



GLASSER INSTITUTE
for CHOICE THEORY

Little Book of Choice Theory®

What Choice Theory[®] Can Do For You



What Choice Theory Can Do for You

Are you **satisfied with your life** right now?

Do you find your **work environment motivating**?

Are your **personal relationships supportive**?

Do you feel in **control of your life**?

How would you like to be able to respond a
resounding “YES!” to each of these questions?

IT IS POSSIBLE! You have the power within you to
create this type of life and **Choice Theory**
provides the tools to do it.



The first question to ask yourself is: **Whose behavior can you control?**

You know the answer to that question – right?

Everyone knows they can only control their own behavior.

Next question: **Whose behavior do you try to control?**

It's a rare person who doesn't answer that they try to control everyone else's behavior all day long!

Choice Theory helps you notice when you are trying to control others. Its concepts guide you to change your focus to what **you can do** to improve the situation.



Most human interactions can be enhanced with a **good understanding and consistent practice** of Choice Theory.

It has helped people become better leaders, teachers, spouses and friends. It can also aid in improving the most important relationship you have – the one with yourself.

Choice Theory began as an explanation of all human behavior. It has evolved into a method to help people change and modify their controlling beliefs and behaviors. Now, it is used by many to provide **invaluable guidance for a satisfying life**.

Choice Theory has been applied in the areas of: mental health, anger management, stress management, couple's relationships, parenting, corrections, drug & alcohol, foster care, leadership, teambuilding and diversity.



The point is that Choice Theory is not just for improving personal relationships. It is **applicable in all aspects of your life**. If you think about it, most of the conflict you encounter is due to your interactions with people.

First and foremost, Choice Theory is a **model of hope and empowerment**. It helps you to gain the confidence to develop healthy coping skills to handle the most difficult circumstances.

The premise is that there is **nothing wrong with you**. No matter how difficult your life is, *you are not broken*. **You are just doing the best you can with what you've been dealt.**



Choice Theory gets you started by helping you focus on what you can control. It can help you **move from a position of powerlessness to taking responsibility for your life**. You may not be responsible for what happened to you, but you do control what you choose to do about it. And, the behaviors you choose allow you to get your needs met without preventing others from meeting theirs.

The first step in taking responsibility for your life is to gain an understanding about what is within your control.

Complete the exercise in the next section to create an awareness of the types of situations you try to affect throughout your day. Are you spending much of your time trying to control things that are out of your control?

Exercise I: What You Can Control



Exercise 1: What You Can Control

On the next few pages are five scenarios which you may encounter in your daily life.

Take a look at the options about how to deal with each situation and mark the ones that are within your control.

Then, look through the answers at the bottom of the page.

Do you spend much of your time focusing on those responses that are outside of your control?



Scenario 1: You're working on a project with several other people. This project can either be for a class, work or something around the house. Which of the following are within your control?

- A. How the work is assigned to group members.
- B. How much work you do.
- C. How much work the others do.
- D. The quality of the work you do.
- E. How the others complete their part of the project.

Answers: A – No, B – Yes, C – No, D – Yes, E – No.



Scenario 2: Eating a healthy diet is important to you, but your family isn't quite as committed as you are. Which of the following are within your control?

- A. What you purchase at the grocery store.
- B. What your family eats when you're not around.
- C. What you cook for dinner.
- D. What your family eats when you go out to dinner together.
- E. Whether your children go out to eat with you.

Answers: A – Yes, B – No, C – Yes, D – No, E – No.



Scenario 3: Your boss is very demanding and expects you to work late frequently. Which of the following are within your control?

- A. To choose whether or not you stay late at the office.
- B. To change your boss' work habits so you can go home at a reasonable hour.
- C. To request alternative working arrangements.
- D. To fire your boss.
- E. To find a job that better suits your schedule.

Answers: A – Yes, B – No, C – Yes, D – No, E – Yes.



Scenario 4: In your opinion, your husband drinks excessively, but he doesn't believe that it's a problem. Which of the following are within your control?

- A. To make your husband admit that he has a problem.
- B. To leave a function when you believe your husband has had enough to drink.
- C. To make your husband stop drinking at a party.
- D. To choose whether to join your husband on an outing where alcohol will be served.
- E. To cover up for your husband when he tells you to.

Answers: A – No, B – Yes, C – No, D – Yes, E – Yes.



