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The Basics

WHO AM I?

Who am I is one of the most puzzling questions for teenagers to answer. The teenage years represent some of the most difficult times in a young person's life. It is the time when they are transforming from who they are, to who they will become. No longer children, teens struggle to find their identity as they develop into adults. These are confusing times. Knowing who you are is one of the greatest pieces to the puzzle of life. It creates the road map that governs your direction, purpose, and your fulfillment in life's endeavors. Like a key, your identity unlocks your future.

Your journey begins with a question. Through the pages of this book, you will find the answer that defines who you are and why you should love yourself. In so doing, you will be able to access the great doors of opportunity that await you.



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The Basics

The basics of success have been shown to be encapsulated in a person's character. Students succeed and obtain good grades by being diligent at their studies; athletes such as Michael Jordan and LeBron James succeed at their craft when they possess the character traits of dedication and determination. By being dedicated to their sport they worked tirelessly and never gave up. Through their determination they became the best in the World.

According to Thomas Koulopoulos founder of the Delphi group, there is no single formula for success yet there are specific traits that drive every successful person one such trait is the passion for self-improvement. Successful people are always working on improving themselves; they have been known to be their own worst critic. For example, Benjamin Franklin was such a person, he created a list of 12 character traits that he wanted to improve on. Your grades are few things that he would identify to cultivate. Benjamin Franklin would say to develop each trait and work on them daily.

Webster defines success as: a person or thing that has success as measured by the attainment of goals wealth etc.



Wisdom Key

As you read through the positive character traits, you may feel a conviction as you read some of them. This feeling will help to illuminate the traits that are most essential for you to work on.

Character Traits

There are 20 character traits that are believed to promote not only success but your own happiness in life as well. Utilizing the traits on the next page. Answer the questions below.

1. Analyze the character traits and select those that you feel best depict who you are and explain why.

2. Which traits do you desire to have that you currently lack?

3. What are you willing to do to cultivate the traits that you are lacking?

Positive Character Traits

- 1. Integrity:** Having strong moral principles and values to do right regardless of whether anyone knows it or not.
- 2. Honest:** Upholding truth in your conversation and actions.
- 3. Loyal:** Faithfulness and commitment. You don't walk away from other people or commitments
- 4. Respectful:** To treat others kindness, courtesy, kindness, and civility.
- 5. Humility:** You are modest about your opinion of yourself yet confident.
- 7. Compassionate:** You consider and feel the suffering and misfortune of others, and a desire to do help.
- 8. Fair:** Doing the right thing for everyone. Not taking advantage or treating others wrong
- 9. Responsible:** You accept obligations even when it isn't easy. You can always be relied upon to do what you are supposed to
- 10. Forgiveness:** To let go of offenses; to pardon someone of their offenses towards you. This allows you to move forward.
- 11. Authentic:** Being your real self, without pretense, or insincerity.
- 12. Courageous:** doing what is needs to be done despite being afraid
- 13. Generous:** You like giving your time, money and other efforts to others without expecting something in return.
- 14. Perseverance:** Being persistent on a course of action without giving up before reaching the goal
- 15. Politeness:** Practicing good manners, common courtesies, and etiquette.
- 15. Kind:** Kindness is an attitude of being considerate and helpful, to others.
- 16. Loving:** Being open and loving toward others. It may include being affectionate with those feelings.
- 17. Optimistic:** You are generally hopeful and confident an have a positive mental attitude.
- 18. Reliable:** You are dependable and consistent in your ability to come through because you do what you say you will do
- 19. Conscientious:** You desire to be your best and to also do things well. You are thorough, and vigilant in your efforts.
- 20. Self-discipline:** Having strong discipline or will power, to adhere to the work, steps or actions necessary to advance.

Positive Character Trait

What Do I Believe?

Another aspect of knowing who you are is knowing what you believe. Most of us go through life making decisions and walking through situations without really understanding why we do the things that we do or who we really are. One aspect of knowing who you are is knowing what you believe. Knowing your morals and values are key to your growth and development because they govern your behavior.

Morals: principles of what is right or wrong and human conduct.

Example: it is morally wrong to steal.

