

Preparing for the Road Trip: The Power in Choice

Facilitator Focus:

Purpose 1:

To help participants recognize they are each accountable for their own lives and that no one can take their individual choice away... no matter their circumstances.

Purpose 2:

To raise participants' awareness that every person has choice and they cannot control or take responsibility for the actions of others.

Purpose 3:

To prepare participants for the ownership and exploration this course requires.

The Power in Choice

Choice is the foundation for empowerment. By recognizing and embracing the fact that you always have CHOICE, you create an infinite source of power for change within yourself. Good things and bad things happen in life... to every person. It is your ability to choose your reaction to each situation that determines how satisfied or dissatisfied you will be day in and day out.

Why is your power of CHOICE so important?

“You are ALWAYS choosing.” What does that mean?

Even when you choose to do nothing, you still CHOOSE it. So by not doing anything, you are still doing something...
Everyone has freewill.
You get to choose and you get to experience the outcomes for your choices.

Even though the universe brings you many circumstances in life that you may or may not have chosen in some way or another, you choose what's next.

“I am always choosing. I am exercising my Power of Choice, no matter what I do.”

What feelings, thoughts, and emotions occur when you say this sentence out loud?

Say this sentence out loud together, then ask them to fill in this box. Ask for responses to the questions and ask them to explain why it makes them feel this way. Emotions might vary from liberation to fear to anger to denial to excitement to resentment to guilt to joy. Keep this discussion going by asking what is behind these emotions.

Do you ever feel like you *don't* have a choice? Name a situation here...

The Power in Choice

When you look at this situation where it *feels* like you don't have a choice, can you see a choice right now?

The point here is for them to see they do have some choice in a situation where they previously felt like they had none. Ask for examples from the class a Example: " My parents make me go to school." What are the options? Run away, explore what parents reasoning is, drop out and move out, change the attitude. Don't be afraid to let them explore the options that seem 'wrong' Only when they see other alternatives can they truly see that they are in fact making a choice by coming to school. Consequences will be discussed later, and this example can be used again in that discussion.

Why is your power of CHOICE so important?

So you don't blame other people for problems and circumstances in life. Why?

One of the biggest reasons for embracing CHOICE in your life is to stay in control of what is rightfully yours: your attitudes, your body, your emotions, your thoughts. Everyone wants a sense of power and control over their own lives, but how easily people give it away just to avoid facing their own problems and taking responsibility! When you blame other people for what is happening to *you*, you willingly give away control of your own life. What you think is punishing them, is really only punishing you. When you blame other people you become a victim. Victim mentality keeps you in a place of no power. When you take responsibility, you become a warrior or a 'victor', keeping the power yourself! When you acknowledge that you always have a choice, you can take full control of your life.

When you take a minute to look at your life, what stuff do you see as someone else's fault? Who are you blaming? Write it down here.

It is _____ 's fault that _____ (this is happening or happened).

What happens when you blame that person?

You become a victim.
You lose control.
You get stuck in a cycle of doing nothing to fix things.
You stay angry a lot of the time.
You try to punish them

The Power in Choice

What happens to the quality of your life when you give that person control by blaming him/her?

Quality of life is no good because you stay angry. You stay hurt. You stay stuck. You give them control of your reactions.

What choice can you make to take the responsibility back?

Encourage someone to share a situation where he/she is blaming and have the group come up with options that help the student take back responsibility

What are three specific ways your life will improve when you take that responsibility back?

1.

2.

3.

Why is your Power of CHOICE so important?

So you realize that other people have a choice, too. Why does this matter?

This is a big one. After all this talk about control and taking yours and owning your own 'stuff'. It is only fair and reasonable that other people get the same opportunity. If you have CHOICE in your life and can use it to create whatever situation you choose to create, then so does every other person on this planet. This is both liberating and frustrating! On one hand, it is amazing because it frees you. You are no longer responsible for other people's decisions, good or bad. You can only do the best you can with what you've got and give 100% of yourself. How other people respond to your efforts is not your responsibility. This helps you to resolve and unload feelings of guilt. Ok, great. That takes a lot of pressure off of you. But it also requires that you loosen your grip on other people. Since you have choice and control of your own life, you need to respect that every other person in your life does, too... Which means you need to stop telling people what to do. You may think you know what's best for them. However, you should only offer your thoughts and advice and not be insulted if they don't do as you say.

The Power in Choice

When you take a minute to look at your life, do you see a situation in which you are taking too much responsibility for the choices that another person is making? It may be a friend, a brother or sister, a parent, a boyfriend or girlfriend... Write it down here.

The goal here is to help each participant see where they may be trying to control someone else's life or possibly taking on the weight of bad decisions made by a parent or another person.

What happens to your quality of life when you take responsibility for that person's choices?

