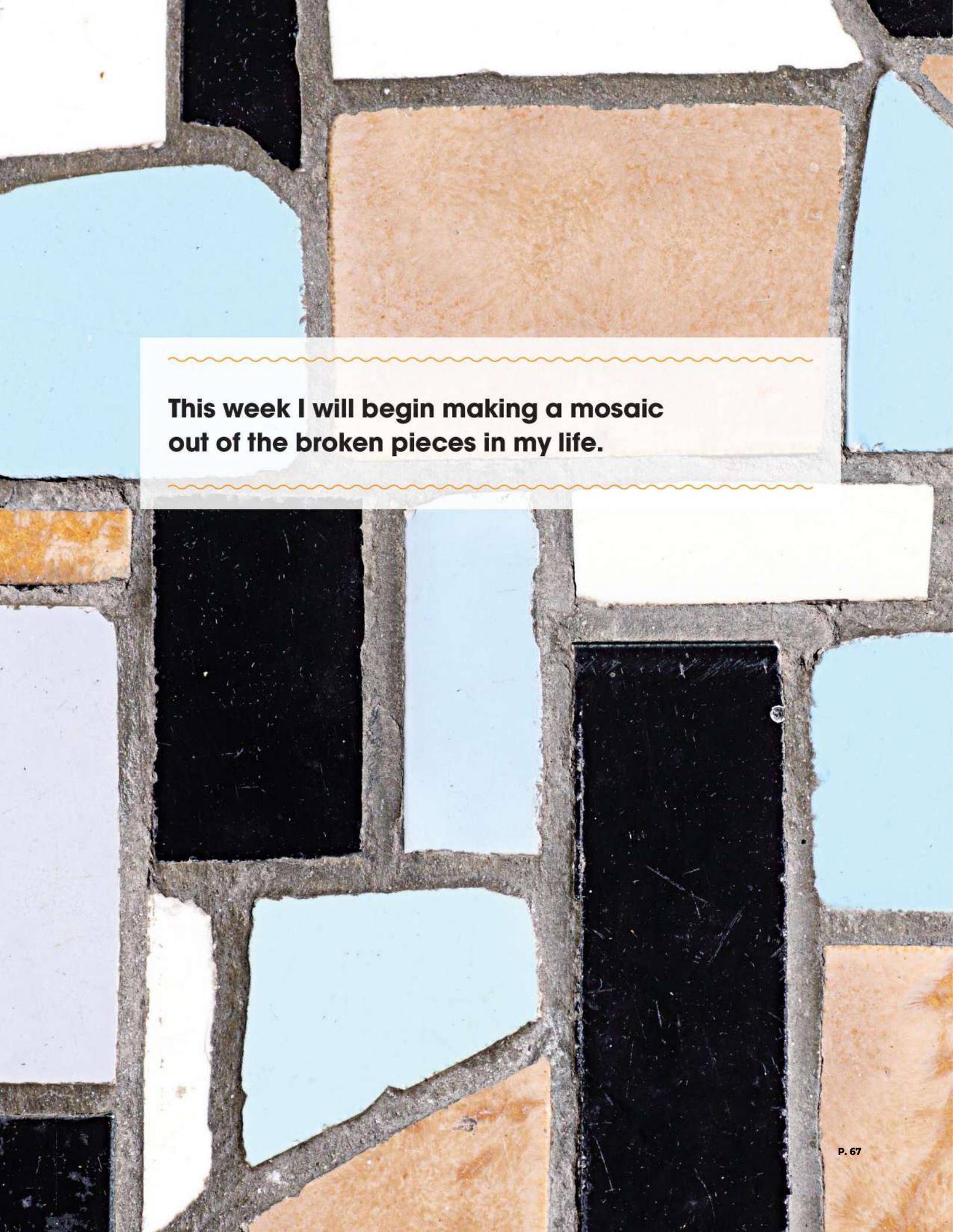
..... What is the most important thing you learned about what is **NOT** forgiveness?

**HOW FORGIVENESS AFFECTS ME**

What is one positive benefit to me if I forgive someone?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Reconciliation:** (synonym is re uniting) Definition: A situation in which two people or groups of people become friendly again after they have argued.
2. **Detached:** (synonym is loosed); Definition: Separated.
3. **Jagged:** (synonym is broken); Definition: Rough and with sharp points.



**This week I will begin making a mosaic  
out of the broken pieces in my life.**

## 03

# Forgiveness Gives You Healing and Health



There's an old saying that unforgiveness towards someone is like drinking poison and waiting for them die. When we hold on to old wounds or grudges, we are in essence choosing to keep a wound that prohibits us from being fully healthy. If we embrace anger, resentment, and bitterness, we will never be able to truly heal from our hurts.



Only by choosing to forgive can we begin the healing process. It may sound cliché, but forgiveness is medicine for the soul —medicine we all need if we want to live life to the fullest.

### REFLECTION:

#### WHICH PATH WILL YOU TAKE?

There are three paths we can take when it comes to relationships. Check one path and discuss why you chose it.

- The Easy Path:** We treat people however we like.
- The Better Path:** We treat people the same as they treat us.
- The Excellent Path:** We treat people better than they treat us.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Wounds:** (synonym is injury): Definition: A damaged area of the body, such as a cut or hole in the skin or flesh made by a weapon.
2. **Grudges:** (synonym is grievance): Definition: A strong feeling of anger and dislike for a person who you feel has treated you badly, especially one that lasts for a long time.
3. **Cliché:** (synonym is commonplace): Definition: A phrase, remark, or opinion that has very often been said or expressed before and is therefore not original and not interesting.
4. **Embrace:** (synonym is hug): Definition: To accept something enthusiastically.
5. **Resentment:** (synonymy is bitterness): Definition: A feeling of anger because you have been forced to accept something that you do not like.
6. **Bitterness:** (synonym is acidity): Definition: An unpleasantly sharp taste.



## Three People You Need To Forgive

There are three people you need to forgive if you desire to change your life in a positive way:

### 1. Forgive Yourself.

Part 1 of this lesson stated, “Everyone needs forgiveness.” We are all broken. When we accept our brokenness, we judge ourselves less harshly and find ourselves more compassionate toward others. Place the broken pieces of your life into a beautiful mosaic by forgiving yourself. You can live a life you are proud of. If that’s not happening now, forgiving yourself will give you the strength to start over again.

### 2. Forgive Your Parents.

Whether living or dead, you need to forgive them for the mistakes they have made in bringing you up. Forgiving your parents may seem insignificant, but forgiving your mother or father is actually the best thing you can do for the quality of your life. Even low-grade parental blame and resentment can negatively affect your current relationships, future relationships, finances, and overall wellbeing. This can prevent you from achieving the love, abundance, and happiness you deserve. Being willing to forgive your parents can have a profound effect on your relationship with your mother or father.

On the other hand, if you are unwilling to forgive your parents, you will remain forever a child. You block your own chance to grow up and become a fully functioning adult, and you will continue to see yourself as a victim.

### 3. Forgive Others.

Forgive everyone. Living a life of forgiveness is to live a life of freedom. Forgiveness is about letting go of your past so you can go forward with your life.

Lewis B. Smedes said,

*“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.”*

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Compassionate:** (synonym is pitying): Definition: Feeling or showing sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others, and wanting to help them.
2. **Profound effect:** (synonym is sincere): Definition: Felt or experienced very strongly or in an extreme way.

## Benefits of Forgiveness

- You will improve your psychological well-being.
- You will feel a sense of peace as you let go of pain and anger.
- You will see yourself and others with greater clarity.
- You will be able to treat others better than they treat you.
- You will be able to live a life without unfinished business.
- You will be able to ask for forgiveness from others.

Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you. ....  
 What benefit did you circle? Why?



### REFLECTION:

Who do you feel that you should forgive first? Yourself? Others? Your parents?

~~~~~

**Today I will forgive someone and reap the positive possibilities of my action.**

~~~~~

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Psychology:** (synonym is mind set): Definition: The scientific study of how the mind works and how it influences behavior.
2. **Clarity:** (synonym is simplicity): Definition: The quality of being clear and easy to understand.

*“All possibilities are on  
the other side of forgiveness.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE A WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 8

## Self-worth



*“The price tag we place on ourselves is the same price tag others place on us.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

491

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Know your value so you can make the choice  
to not sell yourself short.**

---



# Self-Worth is a Choice



Your self-worth is the feeling that you have good qualities and have achieved good things.

### *Who Are You?*

- You are special
- You are important
- You are unique
- You are gifted
- You are accepted
- You are essential
- You are significant
- You are worthy
- You are priceless

### *You matter!!!*

It is important to know this about yourself. It is more important for you to accept and express these qualities about yourself. Write down these qualities as the first step to embracing them as a part of your life.

### *Who I Am*

- I am special.
- I am \_\_\_\_\_

### *I matter!!!*

#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Self-worth:** (synonym is self-respect): Definition: The value you give to your life and achievements.
2. **Unique:** (synonym is special): Definition: Being the only existing one of its type or, more generally, unusual or special in some way.
3. **Essential:** (synonym is all important): Definition: Necessary or needed.
4. **Significant:** (synonym is important): Definition: Important or noticeable.

**REFLECTION:**

Which one of the qualities was the easiest for you to list?

Which one of the qualities was the most difficult for you to list?

Why? Share with others. ....



**02**

## Self-Worth Statements

The price tag you place on yourself is important because...

*1. It is the same price tag others will place on you.*

How do you feel about yourself? Check your price tag. Perhaps you have marked yourself down. It's you that determines your worth. Get off the "Clearance Rack" and put yourself in the glass case where the "Valuables" are kept. Bottom line: Value yourself.

Why? If you place a low value on yourself, rest assured that others will not raise your price. Your value doesn't decrease based on how someone else feels about you. It decreases by how you feel about yourself. Low self-worth occurs when you imitate others instead of being yourself. High self-worth is when you appreciate yourself and back it up with good behavior.



**Definition of difficult words on this page**

- 1. **Imitate:** (synonym is copy): Definition: To copy someone's speech or behavior, or to copy something as a model.
- 2. **Clearance-rack:** (synonym is permission): Definition: The process of removing waste or things you do not want from a place.
- 3. **Valuables:** (synonym is treasure): Definition: Worth a lot of money.

Eleanor Roosevelt said,

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”



The price tag you place on yourself is important because...

*2. It is the same price tag you will place on others.*

Brian Tracy says, “There is a direct relationship between your own level of self-esteem and the health of your personality. The more you like and respect yourself, the more you like and respect other people. The more you consider yourself to be a valuable and worthwhile person, the more you consider others to be valuable and worthwhile as well. The more you accept yourself just as you are, the more you accept others just as they are.”

**Today I will begin raising  
the price tag of my self-worth.**

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Consent:** (synonym is agree): Definition: Permission or agreement.
2. **Price tag:** (synonym is cost): Definition: A piece of paper attached to something for sale that shows how much it costs, or the cost of something.
3. **Self-esteem:** (synonym is self-respect): Definition: Belief and confidence in your own ability and value.
4. **Worthwhile:** (synonym is valuable): Definition: Useful, important, or good enough to be a suitable reward for the money or time spent or the effort made.



yourself

## 03

# Self-Worth Steps



### 1. Fill your self talk with self-worth.

You have a running conversation with yourself going on all the time. It's the most valuable conversation you will ever have! Most of your emotions are determined by the way you talk to yourself. You naturally move toward the conversations you have with yourself. What you say about yourself, you tend to believe. What you believe, you tend to act. How we act, we tend to become. No world record was ever set by someone who said, "I cannot do this."

#### REFLECTION:

Check the one that applies to you:

My self talk is...

- Encouraging
- Positive
- Motivating
- Discouraging
- Negative
- Procrastinating
- Harmful
- Helpful
- Makes Me Better
- Makes Me Worse

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Procrastinating:** ( synonym is delay): Definition: To keep delaying something that must be done, often because it is unpleasant or boring.



## **2. Invest in yourself.**

You must see value in yourself before you add value to yourself. Self-image will determine more than anything else how much you will invest in yourself. Why is it important for you to add value to yourself?

Because you cannot give what you do not have. When you get better, you can help others get better. Your personal development is the belief that you are worth the effort, time, and energy that is needed to develop yourself.

### **TAKEAWAY TRUTH:**

When nobody else celebrates you, learn to celebrate yourself. It's not up to other people to keep you encouraged; it's up to you. Encouragement should come from the inside.



## **3. Add value to others**

Self-worth is the feeling you possess good qualities and have achieved good things. How do we achieve good things? By adding value to others.

### **SELF-WORTH GUIDE:**

1. Feel good about yourself. If you don't feel good about you, it's hard to feel good about anyone or anything else.
2. Feel good about others. The better you feel about others, the more you will want to add value to them.
3. Do good for others. It is impossible to feel badly about yourself when you are doing something good for others.
4. Think of ways to add value to others.
5. Look for ways to add value to others.
6. Add value to others every day.

**REFLECTION:**

1. Who will you add value to this week? .....



2. How will you do this? .....



**FINAL THOUGHT:**

Your self-worth is defined by how you feel about yourself and how others feel about you. Adding value to others will enable them to feel good about you, and you will feel good about yourself.

At the end of each day, silently affirm that you are the type of person you would like to spend the rest of your life with.

~~~~~

**Today I will add value to others.**

~~~~~

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Affirm:** ( synonym is declare): Definition: To state something as true.

*“The value we place on ourselves is the same value others will place on us.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE VALUING YOURSELF ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 9

# Responsibility

*“Step up to the mirror and take responsibility for your life.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to be responsible and add value to your  
life and others.**

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Prompts:** (synonym is instructions): Definition: A set of directions.
2. **Reflect:** (Synonym is think about): Definition: To think carefully, especially about possibilities and opinions.
3. **Evaluate:** (Synonym is assess): Definition: to judge the quality, importance, amount, or value of someone or something.
4. **Choose:** (Synonym is go for) Definition: to decide what you want from two or more things or possibilities.



## Responsibility is a Choice



We often think about responsibility as something heavy — a burden we know we ought to bear because, “it’s the right thing to do.” We also seem to set responsibility up as the opposite of freedom; “I wish I could drop everything and go to the party with you but I have so many responsibilities. I have to study, babysit my sister and brother, and finish my chores!”

The problem with this perspective is that we begin to view ourselves as slaves to the commitments we’ve been given rather than opportunities to progress and mature our lives. When we choose the latter, we can look into the mirror and view responsibility as an exciting word rather than a boring one.

The mirror is a picture of responsibility. It allows us to see ourselves as we actually are and then make the needed adjustments to help us look better. How do you do this? By looking into the mirror and asking, “What can I do to improve myself?” How you respond helps you to make choices that will add value to your life and others.



..... In what area do you want to improve and be more responsible?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Ought:** (Synonym is have to): Definition: Used to say that it is necessary or desirable to perform the action expressed in the verb.
2. **Bear:** (Synonym is carry): Definition: To be responsible for something.
3. **Chore:** (Synonym is task): Definition: A job or piece of work that needs to be done regularly.
4. **Boring:** (Synonym is dull): Definition: Not interesting or exciting.
5. **Adjustment:** (Synonym is adapting): Definition: A small change.

## Reasons to be Responsible



### 1. Responsibility is the foundation for your success.

Winston Churchill said, “The one quality that all successful people have is the ability to take on responsibility.” Why? Because you do what is right for yourself and others. If you do the things you ought to do when you ought to do them, the day will come when you get to do the things you want to do when you want to do them. Responsibility is like an investment you make today because you know it will pay off in the future. A father once said to his children, “When you do more than you’re paid to do, you will eventually be paid more for what you do. The day you take complete responsibility for yourself, the day you stop making excuses, that is the day you start rising to the top!”



What is the most important sentence you underlined? Why? .....



### 2. Responsibility puts you in control of your life.

Do you think of your life as just something that happens to you or something that you can have control over? If you think life just happens to you, then you will have a tendency to be passive. The result? You tend to get in life what you are willing to tolerate. If you allow others to disrespect you, then you will be disrespected. If you tolerate abuse, then you will be abused. If you think it is okay for others to take advantage of you, they will.

However, you can control your life. Can you control everything? No, of course not. But you can choose to control the things that are within your control. First, acknowledge that you have the ability to choose. Then, identify which parts of your life you do have control over and which you don’t. Once you begin taking charge and making choices, your life will begin to change. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, “In the long run, we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.”



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Investment:** (Synonym is sacrifice): Definition: The act of putting money or effort into something to make a profit or achieve a result.
2. **Eventually:** (Synonym is after some time): Definition: In the end, especially after a long time or a lot of effort.
3. **Tendency:** (Synonym is likelihood): Definition: Likely to happen.
4. **Passive:** (Synonym is acquiescent): Definition: Not acting to influence or change a situation; allowing other people to be in control.
5. **Tolerate:** (Synonym is allow): Definition: To accept behavior and beliefs that are different from your own, although you may not agree with or approve of them.
6. **Ultimately:** (synonym is finally): Definition: in the end.

Bob Mowad said,

*“The best day of your life is the one in which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours. It is an amazing journey and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins.”*



**REFLECTION:**

**HOW RESPONSIBILITY AFFECTS ME**

What is the one area of my life that I need to take control of today?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Apologies:** (Synonym is): Definition: An act of saying that you are sorry.
2. **Excuses:** (Synonym is defend): Definition: A false reason that you give to explain why you do something.
3. **Lean:** (Synonym is rely): Definition: To depend on someone or something.
4. **Blame:** (Synonym is accuse of): Definition: To say or think that someone or something did something wrong or is responsible for something bad happening.
5. **Affect:** (Synonym is influence): Definition: To have an influence on someone or something.



Today I will look into a mirror.....  
and take responsibility for my life.

### 3. Responsibility is a sign of maturity.

Maturity doesn't come with age. It comes with the acceptance of responsibility. The result? You move from dependence to independence.



#### THIS IS MATURITY:

Check one for each statement.

	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
To be able to stick with a task until it is finished.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To do your duty without being supervised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be able to carry money without spending it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be able to bear injustice without trying to get even.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To follow your conscience, not the crowd.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To take ownership of your choices and not blame others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have others say, "I can count on you."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To consider others and the consequences before taking action.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To step up to the mirror and take responsibility for your life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### REFLECTION:

##### HOW RESPONSIBILITY AFFECTS ME

How mature are you based on these statements?

What area do you need to improve the most?



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Maturity:** Definition: The state of being mentally and emotionally well-developed, and therefore responsible.
- Dependence:** (Synonym is helplessness): Definition: The situation in which you need something or someone all the time, in order to continue existing or operating.
- Independence:** (Synonym is autonomy): Definition: The ability to live your life without being helped or influenced by other people.
- Stick with:** (Synonym is persist): Definition: To continue doing something and not stop or change to something.
- Conscience:** Definition: The part of you that judges your moral sense of what is right and wrong, it viewed as acting as a guide to one's behaviour.



#### 4. *Responsibility makes you ready for action.*

Deitrich Bonhoeffer observed, “Action springs not from thought, but from a readiness for responsibility.”



Reality without responsibility will make you passive. Reality with responsibility makes you active.

Poet Edward Everett Hale wrote,

“I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything  
But I can still do something.  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

#### **THE FOLLOWING WORDS SHOW BOTH MATURITY AND ACTION:**

You can love me, but only I can make me happy.

You can teach me, but only I can do the learning.

You can lead me, but only I can walk the path.

You can promote me, but I have to succeed.

You can coach me, but I have to win the game.



#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Springs:** (Synonym is come from): Definition: To originate or arise from.
2. **Readiness:** (Synonym is preparedness): Definition: Willingness or a state of being prepared for something.
3. **Reality:** (Synonym is real life) Definition: The actual state of things rather than as they are imagined to be.
4. **Active:** (Synonym is involved): Definition: being able to do something physically or mentally.
5. **Path:** (Synonym is road): Definition: A route or track between one place and another, or the direction in which something is moving.



# The Benefits of Responsibility

- You are proactive and do what you can, rather than focusing on what you can't do.
- You set the course of your life in the direction you desire.
- You become a person of excellence who exceeds expectations.
- You actively learn from each mistake and keep improving.
- You are seen as reliable and trustworthy by others.
- You are given opportunities to progress in your career because you get things done.



### REFLECTION:

Which benefit do you value the most? Why? .....



Review the Reasons to be Responsible:

- Responsibility is the foundation of success.
- Responsibility puts you in control of your life.
- Responsibility is a sign of maturity.
- Responsibility makes you ready for action.

Share which reason to be responsible that you like the most. ....



**Today I will show responsibility to others.**

### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Proactive:** Definition: Taking action to make changes yourself rather than reacting to things that happen.
- Life Course:** Definition: The period between birth and death.
- Exceeds:** (Synonym is surpass): Definition: To be greater than a number or amount, or to go beyond a permitted limit.
- Expectations:** (Synonym is assumption): Definition: To think that someone should behave in a particular way or do a particular thing.
- Reliable:** (Synonym is dependable): Definition: Someone or something that can be trusted because he, she, or it works or behaves well in the way you expect.

