

The Power of Choice — Why Our Choices Matter

A few years ago, I was standing on a crowded subway platform feeling completely overwhelmed. Running a business, managing people, and handling daily pressures had left me exhausted. In that moment, I thought to myself, “Maybe I should give this all up.”

But then another thought came to me: *“You are where you are because of the choices you’ve made. If you don’t like how things feel, change your choices.”*

That simple idea changed my perspective. Instead of giving up something I loved, I started making smaller, healthier choices to better manage stress and improve my life.

Every day, we make choices — some small and some life-changing. We choose what to eat, how to spend our time, how to respond to people, and how to handle difficult situations. Over time, these choices shape our lives and experiences.

One of the most encouraging things about life is this: if we are unhappy with where we are, we can still choose a different path. We may not control everything that happens to us, but we do have control over how we respond.

Psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl wrote in his book *Man's Search for Meaning* that even in the hardest circumstances, people still have the freedom to choose their attitude and response. That reminder can be powerful, especially during difficult times.

Choosing Our Response: Life often brings challenges, disappointments, and unexpected changes. It’s easy to become stuck in sadness, frustration, or self-pity. But we can choose another

response. We can look for meaning, growth, gratitude, or hope even during hard moments.

This does not mean pretending problems don't exist. It means recognizing that we still have choices in how we move forward.

Sometimes the most important choices are small ones:

- choosing to call a friend,
- choosing to take a walk,
- choosing to forgive,
- choosing to try something new,
- or choosing to focus on what still brings joy.

Small choices can lead to meaningful changes over time.

Questions for Reflection: If there is an area of life that feels difficult right now, it may help to ask:

- Why am I unhappy with this situation?
- Where would I like to be instead?
- What small change could help me move in a better direction?

Understanding ourselves and our values helps us make choices that feel more meaningful and true to who we are.

The beauty of life is that no matter our age, we continue to have the power to choose — and those choices can still shape our happiness, relationships, and sense of purpose.