Scenario 5: Your wife is often late for events you want to attend. Which of the following are within your control?

- A. To make your wife hurry to get ready.
- B. To patiently wait for your wife.
- C. To convince your wife that how she looks isn't important.
- D. To arrange alternate transportation for your wife to take to the event.
- E. To make your wife take the transportation you arranged.

Answers: A – No, B – Yes, C – No, D – Yes, E – No.

The Relationship Habits



The Relationship Habits

Choice Theory teaches that your **important relationships** are crucial to your **happiness**.

Problems begin to occur when you attempt to get those **important people to do things you want** instead of supporting what they want. In effect, you're chipping away at the foundation of those relationships, typically without realizing it.

Think about it. What are you really trying to accomplish when you complain about someone? **You're hoping they will change**, right? How about when you blame or criticize someone for what they did?

When you complain, criticize or blame, **you're assuming you know what needs to be done** and are trying to get others to do it. Often, the other person knows what you want, but doesn't want to comply.



You can look at things a bit differently by **changing the story** and admitting that this is something *you* want. If *you* want it, maybe you should take responsibility for making it happen.

One way to approach the situation is to **ask the other person** how important this is for him, and then working out the details together. That may sound difficult or trite, but it's much easier than trying to control someone who doesn't want to be controlled.

It is perfectly **normal to want to change** another person's behavior, however, it comes with a price.

Each time you **try to control** the other person, it **weakens the relationship**. Again, this is true with both personal and professional relationships.



According to Choice Theory, there are **7 Disconnecting* Habits**, which are:

- **complaining**
- **blaming**
- **criticizing**
- **nagging**
- **punishing**
- **threatening**
- **rewarding to control (bribing)**

There are many more than these seven, but you get the general idea.

**Dr. Glasser labeled these habits as "Deadly" instead of "Disconnecting". The Glasser Institute for Choice Theory has chosen to use the latter term due to the contradictory definition of the word "deadly" in some countries outside of the US.*



In their place, you can begin to institute what are known as the **7 Connecting* Habits**.

These include:

- **listening**
- **respecting**
- **accepting**
- **encouraging**
- **supporting**
- **trusting**
- **negotiating differences**

Again, there are many more positive actions you could add to this list but these seven are a good place to start.

**Dr. Glasser labeled these habits as "Caring" instead of "Connecting".*



What would happen if you started listening, **really listening**, to what people around you were saying? Then you could try **supporting** and **encouraging** them.

Supporting and encouraging are easy when people are doing what you want them to do. What do you think would happen if you **supported a child**, for example, with what **she wanted to do**? Of course, you **wouldn't support** anything that would be **harmful**.

Let's say you wanted your daughter to become a competitive ice skater and she wanted to be a musician. As a result, most of your arguments have been about her spending too much time with her rock band.

How do you think it would affect your relationship if you started **supporting her musical interests**?



When you **support and encourage someone** to do things you don't particularly care for, paradoxically, it will help the relationship to **grow stronger**.

Complete the exercise on the next few pages and take notice about how you were treated by someone who made a difference in your life.

If you treat others the way that person treated you, do you think life would be any easier?

Exercise 2: Your Favorite Person



Exercise 2: Your Favorite Person

Think about one of your **favorite** teachers, coaches or adults.

What type of **environment** did they create?

How did they **treat** you? How did you treat them?

When you were with them...

What did you **do**? (How did you behave?)

What did you **think**?

What were your **feelings**?

How did they **talk** to you, to others, in the classroom, on the field, at home?



What were their **expectations**?

for you,
the class,
the team?

How did they **share** those expectations?

What did you **expect of yourself**

in class,
on the team?

Did you **behave** differently when you were with them?



What if you were to interact with an important person in your life the way your favorite person did with you?

How can you treat that important person better?

How can you change your thinking about them and change how you talk to them?

What are your expectations about the relationship?

How can you change your behavior to realize those expectations?



How can you incorporate more of the Connecting Habits when interacting with them?