*“Step up to the mirror and take responsibility for your life.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE TAKING RESPONSIBILITY ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

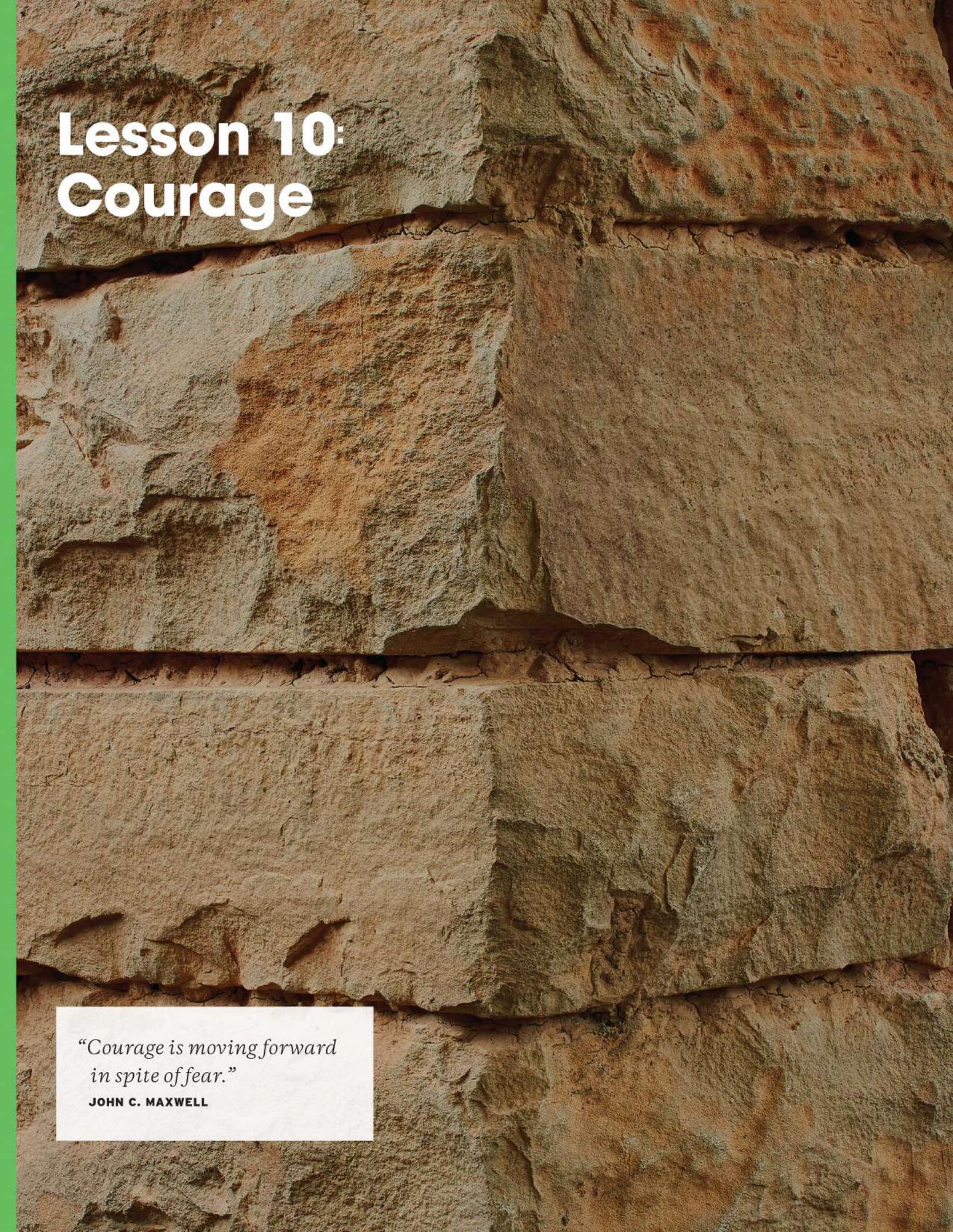
Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....





# Lesson 10: Courage

*“Courage is moving forward  
in spite of fear.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



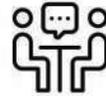
First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose courage as the cornerstone  
in building your life.**

---

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Courage:** (Synonym is bravery): Definition: The ability to control your fear in a dangerous or difficult situation.
2. **Cornerstone:** (Synonym is foundation): Definition: A large stone near the base of a building where two walls meet something of great importance that everything else depends on.



01

## Courage is a Choice

A cornerstone is the chief foundation for a building. It is strategically placed and chosen by the builder. It is the most important stone in the building. Courage is the cornerstone in building your life. Maya Angelou wrote, “Courage is the most important of all virtues consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.”

### EVERYDAY YOU NEED COURAGE TO...

- Seek the truth, even when you know it may be painful.
- Change, even when it’s easier to remain comfortable.
- Express convictions, even when others challenge you.
- Overcome obstacles, even when progress will come no other way.
- Learn and grow, even when it will display your weakness.
- Take the high road, even when others treat you badly.
- Lead, even when being in front makes you an easy target.



02

## Cornerstones of Courage

### 1. Choose to be courageous.

Courage is the door that can only be opened by you from the inside. Courage is a choice. It is available to all of us, not just a select few. Courage begins with the desire to want something different in your life — something more. Courage often comes when we get tired of being beaten down and are ready to rise and claim the powerful being that we are.

In every moment, you have the right, the power, and the choice to be courageous or weak. Sometimes courage is not bold, loud, or executable. Sometimes courage is quiet, graceful, and still.

Life is difficult. Every day you will experience challenges. Open the door, hold your head high, look trouble in the eye, and say, “I choose to be bigger than you. You cannot defeat me.”



..... What did you underline that is important to you?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Virtue:** (Synonym is attribute): Definition: A good moral quality in a person, or the general quality of being morally good.
2. **Erratically:** (Synonym is unevenly): Definition: In a way that is not regular, certain, or expected.
3. **Convictions:** (Synonym is opinion): Definition: A strong opinion or belief.
4. **Overcome:** (Synonym is defeat): Definition: To defeat or succeed in controlling or dealing with something.
5. **Bold:** (Synonym is fearless): Definition: Not frightened of danger.

## 2. Face your fears.

Mark Twain said,

**“Courage is resistance to fear,  
mastery of fear, not absence of fear.”**

Courage is absolutely a choice. Fear does not have the power to rob you of your dreams, motivation, and strength unless you decide to let it. Remember, the only person with the power to hold you back, or move you forward, is YOU!

### REFLECTION:

It is often helpful to write down the fears that cause you to hold back or hesitate from doing ..... what you need to do. List your top two and discuss with your group one of them.



1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Resistance:** (Synonym is withstand): Definition: The act of fighting against something that is attacking you, or refusing to accept something.
2. **Mastery:** (Synonym is control): Definition: Complete control of something.
3. **Hold back:** (Synonym is block): Definition: To stop someone or something developing or doing as well as they should.
4. **Hesitate:** (Synonym is delay): Definition: To pause before you do or say something, often because you are uncertain or nervous about it.



### HOW CAN YOU OVERCOME THE FEARS YOU JUST LISTED?

1. Acknowledge that you will always have some fear. Adversity and problems will always be with you. Remember, a plane takes off against the wind, not with it.
2. Identify your good fears and bad ones. Good fear causes us to prepare and then act. Bad fear causes us to avoid. Fear is a reflex — courage is a choice!
3. Reduce your fear by preparing yourself for possible outcomes to your action. Then initiate your courageous action. Courage is like a muscle. It grows and gains strength by overcoming resistance.



#### REFLECTION:

..... Which of the three remedies for fear do I need to practice?



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Adversity:** (Synonym is hardship): Definition: A difficult or unlucky situation or event.
2. **Reflex:** (Synonym is involuntary): Definition: A physical reaction to something that you cannot control.
3. **Remedies:** (Synonym is treatment): Definition: A successful way of curing an illness or dealing with a problem or difficulty.



**Today I will strengthen my courage muscle.**

## Cornerstones of Courage (Continued)



### 3. *Focus on what you will gain.*

Fear causes you to focus on what you will lose. Courage helps you focus on what you will gain.

Learning to shift our focus away from what we stand to lose, and toward what we stand to gain will completely change our perception of the situation. This simple shift can quickly leave us feeling more courageous and eager to take action!

Optimism is the foundation of courage.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Perception:** (Synonym is view thought): Definition: A thought, belief, or opinion, often held by many people and based on appearances.
2. **Eager:** (Synonym is longing): Definition: Wanting very much to do or have something, especially something interesting or enjoyable.
3. **Optimism:** (Synonym is hopefulness): Definition: The feeling that good things are more likely to happen than bad things.



# Benefits of Courage



## 1. *Courage gives you energy.*

Courage has a tangible quality. You can't touch it, but you can feel it. It feels like positive acceleration. Courage sends a rush of energy through your body. It makes you wake up in the morning with a feeling of wanting to wrap your hands around the day.

## 2. *Courage gives you confidence.*

Courage is what you do. Confidence is how you feel. What you do determines how you feel.

## 3. *Courage always gives you a win.*

When you have the courage to speak up or stand up for what is right, you win... even if you lose! How did you win? You gained the respect of others. That's a big win.

## 4. *Courage gives others courage.*

Courage is contagious! Your visual expression of courage will encourage others to do the right thing also.

### **REFLECTION:**

Check the statements that appeal to you.

- Courage gives you energy.
- Courage gives you confidence.
- Courage always gives you a win.
- Courage gives others courage.



Which of the four Benefits of Courage do you like the best? Why?

### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Acceleration:** (Synonym is speeding up): Definition: An increase in the speed or rate of something.
2. **Contagious:** (Synonym is transmissible): Definition: Spreads quickly among people moving easily from one person to another.
3. **Expression:** (Synonym is appearance): Definition: The act of saying what you think or showing how you feel using words or actions.

## Review Cornerstones of Courage



1. CHOOSE TO BE COURAGEOUS.
2. FACE YOUR FEARS.
3. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WILL GAIN.
4. TAKE ACTION!

Courage is not something you already have that makes you brave when the tough times start. Courage is what you earn because you have taken action to do the right thing. For example: bullying.

There are two ways you can use your strength. You can push people down or you can pull people up.

In life, when you begin to push someone down, you do not better yourself — you lessen yourself. Likewise, if you are trying to pull someone up, you are also improving yourself. What you do to others will have its effect, good or bad, on you as well.

You have a choice! Do you want to be a push down person or a pull up person?

How we counteract bullying doesn't depend on who the bully is or on the bully's actions, but on how we think of ourselves. If we don't value ourselves, we are in a prime position to become the victim of a bully. The higher we value ourselves, the more likely we are to courageously stand up to the bully's actions, for ourselves and for others. When we value others, we are more likely to see how others are being wrongly treated. This allows us the opportunity to say that it is wrong, it cannot be, and we must change it.

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### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Bullying:** Definition: The behavior of a person who hurts or frightens someone smaller or less powerful.
2. **Lessen:** (Synonym is diminish): Definition: If something lessens or is lessened, it becomes less strong.
3. **Counteract:** (Synonym is restrain): Definition: To reduce or remove the effect of something unwanted by producing an opposite effect.
4. **Prime:** (Synonym is main): Definition: Main or most important.
5. **Victim:** Definition: A person who has suffered the effects of violence or illness or bad luck.

Malala Yousafzai says,

“There’s a moment when you have to choose whether to be silent or to stand up.”

How do we get the courage to stand up?

*Identification: Who am I?*

I am a person of worth attempting to do something worthwhile.

*Action: What will I do?*

Take action and do the right thing regardless of feelings.

*Emotion: How will I proceed?*

I will allow my actions to shape my feelings.

My discovery? Each time I acted with courage and did what was right rather than giving in to what I felt, my will overcame my fears. A strong person stands up for themselves. A stronger person stands up for others.

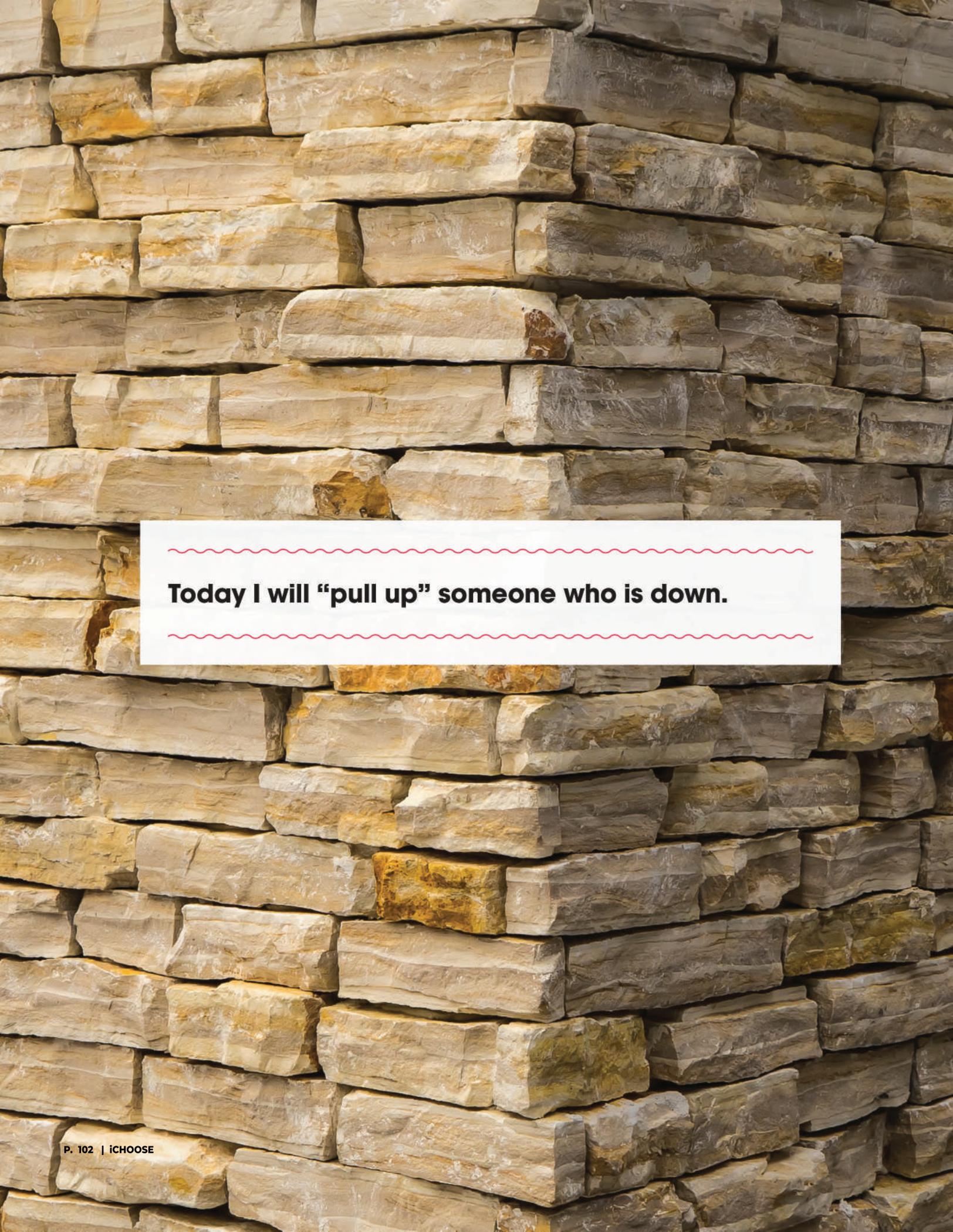


**REFLECTION:**

Am I a “push down” or a “pull up” person? Share with others.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Worthwhile:** (Synonym is valuable): Definition: Useful, important.
2. **Identification:** (Synonym is recognition): Definition: The act of recognizing and naming someone or something.
3. **Emotion:** (Synonym is sentiment): Definition: A strong feeling such as love or anger, or strong feelings in general.
4. **Discovery:** (Synonym is realization): Definition: The act of finding something that had not been known before.



Today I will “pull up” someone who is down.

*“Courage is moving forward  
in spite of fear.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE SHOWING COURAGE ON A SCALE  
OF 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1     2     3     4     5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....

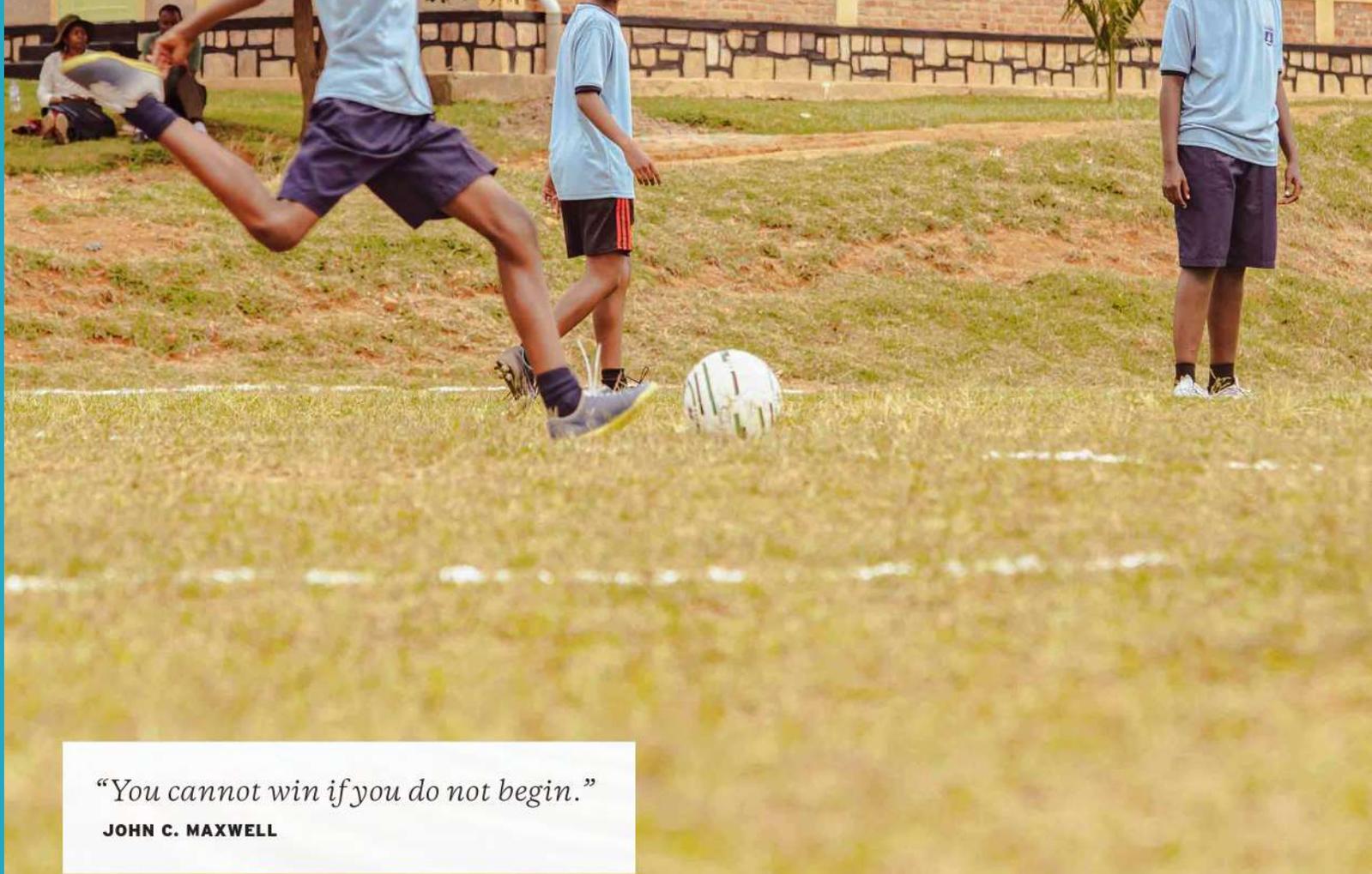


**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 11 Initiative



*"You cannot win if you do not begin."*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



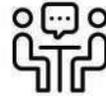
First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to take initiative and become  
a “ripple starter” of good things.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Initiative:** (Synonym is): Definition: The ability to judge what needs to be done and take action, especially without suggestion from other people.
2. **Ripple:** (Synonym is wave): Definition: A small wave on the surface of water.



## Initiative is a Choice



Impact and change only happens with action. Action begins with initiative. Picture a pond that is perfectly calm, it is smooth and it looks like glass. See yourself taking initiative and picking up a stone. You throw it into the water. What do you see? Ripples. How did the ripples begin? By you taking initiative and throwing the stone.

One initiative and one ripple seem to go on forever. The entire pond has been impacted by the action of one stone. The pond is your world, and every stone you throw makes a difference. The Dalai Lama said, “Just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped into the water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching effects. One person, one initiative, one action, can start a ripple of change.”

Mother Teresa said,

*“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast the stone across the waters to create many ripples.”*

Initiation is the “Ripple Starter.” By taking initiative to do good things, you can create a ripple effect that will go far beyond your own life. Doing good has the power to transform us on the inside and then ripple out into ever-expanding circles to have a positive impact on others.



..... What did you underline that is important to you?



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Pond:** (Synonym is puddle) Definition: An area of water smaller than a lake, often artificially made.
2. **Pebble:** (Synonym is gem): Definition: A round stone, especially one found on a beach or in a riverbank.

## The Problem of Procrastination



Initiators *make* something happen. Procrastinators *wait* for something to happen. You can choose which one you will be.



**PROCRASTINATION IS THE ENEMY OF INITIATIVE.**

### 1. *It limits your potential.*

The longer you wait to do something you should do, the higher the odds that you won't do it.

