

# Quest

e-newsletter

Information, insight and inspiration for your quest

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### Making Healthy Choices (Part 2)

- Seven critical factors
- NEW Feature: "Q-Starters"

LIFE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

## Making Healthy Choices (Part 2)

We make choices every day that impact our health, relationships, financial standing, spiritual growth, safety, emotional state, and ultimately our future. Even in situations that are not the result of our own choices, we still can choose our reactions and our attitudes.

### CHOICE

marvelous gift



powerful tool



awesome  
responsibility

Choice is a marvelous gift, a powerful tool and an awesome responsibility. In this edition of *Quest*, you will discover seven factors that are important when making healthy choices. In addition, you will find a variety of strategies for successfully implementing them. These factors include:

- Self-esteem
- Mental State
- Courage
- Honesty
- Research
- Creativity
- Careful Consideration

Before reading on, please take a moment to write down or circle those factors from the above list that are the most meaningful or interesting to you. In this month's "Q-Starters"™ article, you will be asked to take a closer look at all seven factors, especially those you marked.

### The Seven "Healthy Choice" Factors

#### Self-esteem and Mental State

The condition of your self-image and mental status greatly influences your ability to make choices. When we feel confident and have good mental clarity we make better-informed decisions. Before finalizing a decision, especially an important one, assess the state of your self-image and your ability to think clearly and logically. Remember that a variety of factors can impair your self-esteem and mental condition (e.g. stress, burnout, negativity, physical illness, spiritual stagnation, unresolved issues). You may need to take a time-out to recharge your battery or carve out some quality time to regain your focus. If possible, delay making major decisions until your status improves, or consider an alternative that offers you the ability to renegotiate when you're able to make a better decision.

#### Courage and Honesty

Not all of the choices we make will be popular or easy. Some will be made without the support of others, while some decisions will be difficult, but necessary. Having courage is vital to the decision-making process. It's having the strength to stand up for what you believe in, despite what others think.

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*(Courage and Honesty Continued)*

It's consistently making choices based on your own set of values – not anyone else's. Courage demonstrates to others your determination and moral fiber. Everyone's source of courage is different. Perhaps you draw yours from your life experiences, someone you admire, a family member, or your faith. The key is finding it and tapping into it when necessary. Equally important is your ability to be true to who you are. It's essential that you establish a list of conditions or guidelines based on your value system. Be honest with yourself and others about your ability to carry out a decision based on your priorities, lifestyle and beliefs. Too often we find ourselves in unfavorable situations (e.g. a job, relationship, financial status) because we're not honest with others or ourselves when we make decisions. Instead we try to conform -- while at the same time – sacrificing our priorities and values. And this brings us back to courage.

### **Research and Creativity**

When making decisions, it's important that you do the necessary research. Make a list of possible resources for information (e.g. books, the Internet, someone with experience or contacts, organizations). Your investigation may reveal some unexpected and welcomed options, and valuable resources that can help you implement your decision. During this exploration stage, you will also want to engage your creativity. Some of our best choices are not always the most obvious choices. Brainstorm various scenarios. If you're having trouble getting your creative juices flowing, try the *"Creative Whack Pack"* by Roger von Oech. This deck of idea-generating cards can help you break habitual thought patterns and look at what you're doing in a fresh way.

### **Careful Consideration**

Once you've narrowed your choices, it's time for thoughtful reflection. Based on the criteria you established, weigh the pros and cons (e.g. risks, rewards, consequences, costs). Avoid dismissing ideas too quickly. Give each option careful consideration. During this analysis step, you may be tempted to seek the assistance of others. A word of warning -- be very selective. The best time to seek advice is during the research stage. Too much new information at this point can cloud your thinking. However, many people (present company included) have found direction and solace through spiritual contemplation and introspection. And if possible, step away from the decision-making process and take a break. It's amazing how our subconscious minds continue working on an idea even when we're not thinking about it. It is through our subconscious that we experience "aha" moments.



We make choices every day that chart the course for our future. These seven factors can help us improve all of our choices -- large and small, and ultimately our future. To discover more about your own decision-making style, go to this month's "Q-Starters."

## **February "Q Starters"**

In the decision-making process, the seven "healthy choice" factors work together to provide a framework for making better-informed choices. Review the seven factors (especially those you circled or jotted down) and then answer the questions on the following page.

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**How well are you implementing the seven factors? Rate your overall effectiveness.  
List your strengths. Identify the factors you tend to avoid.**

**How has a recent decision been impacted by your use of the seven factors or the lack of?**

**Which factor(s) are you going to focus on? Why? And how?**

“Q Starters” are designed to give you a jumpstart so you can begin the process of exploring your innermost thoughts, feelings and attitudes. These self-discovery tools also offer a framework for developing an action plan.

*“Q Starters” are a trademark of CommuniQuest, Inc.*



Jennifer is a professional speaker, author and president of CommuniQuest, Inc. Through her seminars and keynotes, she delivers fresh insight and proven techniques on how to work smarter and live a more satisfying life. For more information on her workplace strategies and inspirational programs, visit [www.communiquest.com](http://www.communiquest.com) or call 1-888-866-0821.

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