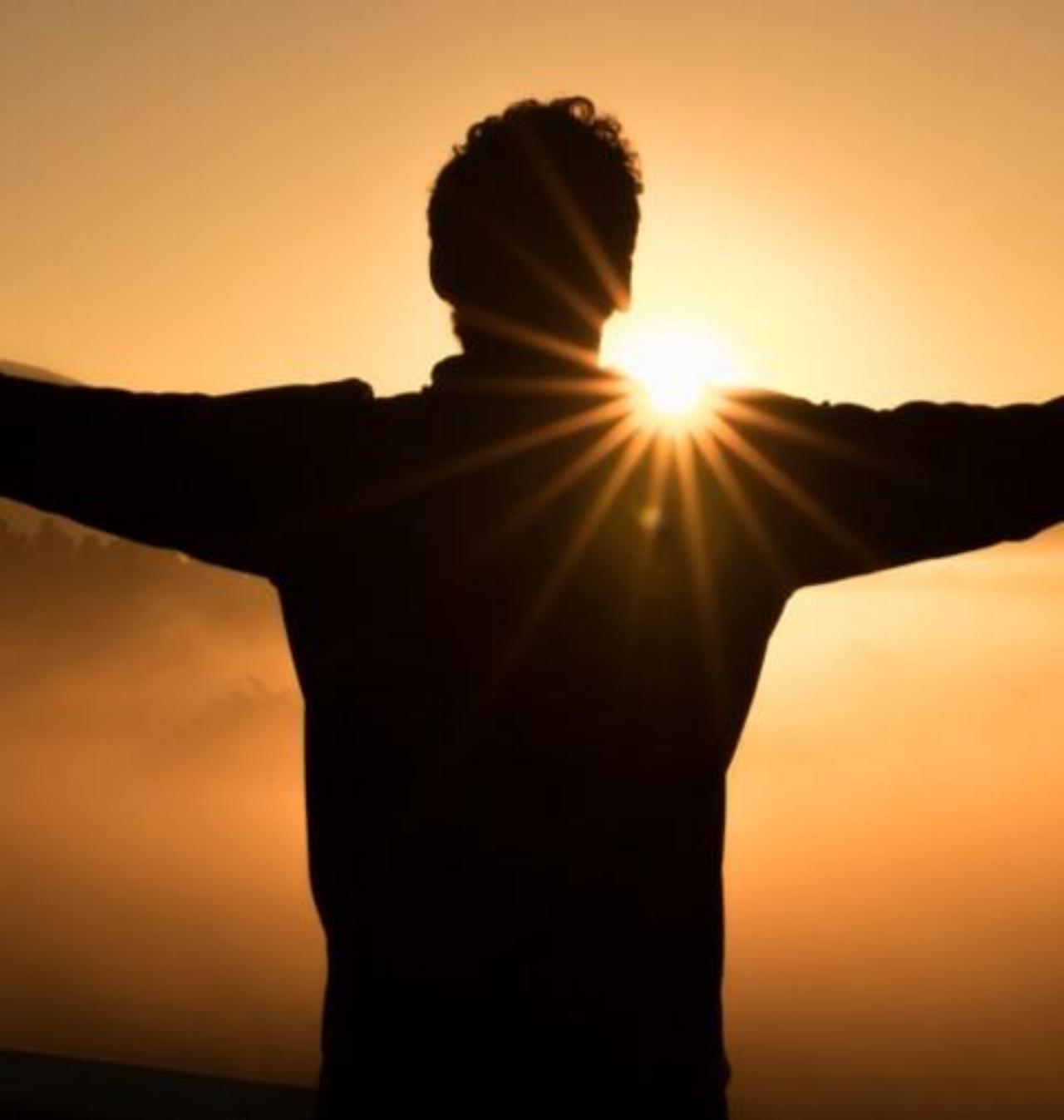
Disconnecting Habits

- **Complaining**
- **Blaming**
- **Criticizing**
- **Nagging**
- **Threatening**
- **Punishing**
- **Bribing/Rewarding to Control**

Connecting Habits

- **Listening**
- **Supporting**
- **Encouraging**
- **Trusting**
- **Respecting**
- **Accepting**
- **Negotiating Differences**

The Five Basic Needs



The Five Basic Needs

According to Choice Theory, there are five **Basic Needs**:

- **Survival**
- **Love & Belonging**
- **Power**
- **Freedom**
- **Fun**

Everybody has needs that fall into these five areas, but to differing degrees.

The relative strength of each need is **inherent to your unique personality and temperament** and your ability to meet them can change depending upon your life's circumstances.