The goal is for the student to see what is truly happening to their own well-being and happiness when they continue to take responsibility for problems that don't belong to them.

What might you do differently now that you are aware you *cannot truly choose* for that person?

What are three specific ways your life will improve when you stop trying to control or fix things for that person?

1.

2.

3.

The Power in Choice

'Taking Ownership'

What does the phrase 'take ownership' mean to you?

Responsibility for yourself
Believing in yourself
Acknowledgement (you can't change what you will not own)

Of what does every person need to take ownership?

➤ decisions	➤ anger
➤ attitudes	➤ fears
➤ goals	➤ boundaries
➤ problems	➤ health
➤ careers	➤ habits
➤ relationships	➤ choices
➤ actions	➤ words

Our Lives.

WHY? What happens when you DON'T take ownership for the things above?

You give someone else control of your life.
You have little or no direction
You are a victim instead of a warrior.
You will not reap the benefits the universe has to offer for ownership
You can't find the solutions to your problems
You end up blaming other people all the time
It is difficult to find a solution to your problems
You lose your ability to choose
Your life spins out of control
You cannot accomplish your desires

What happens when you DO take ownership for your own 'stuff'?

- You can make things different.
- You can make things better.
- You will go further in your relationships / your career / your achievements / your life.
- You will see CHOICE more clearly

The Power in Choice

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

When you embrace your power to Choose, you clearly improve your quality of life. When you improve your quality of life, you attract negative attention from those who *have not* embraced their own Power in Choice.

Why does this happen?

Often times people do not like you to change because when you change they must change. When one part of the system changes, all the other parts shift, too.

Some people might get jealous of your new found courage to make decisions for yourself.

Some people want you to stay stuck b/c they are stuck. If you move, it means they have the potential to move, too.

What can be done about it?

One thing you can do is explain the power of choice. Whatever the case, don't let someone make you feel guilty for embracing your power of choice. If they want to feel bad... that is their choice!

You can ignore them.

You can still love them and continue doing exactly what you need to do to take the next best step for your life.

The Power in Choice

Personal Exploration: Read the following list.

Be honest with yourself and circle each area where you are not fully taking ownership.

➤ My problems	➤ My decisions	➤ My anger
➤ My career	➤ My attitude	➤ My fears
➤ My relationships	➤ My goals	➤ My boundaries
➤ My actions	➤ My health	➤ My habits
➤ My choice	➤ My words	➤ My future

<i>I am not fully taking ownership in this area.</i>	<i>It affects my quality of life because...</i>	<i>If I DID take ownership for this area my life would look different because...</i>	<i>Am I willing to choose differently to create positive change?</i>	<i>One choice I can make to take ownership of this area of my life is...</i>
1.				
2.				
3.				

The Power in Choice

How many times has an adult looked at you, jaws clenched, face all red, and said, “Now you have to face the consequences of your decision.” It’s usually a pretty negative thing, right? You have probably heard this phrase after you’ve done something wrong and you are headed for some type of punishment or discipline. Even though ‘consequences’ can be to be a pretty ugly word in a teenager’s vocabulary, it’s still important to tie it back to all this talk about CHOICE. But first, let’s name it something different. Yes, there are always ‘consequences’ to each choice you make, but there are some other words that mean the same thing...

Consequences also means...

Results Effects Outcomes

Fill in this sentence with whichever word you like best...

*I am always choosing, so it’s important to think about the possible
 ----- of the CHOICES I make.*

Think of a choice you are making right now that is producing ‘useful’ results for you. Write a little bit about that choice here:

What is the choice?

When do you make the choice?

What happens right before you make the choice?

Now list at least 5 things that are happening in your life because you are making the above choice.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

The Power in Choice

Think of a choice you are making right now that is producing results for you that are NOT USEFUL. Write a little bit about that choice here:

What is the choice?

When do you make the choice?

What happens right before you make the choice?

Now list at least 5 things that are happening in your life because you are making the above choice.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Name two different choices you could make that would produce better results for you and for your life?

1	
2	

The Power in Choice

What have you learned about the Power in Choice today?

How does your power in choice affect your social life and your schoolwork?

How does your power in choice affect your family life?

How does your power in choice affect your future?

What will you do differently when you leave here today?

Top 5 Questions to embrace my Power in Choice.

1. Who is currently choosing for me?
2. What is it costing me?
3. What benefits am I receiving?
4. Am I ready to consciously choose?
5. What are 3 choices I can make to improve my quality of life?

Top 5 ways to embrace my Power in Choice.

1. Realize that I am ALWAYS choosing, even when I choose to do nothing.
2. Don't blame others! When I blame I become the victim.
3. Accept that I cannot fix things for other people.
4. Take ownership of my life.
5. Don't let the negativity of others pull me down!