Values: standards and principles considered valuable or important in life. An example is very important to get a good education.

Morals and values determine what you judge as right or wrong. These principles have a way of shaping the person that you become. They represent invisible road marks and barricades that direct you along certain paths while blocking you from walking down others. If you do not know what you believe or why you believe it, you will most likely fail to remain true to those beliefs when challenging circumstances come your way. As you go through the exercises that follow, you will be asked to not only to identify your morals and values but also to put them to the test in hypothetical situations.





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The Issues

Emotions

Psychologists have discovered that there are 6 basic emotions that are universal in all human beings regardless of where they live in the world:

- Anger
- Disgust
- Fear
- Happiness
- Surprise
- Sadness



Anger



Fear



Disgust



Joy



Sadness



Surprise

Feelings Word List Titled

Happy	Sad	Mad	Surprised	Disgust	Scared
Joyful	Blue	Angry	Delighted	Sick	Fearful
Glad	Gloomy	Furious	Curious	Ugly	Helpless
Cheerful	Miserable	Used	Impressed	Inferior	Nervous
Warm	Lonely	Outraged	Playful	Stupid	Puzzled
Thankful	Heartbroken	Aggravated	Enchanted	Exposed	Reserved
Terrific	Depressed	Insulted	Shocked	Guilty	Cautious
Merry	Threaten	Rebellious	Inquisitive	Inadequate	Tearful
Helpful	Disappointed	Frustrated	Stunned	Shamed	Afraid
Ecstatic	Hopeless	Scorned	Exhilarated	Inept	Horrorified
Appreciated	Melancholy	Violated	Mystified	Insignificant	Anxious
Pleased	Let Down	Resentful	Splendid	Embarrassed	Frightened
Tender	Alone	Spiteful	Astonished		
Uplifted	Burdened	Bitter			

1. Which emotions have you felt today? Explain why these emotions emerged.



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Resolutions

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Introduction

As you go through life you will encounter challenges. When you were a tot riding your tricycle everything was great. You'd have the Tooth Fairy to leave dollars under your pillow and you could count on Santa Claus to make the end of every year feel magical. But as you mature into young adults you realize that there is no Tooth Fairy, and Santa Claus will only bring the gifts that your parents can afford to buy. As the teen years emerge so do problems. You realize that the path to happiness is not as smooth as you once thought. As you face every new obstacle, it is not always easy to figure out what you need to do to overcome it.

This level is designed to help you deal with the conflicts that arise in life. As you learned in the last chapter, proclaiming your morals and values is the easy part- putting them to the test is a whole other story. Have you asked yourself why it is so difficult to put your beliefs into practice when challenges arise? There are several reasons it could be hard to make choices that align with your belief systems when you're in the hot seat. Peer pressure, poor communication skills, and a lack of self-control, are all barriers to resolving conflicts peaceably. This chapter will discuss the barriers to making good choices and will teach you strategies to find good solutions to conflict, communicate effectively and resist the temptation to do things that compromise your beliefs.



Conflict Resolution: The Method and the Plan

In dealing with peer pressure, you must learn how to negotiate outcomes, despite pressure from your friends to do otherwise. Many times teens simply don't know how to say no or when to walk away from a situation. The Conflict Resolution Method teaches you that there are always options or solutions to resolve a conflict. The important thing to note is, the right option will always take you forward not backwards. When you choose the wrong option, it may seem like the problem is solved but you have really just opened a big can of worms. For example, smoking a joint at a party might solve your immediate problem of wanting to look cool in front of your friends but what if the cops busted the party and arrest everyone for possession of illegal substances? Not only would your parents be upset but you will get suspended from school and have an arrest on your record that could make it hard to get a job or get into college. Your problems would only be beginning.

Finding the best solution to conflict is a process that begins with visualizing all the possible choices and choosing the one that will best resolve a problem without any additional fall out. There are four steps to resolving conflict:

First, identify the problem:

This is when you focus on what obstacles have been placed in your way. What challenges does the situation present?

Second, develop alternative to resolve the problem:

This is when you think creatively in order to find a way out of the problem. Consider all possible actions that can resolve the issue in a manner that allows you to stay true to your morals and value.

