



## Integrity Self-Exploration

**Introduction:** Read and discuss the following statements as a group while trying to be as honest and open with yourself and the group as possible.

### ***Would you rather...***

Be hurt by the truth or comforted by a lie

Be uncomfortable yet open or “safe” but secretive (*About yourself in this group*)

Experience the sting of pain from confessing a mistake or the slow and steady stress of concealing your errors

Struggle honestly today with a clear conscience or get ahead faster through scams and deceit

Walk away from a fight to maintain inner peace or engage in a confrontation but deal with lingering drama

Face the music on your own terms now or run from the consequences knowing they may catch you later

Take the hard road now with self-respect or take the easy way out and risk remorse or regret

### **Questions like these are related to the important topic of integrity**

- **Integrity** is an important human quality that can be difficult to define. Here is one definition:

#### *Integrity (noun)*

Adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; the state of being “whole”

#### ***Digging Deeper*** (Discuss)

- Think of a bridge – Would you cross a bridge if someone told you the “integrity” of the bridge is compromised? – Why not?
- Part of the definition of integrity says that it involves being “*whole*” – What do you think that means?
  - To help put that in perspective, how is a person who lacks integrity “*divided*”?

### **Now please share your own personal experiences with integrity by discussing these questions:**

1. You’ve reviewed the definition of integrity but now share what does integrity mean to you personally?
2. Can you think of a time in life when your integrity was put to the test? – How did it work out?
3. Sometimes doing the right thing can bring some discomfort, stress, and even pain (at least at first) – How have you taken the hard road with a decision in life in order to maintain integrity?
4. One way to learn about integrity is to see how a person deals with adversity – How do you tend to deal with life’s unexpected challenges today?
5. Keeping it real – Would others say you have integrity? Who do you believe feels this way about you?
6. Finally, what helps you build integrity in your own life?



## Four Pillars of Personal Integrity Building

Life in this world can be hard so don't feel discouraged because building and maintaining integrity is an ongoing effort for everyone alive today. Life has many, many challenges that test our integrity

### *Here are four aspects of building and maintaining integrity*

**1 – Honest Self Awareness (Self-Honesty)** – Ask yourself the difficult questions and don't hide from the uncomfortable answers. Below are some examples of self-questions when facing an integrity challenge:

- Is there something I need to change here (even if I don't necessarily want to)?
- Am I avoiding the truth or running from reality in this situation?
- Even though I feel I am right, is there a possibility I am actually wrong about this?
- Am I just making excuses to avoid responsibility?
- Am I blaming other people or circumstances when I really need to look in the mirror about this?

**2 – Accountability, Acceptance and Ownership** – When faced with a challenge, can you honestly make the following self-statements?

- "I accept my role and own my part of the problem and of the solution"
- "I will work on what I need to reasonably and ethically do to make things better even if it comes at a hardship to me"
- "I will see this through to the end (if possible) and not try to escape my commitment to this issue"

**3 – Consult and Plan with the Right People** – People with integrity surround themselves with others who have integrity. Consider the following questions:

- Are there honest and upright people in my life who will tell me the truth, even if it is uncomfortable?
- Are these people available to consult with when I am facing a challenge?
- Am I distancing myself from people who try to get me to compromise my ethics and principles?

**4- Decisions and Actions** – True integrity is defined by the choices we make and the actions we take. Talking the talk is a good start but walking the walk is the real sign of a life of integrity. Consider the following

- Are my current goals in line with a life of honesty, self-respect, and trustworthiness?
- Could I be considered a role model to others (like family and friends, and especially children)?
- Am I preparing myself to face and make the difficult decisions in life when I need to?
- (To the degree I can, as we all make mistakes) – Are my actions mostly congruent with my principles? (*Avoiding duplicity or hypocrisy*)

### Final "Take Home" Questions

- **What is one (or two) things that you will take with you from this discussion?**
- **What is one thing you can start doing today (or at least very soon) to increase integrity and make self-improvement toward your recovery and personal life goals?**

**Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth. Do the right thing because it is right.  
These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.**

— W. Clement Stone