### 2. *It provides only short-term relief.*

The best moments of a procrastinator's life are the first moments they decide to wait. It feels good to not have to do something you don't want to do... for a moment! Then, reality begins to slowly take over your relief. Why? It still needs to be done. Putting something off does not make it go away, and procrastinating only makes it worse. It makes something difficult only more difficult!



### 3. *It takes away your choice.*

When you do not choose to do something about your circumstances, your circumstances will make the choice for you... and that is seldom good.

#### REFLECTION:

Which one of the 3 problems above have you experienced? .....  
Share with others.





Procrastination is the act of delaying or postponing a task or set of tasks. It is what prevents you from following through on what you set out to do.



So... why do people procrastinate?

1. The task is unpleasant.
2. The task is difficult to do.
3. Lack of self-confidence.
4. Lack of self-discipline.
5. Not recognizing the harm of procrastination.

*Procrastination destroys initiative!*



**REFLECTION:**

From the list above, which of the 5 reasons is why you sometimes procrastinate?

**HOW PROCRASTINATION AFFECTS ME**

What is the most negative effect procrastination has on you?



**Today I will do less procrastinating  
and more initiating.**



## Create your Ripple Effect



By taking initiative to do good things, you can create a ripple effect that will go far beyond your life.

Initiative is recognizing and doing what needs to be done before being asked.

Life rewards action. To get from where you are now to where you want to be requires forward movement and momentum. Although you may already know what it takes to bridge the gap, simply knowing what to do is not enough. Action is the key to creating the changes needed to propel you in the direction of your dreams and help you achieve your relationship goals.



### HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING AND START INITIATING

#### *1. Stop waiting for the ideal situation to do something.*

This is a humorous story of a very religious man who was caught in rising floodwaters.

#### **RISING FLOODWATERS STORY**

He climbed onto the roof of his house and trusted God to rescue him. A neighbor came by in a canoe and said, “The waters will soon be above your house. Hop in and we’ll paddle to safety.” “No thanks,” replied the man. “I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure he will save me.” A short time later the police came by in a boat. “The waters will soon be above your house. Hop in and we’ll take you to safety.” “No thanks,” the man said. “I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure he will save me.”

A little time later a rescue services helicopter hovered overhead, let down a rope ladder and said, “The waters will soon be above your house. Climb the ladder and we’ll fly you to safety.”

Once again, the man said, “No thanks.” I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure he will save me.”

All this time the floodwaters continued to rise until soon they reached above the roof and the man drowned. When he arrived at heaven, he demanded an audience with God. Ushered into God’s throne room he said, “Lord, why am I here in heaven? I prayed for you to save me. I trusted you to save me from that flood.”

“Yes you did my child,” replied the Lord. “And I sent you a canoe, a boat and a helicopter. But you never got in.”



**2. Make future consequences become present consequences.**

This is exactly what happens during the moment when we finally move beyond procrastination and take action. For example, let's say you have a report to write. You've known about it for weeks and continue to put it off day after day. You experience a little bit of nagging pain and anxiety thinking about this paper you have to write, but not enough to do anything about it. Then, suddenly, the day before the deadline, the future consequences turn into present consequences, and you write that report hours before it is due. The pain of procrastinating finally escalated and you crossed the "Action Line."



**3. Do something good for you while you do something that makes you feel good.**

**SOMETHING GOOD FOR YOU**

Exercise

Homework

Chores

Volunteering/part-time job

**SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD**

Listen to music

Do the work with a friend

Call someone you love

Take pictures with friends





#### 4. *Take action and inspire yourself and others.*

J.R.R. Tolkien said, “It’s the job that is never started that takes the longest to finish.”<sup>11</sup> So... get started! Action inspires because it creates new possibilities that didn’t exist until you initiated. Opportunity dances with those already on the dance floor and initiation put you there!



Procrastination looks at something that needs to be done and asks, “Can I wait for another day?” Initiative asks, “How can I?” and moves now. Every day, there are things before you to do. Procrastinating on those things will push you down. If you take action, you will push past those things and be inspired.



There are many ways to inspire others. Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then take the initiative and do it for them. When you smile at someone, you make their day better... and your day better! Be the first to do something for someone else. If you have ever asked why somebody didn’t step up and do something about a wrong, realize that you are somebody and you can step up.



#### **REFLECTION:**

..... What did you underline that meant the most to you?

~~~~~

**Today I will do something positive for someone that inspires them.**

~~~~~

*“You cannot win if you do not begin.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE TAKING INITIATIVE ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 12: Priorities



*“Decide what your priorities are.  
If you don’t, someone else will.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



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**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to prioritize your life for successful living.**

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## 01

# Priorities are a Choice



You were born with the potential for greatness. You get to choose which path you will take, how high to set the bar for yourself, and how hard you are willing to work to clear that bar. You get to decide how to spend your time, who to spend it with, and what you will give up when time runs short. Every priority you make and every action you take has consequence, but whom better to decide what is best for you than you? It is your life to live. Own it!

### THE ROCK STORY

A teacher stood before her class. She picked up a large clear jar and placed it on a table. After filling it with rocks, she asked her class, “Is it full?” They agreed that it was.

The teacher then picked up a box of small pebbles and poured them into the jar. She shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the rocks. “Is it full now?” They agreed that it was.

The teacher then poured a box of sand into the jar. Of course the sand filled up the entire jar. She then asked once more if the jar was full. The students said yes.

The teacher said, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The rocks are the most important things — your family, your health, your friends, and your dreams... things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

“The pebbles,” she continued, “are the other things that matter. Things that are necessary for your daily life. The sand is everything else — the small stuff.”

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Priorities:** (Synonym is prime concern): Definition: Something that is very important and must be dealt with before other things.
2. **Jar:** (Synonym is jug): Definition: A cylindrical container, usually made of glass, with a wide top opening.

If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness and success.

Take care of the rocks first — the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.

**REFLECTION:**

The Rocks = The Most Important Stuff

The Pebbles = Necessary Stuff

The Sand = Small Stuff

What is one rock in my life? .....



What is one pebble in my life? .....



What is one piece of sand in my life? .....



**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Critical:** (Synonym is crucial): Definition: Of the greatest importanceCritical (Synonym is crucial) Definition: of the greatest importance.



## How to Pick Your Priorities



What are the rocks in your life? What priorities need the most time and effort from you? You can choose what rocks should be put in “your jar” by asking and answering three questions.

### 1. ROCK QUESTION: “WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?”

These are things you are required to do. They are not options. They are necessary.

Rock Answer: “This is one thing I HAVE to do.”

### 2. ROCK QUESTION: “WHAT DO I DO WELL?”

These are things based upon your abilities, your strengths, and your giftedness. You will experience success if you give them time and effort.

Rock Answer: “This is one thing I do WELL.”

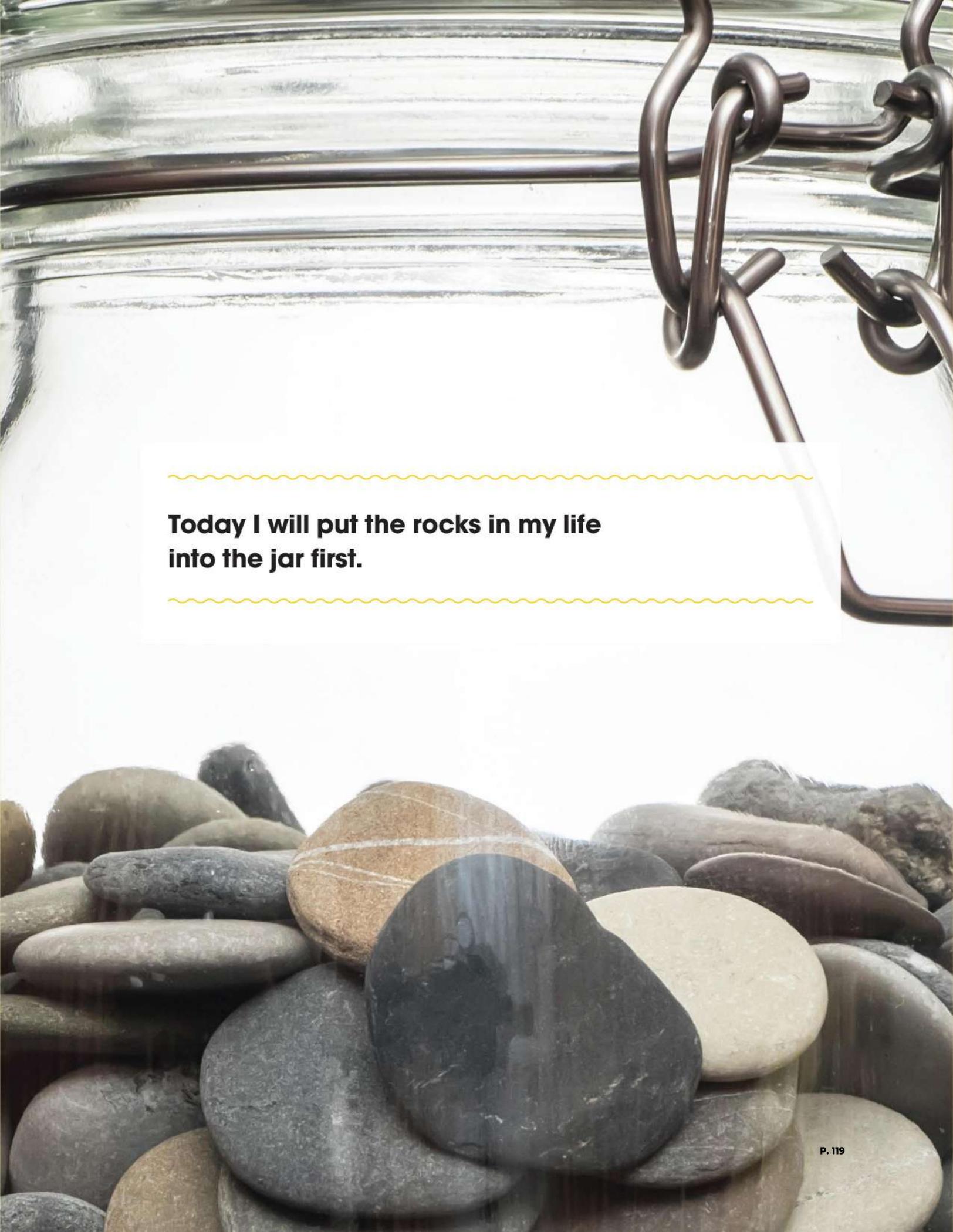
### 3. ROCK QUESTION: “WHAT DO I LOVE TO DO?”

These are the things you dream about. You are passionate about them. You will be fulfilled when you do these things.

Rock Answer: “This is one thing I DREAM about.”

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Passionate:** (Synonym is zealous): Definition: Having very strong feelings or emotions.



**Today I will put the rocks in my life  
into the jar first.**



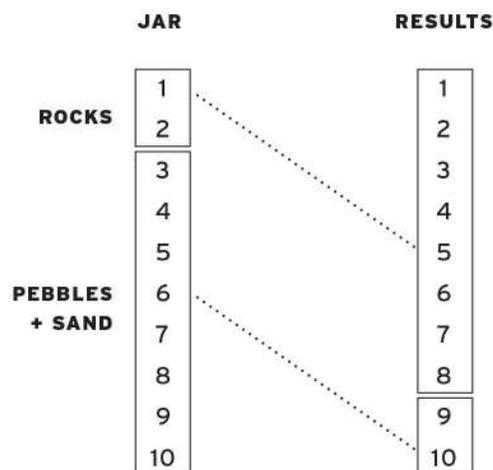
## How Prioritizing Affects Me

When you focus your attention and give your time to the most important priorities, the rocks, you will receive the highest return for your effort.



Look at the diagram. The left column represents your jar; the right column represents the results based on your priorities. The first two numbers are the rocks you choose to put into your jar. If you do that, you will receive 80% of everything you need in life.

The bottom eight numbers are the pebbles and sand you choose to put into your jar. If you put them into your jar first, you will only receive 20% of everything you need in your life.



### REFLECTION:

Discuss the diagram: As you look at it, what does it teach you? .....





## Lessons Learned from the 80/20 Principle



### *1. Activity does not equal accomplishment.*

Working hard is important. Working smart is more important. How do you work smart? By doing the important things first, the “rocks.” Eliminate the “sand” and some of the “pebbles.” Write down your “Not To Do” list before preparing your “To Do” list. Your goal is not to be busy; it is to be effective. Stop spending time on minor things, and start giving major time to the important things.

### *2. Evaluate and change or remain the same.*

Constantly evaluate your priorities. Why? Priorities change. Ask yourself, “Would I have started this project or relationship if I could do it over again, knowing what I know now?” If the answer is “No,” then remove it from your priority list. You don’t always have to finish what you start.

*Don't spend too much time  
climbing the ladder only to  
realize when you reach the top  
that the ladder was leaning  
against the wrong building.*

### *3. Act or react.*

Control your day or your day will control you. Whenever you feel the tendency toward laziness taking over and you remember something you should be doing, stop and say out loud, “Do it now! Do it now! Do it now!” A sculptor doesn’t look at a piece of marble waiting for the unneeded pieces to fall off. Grab a chisel and get busy!

#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

- Sculptor:** (Synonym is carver): Definition: A person who creates sculptures out of material such as wood, clay, metal, or stone.
- Marble:** (Synonym is alabaster): Definition: A type of very hard rock that has a pattern of lines going through it, feels cold, and can be polished to become smooth and shiny.
- Chisel:** (Synonym is gouge): Definition: A tool with a long metal blade that has a sharp edge for cutting wood, stone, ETC.



### REFLECTION:

Look at the three lessons on priorities. Which lesson do you need to learn the most?

### HOW MY PRIORITIZING AFFECTS OTHERS

When you choose to prioritize your life correctly, you place yourself in a position to prioritize your life for others.

### “NO FOR NOW” DOESN’T MEAN “NO” LATER.

You should be willing to say “No for now.” Why? Saying “no for now” creates space to say “yes” when the time is right.

The natural tendency of others is to place their priorities over your priorities. Knowing this, you can be both an example and helpful to them by explaining, “My ‘No’ to you now will allow me to be present and helpful for you later.”

For example, if you have a major chemistry test in the morning but your roommate needs to talk about their breakup, you would be wise to suggest to him that you talk about it tomorrow after your test. Otherwise, you would be distracted, unhelpful, and unable to give him the attention he deserves.

The result? A win for both of you!

Your prioritized life allows you something rare and genuine to offer — the best and fullest version of yourself — helpful and present.

---

**Today I will apply the 80/20 principle to my life, and by doing so, prioritize my life for others.**

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### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Genuine:** (Synonym is authentic); Definition: Real and exactly what it appears to be.

*“Decide what your priorities are.  
If you don’t, someone else will.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE MANAGING PRIORITIES ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:** Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

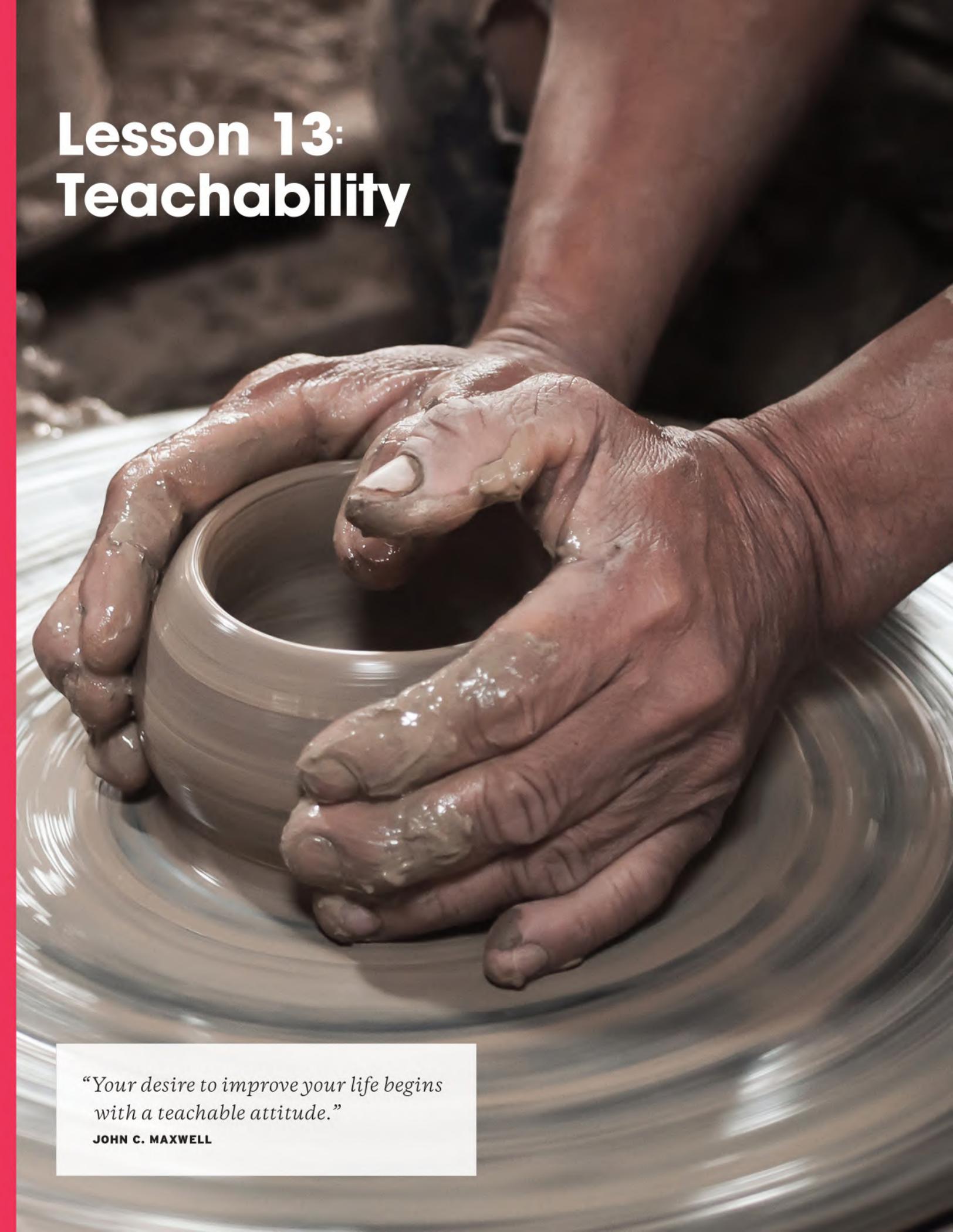
Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....





# Lesson 13: Teachability

*“Your desire to improve your life begins  
with a teachable attitude.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to be teachable so you can  
improve your life.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Teachable:** (synonyms is Trainable) Definition: Ability to learn by instruction.



# Teachability is a Choice



Clay is a product that is easy to mold when wet and can be transformed into a beautiful piece of art. Your life, like clay, can be a work in progress. No matter what your clay looks like, it can be molded by your willingness to be teachable and receptive to the lessons that life has for you. This lesson will help you learn how your life can be shaped into the beautiful person you want to become.

TEACHABLE → MOLDABLE → BEAUTIFUL



..... What area in your life would you like to improve?



## TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE...

### 1. Humble — “I need to learn and improve more.”

If you are humble you know that life is difficult, and you cannot do everything on your own. You need a teachable spirit and the help of others. Pride is the opposite of humility.

Let’s compare the two.

Pride is independent.

Pride closes our minds to feedback.

Pride prevents us from admitting mistakes.

Pride is unteachable.

Pride limits our potential.

Pride says, “I know enough.”

Humility is dependent.

Humility opens our minds to feedback.

Humility allows us to face our mistakes.

Humility is teachable.

Humility expands our potential.

Humility says, “I need to learn more.”

## Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Clay:** (synonym is Earth) Definition: Thick, heavy soil that is soft when wet, and hard when dry or baked, used for making bricks and containers.

2. **Mold:** (synonym is shape) Definition: A hollow container used to give shape to molten or hot liquid material when it cools and hardens.

3. **Pride:** (synonym is self-esteem) Definition: To feel very pleased about someone or something you are closely connected with.

4. **Willingness:** (synonym is Readiness) Definition: The quality of being happy to do something if it is needed:

5. **Humility:** (synonym is modesty) Definition: The quality of not being proud because you are aware of your bad qualities.

**REFLECTION:**

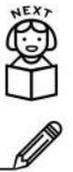
Which represents you more? Pride or humility? .....



**TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE...**

**2. Hungry — “I want to learn and improve more.”**

If you really want to do something, you will find a way. If you don't, you will find an excuse. How do you know you are hungry to learn and willing to improve? By asking for feedback from those that can help you and care for you.



### FEEDBACK QUESTIONS

Check those that apply to you.

#### POSITIVE RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

- Am I vulnerable enough to know I need help from others?
- Am I grateful that someone cares enough about me to help?
- Am I open to listen, learn, and change, even if it hurts?
- Am I willing to make changes for improvement in my life?

#### NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

- Do I think I know more than others and don't need their help?
- Do I roll my eyes during constructive criticism?
- Do I feel ungrateful to those who care for me and want to help me?
- Do I walk away without taking time to reflect on what I have heard?



..... Review what you checked. How many were in the positive response section? How many were in the negative response section? Share.

#### REFLECTION:

##### HOW TEACHABILITY AFFECTS ME



..... What one change will I make to be more teachable?