Third, choose the best plan:

This is when you make a decision about which alternative is the best choice. Remember the best choice always takes you forward not backwards.

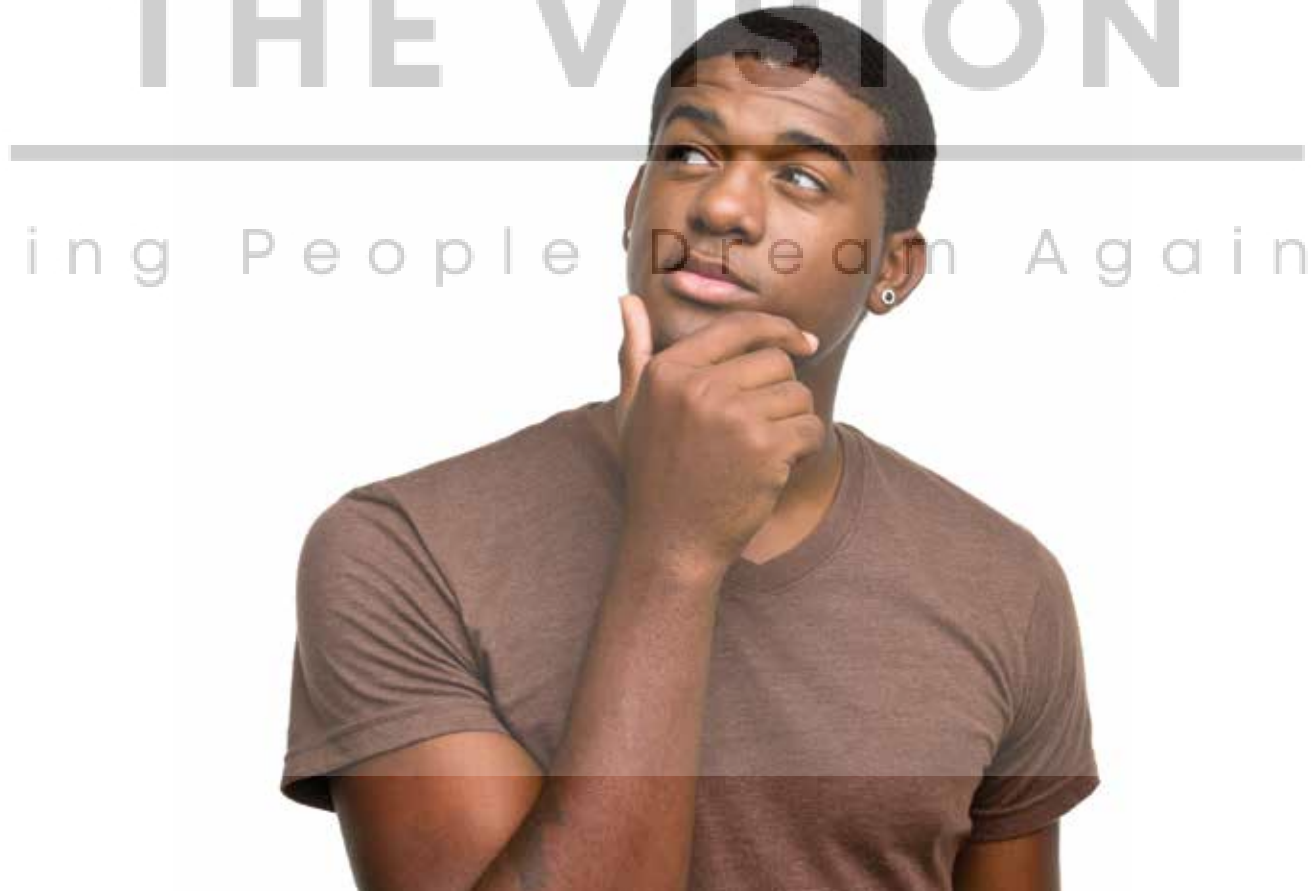
Finally, implement the plan and evaluate your success:

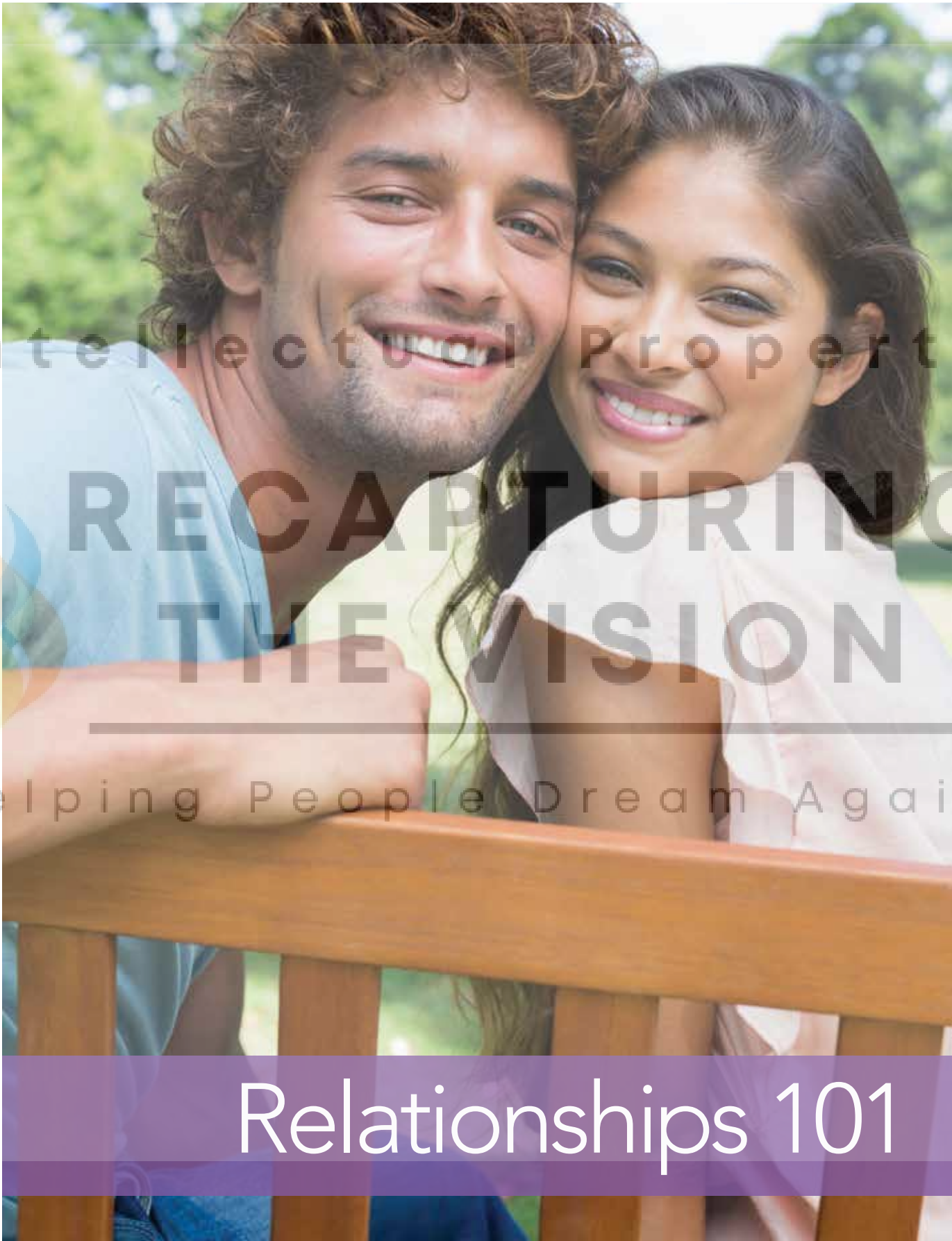
This is when you put your plan into action. the first question you want to ask yourself is :Did the alternative option you chose accomplish the goal and bring a good end to the problem ? How will you use the results to help resolve future conflicts?

Let's look at an example: Joann wants to fight you because she is sick and tired of your mouth.

1. Identify the problem
 - A. You're trying to avoid fighting.
 - B. The problem appears to be hearsay: he said -she said. More than likely the problem is someone with loose lips or shady intentions.