Survival

The first need is **Survival**. Everyone seeks to meet this need by making sure they have food to eat and a place to stay. Other ways to meet the need for Survival involve things such as health and reproductive sex for survival of the species.

The need for Survival also includes seeking to **feel safe and secure**.

At first you may not think you have much of a need for Survival since you probably have food to eat, a place to live and are in fairly good health.

But, how likely are you to **take risks** – either with your physical or emotional safety or with your finances?



Survival

If you have a high Survival need, you don't take many risks. You tend to think about how what you're doing now will affect your future self.

Your **motivation** for exercising and saving money would be so that you could **enjoy your later years**.

If you have a low need for Survival, you generally **live in the moment**. You tend to be more of a spender than a saver and become **energized** when you **take risks**.



Love & Belonging

The second need is **Love & Belonging**. Everyone, to some degree, has a need for **intimacy** and to be **connected** with other people.

There is also the need to feel like you **belong**, which is why people join various organizations.

If you have a high need for Love & Belonging, you'll seek out **friendships** because you enjoy doing things with other people.

You may also have a strong desire to **settle down** with a life partner. You would also tend to be **uncomfortable with conflict**.



Love & Belonging

You might think having a strong need for Love & Belonging has no down side. But, how likely are you to bring up an issue that is bothering you with a family member?

Conflict can feel dangerous in a relationship to those with a high need in this category.

If you have a low need for Love & Belonging, you **still have a need for people** in your life, but you may prefer to stay home and read a good book rather than going out with friends.

You would feel relatively comfortable asking others to do things for you and not require as much **emotional reassurance** in your relationships.



Power

The third need is **Power**. Everyone to a degree has a need to feel competent, successful and significant.

Some have a strong need to feel **recognized for achievement** or a desire to “win.” For others, there is a drive to **make an impact** or have influence over others.

There are healthy and unhealthy ways to meet this need for Power. Choice Theory is helpful in identifying ways of **satisfying this need without controlling**, intimidating or manipulating others.



Power

If you have a high need for Power, some characteristics are that you like to be right, to be **competent**, to be **respected** and to have **influence**.

If you have a low need for Power, you may not care too much for recognition and are generally **content working** as a team member or **behind the scenes** rather than leading an effort.

Choice Theory teaches you to **refrain** from getting any of your Basic Needs met **at the expense of others**. This is especially important in the case of your need for Power.



Power

There may have been times when you filled the need for Power by exerting **power over** others.

Other options to satisfy this need would be to find things to do **with others** or **within yourself** that will work just as well, if not better.

Remember those relationship habits you learned in the last section?

How could you **utilize the Connecting Habits** to convert your need for Power *over* others into something that would be **beneficial for everyone**?



Freedom

The fourth need is **Freedom**. Everyone has a basic need to make their own choices and **direct the course** of their own lives. A need for Freedom is one of the main reasons we **push back** against external control by others.

Those with a strong need for Freedom like to do things **their own way**, question the status quo and dream up **innovations** and **possibilities** that others may find hard to understand or accept.

A strong Freedom need can also be expressed by a desire to spend time away from others or behave in **unconventional** ways. People with a high need can come across as disruptive or self-centered because they seem to **pursue their own vision** rather than that of others.



Freedom

People with a low need for Freedom are comfortable with the **reliability** of existing systems and standards.

They don't have much of a desire to forge new rules or innovations. They are happy with the way things are and **resist change**.

Think about your need for Freedom. Do you feel the urge to do things in a way that is satisfying to you, even if your choices might be unconventional?



Fun

The fifth need is **Fun**. Everyone finds their own way to get this need filled. There are many ways to have fun and **people play all their lives**. Fun is often accompanied by **laughter**. The things you do to get this need met will vary depending upon your personality and the strength of your other needs.

Many people think about getting their need for Fun met by enjoying their **favorite activities**, going to **parties** and engaging in **group activities** or **sports**.

Other preferences may include **quiet fun**. Simply **reading a book**, **working a puzzle**, **fishing** or just sitting around **talking with friends and family** may meet the need for fun.