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

**1.Vulnerable:** (synonym is unsafe) Definition: Able to be easily physically or mentally hurt, influenced, or attacked.

**2.Roll:** (synonym is Spin) Definition: To move somewhere easily and without sudden movements.

**3.Ungrateful:** (synonym is unthankful) Definition: Not feeling or showing gratitude.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, heavily coated in white clay, as they work on a pottery wheel. The hands are positioned to shape a small, shallow bowl. The pottery wheel is in motion, creating a blurred circular effect. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the pottery wheel and the person's arm.

**Today I will be teachable  
and ask others for feedback.**

## TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE...

### 3. Hopeful — “I will learn and improve more.”

If you are not willing to learn and improve, no one can help you. If you are willing to learn and improve, no one can stop you. Teachable people are unstoppable! They have a beginner’s mindset; therefore, many possibilities lie before them. If you have a teachable spirit, you will approach each day as an opportunity to learn and improve. Your heart will be open. Your attitude will be expectant. You will learn from your mistakes.

Everyone makes mistakes. The questions are, “Did you learn from them? Did you change? Have you improved?” If the answers are “yes,” you can be hopeful of your future.



## AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS BY PORTIA NELSON

### CHAPTER I

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost... I am hopeless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

### CHAPTER II

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I *pretend* I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in this same place.  
But it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.



### Definition of difficult words on this page

- 1.Expectant:** (synonym is Eager) Definition: Thinking that something pleasant or exciting is going to happen.
- 2.Hole:** (synonym is pitch) Definition: An opening that goes completely through an object.
- 3.Sidewalk:** (synonym is walkway) Definition: A path with a hard surface on one or both sides of a road, that people walk on.
- 4.Pretend:** (synonym is to dissimulate) Definition: To behave as if something is true when you know that it is not, especially in order to deceive people or as a game.

NEXT



### CHAPTER III

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I *see* it there.  
I still fall in.... it's a habit... but,  
my eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.

### CHAPTER IV

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

### CHAPTER V

I walk down another street.



..... What was the most important thing you learned from the autobiography in 5 Short Chapters? Share.

### TEACHABLE PEOPLE ARE...

#### 4. *Helpful* — “I will pass onto others what I learned and how I improved.”

There are two kinds of sculptures. One is where you subtract and the other is where you add. Sculptures made of stone are created by chipping away and subtracting until a masterpiece is formed.

Sculptures made of clay are created by molding and layering of more clay until a masterpiece is shaped. You are like clay, being molded by a teachable spirit. As you learn and improve, you are helping by passing it on to others.



..... **HOW MY TEACHABILITY AFFECTS OTHERS**

Who will you share your teachable improvements with?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

- Chipping away:** (synonym is to decrease) Definition: To gradually reduce something so that it becomes smaller or weaker.
- Masterpiece:** (synonym is Paragon) Definition: A skillful or impressive example of something.
- Layering:** (synonym is grouping) Definition: Act of adding quantity, or thickness of material, typically one of several, covering a surface or body.



**Today I will help someone learn  
and improve through my sharing.**

*“Your desire to improve your life begins with a teachable attitude.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE TEACHABILITY ATTITUDE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 14: Self-Discipline



*“Your level of success will be determined  
by your level of self-discipline.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to be self-disciplined so you can climb the  
mountain of your dreams.**

---



# Self-Discipline is a Choice



Everything worthwhile is uphill. EVERYTHING! Your dreams are uphill. Great relationships are uphill. Success is uphill. To go uphill, you need to be intentional. You don't accidentally go uphill. Self-discipline is how you get there. You climb uphill by pushing upward. Self-discipline is that push. Self-discipline is doing what you are supposed to do, when you are supposed to do it.

Here's the problem. Most people have uphill hopes but downhill habits. Why? Downhill is easy. People like easy. Look at the difference between uphill climbing and downhill sliding.

## FEEDBACK QUESTIONS

Check which most represents you.

### UPHILL CLIMBING

- Everything worthwhile
- Wins
- Preparing
- High morale
- High self-respect
- Self-improvement
- Purposeful
- Fulfilling
- Making a difference
- Intentional actions (doing)
- Uphill habits

### DOWNHILL SLIDING

- Nothing worthwhile
- Losses
- Repairing
- Low morale
- Low self-respect
- No improvement
- Aimless
- Empty
- Not making a difference
- Good intentions (knowing)
- Downhill habits



..... Which side has the most checks? Uphill climbing or downhill sliding?

## Definition of difficult words on this page

**1.Uphill:** (synonym is climbing) Definition: Leading to a higher place on a slope.

**2.Downhill:** (synonym is slope) Definition: Moving towards the bottom of a hill.

**3.Worthwhile:** (synonym is Valuable) Definition: useful, important, or good enough to be a suitable reward for the money or time spent or the effort made.



It is easy to tell people about your dreams. It's easy to create vision boards and write down your goals. It's easy to stand in front of your mirror and declare self-affirmations; unfortunately, that's where many people stop! To dream is not enough. The achievement of a dream only comes through activating the dream. For dreams to come true, they require constant work. The dream is free, but the journey isn't.

The dream is filled with inspiration. The dream journey requires self-discipline. Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain (the dream); however, few get there because they have to climb (self-discipline).

What is one thing you can do to activate your dream? .....



### Everything worthwhile is uphill!

The word "everything" implies inclusive, all encompassing. It is filled with promise. The word "worthwhile" implies desirable, appropriate and good for you. It is attractive. The word "uphill" implies challenging, grueling, exhausting, and strenuous. It is difficult.

John C. Maxwell said, *"The right thing to do and the hard thing to do are often the same thing."*

---

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Encompass:** (synonym is surrounding) Definition: To include different types of things.
2. **Gruel:** (synonym is crowdie) Definition: A cheap simple food made, especially in the past, by boiling oats with water or milk.
3. **Exhaust:** (synonym is wear out) Definition: Make (someone) feel very tired.
4. **Strenous:** (synonym is difficult) Definition: Requiring or using great effort or exertion.



Your life today is essentially the sum of your habits. How happy or unhappy you are? A result of your habits. How in shape or out of shape you are? A result of your habits. How successful or unsuccessful you are? A result of your habits.



What you repeatedly choose to do (what you spend time thinking about and doing each day) ultimately forms the person you are, the things you believe, the success you will have, and the personality that you portray. But what if you want to improve? What if you want to change poor habits? How would you go about it?

### **The Big Question!**

How do you start uphill climbing and stop downhill sliding?

### **The Big Answer!**

The first step toward going uphill is for you to decide you don't want to stay where you are. The second step is to change your habits. Since you are what you do every day, what you choose to do every day is essential. Ask yourself — are your habits helpful or hurtful to you? Bad habits cause downhill sliding. Good habits help you climb upward. The choice is yours.

*Self-discipline reinforces uphill climbing.*

### **The Big Idea!**

Your thinking determines your habits. Changing how you think will begin to change your habits.

*Self-discipline reinforces uphill thinking.*

Marianne Williamson said,

*“You must learn a new way  
to think before you can  
master a new way to be.”*

---

#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

**1. Portray:** (synonym is sketch) Definition: To represent or describe someone or something in a painting, film, book, or other artistic work.

## Benefits of Self-Discipline



Think about the benefits of self-discipline. Check the benefits that appeal to you.

### SELF-DISCIPLINE...

- Gives you control over your life.
- Makes you an active contributor instead of a passive observer.
- Fuels you to continue climbing when others quit.
- Releases you from the negative effects of an undisciplined life.
- Enables you to do your best in every situation.
- Allows you to enjoy the satisfaction of getting things done.
- Helps your actions to control your emotions.
- Causes others to admire your disciplined lifestyle.

### REFLECTION:

How many of the benefits did you check? .....

Which benefit appeals to you the most? Why?

Which downhill sliding habit will you stop? How? .....



**Today I have decided to be an uphill climber!**

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1.A **passive observer**: (synonym is A careless observer) Definition: An individual who neither influences nor is influenced by the actor he is observing.

## Discipline Your Thinking



What we think determines who we are.

Who we are determines what we do.

You are today where your thoughts have brought you.

You go tomorrow where your thoughts will take you.

Why? Because how we think affects who we are and what we do (habits).

Examples:

**If you think NEGATIVE you will PROCRASTINATE.**

Why? Because you don't think your action will bring something good. Do you know what happens when you give a procrastinator an opportunity? Nothing!

**If you think POSITIVE you will take ACTION.**

Why? Because you do think your action will bring something good. "If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that the little things in life matter." — Admiral William H. McRaven

**If you think life should be EASY you will slide DOWNHILL.**

Why? Thinking life will be easy is expecting everything to come your way. This is wrong thinking. Apathetic people do the downhill slide daily. Most people think if they do nothing, nothing is lost and nothing is gained. If you choose to do nothing then you are, in fact, downhill sliding.




---

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Procrastinate:** (synonym is Delay) Definition: To keep delaying something that must be done, often because it is unpleasant or boring.
2. **Reinforce:** (synonym is strengthen) Definition: To make something stronger.
3. **Apathetic:** (synonym is uninterested) Definition: Showing no interest or energy and unwilling to take action, especially over something important.



**If you think life is DIFFICULT you will climb UPHILL.**

Why? Because you know that you must fight for what you get. If you are an uphill climber, you know that if you do the things you need to do when you need to do them, then someday, you can do the things you want to do when you want to do them. Every mountaintop is within reach if you just keep climbing.



**If you think you are NOT in CONTROL of your life, you will make EXCUSES.**

Why? Because you don't feel responsible. It is easier to point the finger at other people instead of looking in the mirror and taking personal responsibility for your own actions. If you really want to do something, you will find a way. If you don't, you will find an excuse.

**If you think you ARE in CONTROL of your life, you will JUST DO IT!**

Why? Because you can! In choosing to determine your future, you will do what has to be done, when it has to be done, as well as it can be done, and do it that way all the time!



**REFLECTION:**

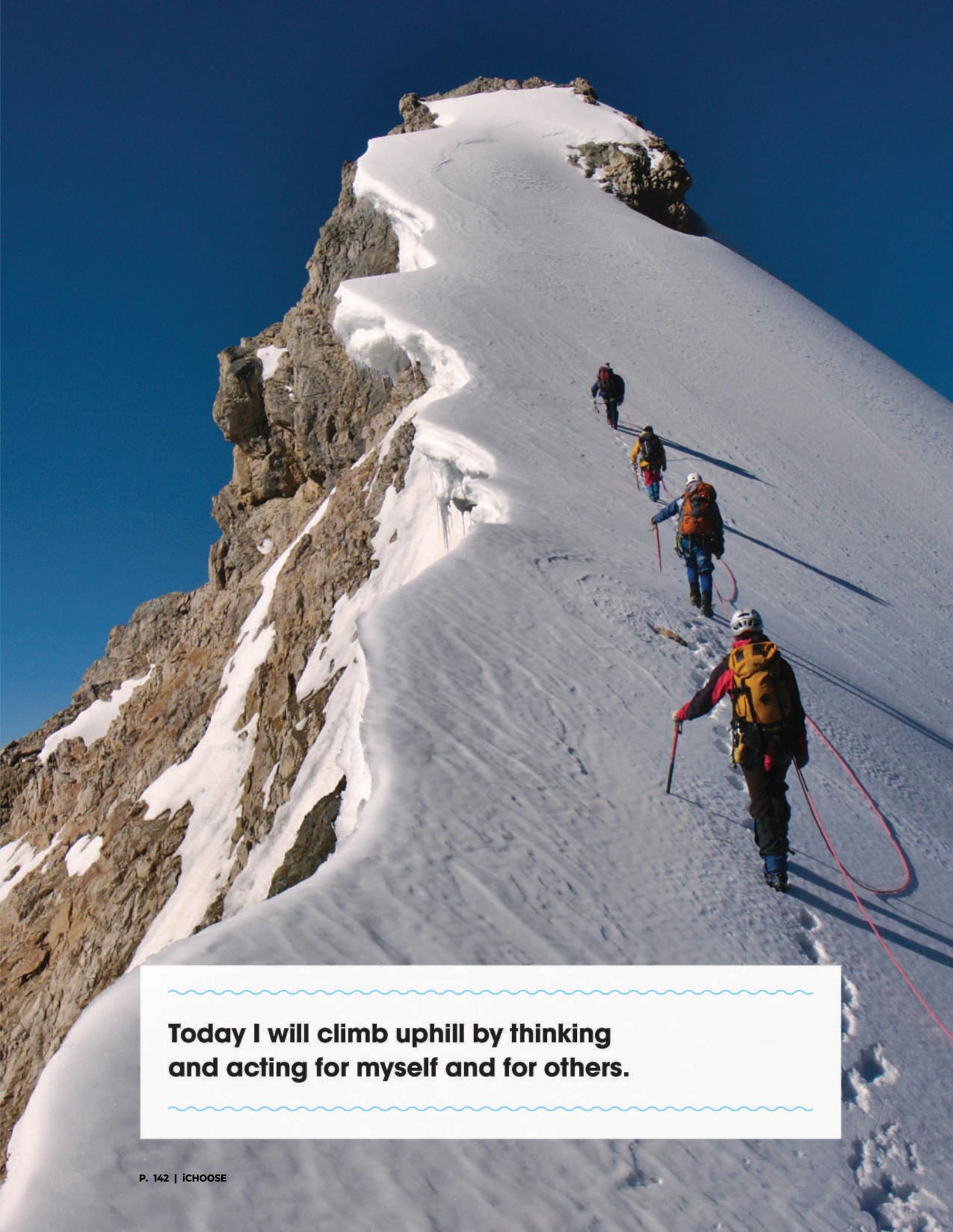
..... Think of how your thoughts determine your habits. Which thought do you have that creates a positive habit for you?



..... Which thought do you have that creates a negative habit for you?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Mountaintop:** (synonym is peak) Definition: The top of a mountain.



~~~~~

**Today I will climb uphill by thinking  
and acting for myself and for others.**

~~~~~

*“Your level of success will be determined by your level of self-discipline.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE SELF-DISCIPLINE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 15: Resilience



*"Be a diamond. Shine through the grind."*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to be resilient and overcome the difficult things in your life.**

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

**1. Resilient:** (synonym is strong) Definition: The ability to be happy, successful, etc. again after something difficult or bad has happened.

**2. Overcome:** (synonym is Conquer) Definition: To defeat or succeed in controlling or dealing with something.



# Resilience is a Choice



Resilience is the capacity to cope with stress and adversity. It is a result of both pressure and choice. Everyone has difficulties in life, but it is your choice to be defeated by hardship or refined by it. It is your choice to be broken by pain or made wiser because of it. It is your choice to be crippled by fear or allow it to build courage within you. It is your choice to be resilient that makes the difference!

The benefits of life's challenges are so precious that if they could be bought, people would pay dearly for them, and they do!

Diamonds are tough — almost unbreakable — and one of the most resilient gemstones on earth. What is fascinating about diamonds is the symbolic beauty they represent. They are the embodiment of beauty molded under extreme pressure.

A diamond doesn't start out polished and shiny. It once was nothing special, but with enough time, pressure, and hardship, it eventually becomes a jewel to be treasured! You can be like a diamond.

You weren't born with resilience, but you can become resilient by practicing it in the choices you make and the actions you take. You become what you do if you do it often enough. After much practice, resilience becomes who you are.



---

## Definition of difficult words on this page

- 1. Adversity:** (Synonym is Misfortune) Definition: A difficult or unlucky situation or event.
- 2. To refine:** (synonym is purify) Definition: To make something pure or improve something, especially by removing unwanted material.
- 3. To cripple:** (synonym is to disable) Definition: To severely affect or limit someone in a way that is not physical.
- 4. Gemstones:** (synonym is A jewel) Definition: A precious stone, especially when cut into a regular shape.
- 5. To fascinate:** (synonym is To interest) Definition: To interest someone a lot.
- 6. Embodiment:** (synonym is personification) Definition: Representation or expression of something in a tangible or visible form.
- 7. Polish:** (synonym is varnish) Definition: To rub something using a piece of cloth or brush to clean it and make it shine.

# Resilient Practices



## 1. Make failure your friend.

Failure is inevitable. Everyone fails, but not everyone responds the same toward failure. Your response toward failure will be determined by whether you make failure an enemy or a friend.

Note the differences and check all that apply:

### FAILURE AS AN ENEMY

- I deny it.
- I put myself down.
- I make it a stop sign.
- I quit.
- I lose my way.
- I get bitter.

### FAILURE AS A FRIEND

- I learn from it.
- I pick myself up.
- I make it a guideline.
- I keep trying.
- I find my way.
- I get better.

Which side has the most checks? "Failure as an enemy" or "Failure as a friend"? .....  
The more you check "Failure as a friend" the more resilient you become.



## 2. Master your emotions or they will master you.

Resilience is an overcoming word. Life is not easy. A resilient person continually swims upstream, runs against a stiff wind, and climbs mountains. Life is uphill all the way! Resilient people don't count their losses; instead, they count their lessons. They keep faith in the future even when things are not working out in the present. They believe mistakes are not failures but are proof to having made the effort. When they fall, they get up, get over it, and get going again!

How do they overcome? What is their secret? They overcome many things because they first conquered their emotions. How?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Inevitable:** (synonym is unavoidable) Definition: Certain to happen and unable to be avoided or prevented.

2. **Bitter:** (synonym is resentful) Definition: Expressing a lot of hate and anger.



Emotions are sometimes unreliable. Have you ever reacted emotionally and later regretted it? Of course. That happens to everyone. To make your emotions an asset instead of a liability, include them with...



1. **An inquisitive nature:** Emotions are your reactions to the world around you. By reflecting and asking why you have a reaction to something, you can make your feelings become more productive.
2. **A mature perspective:** Emotions can be a result of just your own perspective. Allow someone you trust to speak into your life. Their perspective may make your emotions more whole.
3. **More time:** Reflection removes the edge from reaction. Wait until the emotional surge has passed before you respond.
4. **More resolve:** Once you are confident in your decision, act. Let your emotion — with added resolve — strengthen your resilience.



#### REFLECTION:

##### HOW RESILIENCE AFFECTS ME

What one thing will I do to become more resilient?



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Unreliable:** (synonym is undependable) Definition: Not able to be trusted or believed.
2. **Liability:** (synonym is debt) Definition: A thing for which someone is responsible, especially an amount of money owed.
3. **Inquisitive nature:** (synonym is curious nature) Definition: A nature of having or showing an interest in learning things.
4. **Perspective:** (synonym is View) Definition: A particular way of considering something.
5. **Edge:** (synonym is condition) Definition: A small but noticeable amount of anger in someone's voice.
6. **Surge:** (Synonym is Gush) Definition: A sudden and great increase.

~~~~~  
**Today I will not allow my failures or  
my emotions to control my actions.**  
~~~~~



## Resilient Practices (Continued)



### *3. Get small wins under your belt.*



Resiliency is built through accumulating small wins in your life. Small wins begin with effort. Don't try to be perfect. Try to be better. Better is enough to get you going. Once you start, you will feel better about yourself, and that is a small win. The dividing line between words and wins is action. Do you want to sound good or do good?

Resiliency builds self-respect. One sure way for you to build self-respect is through effort and accomplishment. Self-respect isn't something a teacher or a coach or a government can hand you. Self-respect grows through self-created success — not because we've been told we're good, but when we know we're good.

Words of praise without accomplishment = Self-doubt

Words of praise with accomplishment = Self-respect

When you take action, you will encounter fear. You will struggle and face difficulties. At times, you will have to fight for what you want. But you will make a wonderful discovery. Often it is in those difficult struggles that you come most alive. That is where you earn self-respect, forge friendships, learn wisdom, become creative, and do purposeful work. If you want to build resilience, you will have to fight for it, and the greatest win will be self-respect.



#### REFLECTION:

#### WORDS OF PRAISE WITH ACCOMPLISHMENT = SELF-RESPECT

What can you attempt and accomplish right now that will increase your self-respect?



#### HOW MY RESILIENCE AFFECTS OTHERS

#### 4. *See the big picture.*

Life is all about perception. What one person sees as reality may be completely different from what another person in the same situation may see. It all depends on how our individual thoughts, feelings, choices, and behaviors shape our worlds. If we could only take a step back and look, I mean really look, at how we react to situations and interact with other people, we would learn so much about ourselves and others.

Resilience is endurance with direction. It is endurance with a purpose. The result? You view all your setbacks from a broader perspective. You see more so you are able to endure more! When you see more and can endure more, you can be more for others.

Advantages of seeing the big picture...

**1. Hopeful living:** Resilient people never lose hope. They face their fears and have an adaptive attitude that lets them focus on possibilities, even in the worst of times. Hopeful living is both inspirational for the individual and for others. They are refined by tough situations.

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

**1. Endurance:** (synonym is Toleration) Definition: The ability to keep doing something difficult, unpleasant, or painful for a long time.

**2. Setbacks:** (synonym is Problems) Definition: Something that happens that delays or prevents a process from developing.

**3. To endure:** (synonym is Undergo) Definition: To suffer something difficult, unpleasant, or painful.

When they are faced with a very difficult situation, this happens:

Their pride says — “It’s impossible.”

Their experience says — “It’s risky.”

Their reason says — “It’s pointless.”

But their heart says — “Give it a try.”

Defeat is in the mind but resilience is in the hopeful heart.

**2. Generosity to others:** Giving enlarges insight. Even in the toughest of times, resilient people find a way to care for others because sometimes being selfless is the best way to discover your own strength.

