

## Making Wise Choices

*A person defines and redefines who they are by the choices they make, minute to minute. - Joyce Chapman*

### The Wise Choice Process

In the face of any challenge, you can make a responsible decision by answering six questions. You about to learn a system that will empower you to take full responsibility for creating your life as you want it to be despite the inevitable challenges that life present. An example is offered in italics.

1. **What's my present situation?** Begin by identifying your problem or challenge.

*I stayed up all night studying for my math test. When I finished taking the test, I hoped for an A, at worst a B. When I got the test back, my grade was a D. Five other friends got A's. I feel depressed and angry.*

2. **How would I like my situation to be?** You can't change the past, but if you could create your desired outcome in the future, what would it look like?

*I would like to get A's on all of my future tests.*

3. **What are my possible choices?** Create a list of possible choices that you could do.

- *I could complain to my history classmates and anyone else who will listen.*
- *I could drop the class and take it again next semester with another instructor.*
- *I could complain to the department head that the instructor grades unfairly.*
- *I could ask my successful classmates for help.*
- *I could ask my instructor for suggestions about improving my grades.*
- *I could read about study skills and experiment with new ways to study.*
- *I could request an opportunity to retake the test.*
- *I could take all of the online practice quizzes.*
- *I could get a tutor.*

4. **What the likely outcome of each possible choice?** Decide how you think each choice is likely to turn out.

- *Complain to classmates: I'd get the immediate pleasure of criticizing the instructor and maybe getting other's sympathy.*
- *Drop the class: I'd lose three credits this semester and have to make them up later.*
- *Complain to department head: He would probably ask if I've spoken to my instructor first.*
- *Ask classmates for help: I might learn how to improve my study habits; I might also make a new friend.*
- *Ask instructor for suggestions: I might learn what to do next time to improve my grade.*
- *Read about study skills: I would probably learn some good strategies to improve my test scores.*
- *Request the opportunity to retake the test: My request might get approved and give me the opportunity to raise my grade.*
- *Take all online quizzes: This action wouldn't help my grade on this test but it would probably improve my next test score.*
- *Get a tutor: A tutor would help, but it would probably take a lot of time.*

5. **Which choice(s) will I commit to doing?** Now create your plan your plan. Decide which choice or choices will likely create your desired outcome; then commit to acting on them.

- *I'll talk to my successful classmates, make an appointment with my instructor and have him explain what I could do to improve, and I'll request to retake the test. I'll read about successful study skills and if these choices don't raise my next test score I'll get a tutor.*

6. **When and how will I evaluate my plan?** At some future time you will want to evaluate your results. To do so, compare your new situation to how you want to be.

- *After my next math test, I'll see if I have achieved my goal of getting an A. If not I'll revise my plan.*

In this activity you will apply the Wise Choice Process to improve a difficult situation in your life. Think about a current problem, one that you're comfortable sharing with your classmates or teacher.

Perhaps this situation has to do with a grade you received, a teacher's comment, or a classmate's action. Maybe the problem relates to a relationship, a job, money. The Wise Choice Process can help you make an empowering choice in any part of your life.

Answer each question from the Wise Choice Process as it relates to your situation:

1. **What's my present situation?** Begin by identifying your problem or challenge.

**How would I like my situation to be?** You can't change the past, but if you could create your desired outcome in the future, what would it look like?

2. **What are my possible choices?** Create a list of possible choices that you could do.

3. **What the likely outcome of each possible choice?** Decide how you think each choice is likely to turn out.

4. **Which choice(s) will I commit to doing?** Now create your plan your plan. Decide which choice or choices will likely create your desired outcome; then commit to acting on them.

5. **When and how will I evaluate my plan?** At some future time you will want to evaluate your results. To do so, compare your new situation to how you want to be.

*Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved. - William Jennings Bryant*