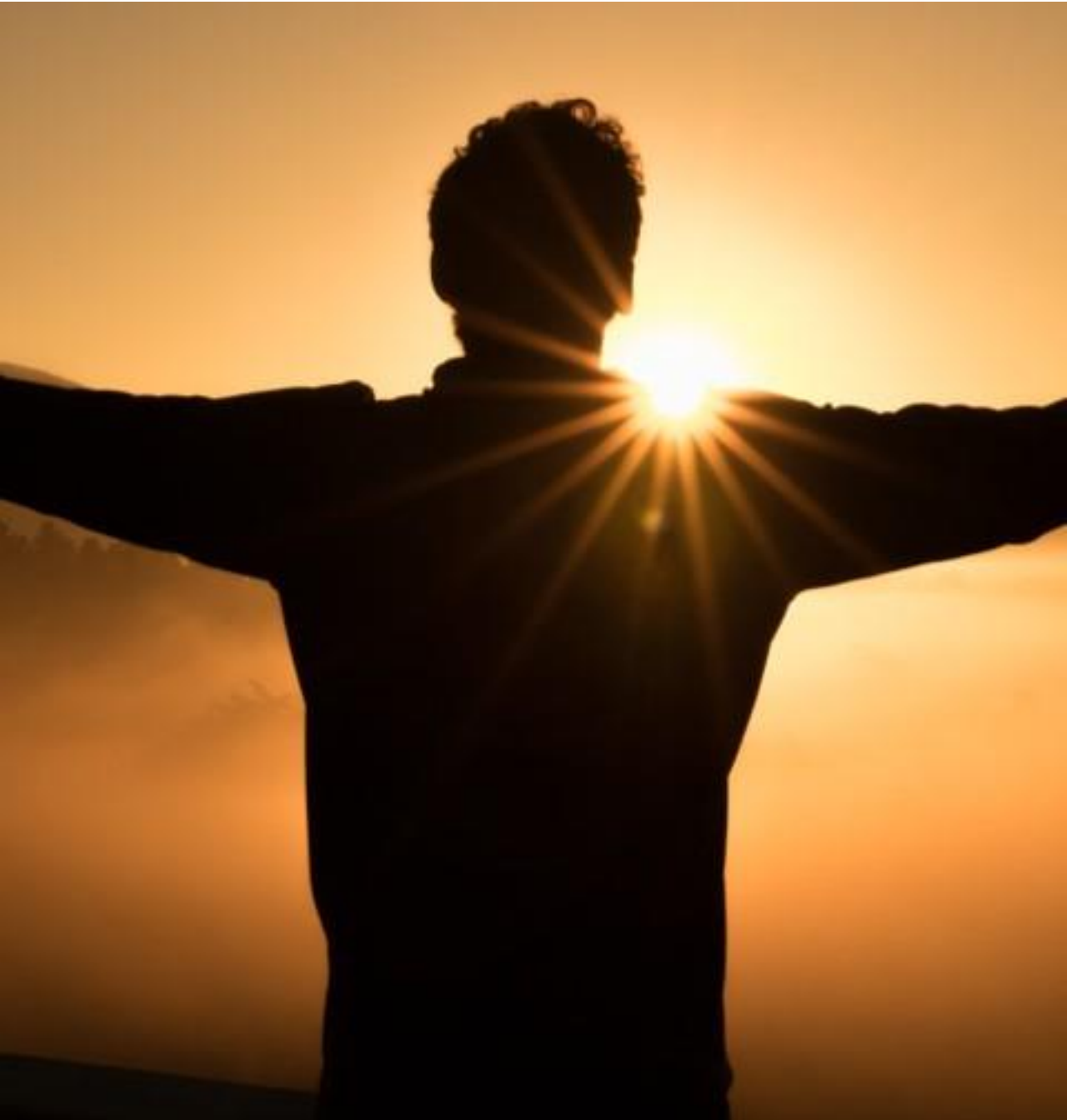


Fun

Dr. Glasser identified learning as another way to meet your need for Fun. He considered fun as the **reward for learning**. He also considered that when couples learn about each other, they are meeting their need for Fun.

Considering the various ways to have fun, someone with a high need for Fun would often be laughing, engaging in quiet leisure activities or a voracious learner.

How strong do you consider your need is for Fun? Expand beyond the conventional definition that fun means engaging in activities with others. Do you enjoy learning or spending time doing quiet activities?



Every person has the **task of satisfying all five personal Basic Needs**. While the strength of your personal needs remains **consistent** throughout your life, your **ability to meet them may vary** with your circumstances. You may find different needs seem more or less important at different stages of your life.

