

THE CHOICES OF MATURITY & CHARACTER

Taking Responsibility	vs.	Passing Responsibility
Humility	vs.	Arrogance and Pride
Seeker of Truth	vs.	Promoter of Opinions
Promoter of Unity	vs.	Promoter of Disunity
Decisiveness	vs.	Procrastination
Active Faith	vs.	Cautious Doubt
Desire of Growth	vs.	Desire for Pleasure
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Applied Meekness	vs.	Self Enhancement

Everyone of us is on a journey of maturity and growth in our lives, the pace of our growth is different depending on the speed at which we grow out of habits, beliefs and attitudes which do not serve us and into ones which do.

The only thing we have control over in life is how we choose to respond and react to situations in life. Life is lived inside out, not outside in.

Our emotional and mental well-being isn't the result of the things that happen to us in the outside world. This is why it's important to become aware of the extent of the choices we have on a minute by minute basis.

Some people need to create noise in their lives because they do not like or are uncomfortable with quietness and peace. That's because peace scares them. When we have quietness and peace in our lives, it suddenly forces us into a state of self-awareness and reflection.

This is in fact an unwillingness to deal with their problems and maybe even take ownership of those problems. Instead, they adopt avoidance strategies.

The only way that problems can serve us is if we own them and we learn how to deal with them in the most effective way; through being mindful of our responsibility and the choices we have. This is how we grow and mature in life.

It all comes down to the way we respond to our external environment.

This worksheet is designed to take you through the choices we all face when it comes to maturity and character. Through having a deep awareness of our current choices, we can progress by being more mindful of the decisions we make in the future and how that can impact our way of living.

Take some time to explore the choices of maturity and character by answering the following questions:

Taking Responsibility vs. Passing Responsibility

The greatest realisation through mindful meditation we can come to in life is that we're flawed human beings. We're imperfect in every single way and that's okay. It's a truth that empowers us. While you are not responsible for having imperfections, you can take responsibility for making intentional improvements and becoming better.

When we become aware of the extent of the choices we have and how it is we choose to respond to those circumstances, we can choose to either take responsibility or be irresponsible and pass the buck on to someone else.

Qu) Is your natural inclination to take responsibility for other people who refuse to take responsibility for themselves?

Qu) In what ways could you take less responsibility for others to encourage them to step up and start taking more responsibility for themselves?

Qu) What would change in your life if you started to take less responsibility for other people's problems?

Humility vs. Arrogance and Pride

Humility is taking responsibility for the part that we play in a given situation. It's the understanding that we are imperfect human beings but that we can take responsibility

for this and the mistakes we make along life's journey. Arrogance and pride are the tools of the coward.

Qu) Are there times where you haven't taken responsibility for the role you've played in a situation arising and the outcome that followed?

Qu) How do you think the outcome would have changed had you taken responsibility?

Qu) In what ways do you think your life would change if you took responsibility for your imperfections?

Seeker of Truth vs Promoter of Opinions

Mature people are seekers of truth. Many people don't like the truth because it's uncomfortable. It's far easier to have opinions of others than face our own reality.

Qu) Being really honest with yourself, how many social, work and intimate relationships do you have in your life that are based upon truth?

Qu) How do you feel the quality of your relationships would change if you chose to be transparent and honest in them?

Often we don't say things because we don't want to hurt the other person's feelings but by not speaking up, we're not being honest and this can also end up hurting the other person and causing strain on the relationship.

Qu) Think of someone that you can reach out to and be completely honest about a concern you have in the relationship that you have with them. Write one or more names down then reach out to them and have that conversation.

Promoter of Unity vs. Promoter of Disunity

When it comes to being a promoter of unity, we want to consider the labels and judgements that we've made of other people (for example, through generalisations) and how it is that we typically respond to people who are different from us.

Below you'll find a list of words. Many are controversial, however they are all social labels. What this exercise is designed to do is help you to become more mindful of your emotional responses to these labels. As you go through this exercise, try not to judge yourself for the feeling you associate with each word. It's important just to be honest.