**3. A better you:**

John C. Maxwell said,

*“Resilience is not about how hard a hit you can give... it’s about how many hits you can take and still keep moving forward, becoming better with each blow.”*

Resilience is the virtue that allows you to move through difficulties and get better. You shed the label of “victim.” You won’t say, “What happened to me is terrible and there’s nothing I can do.” You will say, “What happened to me was pretty bad, but others are worse off, and I will get through this.” You won’t wallow in self-pity and ask “Why me?” Instead, even though it can be painful, you will persevere with a positive attitude and become a beautiful diamond! The rewards of resilience are worth it.



#### **Definition of difficult words on this page**

- 1.Pointless:** (synonym is senseless) Definition: Something that is pointless has no purpose, and it is a waste of time doing it.
- 2.Generosity:** (synonym is liberality) Definition: A willingness to give help or support, especially more than is usual or expected.
- 3.Blow:** (synonym is punch) Definition: A powerful stroke with a hand, weapon, or hard object.
- 4.Virtue:** (synonym is Goodness) Definition: The general quality of being morally good.
- 5.Worse off:** (synonym is badly off) Definition: Poorer or in a more difficult situation.
- 6.Self-pity:** (synonym is grief or sadness) Definition: Sadness for yourself because you think you have a lot of problems or have suffered a lot.



**REFLECTION:**

..... What is the most important thing you have learned about resilience?

Empty rectangular box for reflection on the most important thing learned about resilience.



..... What resilience choice will you make now that will help you and others?

Empty rectangular box for reflection on a resilience choice to make now that will help you and others.

~~~~~  
**Today I will become better for myself and for others because I am more resilient.**  
~~~~~



*“Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. It is like the mind's paintbrush.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE RESILIENCE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 16: Influence

*“Your life is significant when you influence others in a positive way.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to light your candle of  
influence for yourself and others.**

---



# Influence is a Choice



Influence is like a candle. When lit, it makes everything brighter and better. Unlit, nothing positive happens. It is the choice to light the candle that adds value to others. You hold the candle of influence in your hand. What will you do with it? Will you light it and walk around helping others to see?

When Benjamin Franklin wanted to interest the people of Philadelphia in street lighting, he didn't try to persuade them by just talking about it. He hung a beautiful lantern on a long bracket in front of his home. He kept the glass highly polished. Every evening at the approach of dusk, he carefully lit the wick. People saw the light from a distance, and when they walked in its light, they found that it helped them to avoid sharp stones on the pavement. Others placed lights at their homes, and soon, Philadelphia recognized the need for street lighting.

## WHO LIT THEIR CANDLE FOR YOU?

Name a teacher who helped you in school.

Name a person who makes you feel special.

Name someone who helped you at a difficult time.

Name a person you enjoy spending time with.

The people whose names you wrote down have all had a positive influence on your life. They lit their candles for you!



..... Share with your group one person who has turned on a light for you.

## Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Lit:** (synonym is set on fire) Definition: Past simple and past participle of light.

2. **Persuade:** (synonym is Convince) Definition: To make someone do or believe something by giving them a good reason to do it.

3. **Lantern:** (synonym is lamp) Definition: A lamp with a transparent case protecting the flame or electric bulb, and typically having a handle by which it may be carried.

4. **Dusk:** (synonym is sunset) Definition: The time before night when it is not yet dark.

5. **Wick:** (synonym is Thread) Definition: A piece of string in the Centre of a candle, or a similar part of a light, that supplies fuel to a flame.

The question is not, “Can our influence make a difference?” The question is, “What kind of a difference will our influence make?” The answer is, “Light your candle and make things better for others.”

**YOU LIGHT YOUR CANDLE WHEN...**

**1. You care for others.**

Mother Teresa was known for caring for people. She used her influence to speak up for people who had very little influence. She said, “Let no one come to you without leaving better and happier.” She nurtured others. When you hear the word *nurture*, what do you first think of? If you’re like most people, you probably envision a mother cradling a baby. She takes care of her child, protecting him, feeding him, encouraging him, and making sure that his needs are met. She doesn’t give him attention only when she has spare time or when it’s convenient. She loves him and wants him to thrive. Similarly, as you try to help and influence the people around you, you must have positive feelings and concern for them. If you want to make a positive impact on them, you cannot dislike, despise, or discredit them. You must give them love and respect. Or as human relations expert Les Giblin put it, “You can’t make the other fellow feel important in your presence if you secretly feel that he is a nobody.”



**REFLECTION:**  
When people are with you, do they leave better and happier? .....

How do you help them leave better and happier? .....



**Definition of difficult words on this page**

- 1. **Envision:** (synonym is Imagine) Definition: To imagine or expect that something is a likely or desirable possibility in the future.
- 2. **To cradle:** (synonym is holder) Definition: A small bed for a baby, especially one that moves from side to side.
- 3. **To thrive:** (synonym is Prosper) Definition: To grow, develop, or be successful.
- 4. **To despise:** (synonym is Hate) Definition: To feel a strong dislike for someone or something that you think is bad or worthless.
- 5. **To discredit:** (synonym is To dishonor) Definition: To cause people to stop respecting someone or believing in an idea or person.



## YOU LIGHT YOUR CANDLE WHEN...

### 2. *You help others.*

Your influence will be either a plus or a minus in the lives of others. One way to make sure you add value to people is to intentionally help them. Here are some ways to do that.



- **Practice the 30-Second Rule:** Say something positive to a person the first thirty seconds you are with them.
- **Compliment people in front of other people:** Everyone likes a compliment. Especially in front of others.
- **Be the first to help:** The first person to offer a helping hand is always remembered. Don't wait for others. Help first.
- **Be an encourager:** Encouragement is oxygen for the soul. Everyone does better when encouraged.
- **Listen with your heart:** People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.



#### REFLECTION:

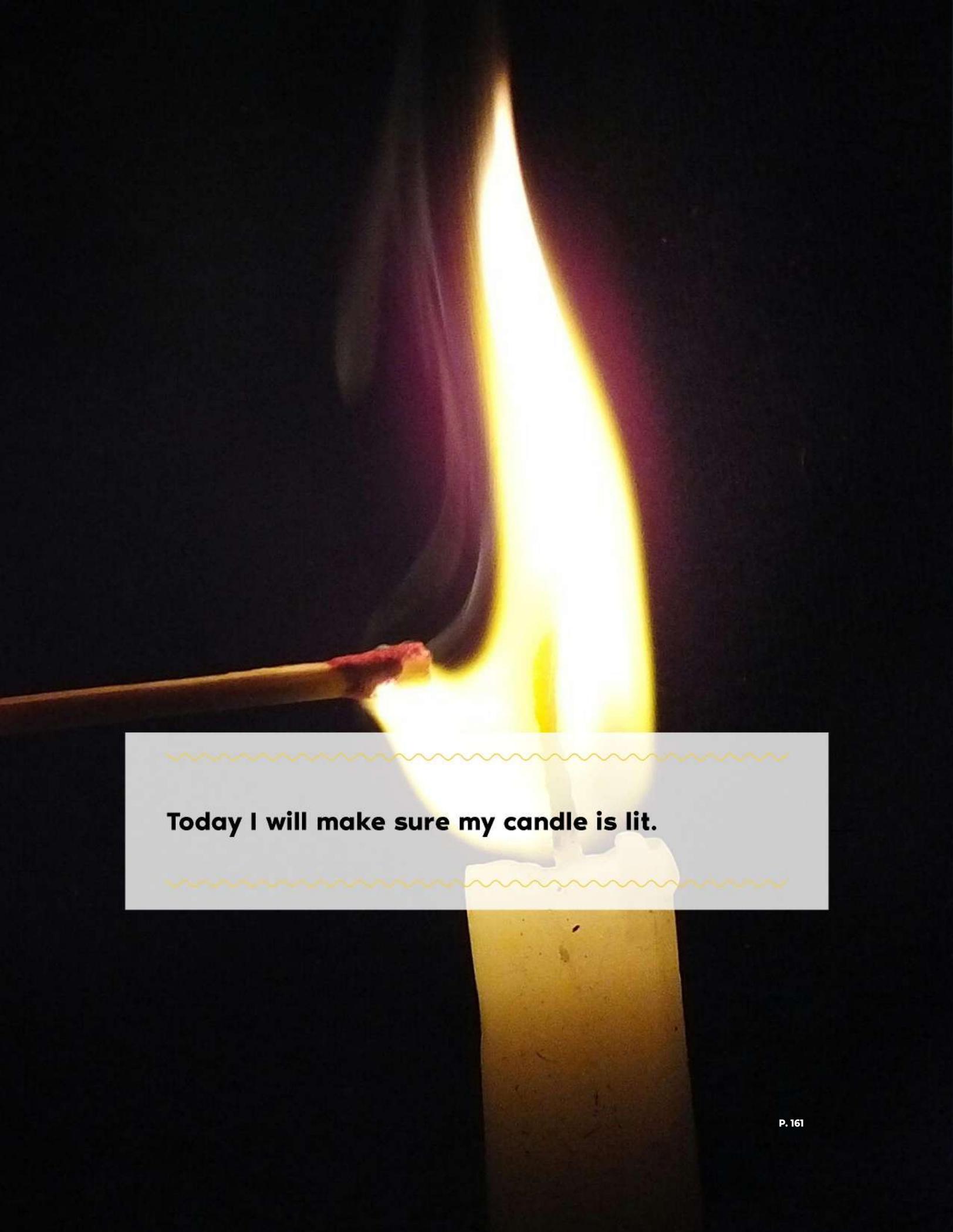
Look at what you underlined. What was most important to you? Why?



Each day, light your candle of influence for someone. Who will it be today? Write their name. How will you light their candle?

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Compliment:** (synonym is tribute) Definition: Something that you say or do to show praise or admiration for someone.



~~~~~  
**Today I will make sure my candle is lit.**  
~~~~~

## Influence is a Choice (Continued)



### YOU LIGHT YOUR CANDLE WHEN...

#### 3. *You learn and live good values.*

Your values reflect the kind of influence you have on others. In this “iChoose” series of lessons, you have learned sixteen values. As you live these values, your candle will shine brightly to light the paths of those you influence. Your family and friends will see you demonstrate these values and will be drawn closer to you.



- **Choice:** One of the greatest gifts you will ever receive is the gift to make choices.
- **Growth:** The only guarantee that tomorrow will get better is if you grow today.
- **Attitude:** Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. It is like the mind's paintbrush.
- **Commitment:** Victory is given to the one who finishes, not the one who starts.
- **Relationships:** Relationships get better when we tear down the walls that divide us and build bridges that bring us together.
- **Character:** Making right character choices makes us bigger on the inside.
- **Forgiveness:** Forgiveness is a choice to not hold something against another person in spite of what they have done to you.
- **Self-worth:** The price we put on ourselves is the same price tag others put on us.
- **Responsibility:** Step up to the mirror and take responsibility for yourself.
- **Courage:** Courage is moving forward in spite of fear.
- **Initiative:** You cannot win if you do not begin.
- **Priorities:** Decide what your priorities are. If you don't, someone else will.
- **Teachability:** Your desire to improve your life begins with a teachable attitude.
- **Self-Discipline:** Your level of success will be determined by your level of self-discipline.
- **Resilience:** Be a diamond. Shine through the grind.
- **Influence:** Your life is significant when you influence others in a positive way.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **To tear down:** (synonym is To demolish) Definition: To intentionally destroy a building or other structure because it is not being used or it is not wanted any more.
2. **Grind:** (synonym is crush) Definition: To make something into small pieces or a powder by pressing between hard surfaces.

Embracing these values makes your influence more valuable.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said,

*“Our chief want in life is someone to inspire us to be what we know we could be.”*

Hopefully these values have inspired you to reach your potential. Now, go inspire others. Keep the candle lit!

**REFLECTION:**

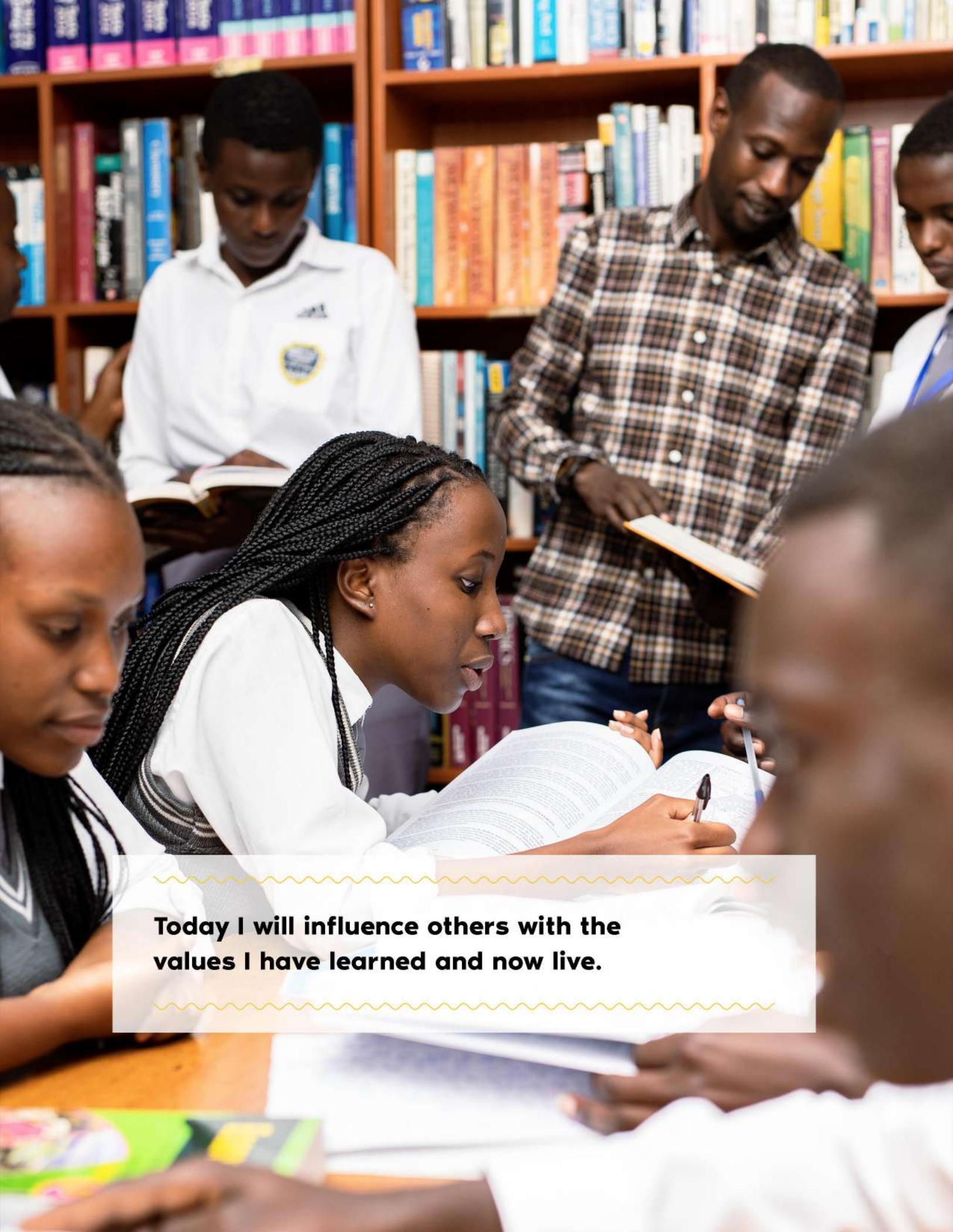
Look at all of the values you have learned. What is the most important one to you? Why?

Which value do you need to work on the most? Why?

What value will you practice that will add the most value to others?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **To embrace:** (synonym is Accept) Definition: To accept something with great interest or enthusiastically.



**Today I will influence others with the values I have learned and now live.**

*“Your life is significant when you influence others in a positive way.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE INFLUENCE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# “I Do”

## Two words that will make a difference in your life and in the lives of others.

Good intentions are overrated. Good actions are underrated. Our lives are measured by our actions, not our intentions. However, most of us want to be valued by our intentions, not our actions. Does it really matter if we wanted or really intended to do something, but ended up not doing it? Not doing anything is the same as intending to do something but never actually doing it.

There is a success gap between knowing what we should do and doing it. The lessons you will learn will help you close the gap from someday to today... occasional to continual... dreaming to doing... wishing to achieving!

Action is the basis for success. Every action may not give you success, but without action no success is possible. Life rewards action. To get from where you are now to where you want to be requires movement. Even when the right action doesn't work, it provides you with information. This kind of failure creates new options. Scientists know this well. Their failure rates are extremely high because they are continually experimenting. Their successes are formed out of their failures.

Time works against anything that is stagnate. Machines that aren't used, rust. Water that doesn't move becomes poisonous. Great white and whale sharks that don't swim suffocate. Albert Einstein said, “Nothing happens until something moves.” Our fatal mistake is waiting to be motivated before we take action.

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### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Underrate:** (Synonym is undervalue): To fail to understand how skilful, important, valuable, someone or something is.
2. **Stagnate:** (synonym is standstill): To stay the same and not grow or develop.
3. **Suffocate:** (Synonym is strangle): To feel or cause to feel trapped and oppressed.

I don't want to get out of bed until...  
I don't want to do my chores until...  
I don't want to do my homework until...  
I don't want to exercise until...  
I don't want to practice until...

The two motivational words needed to be added after “until”:

“I start!”

You will never be motivated until you start.

*Start now.  
Start where you are.*

Start with fear. Start with tiredness. Start with loneliness. Start with boredom. Start with pain. Start with doubt. Start with hands shaking. Start with voice trembling but start. Start and don't stop. Start where you are, with what you have. Just... start.

The moment we take action, do something, then, and only then, do we feel like doing it. The first step of action is always the most important step. What we won't do will keep us from success a lot more than what we can't do. The secret of getting ahead is getting started. Motivation is a result of action. Waiting is the least motivating thing you can do!

The following lessons are designed to influence you to do, to take action. Why? Action is the key to creating the changes needed to propel you in the direction of your dreams. Nobody ever regretted successful actions. Your future will be better if you practice the following lessons. It doesn't guarantee your success or happiness, but it will give you a better chance at both!

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#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Tremble:** (Synonym is shudder): Shaking slightly in a way that you cannot control.
2. **Propel:** (Synonym is thrust): To push or move something somewhere often with a lot of force.
3. **Guarantee:** (Synonym is insure): To assume responsibility for the satisfactory performance.

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice asking good questions  
of yourself and others.**

---

# Lesson 1

## My Questions Influence My Actions



*“If you know the right questions, you will ultimately find the right answers.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
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---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice asking good questions  
of yourself and others.**

---



01

## Five Frogs on a Log



Riddle: Five frogs are sitting on a log. Four decide to jump off. How many are left?

What is the answer?

Take your time.

No rush.

Okay, how many are left?



**ASK EACH PARTICIPANT TO GIVE THEIR ANSWER.**

The most common answer is “one,” but that’s the wrong answer. The correct answer is five. Why? Because the four that “decided” to jump off the log; that’s all they did. There is a big difference between deciding and doing!

Good intentions are overrated. Good actions are underrated!

### **The Law of Diminishing Intent**

The longer you wait to do something, you should do now, the greater the odds that you will never do it!

Too often we are like the four frogs on the log. We decide to take action, but we don’t. Often, we say to ourselves, “it’s not the right time to begin.” So, we wait allowing our intentions to win over our actions.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Have you ever had an intention that never turned into action? What was it?

*“Life lived for tomorrow will always be a day away from being realized.”*

LEO BUSCAGLIA

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

- There is a big difference between deciding and doing.
- Good intentions are overrated. Good actions are underrated.
- The longer you wait to do something that you should do now, the greater the odds that you will never do it.

Which statement is most important to you? Why?



**02**

**Four Questions That Influence Your Actions**

*“Questions are like keys. They unlock the doors of action for us.”*

JOHN C. MAXWELL



**1. “What do I feel?”**

The feeling question is the easiest to answer because feelings are central to our lives. Emotions can hold knowledge for you, if questioned prior to acting on them. Feelings often come on quickly and are impulsive reactions therefore they can be prone to error. Due to this, your feelings can be misleading if you always react to them without first questioning them. What we feel usually becomes the very first influencer of our actions. It is important to know that your feelings are not the ‘real or complete you’. They are only a part of you that will help give insight to your actions, reactions or inactions.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Overrated:** (Synonym is exaggerated): A person or thing is considered to be better or more important than they really are.
2. **Impulsive:** (Synonym is spontaneous): Acting or done without forethought.

Have you ever had an argument with someone and then discovered you were wrong? What did you do? Did you apologize and leave it at that? Or did you apologize with a “but”?

But... you should have realized that would upset me.

But... you know I don't deal well with that kind of thing.

But... I was sure you said.

But... I still think you could have considered my point of view.

It doesn't really matter what the “but” is; it always represents the same thing. It's your mind attempting to manipulate the facts to agree with the way you feel, rather than accepting that your feelings were wrong in the first place. Accepting that our feelings are wrong is one of the most difficult things to do because feelings become our first impression and can seem more important than they are.

**FACTS ABOUT FEELINGS:**

Check which statement you think is the most important fact about feelings.

- Feelings are not the real and complete you.
- Feelings are not always reasonable or logical.
- Feelings come and go.
- Feelings alone should not influence actions.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What is the most important thing you have learned about your feelings?