Understanding which of the Basic Needs are most important to you, gives you a **place to begin** in finding something that will help you get through stressful times.

Staying aware of how well these needs are met will take you well on the road to living a **satisfying life**.

Complete the exercise on the next few pages to determine the relative strengths of your Basic Needs.

Exercise 3: Basic Needs Assessment



Exercise 3: Basic Needs Assessment

On the following pages, rate each statement with your first thought about how much it resembles you. Circle the appropriate number with one being least like you and five being most like you. Then, add up the circled numbers to get your total score for each of the Basic Needs.



Survival	Rating Scale					Score
I always wear a seat belt when provided.	1	2	3	4	5	
I save rather than spend.	1	2	3	4	5	
I take very few risks.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am wary of new things, ideas and people.	1	2	3	4	5	
Exercise is important in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	
I dislike change of any sort.	1	2	3	4	5	
I eat well for good health.	1	2	3	4	5	
I must feel safe at all times.	1	2	3	4	5	
Maintaining my health is a priority for me.	1	2	3	4	5	
Having money to pay bills is a concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Total Score					



Love & Belonging

Rating Scale

Score

I enjoy time spent with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	
I participate in various groups.	1	2	3	4	5	
I dislike conflict.	1	2	3	4	5	
Relationships are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am mostly comfortable around people whom I know.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am happy when working with others as part of a team.	1	2	3	4	5	
I love romance and being intimate with my partner.	1	2	3	4	5	
It is important for me to show others I care for them.	1	2	3	4	5	
Being accepted by others is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	
I often turn to others for support.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Total Score					



Power	Rating Scale					Score
I have numerous skills and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	
I often seek to do my best in what I do.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am competitive.	1	2	3	4	5	
I like being recognized for my accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5	
I demand respect from those around me.	1	2	3	4	5	
Leaving a legacy is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	
I need to be right most of the times.	1	2	3	4	5	
I like being in control.	1	2	3	4	5	
Being the center of attention feels wonderful.	1	2	3	4	5	
I feel important and powerful when I have expensive things.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Total Score					



Freedom	Rating Scale					Score
I frequently question the rules.	1	2	3	4	5	
I become frustrated when I believe I don't have choices.	1	2	3	4	5	
I dislike being told what to do.	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoy a lot of time to myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
I must do things my own way.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am creative.	1	2	3	4	5	
I like doing things on a moment's notice.	1	2	3	4	5	
Being independent is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoy change.	1	2	3	4	5	
I get frustrated when I feel restricted.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Total Score					



Fun	Rating Scale					Score
I laugh often.	1	2	3	4	5	
There are many hobbies I enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5	
Learning something new is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	
Even when times are serious, I try to do fun things.	1	2	3	4	5	
I can turn drudgery into fun.	1	2	3	4	5	
Making other people laugh is my mission in life.	1	2	3	4	5	
I can make fun out of anything.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am playful.	1	2	3	4	5	
I am able to laugh at myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
Enjoying things and people are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Total Score					



Add up the numbers you circled for each of the Basic Needs. In which of the needs did you score the highest? Were there any surprises?

Note that this assessment has not been scientifically validated. It merely gives you an idea of potential characteristics for people with high needs in each of these areas.

People act out on these needs in various ways and the items listed here include just some of those possibilities. What this means is that the actions you normally take or your general thoughts may not have been included in this assessment. As a result, that specific need may be stronger than what was reported here.

The Basic Needs overlap and there are many different ways to get them met. The important thing to note is what activities/thoughts help give you a feeling of comfort and reduced tension, no matter in which category they fall.

Your Quality World



Your Quality World

Your Quality World exists in your memory and is **unique to you**. It contains personal **images** that have **either satisfied** your Basic Needs up to the present, or that you **can imagine might satisfy** your needs into the future.

Now that you've completed the needs assessment, you appreciate how the Basic Needs **influence the behaviors you choose** to meet those needs. The very best of these personal **need-satisfying images** form your Quality World.



Quality World pictures include:

- the people you most **want to be with**,
- the things you most **want to own** or experience,
- the places that are **meaningful to you** or you'd like to visit,
- the ideas or systems of belief that **govern much of your behavior**.

The pictures in your Quality World can represent reality, sheer fantasy or anywhere in between.