WORD	FEELING
FAGGOT	
QUEER	
CHRISTIAN	
MUSLIM	
ISLAM	
PEDOPHILE	
TERRORIST	
RAPIST	
SOLDIER	
RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALIST	
ORTHODOX	
CATHOLIC	
MOTHER	
FATHER	
BROTHER	
SISTER	
SON	

DAUGHTER	
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Decisiveness vs Procrastination

Procrastinators live in a state of indecisiveness. This isn't because they can't make a decision, they simply won't make decisions because they are grounded in fear. Nothing good ever comes from procrastination.

Qu) In what situations do you find yourself procrastinating?

By understanding the situations that lead you to procrastination, you can become more aware of why it's happening. Often it's on those important tasks that mean something. Our avoidance is in fact our fear of not being able to complete the task to the standard we've set for ourselves.

Qu) Why do you fear making decisions?

Often our indecisiveness comes from a past experience where a decision has been made with a less than desirable outcome. Bring awareness to those times in the past into the present and consider how these experiences have influenced your tendency to procrastinate today.

Qu) What are the limiting beliefs preventing you from making a decision?

Indecisiveness and procrastination represents a lack of trust within ourselves and our own judgement. Consider and reflect back on the limiting beliefs that are currently stopping you from moving forward.

Qu) How different would your life be if you let go of these limiting beliefs and trusted in your own decision making abilities?

Active Faith vs Cautious Doubt

When we choose active faith, we're more inclined to make decisions. Active faith means taking action and responsibility for the outcome knowing that you've made decisions based on your best judgement in the present moment.

Qu) What fears are you holding onto that are preventing you from having faith in the decisions you're making?

A lot of the time, we are concerned with other people; what they think, how they'll feel etc. We base our decisions of what they want and what we think they want. Understanding these fears will empower you to step forward and make decisions based on the life you want and what's right for you.

Desire of Growth vs. Desire for Pleasure

Pleasure is temporary but leaves us unfulfilled. Growth is permanent and comes about only through taking full ownership for all our experiences, for the consequences of our decisions and for our own personal growth.

Qu) Consider situations in your life where you have chosen to resist growth through the desire for pleasure or instant gratification?

Reflect back on times where you were aware of what you 'should' be doing but maybe chose to spend time doing something more enjoyable or fun.

Qu) In those situations, how did you feel about your decision to do something for pleasure as opposed to committing to your own personal growth?

Consider how you felt before making the decision, during the activity and afterwards. Often tricking ourselves into experiencing something enjoyable in the short term can lead us to feeling sad or unfulfilled later on.

Qu) Let's reverse the same scenario. Consider a time where you made a sacrifice and decided to focus on doing something that was going to help you progress in life?

Think of as many experiences as you can and write them down. They don't always have to be a big decision. It could be a little thing like working later instead of going out with friends, or choosing to go to sleep earlier because you know rest is important.

Qu) The next time you are finding yourself resisting growth and embracing the desire for pleasure, what is one action step you can take to get yourself back on track?

Note: This doesn't mean you can't have down time and enjoy yourself. This is about taking responsibility for the times we procrastinate or resist growing as individuals often through fear.

Applied Meekness vs Self Enhancement

Self-enhancement is when people put on a mask and try to portray themselves as being better by overcompensating in the areas they lack. This creates a false sense of confidence which actually exacerbates the insecurities that already exist.

Applied meekness on the other hand is harnessed strength; strength under control. It's being secure in who you are, what you're capable of and having full control over your responses in any given situation. Peace can be found when you reach this state of self-confidence without the need for validation from others.

Qu) Can you consider a time where you've tried to overcompensate for something you felt you lacked?

Qu) In this situation, what were the insecurities you were trying to mask

Qu) Did wearing a mask and overcompensating help to reduce these insecurities or make them worse?

Qu) How could letting go of these insecurities allow you to show up as your truest self without the need to self-enhance?

Qu) What action steps can you take to develop your confidence in who you are as an individual, and remove the desire to self-enhance through your current insecurities?