**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Manipulate:** (Synonym is exploit): To control something or someone to your advantage, often unfairly or dishonestly.
2. **Impression:** (Synonym is feeling): An idea or opinion of what something or someone is like.
3. **Logical:** (Synonym is reasoning): Capable of or reflecting the capability for correct and valid reasoning.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which of those four statements were most important to you? Why?

What good intention will you move into action?



**Today I will take one good intention  
and make a good action.**



## Four Questions That Influence Your Actions



### 1. "What do I feel?" (Part 1)

### 2. "What do I know?"

Often facts are in direct conflict with your feelings. Knowing this truth can make you uneasy. It triggers feelings you may not like, perhaps guilt, disgust, frustration, or any number of other undesirable emotions.

To follow your feelings and ignore the facts will limit you. To follow the facts and ignore your feelings will frustrate you. But when you get the facts correctly and integrate them with your feelings, your thinking becomes solid.

It matters that you feel what you feel. However, it is not reality. Not separating feelings from facts becomes destructive for you and others.

For instance, just because someone feels that you did them wrong doesn't mean that you actually did. Many miscommunications and misunderstandings arise when that happens. Sometimes facts aren't pleasant. Sometimes the truth hurts. Sometimes what we wish to be true simply isn't, and no amount of wishing will ever change it.

If you don't ask the question "What do I know?" then you move through life based on assumptions. Looking for facts throughout conversations and your personal experiences can provide a foundation of realistic thinking.

#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Look at what you underlined. Which statement is most important to you and why?



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Disgust:** (Synonym is dislike): Means a strong feeling of disapproval or dislike.
2. **Miscommunication:** (Synonym is misperception): Means failure to communicate ideas or intentions successfully.
3. **Misunderstanding:** (Synonym is confusion): Means an occasion when someone does not understand something correctly.



### 3. What do I think?

#### Think Choice

Now that you have gathered your feelings and the facts, it's time to think correctly. Think choice! Stop telling yourself that you have to do this, or you must do that, or you should do this. Those thoughts will weaken your motivation to act. Simply reframe your language to say, "I choose." I choose to forgive. I choose to not feel sorry for myself. I choose to do the right thing regardless of my feelings. I choose to admit to my mistakes. I choose to say I am sorry. The moment you choose you will feel empowered to take action. Thinking without doing is more exhausting than just doing.

What have you thought about doing that you have not done?

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Everything in your life will be held in temporary suspension until you take action.

Below are three questions that influence your actions. Act them out together.

1. What do I feel? Place your hand over your heart
2. What do I know? Place your finger to your temple
3. What do I think? Place your hand to your chin



### 4. What do I do?

Leonardo Da Vinci said,

*"I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do."*

Starting is the first and most important step in taking action. Musicians say that the hardest part of practicing is taking the instrument out of the case. To begin is to be half-done. A small step in the right direction is the biggest step you will take.

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#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Empowered:** (Synonym is authorized): Means to be confident and in control of your life.
2. **Suspension:** (Synonym is layoff): Means the act of making someone leave a job or school doing an activity, usually as a punishment.

“I’ll try to do my best” is a statement that most of us have made at one time or another. It is a way of saying that the route to achievement is found in having a “trying attitude.” But is a “trying attitude” enough? Can we move from where we are to where we want to be with a “trying attitude?” I think not! Because when we stop to think about it, trying is not a commitment. It is just another way of saying “I’ll make the effort,” or “I’ll go through the motions.”

If a “trying attitude” is not enough, then what is? It is a “doing attitude.” There is great magic in the little word DO. For when we tell ourselves “I’ll do it,” we unleash tremendous heart power, giving us a desire to excel and a complete aliveness and total dedication to get done what needs to be done.

It is a “doing attitude” that helps us to become who we are to be. It is not enough to just “try.” “To do” is the thing. And we will take action as long as we keep telling ourselves over and over again, “I can do it”... “I will do it”... “I did do it!”

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### 03

## Statements That Move Us To Take Action

- **Action comes before motivation.**

It is easier to act your way into feeling than to feel your way into action. Just do it!

- **Action finds the answers.**

You never have all the answers before you start. You have to start before you have all the answers.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What did you underline that was important to you?



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**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Achievement:** (Synonym is success): Means something very good and difficult that you have succeeded in doing.
2. **Tremendous:** (Synonym is amazing): Means very great in amount or level, or extremely good.



**GROUP ACTIVITY:**

Below are four questions that influence your actions. Act them out together.

1. What do I feel? Place your hand on your heart.
2. What do I know? Place your finger to your temple.
3. What do I think? Place your hand to your chin.
4. What do I do? Flex your muscles.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which question do you think is most important?

Which question do you need to improve on?

**My Action Plan**

1. What do I feel? My feelings are important but are not enough.
2. What do I know? Facts must always balance my feelings.
3. What do I think? My choice gives me control over my life.
4. What do I do? Take action! Nothing happens until I start.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Flex:** (Synonym is stretch): To bend without breaking.



TAKE ACTION:

**Today I will act upon a combination of what I feel, know, and think.**



*“If you know the right questions, you will ultimately find the right answers.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE ASKING QUESTIONS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 2

## My Values Influence My Actions



*“Values determine actions and actions speak louder than words.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

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**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice living good values  
to increase your value.**

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## 01

# The Value of Values

### Values are like...

- Glue - they hold you together.
- A Foundation - they provide stability for you to stand on.
- A Ruler - they set the standard for your behavior.
- A Compass - they give direction and guidance.
- A Magnet - they attract like-minded people to you.
- A Fingerprint - they are uniquely you and identify who you are.

### Values identify who you are.

How do you know whether you are living according to your most true and highest values? Just look at your life. That old saying, “Actions speak louder than words” is especially true when it comes to values. Our lives are continually demonstrating what matters to us most.

Your life never lies. What you value most is what your life will show.

Unfortunately, most of us spend far too much time not consciously honoring our most important values. If you want to know why you are not doing something you think you should, or why you can't stop doing something you think you shouldn't, the answer will almost always be the same: you are living someone else's values.

When you hear yourself saying, “I should...,” “I need to...,” or “I really must...,” you are not acting on your values. But when you hear yourself saying, “I desire to...,” “I choose to...,” or “I love to...,” then you know that you are talking about taking action on something that is truly valuable to you.



#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

What is the most important statement that you underlined? Why?

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Foundation:** (Synonym is base): Means an idea or fact that something is based on.
2. **Continual:** (Synonym is frequent): Means in a way that happens repeatedly.

## Values to Action Compatibility

Values are who you are. Actions are what you do. What you value is the compass that aligns your actions. What you value becomes the foundation you build your actions on. What you value is the glue that holds your actions together. What you value is the magnet that attracts people to take action with you. What you value is the ruler that measures your actions. What you value is the fingerprint that makes your actions uniquely you.

What you value is what you do with enthusiasm! When your values and actions **do not** match you will notice an energy drain. When your values and actions **do** match you will notice an energy boost!

For instance, when you value relationships, you do things that add value to people. When you value character, you make decisions that are true to who you are and desire to be. When you value courage, you overcome your fears and take actions that stretch you. When you value commitment, you are dedicated to finishing what you began. All these actions, because they are aligned with your values, give you an energy boost.



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Name a value you believe is important to you. \_\_\_\_\_.

What can you do this week that will demonstrate that value to others?

\_\_\_\_\_.



### TAKE ACTION:

**Today I will match my actions to what I value.**



## End of Lesson 2, Part 1

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Enthusiasm:** (Synonym is interest): Means a subject or activity that interests you very much.
2. **Demonstrate:** (Synonym is exhibit): Means to show or make something clear.

## Values to Action Compatibility

Values are who you are. Actions are what you do. What you value is the compass that aligns your actions. What you value becomes the foundation you build your actions on. What you value is the glue that holds your actions together. What you value is the magnet that attracts people to take action with you. What you value is the ruler that measures your actions. What you value is the fingerprint that makes your actions uniquely you.

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### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Name a value you believe is important to you. \_\_\_\_\_.

What can you do this week that will demonstrate that value to others?

\_\_\_\_\_.



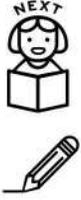
### TAKE ACTION:

**Today I will match my actions to what I value.**



#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Enthusiasm:** (Synonym is interest): Means a subject or activity that interests you very much.
2. **Demonstrate:** (Synonym is exhibit): Means to show or make something clear.



*“When we love something, it is of value to us, and when something is of value to us, we spend time with it, time enjoying it and time taking care of it.”*

**SCOTT PECK**

When you live according to your most important values, that’s when you liberate the most authentic you. Living according to your core values is the secret to living an inspired and fulfilling life.

When you truly value something, you are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to fulfill that value. You’ll notice people, places, things, ideas, or events to fulfill your values. Your personal values determine your attention, retention, and intention: what you notice, what you remember, and what you intend or act upon.

Your core values create what I call “intentional living.” If you place a high value on health, you’ll make sure you get to the gym, even if you have to give up some other pleasures to do so. If you place a high value on “dressing for fashion,” you might skip the gym in order to stop by your favorite clothing store. If you place a high value on friendships, you may postpone other commitments to spend time with friends. If you want to know what you truly value, look at what you make time for.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What was the most important statement you underlined? Why?

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Authentic:** (Synonym is trustworthy): Means something that is real or true or what people say it is.
2. **Retention:** (Synonym is holding): Means ability to keep or continue having something.

When you learn and live good values, your life becomes more valuable!

Below are the values learned in your “iChoose” program. Review them and place a check mark beside the values that mean the most to you.



- **Choice** - One of the greatest gifts you will ever receive is the gift to make choices. You value the freedoms you have through your choices.
- **Growth** - The only guarantee that tomorrow will get better is that you grow today. You pursue new skills and a greater self-awareness.
- **Attitude** - Your attitude colors every aspect of your life. You value striving for a good attitude in any given circumstance.
- **Commitment** - Victory is given to the one who finishes, not the one who starts. You are dedicated to finishing what you began.
- **Relationships** - You value meaningful connections with others.
- **Character** - You value making right character choices where words and deeds match.
- **Forgiveness** - Forgiveness is a choice to not hold something against another person in spite of what they have done to you. You value grace and forgiveness.
- **Self-worth** - You value who you are, no matter where you are regardless of who you are with.
- **Responsibility** - You value taking responsibility for yourself and to others, your successes, and your failures, for both actions and outcomes.
- **Courage** - Courage is moving forward in spite of fear. You value getting out of your comfort zone and taking risks.
- **Initiative** - You activate your life because you cannot win if you do not begin. You value going first, making things happen.
- **Priorities** - You value the ownership of how you spend your time. You understand the value of your strengths and giftedness and prioritizing them to maximize your success in life.

- **Teachability** - Your desire to improve your life begins with a teachable attitude. You value opportunities to learn to get ahead in life.
- **Self-discipline** - Your level of success will be determined by your level of self-discipline. You value a challenge and the ability to remain disciplined in thought, emotions and actions to accomplish it.
- **Resilience** - Be a diamond. Shine through the grind. You understand that life is not easy and value those who can overcome the difficult things in life becoming better and brighter from them.
- **Influence** - You value influencing others in a positive way that creates significance in their lives.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which values mean the most to you? List your top three.

Values come from the heart. You do things best when your heart helps!



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Embrace what you value and live according to it.**





*“Values determine actions and actions speak louder than words.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE LIVING VALUES THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 3

## My Priorities Influence My Actions



*“Place FIRST in your life what matters MOST in your life.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice doing things that really matter.**

---



## 01

# What Matters?



You can do anything you want to do, but you cannot do everything you want to do. Therefore, you must determine what matters most.

### 1. Priorities matter.

Why are priorities so important? Priorities help you determine how you spend your time. They help you decide which actions or decisions deserve your attention most. How do you manage the priorities in your life? By knowing what is most important and choosing to do things in the right order daily.

### Time Thoughts

- Time is more important than money. You can get more money, but you can't get more time.
- Shrink the clock. Make your deadline sooner than requested.
- When you value yourself, you will value your time. When you value your time, you will do something about it.
- Lost time is never found again.
- Learn to say "no." Don't let your mouth overload your back.



#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Which one of those time thoughts mean the most to you? Why?

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Shrink:** (Synonym is decrease); Means to become smaller or make something smaller.

## 2. Today matters.

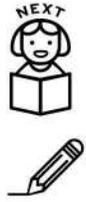
Ernest Hemingway said, “Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today.”

Today matters!

We over exaggerate yesterday,

We overestimate tomorrow.

We underestimate today.



*“How different our lives are when we really know what is deeply important to us, and keeping that picture in mind, we manage ourselves each day to be and do what really matters most.”*

**STEPHEN COVEY**

### Today Thoughts

- Now is all you have.
- There is no such thing as an unimportant day.
- You cannot recycle a wasted day.
- A single day is enough to make us a little better.
- If you can't do it today, what makes you think you can tomorrow?
- “You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.”
  - Ralph Waldo Emerson
- “Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not come. We only have today. Let us begin.”
  - Mother Teresa



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which one of these thoughts means the most to you? Why?

*“Nothing is worth  
more than today.”*

**GOETHE**



**3. Your strengths matter.**

Your strengths will set you up for success. Work on them. Your weaknesses make you average and wear you down. Ignore them. All too often, we spend our time doing things that do not complement our abilities. When that happens, we fail to match our potential.

A parable tells of a group of animals who decide to start a school. The curriculum included swimming, running, climbing, and flying.

The duck, an excellent swimmer, had problems in other areas, so he majored in climbing, running, and flying. As a result, his swimming suffered greatly. The rabbit, a superior runner, spent so much time trying to learn other areas that his speed began to fade. The squirrel, who had rated an “A” in climbing, dropped to a “C” because the instructors spent hours trying to teach him to swim and fly. And the eagle was disciplined for soaring to the top of the trees when he was being taught to climb.

The conclusion? Let the duck swim. Let the rabbit run. Let the squirrel climb and let the eagle fly!

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which animal appeals to you the most? What do you do best: swim, run, climb, or fly? What is a strength of yours?



You do best when you do what you do best! Each day you have to make a decision. Will you give up, give in, or give it your all? You will give it your all when you realize that your priorities matter, today matters, and your strengths matter.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What is your biggest takeaway from this lesson?



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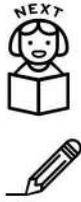
**TAKE ACTION:**

**What one thing will you prioritize today that will make today and tomorrow productive for you?**

---



## What Matters? (cont.)



1. **Priorities matter.**
2. **Today matters.**
3. **Your strengths matter.**
4. **You matter.**

You are a person with potential. You have a contribution to make. You have a gift that others need. You are the change this world needs. You matter!

To be who you are and then become the person you are capable of becoming, that's your priority in life. Life is like a 10-speed bike; most people have gears that they never use. Don't let that be you!

You are on earth for a reason: to better yourself and others. Always remember that you are one of a kind, and never forget, no matter how overwhelming life's challenges and problems seem to be, that one person can make a difference in their world. You can be that person!

### **SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What makes you unique and special? Write one thing and share it with the others.



How you value yourself determines how you value others.

### **5. People matter.**

Our world is filled with needs waiting to be met by someone. You can be that someone! However, to be that person, you must value and care for people. Others don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

### Can you pass this caring test?

During my second month of nursing school, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one: “What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?” Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50’s, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. “Absolutely,” said the professor. “In your careers you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say ‘Hello.’”

I’ve never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.



#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Who do you see at school that you don't know?

Today, introduce yourself to them. Remember their name and say “hi” to them often.



### 6. Happiness matters.

Happier people become better people. They spend more time learning and growing. They are more likely to seek interactions with other people. The happiest of people also tend to be more loving, compassionate, courageous, and grateful. They are more thoughtful, polite, and attentive to others’ needs.

We all know happy and unhappy people. Which are kinder, gentler, more thoughtful, and considerate? Which are angrier, more impatient and intolerant?

Who do you choose to be? The happiest people don’t necessarily have the best of everything. They choose to make the best of everything.

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Conscientious:** (Synonym is diligent) means putting a lot of effort into your work.

*Popularity is when other people like you. Happiness is when you like yourself.*

Being happy yourself is one of the best things you can do to help other people be happy too! Happiness has a ripple effect far beyond a single individual. When you are happy other people notice and are influenced by your joy.

Happiness is contagious!

“We tend to forget that happiness doesn’t come as a result of getting something we don’t have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.”

- Fredrick Koeing

Happiness matters. It matters most directly to you, but it also matters to your family. It matters to your friends. It matters to your community. Your happiness matters - to all of us!

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which of the reasons happiness matters most resonate with you?





**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.

These things matter:

1. Priorities matter.
2. Today matters.
3. Your strengths matter.
4. You matter.
5. People matter.
6. Happiness matters.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Live your life by what matters most.**





*“Place FIRST in your life what matters MOST in your life.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE PRIORITIES THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



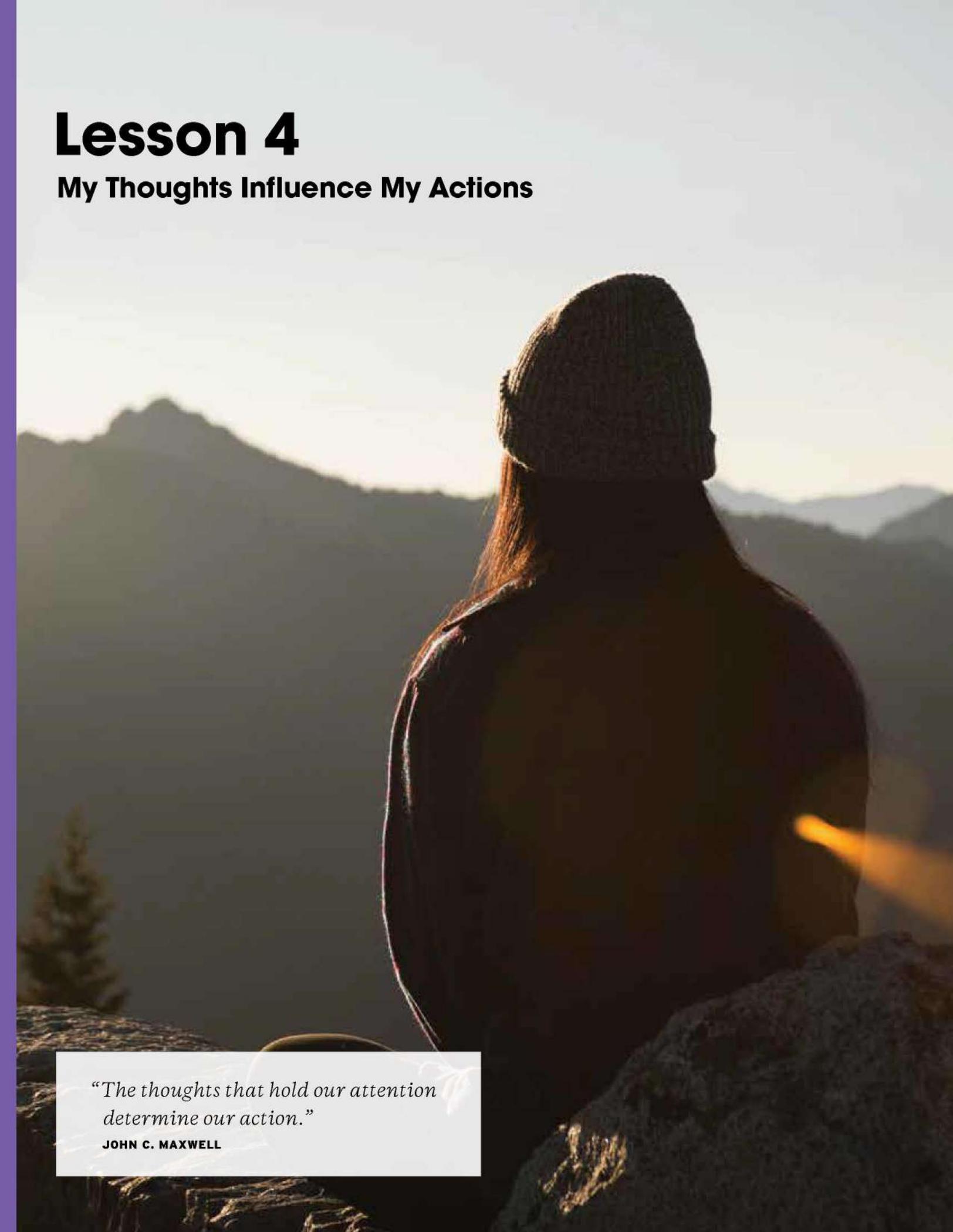
**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 4

## My Thoughts Influence My Actions

A person is shown from the back, wearing a dark beanie and a dark jacket, looking out over a vast mountain range. The scene is captured in silhouette against a bright, hazy sky, likely during sunrise or sunset. The person is standing on a rocky outcrop. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

*“The thoughts that hold our attention  
determine our action.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice thinking better thoughts  
to get better results.**

---



## 01

# Three Thoughts to Think About



### 1. My thoughts have a great influence on my life.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Life consist of what a person thinks about all day long.” Good things begin with a thought. Bad things begin with a thought. All things begin with a thought! So the question is, “What am I thinking?”

#### REFLECT AND EVALUATE:

Throughout my day...

- I think positive thoughts only.
- I think negative thoughts only.
- I think more positive thoughts than negative thoughts.
- I think more negative thoughts than positive thoughts.