Positive emotions are the sign that what you are experiencing at that moment **matches** your **Quality World pictures**. Good feelings will occur even if the matched pictures represent non-responsible ways of meeting your needs.



As an example, someone with a **high need for Survival** would want to save for the future.

He would contribute to his retirement accounts so that he **wouldn't have to worry about money** later on.

The **picture** in his Quality World is one about his being **financially stable** in retirement.

He may see himself traveling a lot and really enjoying life.

This Quality World picture would **guide the person** to pay close attention to how he spends his money now so he wouldn't have to worry about outliving his savings later.



An alcoholic would be an example of someone who **considers drinking** as being **need-satisfying**.

He has found alcohol to be the **best coping mechanism available to him**.

He may have pictures of going out with his friends while drinking and having a good time.

In the case of the alcoholic, even when his friends start fading out of the picture, the **alcohol still remains**.

The alcohol addict can remove everything but alcohol – **even family** – from their Quality World.



One of the greatest **fears** many parents have is that their children will become **addicted to drugs or alcohol**. You can expect that most adolescents will experiment with these substances. How can you reduce the risk that your teenager will become an addict?

The most powerful thing parents can do if their adolescent begins abusing drugs and alcohol is to avoid the Disconnecting Habits and spend every available opportunity **practicing the Connecting Habits**. Preserving positive connections with their teen is the best way to ensure the parents remain pictured **in their teen's Quality World**.

You may still “lose” your child for a while, but you are also the **greatest hope** for keeping the substances from totally consuming their Quality World.

Exercise 4:
Quality World Board



Exercise 4: Quality World Board

What types of pictures populate your Quality World?

The purpose of this exercise is to create a visual of the pictures that make up your Quality World. This will help to remind you of the things that generate positive emotions for you. Start by collecting existing pictures you have of friends and family.

Then, search through the internet and find images that appeal to you. Use keywords associated with each of the five Basic Needs to find these images. For example, you can search things like “people having fun” or “fancy cars” or “creativity”.



Try to **find pictures** that fall into each of the following categories:

- the **people** you most want to be with,
- the **things** you most want to own or experience,
- the **places** that are meaningful to you or you'd like to visit,
- the **ideas or systems of belief** that govern much of your behavior.

Create a collage of these images – either on your computer or on a poster board.

Keep it handy to use as a reminder of what is important to you and **review it often**.

Perception



Perception

How do the various pictures get into your Quality World?

You develop those pictures from your **experiences**.

But, everyone perceives them in their own unique way.

Did you ever go to a movie with someone and each of you had a completely **different impression** of the film?



One viewer may not have been able to **fully appreciate the message** from the movie due to vulgar language or violence in the film.

Another viewer may have been able to overlook what he heard and saw on the screen and felt **moved by the message**.

What causes this difference?

Perception is unique to every person. Common belief is there are accurate and inaccurate perceptions. In practice, each person has a unique perception, valid only for them.

What causes the difference?



The first factor affecting perception is your **sensory system**.

How well are you seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling things?

This sensory information is as accurate as your five senses and depends on how well you are focusing your attention considering all the information available.

Second, your prior knowledge will affect how you perceive information.

In Choice Theory, this effect is called the **Total Knowledge Filter**. It represents placing new information in the context of all you know. The more knowledge you have, the better chance you have of understanding your situation and possible choices you may have.



The final thing that affects perception is your personal system of **values and beliefs**.

Believing that you are right and the other person is wrong will not bring the two of you together.

Having differing views does not make anybody right or wrong, just **different**.

What if you attempted to **understand the values and beliefs** behind the other person's perceptions?

Do you think that would give you a better understanding of your friend's point of view?

How would this better understanding impact your **relationship**?

Exercise 5: Understanding Perceptions



Exercise 5: Understanding Perceptions

People **create perceptions** from what **makes sense** to them. But, just because it's right for you doesn't mean that it applies to anyone else.

Let's say you have a high need for Love & Belonging. It is important to you to go out with friends every weekend and regularly interact with people.

If a group of people is getting together, everything else gets pushed aside so that you can spend time connecting with them.



Push the clock forward a few years and you have children. Your son has a very low need for Love & Belonging. He is quite content to stay at home alone playing video games. You see other children enjoying playing together on a soccer team and **feel bad** for your son because **he's all alone** and has few friends.

Do you think your son is unhappy? Who defines what it takes to feel happiness?