2. Develop alternative to resolve the problem.
 - A. Asked to speak to her after school away from everyone.
 - B. Tell her you do not know what she's referring to because you have not said anything about her but if she wants the fight bring it on!
 - C. Apologize.
3. Choose the plan that best resolves the problem.
 - A. you choose to speak to her about the situation after school.
4. implement the plan and evaluate if it was successful.
 - A. When you see her after school, explain to her that someone must be trying to start something because you honestly had not said anything. Then allow her to explain what happened from her point of view.
 - B. Evaluate. Did the plan work ? Does Joann still want to fight you or are you two on good terms now?
5. In the following activities you have a chance to consider alternative solutions to real world problems.





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Relationships 101

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Introduction

Good relationships are more than something we want, they are also what we need to be our happiest and even healthiest. Whether with family, friends or romantically-supportive, fulfilling relationships don't come automatically. They take time and energy to make them work. You must be armed with great communication skills to govern your relationships so prevent them from breaking down over time.

The next exercises will equip you with the communication skills that will help you to build great relationships versus tear them down. As you learn the proper communication tools, be sure to put them to work daily to make your relationships great.



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Reflective Listening

You can probably relate to the escalation of tempers when two people disagree. It is in the heat of these types of moments that miscommunication is most likely to occur. When emotions are this high, meanings can be misconstrued. Reflective Listening is a very important technique that can ensure that the intended message is what is relayed to the listener. It effectively lessens misunderstandings and allows you to deal with the real issues at hand instead of getting more angered over unintended messages.

In a conversation using Reflective Listening, the speakers should refrain from blaming or making accusations. They should use short statements such as, "When you do this...", or "I feel this way when..." The listener repeats what the speaker said before responding. Here is an example:

With Reflective Listening:

Janet: I am unhappy in this relationship.

Jeremy: What I hear you saying is that you are unhappy with our relationship.

Janet: Yes, I'm unhappy because when you're around your other friends, you tend to leave me out.

Jeremy: I hear you saying that you feel unhappy because I work too much and you feel that I have put work before you.

Janet: Yes, I feel this way when you work too much.

Jeremy: Janet I am working long hours because I want to be able to give you nice things. It's for our future. I don't want for this to cause problems. So what do you want me to do, cut back?

Without Reflective Listening:

Janet: I don't like the way you ignore me.

Jeremy: I don't know what you want!

Janet: You spend too much time at work and it makes me feel as though your work is more important to you than I am. I get what is left over.

Jeremy: I don't give you left-overs I am trying to make ends meet. Isn't anything I do good enough for you? You wanted new furniture, so I am working my hands to the bone for it and you still aren't happy. I don't know what else I can do.

Janet: I don't need you to do anything for me, I'll get the furniture on my own. I only wanted the house to look like a home and be nice for you to come home to!

Reality Lesson

Directions: Read the Reality Lesson and answer the questions.

The Honeymoon is Over

Janet and Jeremy have been married nearly a year now and boy have they gotten off to a rocky start. Shortly after returning from their honeymoon, they have found it difficult to deal with disagreements. It seems as though every time there is a concern, talks escalate into yelling matches or worse yet break down into spats. Each party camps out on opposite ends of the house for days until by some miracle they are able to make up. Even in these situations when they finally make up they still never go back to iron out the wrinkle of the original spat that got them apart in the first place.

Janet has just started working at a new job and she now gets home a little later. Jeremy often arrives home first. When Janet steps through the door, she hustles to get dinner ready and tidies up a bit before the day fades to night. Janet, pressured to keep the house in order, believes that most of the responsibility falls on her. She just wishes that Jeremy would help out a little more.

Monday evening Janet rushes through the door to set her grocery bags down. She calls out to Jeremy to remind him that they only have an hour to get things ready since their dinner guests would be arriving shortly. "Jeremy, where are you, did you hear what I said? Donald and Terina will be here soon." Jeremy emerges from the bedroom where he has been playing with his Xbox. Janet explodes "I am sick and tired of doing everything. Why can't you help out!"

1. Did Janet start this discussion off correctly using reflective listening?

2. What did she do wrong?



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