Do your thoughts influence a positive or negative lifestyle?

Value your thoughts! Every thought we think has the potential to create our future. What we think and how we think makes such a difference in what we do and how we do it! Since your thoughts influence your behavior, place great value on your thinking.



### 2. Good thinking creates the foundation of good results.

In the book *As A Man Thinketh*, James Allen, philosopher of the human spirit, wrote, “Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results. This is but saying that nothing can come from corn but corn.”



Farmers understand this law in the natural world and work with it, but few understand it in the mental world. One of the reasons people don’t achieve their dreams is because they desire to change their results without changing their thinking. But that’s never going to work. If you expect to reap corn when you planted beans, you’re not going to get corn no matter how much time you spend



watering, fertilizing, or cultivating your bean plants. If you don't like the crop you are reaping, you need to change the seed you are sowing! If you don't like the results you are getting, change your thinking.

If you focus your thinking on results, you are unlikely to change. If you focus your thinking on change, you will get results. Do you want to achieve? Then sow the "seed" of good thinking.

### Three Questions To Ask Myself

1. What do I want?

That answer will determine what kind of change you wish for.

2. Are my thoughts compatible with my desires?

When you choose your thoughts, you choose your results.

3. Are my actions compatible with my thoughts?

Your actions are the interpreters of your thoughts and the change you want in your life.

#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Think of something you desire.

What thoughts will give you what you desire?

What actions will give you what you desire?

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
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4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice thinking better thoughts  
to get better results.**

---



## 01

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If you focus your thinking on results, you are unlikely to change. If you focus your thinking on change, you will get results. Do you want to achieve? Then sow the "seed" of good thinking.

### Three Questions To Ask Myself

1. What do I want?

That answer will determine what kind of change you wish for.

2. Are my thoughts compatible with my desires?

When you choose your thoughts, you choose your results.

3. Are my actions compatible with my thoughts?

Your actions are the interpreters of your thoughts and the change you want in your life.

#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Think of something you desire.

What thoughts will give you what you desire?

What actions will give you what you desire?



### 3. Positive change in my life begins with positive thinking.

Making positive personal changes is not easy because of our feelings. We want to change but we do not know how to get past our emotions. The best way to overcome this challenge is by stating the following “Positive Change Principles.”

#### **GROUP ACTIVITY:**

Read the following “Positive Change Principles” out loud together.

Positive Change Principles

1. I can control my thoughts.
2. My feelings come from my thoughts.
3. I can control my feelings by controlling my thoughts.

If you are willing to change your thinking, you can change your feelings. If you change your feelings, you can change your actions. And changing your actions, based on good thinking, can change your life.

*“Act the way you want to be, and soon you will be the way you act.”*

**BOB DYLAN**

#### **How To Control Your Thoughts**

You control your thoughts by practicing “Think, Write, Say, and Do.”

Thinking is action in rehearsal. Think it.

Writing is action with clarity. Write it.

Saying is action with commitment. Say it.

Doing is action with courage. Do it.



Act out “Think, Write, Say, and Do” together as a group.

Think - Place your finger to your head.

Write - Place your finger to your palm.

Say - Place your hand to your mouth and remove.

Do - Place your arms in the air and flex your muscles.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.

Choose one thought you want to put into action.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**I will practice “Think, Write, Say, and Do”  
with my thoughts.**



## Successful People Think Differently Than Others



The greatest gap between successful and unsuccessful people is how they think. Successful people think abundance. Unsuccessful people think scarcity. Abundance thinking believes that there is always an answer, regardless of the problems. Scarcity thinking believes there are few or no answers, regardless of the problems. Abundant thinking focuses on what is possible. Scarcity thinking focuses on what is the problem. Abundant thinking believes “I can, so I will.” Scarcity thinking believes “I can’t, so I won’t.” Abundant thinking expects you to succeed. Scarcity thinking expects you to survive. Abundant thinking lifts the lid on your potential. Scarcity thinking puts a lid on your potential. Abundant thinking includes adding value to others. Scarcity thinking seldom includes adding value to others.



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Notice the difference between abundant and scarcity thinking. Which type of thinking describes you?

Which type of thinking will help you the most?



## Successful People Practice Intentional Thinking



Benjamin Franklin was a man of many titles and an unmatched ability for accomplishment. He was a politician, an author, an inventor and a scientist. He was a theorist and an activist. Most importantly, Benjamin Franklin was intentional in his abundant thinking.



Every day of his adult life, he set aside time to examine two questions. The morning question was, “What good shall I do today?” And the evening question was, “What good have I done today?” Franklin once wrote, “I would rather have it said he lived usefully, than he died rich.” More than just words, it was the way Franklin lived his life. Even his position as a printer fit his philosophical bent. He did not hoard his ideas, but he shared them, and everyone benefited.

He had a philanthropic mentality; instead of seeing the world in terms of how much money he could make, Franklin saw the world in terms of how many people he could help. To Benjamin Franklin, being useful was its own reward.



04

## The Bookends of Intentional Thinking

Preparation: Thinking before you do something.

Reflection: Thinking after you did something.



*Preparation and reflection  
are like the two wings on a  
plane, they help your  
thoughts fly to new heights.*

### Preparation Bookend

All is well that begins well. At the beginning of your day think of the things you will do and the people you will see. Ask yourself, “How can I make my day successful?”

Think of one person you will meet up with today and ask yourself, “What’s one thing I can talk to them about today?” Think of a task you will do today and ask yourself, “How can I improve on what I am about to do?”

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Who is the person?

What is the task?



**Reflection Bookend**

All is well that ends well. At the end of your day think of the things you did and the people you saw. Ask yourself, “What did I do to make my day better?” Reflection turns experience into insight.

Write down one thing you did in the last 24 hours.

---

What could you have done to make that experience better?

---

Intentional thinking will upgrade your actions with others, which will make you more valuable to others!

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Today I will intentionally think before  
AND after I do things.**

---



*“The thoughts that hold our attention determine our action.”*  
**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE THINKING BETTER THOUGHTS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1     2     3     4     5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



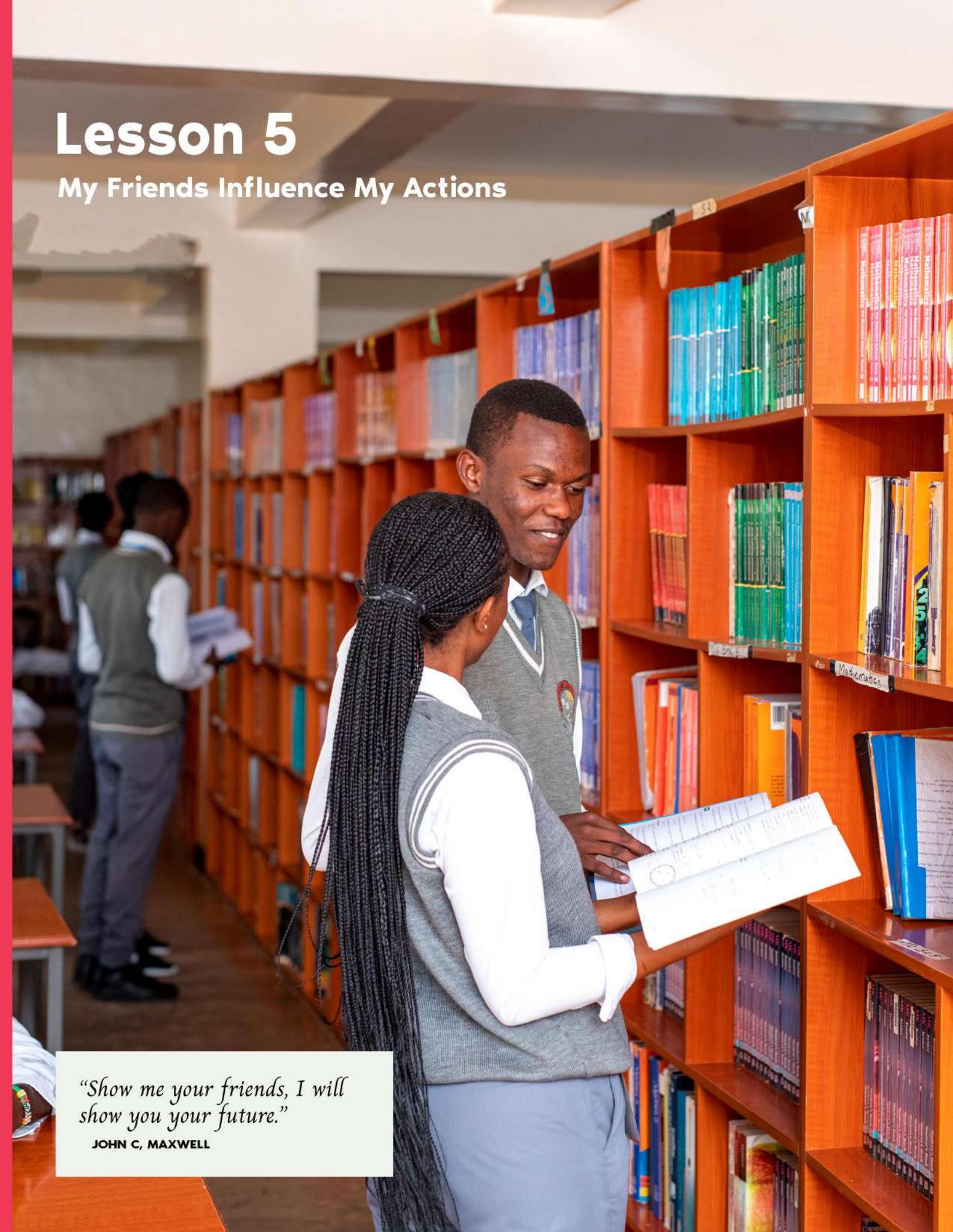
**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 5

## My Friends Influence My Actions

A photograph of a library with wooden bookshelves. In the foreground, a young man and woman are looking at an open book together. The man is on the right, wearing a grey sweater vest over a white shirt and a blue tie. The woman is on the left, wearing a grey sweater vest over a white shirt and has her hair in long braids. In the background, other students are visible, some looking at books. The shelves are filled with books, many of which are labeled 'Mathematics'.

*"Show me your friends, I will  
show you your future."*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice making good choices  
about your friendships.**

---



## 01

# My Friends Influence My Actions

The two greatest influences in your life are what you do and who you know. Those two influences are intertwined. Who you know influences what you do, and what you do influences who you know. You will be like the five people who you spend time with, including yourself.

**WRITE DOWN THE NAMES OF THOSE FIVE PEOPLE, INCLUDING YOURSELF:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Think about those five people. Are they people you want to be like? You are in control over who you are, who you want to be, and who you become by the friends you choose. If you hang with the chickens, you are going to cluck. And if you hang out with eagles, you're going to fly.

Social media has made it easier to find “friends.” The word “friend” has become a very broad term. It can cover everyone – from someone you've met online, someone you went to school with, and even someone you have a friend in common with. In this ever-changing world, it is important to remember what a true friend is and what real friendship is.

There is a difference between being popular on social media and being a real friend. Having thousands of friends on Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook suggests a desire to be popular, not the ability to be a true and loyal friend.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

1. What did you underline that was important to you?

2. Are you searching for popularity or true friendship?

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Intertwined:** (Synonym is interwoven): Means twisted together or closely connected so as to be difficult to separate.

## How To Choose Good Friends



### 1. Choose friends with similar values.

While diversity is great in many ways, when it comes to your general values and beliefs, it's best to keep core friendships with like-minded people. While you can respect others' opinions and differences, choosing friends that hold similar values to yours is important. It will keep you from compromising or being negatively influenced by those that don't uphold the values and standards by which you govern your life.



### 2. Choose friends that share common interests.

Friends with similar interests make life more fun. You can enjoy outings and activities together. They also can be a "Purpose Partner" with you. A "Purpose Partner" is someone with whom you can share your goals and dreams. Because you have common interests, they can relate to what you love and what you want to achieve.

### 3. Choose friends who can complement your weaknesses.

We all have our strengths and weaknesses. Hopefully, you know what yours are. With the right friends, you can tap into the talents, skills, and abilities of those that have expertise in areas that you don't. Maybe you aren't the best at keeping your closet organized, but you have a friend that loves organizing – enlist their help! Perhaps you aren't the best test taker, but you have a friend that gets great grades – enlist their help!



### 4. Choose friends who will stretch you.

*Surround yourself with the dreamers and the doers, the believers and the thinkers, but most of all, surround yourself with those who see greatness within you, even when you don't see it in yourself.*

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Diversity:** (Synonym is distinction): Means the fact that there are many different ideas or opinions about something.

We have a tendency to become what the people in our life think of us. That is why it is important for you to choose friends that will bring out the best in you, see the potential in you, and be an example for you. A friend that expects more out of you is a good friend to have.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Who stretches you? How do they do it?



**5. Choose friends who unconditionally love you.**

Life has much to teach you. You will learn that things don't always turn out the way you planned or the way you think they should, and you will learn that things that go wrong don't always get fixed or put back together the way they were before. Some broken things stay broken. You will also learn that you can get through the bad times and keep looking for better ones as long you have people who unconditionally love and support you.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Unconditionally:** (Synonym is completely): Means in a way that is complete and not limited in any way.

## Review The Five Ways To Choose Good Friends

1. Choose friends with similar values.
2. Choose friends that share common interests.
3. Choose friends who can complement your weaknesses.
4. Choose friends who will stretch you.
5. Choose friends who unconditionally love you.

### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

1. Which do you do best?

2. Where do you need to improve?



---

### TAKE ACTION:

**Today I will take action to improve  
how I choose my friends.**

---



## Friendships End For Different Reasons

- They diminish when a friend moves away because of the distance.
- They end as a result of acceptance into new social groups.
- They grow apart because of choices they make.
- They run their course over time.
- They are not healthy friendships and need to be ended.



*If you have a friend whose friendship you wouldn't recommend, why have it yourself?*

## Healthy Endings

The less you associate with some people, the more your life will improve. Any time you tolerate mediocrity in others, it increases your mediocrity. An important attribute in successful people is that they don't continue friendships that have a negative impact on them. As you grow, your associations will change. Some of your friends may not want what's best for you. They may want you to remain where they are rather than where you desire to go. Friends that don't help you climb want you to crawl. Your friends will stretch your vision or choke your dreams. Those that don't increase you will eventually decrease you. Treat friendship endings with respect. Avoid resentment and grudges. Understand that some friendships have seasons. It's time to move on.



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Have you ever had a friendship that ended? Did it end well?



### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Mediocrity:** (Synonym is average): Means the quality of being not very good.
2. **Resentment:** (Synonym is bitterness): Means a feeling of anger because you have been forced to accept something that you do not like.
3. **Embarrassment:** (Synonym is shame): Means a feeling of self-consciousness, shame, awkwardness.



## How To Be A Good Friend



### 1. Practice sharing.

Sharing is caring. It allows you to experience life together – the good times and the bad times, the dreams and celebrations, and the difficulties and sorrows.

Mr. Alter’s fifth-grade class at Lake Elementary School made headlines when the boys in the class decided by themselves to shave their heads. They did so without embarrassment because one of their own, Ian O’Gorman, developed cancer and had undergone chemotherapy. His hair began to fall out. To make their friend feel at home and one with the crowd, all his classmates agreed to shave their heads (with their parents’ permission) so that upon his return, Ian would not stand out from the class. No one would know who the “cancer kid” was. The teacher, Mr. Alter, was so moved by the spirit of his class that he too shaved his head.

Mr. Alter’s class shared friendship that day and became a family.

### 2. Practice good friendship qualities.

Friendship qualities such as:

- Trustworthiness
- The ability to trust others
- Dependability
- Loyalty
- Honesty

Assessing your own friendship qualities is essential as you build healthy relationships.

*“Who you are is who you attract.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL'S LAW OF MAGNETISM**

It makes sense that you naturally draw in the kinds of friends who are most like you. So, if you’re a downer, you’ll probably find that negative people flock to you. The same is true for being positive: the more you are able to maintain an optimistic attitude, the more like-minded people you’ll attract in return.

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Chemotherapy:** (Synonym is eradicator): Refers to the treatment of disease by the use of chemical substances, especially the treatment of cancer by cytotoxic and other drugs.

**REFLECTION:**

List the qualities of the person you want in a friendship.

Do you have those qualities yourself? If you do, then you will attract that type of friend to you. In other words, be the kind of person you want to spend time with.

**3. Practice contribution.**

A friendship will only succeed if both individuals add value to one another. Consider what you contribute to your relationships versus what you receive from them. Who is getting the better deal?

Choose from the following three options:

- I am getting the better deal.
- The other person is getting a better deal.
- We're getting an equally good deal.

Your best friendships will always be where both contribute equal value.





06

## A Dear Friend's Advice



1. You must first be a friend to yourself before you can be a friend to others.
2. In order to have friends, you must first become a friend.
3. If you make encouraging others a daily habit, you will not want for friends, and you'll feel good about life.
4. If you learn the art of listening with all of your senses, you'll never lack friends.
5. By forgiving others, you show great strength. The willingness to forgive is essential to keeping relationships strong.
6. People who love to laugh and don't take themselves too seriously are people others will want to be around.
7. Learn to say "I love you." Say it often. Say it with your mouth, your eyes, your hands, and your feet. There are no more powerful words in our language.

Stan Toler said:

*"Look for the best in people.  
Everyone has a 'best' in them!"*



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Today I will practice being a good friend.**

*“Show me your friends, I will  
show you your future.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE MAKING GOOD FRIENDS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS  
ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 6

## My Experiences Influence My Actions

*"Experience gives the test first  
and the lessons afterwards."*

JOHN C. MAXWELL

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice evaluating and  
improving every experience.**

---



# My Experiences Influence My Actions

## 1. Try new experiences.

### THE BENEFITS OF TRYING NEW THINGS:

- **You overcome fear.**

Fear is usually the one thing that keeps us from trying new things. Unfamiliarity breeds questions such as, “What if I fail?”, “What are the consequences?”, “What if I don’t like it?” Some level of fear is always present when trying something new, and you will soon realize that your mind exaggerates those fears. Eventually, once you make it a priority to try new things, fear will cease to be a crippling factor in your life. Instead, you’ll see it as a minor speed bump that stands between you and some new experience.

Most people regret the things that they didn’t do, not the things they did do. Your life is singular and finite. Take chances and enjoy it. You only live once. Most fears do not actually come to pass. Overcome them and experience the good things that do occur as a result of trying something new. If you are always in a life vest, how will you know if you can swim?



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

What is the one thing you have not done that you want to do?



- **You get to know yourself better.**

New experiences help you discover yourself. Trying new things helps you realize what was previously unknown. With each new experience you will naturally recognize who you are and who you want to become. It will increase the appreciation you have for yourself.

Do you really appreciate yourself for all you do and are capable of doing? Trying a new thing, whether it’s a new look, a new hobby, or a new motto, will help you to appreciate what you’re really made of. Self-discovery is incredibly important.

Going out on a limb to try something new takes confidence. Showing yourself that you have what it takes will only make you feel better about yourself. You will surprise yourself and realize the potential you had all along.

### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Unfamiliarity:** (Synonym is disregard): Means the lack of knowledge or experience of something.

*“People say they are seeking the meaning of life. I think what they are really seeking is an experience of being alive.”*

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What do you wish to discover about yourself?

What new experience will help you to discover it?



• **You experience personal growth.**

Growth is limited when we only have the same experiences. Growth seems to require that we take new action first, whether it is adopting a new attitude or a new way of thinking, or physically doing something different. Thrusting yourself into new situations and leaving yourself there alone, so to speak, often forces beneficial change. Cultivating a spirit of constant self-challenge keeps you humble and open to new ideas that very well may be better than the ones you currently hold dear.

Life gets boring when you stay within the limits of what you already know. Wake your brain up and tell it you are not here to go through the motions. You are here to experience growth for a purpose.





**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which of the three benefits of trying a new experience appeals to you the most? Check one and discuss.

- You overcome fear.
- You get to know yourself better.
- You experience personal growth.



**2. Make the most out of every experience.**

Living a full life comes from getting the most from it. Getting the most from it doesn't come from what you do, but how you do it.

*“Pearls do not lie on the sea shore. If you want one, you must dive for it.”*



**CHINESE PROVERB**

It takes effort and intention to make experiences memorable and meaningful. What can you do to squeeze the most from every experience and find the 'pearl' within it? Learn to maximize your experiences!

**02**

**How To Maximize Your Experiences**

**1. Elevate each experience.**

- Put emotion into motion - have fun!
- Do something different - kill routine.
- Get everyone involved - no observers.

**2. Learn and grow from each experience.**

- Action leads to insight more than insight leads to action.
- The promise of stretching is not success - it's learning.
- You will never know your reach until you stretch.

**3. Add value to yourself and others with each experience.**

- Say something special about each person during the experience.
- Spend time with each person during the experience.
- Do something special for each person during the experience.

**4. Develop and deepen relationships with each experience.**

- Memories compound when shared with others.
- Make one new friend with each experience.
- Deepen one friendship with each experience.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

1. Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.
2. Which one of the four areas do you want to improve and better maximize your experiences? Why?



**TAKE ACTION:**

**I will maximize my school experience by telling my teacher how excited I am to learn from them today.**



## Bad Experiences Don't Have To Stay Bad



### Truths About Bad Experiences:

- Everyone has them! Some days you're the pigeon. Some days you're the statue.
- Nobody likes them. People do not want ups and downs. They want ups and ups.
- Few people learn and grow because of them. Most people see a bad experience as a tombstone. Few people see a bad experience as a stepping stone.



### How To Make A Bad Experience Better:

*“Experience is not what happens to you. It is what you do with what happens to you.”*

ALDOUS HUXLEY

As you face bad experiences, it's important for you to remember that you can rarely see the benefits while you're in the midst of distress. You usually gain perspective on the other side of it. Author and speaker Og Mandino said, “Whenever you make a mistake or get knocked down by life, don't look back at it too long. Mistakes are life's way of teaching you. Your capacity for occasional blunders is inseparable from your capacity to reach your goals. No one wins them all, and your failures, when they happen, are just part of your growth. Shake off your blunders. How will you know your limits without an occasional failure?”

### How To Deal With Mistakes:

Check which one you do well. Mistakes will happen.

Here are some ways to handle them:

- ACCEPT THEM**  
To err is to be human. We all make mistakes. Expect them and accept them.
- ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM**  
Others may have provoked you into an unwise move or remark, but it was your decision to react as you did. Owning up to your mistakes is necessary for growth and is vital for jumpstarting change.
- RELEASE THEM**  
Giving your mistakes more power than they deserve will turn them into barriers, hindering your ability to move forward and excel with confidence. Say to yourself, “This mistake doesn't define me” and release it.

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Distress:** (Synonym is anxiety): Means a feeling of extreme worry, sadness or pain.
2. **Blunders:** (Synonym is fault): A stupid or careless mistakes.

**LEARN FROM THEM**

If you learn from your mistakes when the situation arises again, you will be more prepared for it and will be less likely to repeat it. Take a mistake inventory and ask yourself, "Why did you do or say this? What would have been more effective? What steps can you take now to do better the next time around?"

**LEARN TO LAUGH AT THEM**

When you can laugh at your own mistakes and get other people to laugh at them too, that helps give you the confidence to move past them. Humor is a way to admit your faults without letting them define you.

**USE THEM**

Sharing your stories of struggle allows others to learn vicariously through you and also empowers them to share their own. If you can forgive yourself for your own errors, you can also forgive others for theirs.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which way do you best handle your mistakes?

Share a mistake you have recently made and how you moved through it. If you are currently handling a mistake, ask for others' advice to help you and note their advice below:

04

## Embrace And Learn From Every Experience

"Everything changes and ends. Things do not always go according to plan. Life is not always fair. Pain is part of life. People are not loving and loyal all the time," explains David Richo.

To experience the fullness of who you really are, embrace every experience and discover the lessons contained within those experiences.

**Definition of difficult words on this page**

1. **Vicariously:** (commissioned) means in a way that is experienced in the imagination through the actions of another person.



Learn and grow from them while you evolve. When you look back on your life, you will realize that every experience was essential to shape your character into the person you are today.



Every day as three young boys went to school, they walked alongside a high wall. Every day as the boys walked to school, they wondered what was on the other side of the wall. Finally, one day, their curiosity grew so strong that one of the boys said, "Let's find out" and threw his cap over the wall. "Now I have to climb the wall to see what's on the other side," he declared.

The other two boys gawked at him in disbelief, but then as they watched him begin to climb, they threw their caps over the wall and joined him. They didn't want to be left behind. They wanted to experience the discovery themselves, not just hear about it secondhand. Throw your cap over the wall too!

*Go explore new places,  
make new discoveries, and  
push yourself to do more  
than you think you can.*

Many are counting on you to go first. Go now!

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Today I will practice improving experiences  
good or bad to live my life to the fullest.**



*“Experience gives the test first  
and the lessons afterwards.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE EVALUATING AND IMPROVING EXPERIENCES  
THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1     2     3     4     5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 7

## My Growth Influences My Actions



*"You don't overcome challenges by making them smaller. You overcome challenges by making yourself bigger"*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice growing today to guarantee  
a better tomorrow.**

---



## 01

# My Growth Influences My Actions

Sir Edmund Hillary was the first person to climb Mt. Everest. Prior to his success on Everest, Hillary had been part of another expedition in which the team not only had failed to reach the summit, but also had lost one of its members. At a reception for the expedition members in London, Hillary stood to address the audience. Behind the platform was a huge photograph of Everest. Hillary turned to face the image of the mountain and exclaimed, “Mount Everest, you have defeated us. But I will return. And I will defeat you. Because you cannot get any bigger, and I can.”

The only way to meet the challenges in your life is to get bigger! You find your limits by pushing them.

## 02

# How To Grow and Get Bigger and Better

### 1. Grow intentionally every day.

There is no such thing as accidental accomplishment. To get better and bigger, you must intentionally grow.

#### WHICH COLUMN DESCRIBES YOU?

#### Accidental Growth

- Plans to start growing tomorrow
- Depends on good luck
- Quits early and often
- Falls into bad habits
- Talks big
- Steps back into safety
- Stops learning after school

#### Intentional Growth

- Starts growing today
- Relies on hard work
- Perseveres long and hard
- Fights for good habits
- Follows through
- Steps forward into growth
- Continues to learn

Jim Rohn said, “You cannot change your destiny overnight, but you can change your direction overnight. If you want to reach your goals and fulfill your potential... become intentional about your personal growth. It will change your life.”

#### Definition of difficult words on this page

1. **Expedition:** (Synonym is exploration): Means a journey undertaken by a group of people with a particular purpose especially that of exploration, research, or war.
2. **Persevere:** (Synonym is endure): Means to continue in a course of action even in the face of difficulty or with little or no indication of success.

## 2. Take responsibility for your own growth.



*“A time comes when you need to stop waiting for the man you want to become and start being the man you want to be.”*

**BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**

The time to grow is NOW! Why? Because...

- The best project you will ever work on is you.
- You're more likely to act yourself into feeling, then to feel yourself into action.
- You will never change your life until you change something you do daily.
- If you give your best effort you will become successful most of the time, but you will be satisfied all the time.

## 3. Get started.

Growth is like a 10-speed bike. In order to switch gears, you have to be moving. A growth mindset is a passport to new adventures. Getting started is just the beginning. You are not yet all you can be. Keep moving because you did not come this far just to be where you are. Carly Fiorina said, “Who you might become is ever before you. What you might accomplish keeps whispering your name.”

The greatest value of growth is personal improvement. Success often asks the question “What am I getting?” Improvement always asks, “What am I becoming?” The profile of someone who improves looks different than those who don't. The differences are...

Everybody makes mistakes.

Everyone hears.

Everybody has problems.

Everybody falls.

Everybody needs to make changes.

Not everybody corrects them.

Not everyone listens.

Not everybody solves them.

Not everybody gets back up.

Not everybody makes those changes.

Growing is defined as a positive change in behavior. That is only possible when we take action and make improvements on what we learn from our actions.



**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



**4. Do not compare yourself to others.**

When you are busy growing, your focus should be on who you are becoming, not what others are doing. You cannot be anybody else; you are uniquely you! So don't worry about what other people are saying or doing. Your goal today is to do better than you did yesterday. Run your own personal growth race. Don't shrink yourself for someone else's comfort, and never become small for people who refuse to grow.

This lesson contains four things that will enable you to grow and get bigger and better. Check the one that you want to improve.

- Grow intentionally everyday.
- Take responsibility for your own growth.
- Get started.
- Do not compare yourself to others.



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Practice one thing you want to improve on.**





## How To Grow and Get Bigger and Better (cont.)



*“You will either step forward with growth or you will step backward into safety.”*

**ABRAHAM MASLOW**

### 5. Try something new often.

Human tendency is to stay with the familiar. There is comfort in doing things you have always done and knowing things you have always known. However to grow, you must try new things. What keeps us from attempting something new?

- Concern for what others will think
- Fear of failure
- Uncertainty of what to do
- Fear of the unknown

We have all experienced these feelings before. However, to grow you need to try something new to experience the following benefits:

- Get to know yourself better
- Gain an appreciation for things you did not know existed
- Challenge your mind
- Become more interesting
- Feed your curiosity

#### **SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Which of the benefits appeals to you the most?

Determine one new thing you will try before the day is over and share it.



6. Embrace the struggle of growth.

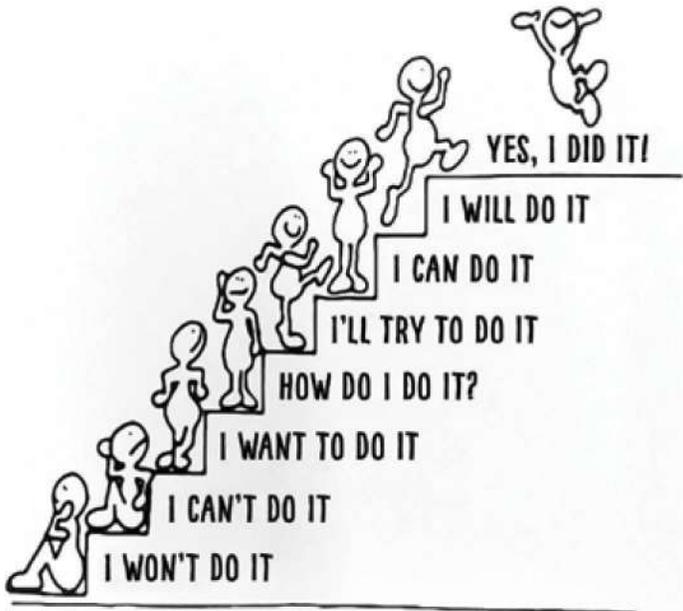
*“I don’t promise you it will be easy. I do promise you it will be worth it.”*

**ART WILLIAMS**

If you can master discomfort, you can master just about anything! Unfortunately, many people avoid discomfort. This becomes a limiting factor in their growth. What comes easy won’t last long, and what lasts long won’t come easy. Don’t join the easy crowd. You won’t grow.

The good news is, whatever you are feeling discomforted about, there is someone else out there feeling exactly the same. You are not alone. Sometimes just knowing that can make you feel more comfortable in pushing through your growing pains.

**THE STRUGGLE STEPS OF GROWTH**



**WHICH STEP HAVE YOU REACHED TODAY?**

Remember, your next step is to take the next step.

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

Review what you have underlined and why it is important to you.

Which struggle step are you on today? Why?

**HOW TO GROW AND GET BIGGER AND BETTER**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF FROM 1 TO 5:**

1. I grow intentionally every day.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I take responsibility for my own growth.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I get started quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I do not compare myself to others.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I try something new often.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I embrace the struggle of growth.	1	2	3	4	5

Which is your strongest area of growth?

Which is your weakest area of growth?



**TAKE ACTION:**

**Today I will take action on my weakest area of growth.**



*“You don’t overcome challenges by making them smaller. You overcome challenges by making yourself bigger”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE GROWING THAT INFLUENCES YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



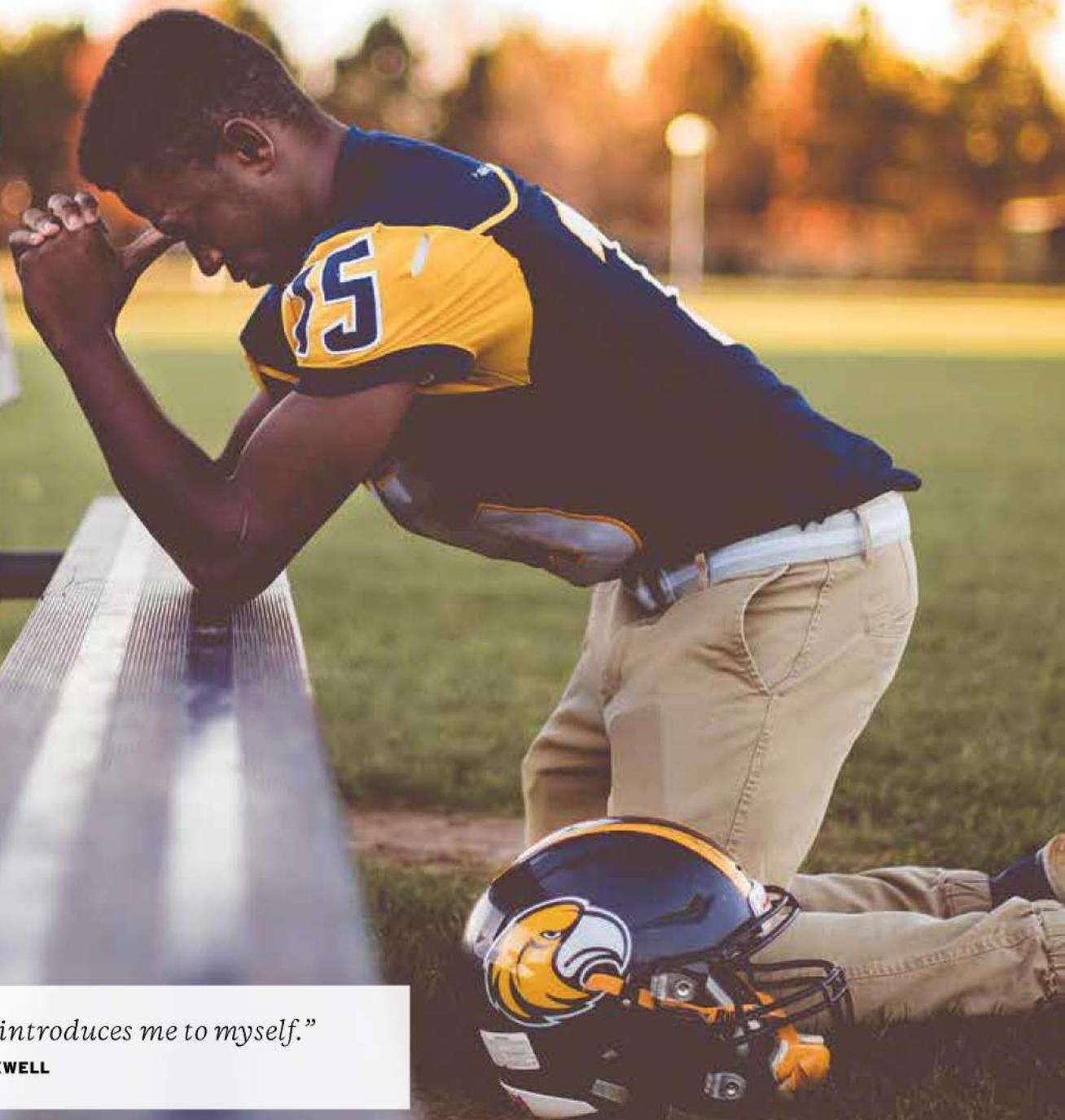
**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....



# Lesson 8

## My Pain Influence My Actions



*"My pain introduces me to myself."*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**LEGEND:**

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person  
read aloud.



Next person  
read aloud.



Underline what's  
important to you.



Share with  
others.



Group  
activity



Take  
action.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:**

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.  
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

---

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Practice walking the pain path successfully.**

---



## 01

# My Pain Influences My Actions



Many young people experience pain which unfortunately results in depression and even worse, suicide. Often teens tend to think they are invincible, so when they feel pain, they are more apt to feel overwhelmed by hopelessness and the belief that they have no control over their lives. Sadly, those mistaken beliefs trigger teens ending their own life, but it doesn't have to happen!

### **WARNING SIGNS**

In an article for World of Psychology, Borchard lists these common indicators of depression among teens:

- Sadness or hopelessness
- Low self-esteem
- Sluggishness
- Substance abuse
- Isolation from parents and friends
- Decrease in desire to do things they used to enjoy
- Physical ailments
- Problems in school
- Talking about death

### **REFLECTION:**

Have you ever experienced any of these signs in your life?

## How To Walk The “Pain Path”



*“The best way out is  
always through.”*

ROBERT FROST



### 1. Have the mindset of a marathoner.

If you are fighting a battle, never forget there is light at the end of the tunnel, so you must stay strong to finish. Switch your mindset from being a sprinter to becoming a marathoner. Accepting you have a long path in front of you will help you to continuously put one foot in front of the other, no matter how long it takes. Ask yourself this question: “Am I prepared to work through my issues even if it takes time?” Most people just want a quick fix, something to give them some relief in the moment. They often use alcohol, food, sex, or something else to lessen the pain however that only makes their pain worse and hurts others. If you want to become well, you need more than a fix. You need to become fit. People who want just a fix, stop improving once their pain lessens. People who want to be fit, continue improving even when the pain lessens.

Sometimes life closes doors because it’s time to move forward, and that’s a good thing because we often won’t move unless circumstances force us to. When times are tough, remind yourself that there are lessons to learn from your pain. Move on from what hurt you, but never forget what it taught you. Just because you’re struggling doesn’t mean you’re failing. Every great success requires some type of worthy struggle to get there. Good things take time. Stay patient and stay positive. Everything is going to come together - maybe not immediately, but eventually.

#### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take one minute and share with the group why it was important to you.



## 2. Keep your negative emotions in check.

It's easy to fall into a trap of self-pity and ask, "Why me?" However, that response is not productive. Everyone is going through their own battles, and the one you are in now likely won't be your last. Re-direct your energy into getting out of the situation rather than sinking further into it. Your mindset must be about victory, not self-pity.

Moving through difficulty can be a highly emotionally charged process. Feelings like fear, loss of control, anger, hopelessness, and resentment are emotionally draining. Preserve your valuable energy by keeping your negative emotions in check. Take steps to resolve the negative emotions in a positive way. Confiding in trusted friends, exercising, and journaling are three ways to release the negative emotions.

Read the following responses of healthy people versus hurting people. Check the ones that represent you when adversity comes your way:

### Healthy people are...

- More willing to change
- More willing to admit failure
- More willing to discuss issues
- More willing to learn from others
- More willing to do something about the problem

### Hurting people are...

- Less willing to change
- Less willing to admit failure
- Less willing to discuss issues
- Less willing to learn from others
- Less willing to do something about the problem



### SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:

Review your check marks. How many are on the "Hurting People" side?

How will you plan to move your check marks to the healthy side? Ask your group for advice on how they would do that.

---

**TAKE ACTION:**



**I will practice moving one check mark from the hurting side to the healthy side. Which one will it be**

---



## How To Walk The “Pain Path” (cont.)



### 3. Celebrate every step forward.

The natural response to pain is to shut down and go inward. The helpful response to pain is to open up and go forward. A critical strategy for staying strong through difficulty is perspective. Every step forward, no matter how small, is a victory.

Every day you are moving closer to the end game, even though you don't feel this is the case. If you compare where you are now with where you were a week ago or a month ago, you will see that there has been progress.

In life, patience is not about waiting - it's about having a good attitude and working hard - knowing the effort is worth it. When the pain knocks you down, don't be afraid to get back up - to try again, hope again, and to live again.

Don't let a hard lesson harden your heart. Life's best lessons are often learned at the worst times and from the worst mistakes. There will be times when it seems like everything that could possibly go wrong is going wrong, and you might feel like you will be stuck in a rut forever, but you won't be. When you feel like quitting, remember that sometimes things have to go very wrong before they can become right. Sometimes you have to go through the worst, to arrive at your best.

While in pain, we must answer this question: “Do I complain or continue on?” You can't do both. Pain doesn't stop nor lessen when you complain about it.

Spending today complaining about yesterday won't make tomorrow any brighter. Take action instead! Let what you've learned improve how you live. And regardless of what happens in the long run, remember that true happiness begins to arrive only when you stop complaining about your problems and you start being grateful for all problems you don't have.

Truth be told, happiness is not the absence of problems, but the ability to deal with them. Every step through your pain will feel better than you ever imagined. You will realize that the struggle is not found on the path; it is the path, and it's worth it!

#### **LESSONS TO LEARN FROM “CELEBRATE EVERY STEP FORWARD”**

- Every step forward no matter how small, is a victory.
- Don't let a hard lesson harden your heart.
- Sometimes you have to go through your worst to arrive at your best.
- Spending time complaining about yesterday won't make tomorrow any brighter.





**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What did you underline that was important to you?

Which pain lesson is most important to you? Why?

NEXT



4. Your scars are symbols of your strength.

*“Tough times don’t last,  
but tough people do.”*

**ROBERT SCHULLER**

We fall.

We rise.

We break.

But... then we heal.

We fail.

We overcome!

Don’t ever be ashamed of the scars life has left you with. A scar means the hurt is over and the wound is closed. It means you have conquered the pain, learned a lesson, grew stronger, and moved forward. A scar is the tattoo of a triumph to be proud of. You can’t make the scars in your life disappear, but you can change the way you view them. Begin viewing your scars as a sign of strength and not pain. See your scars as a sign of “YES! I MADE IT! I survived, and I have my scars to prove it! And now I have a chance to grow even stronger!”

**SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP:**

What did you underline that was important to you?

Share one pain you have overcome.



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**TAKE ACTION:**

**Today I will be proud of my scars and practice walking through my struggles one step at a time.**

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*“My pain introduces me to myself.”*

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

**EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU PRACTICE WALKING THE PAIN PATH THAT INFLUENCES YOUR ACTIONS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)**

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating? .....



**ACTION STEP:**

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating? .....





John C. Maxwell, a #1 New York Times bestselling author, coach, and speaker, was identified as the #1 leader in business by the AMA and the world's most influential leadership expert by Inc. in 2014. His organizations — The John Maxwell Company, The John Maxwell Team, EQUIP, and the John Maxwell Leadership Foundation — have trained millions of leaders touching every nation.

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