Go back to the results of the Needs Assessment you took in Exercise 3. Find your needs with the highest and lowest scores. Write out the perceptions/values that you have formed due to the intensity of those needs.



Now, think of important people in your life who are on the opposite end of the spectrum for your needs that had the highest scores.

Have your perceptions prevented you from fully appreciating those people?

Have your perceptions created conflict between you?

What can you do differently now that you're aware of these differences?

Total Behavior



Total Behavior

A basic principle of Choice Theory is that all behavior is **purposeful** and **total**.

Imagine that you've asked your son several times, politely, to clean his room and he has chosen to ignore you. You feel angry and frustrated so you yell at him to get his dirty clothes off the floor.

An **imbalance** existed between your **Quality World picture** of your son's room and the **actual condition** of his room. This is called being at the **Comparing Place**.



There are four inseparable components of Total Behavior:

- **acting,**
- **thinking,**
- **feeling and**
- **physiology.**

The **acting** and the **thinking** are the only components you can **directly control**. This means that if you want to change how you feel emotionally and physically, then you must make a conscious effort to change what you are doing and/or what you are thinking.

Choice Theory says that all behavior is your **best attempt** to get something you want at that particular point in time. You are never acting in response to some external stimulus – you are always **acting proactively** to get what you want.



Once you focus your attention on **something you want** in your Quality World, you start to look around in the real world to see if there are **ways you can get it**. If you succeed, you feel good.

If you don't get what you want, then you start thinking of all your options. No matter what you decide to do, you have **chosen** what you believe is the **best behavior available to you** with the highest likelihood of getting what you want.



In the example above, the mother had a picture in her Quality World of her son's room being clean with no clothes on the floor. She **chose to yell at him** in an effort to realize that picture.

While she was yelling, she also **felt anger** and frustration. She was thinking her son didn't respect her and her **body's physiology** likely included higher blood pressure, increased cortisol, and an elevated heart rate.

Do you think the mother would feel any less frustration if she were to **change what she expected** and how she interacted with her son?



Understanding Total Behavior **empowers** you to take charge of your life by making **appropriate changes** to improve how you feel.

Start with **small changes** to your thinking and acting and watch how your life becomes more satisfying.

Exercise 6:
4.5 Ways to Create Change



Exercise 6: 4.5 Ways to Create Change

The basic premise for Choice Theory is to understand that the only **person's behavior** you can **control** is **your own**. That does not mean, however, that you allow others to do things at the expense of your getting what you want.

There are several ways to **create change** so you get more of **what you want**.

- Ask for what you want from others.
- Change what you are doing to get what you want.
- Change your perception or how you see the situation.
- Change what you want.
- If you can't have what you want, think about what need would be met if you had it and then find something else that will satisfy that need.



As an example, suppose you've had a rough week and want to go out to dinner on Friday night instead of cooking. See how following the suggestions above can help to determine a way to get your needs met.

1. Ask for what you want others to do.

Tell your husband that you'd like to go out to dinner with him on Friday night.

Don't hint about what you want, **ask for it directly**.

2. Change what you are doing.

Let's say you husband wants to stay at home. When you change what you're doing, you would **stop asking him** to take you out and **make plans** to have dinner delivered.



3. You can change your perception.

Should you find yourself frustrated that your husband doesn't want to go out to eat and you want to use Disconnecting Habits, ask yourself about the **story you are telling yourself** about his refusal.

Are you telling yourself he **must not really love you**? He is **selfish**? After all you do for him in a week, it's the least he could do for you? All these options **cast criticisms** on your husband.

Could you instead **look at it differently**? Could you **put yourself in your husband's shoes** and think about what motivation might be causing him to want to stay home?



Perhaps he would like to have private, intimate time with you at home. Maybe he has a **higher Freedom need**, works with people all week, and just **wants to decompress** at home.

Perhaps he has a **high Survival need** and doesn't want to **spend the money** on eating out. It's also possible he has something else he has been looking forward to doing at home on Friday night all week.

Changing your perception will help you be **more compassionate** in your assessment and realize you may already have a lot of what you want.



4. You can change what you want.

Let's say that your husband told you that he was too tired to go out and that he had really been looking forward to relaxing and watching a sports event on TV that night.

After thinking about it, you decide that what you really want is **quality time** with your husband as well as a break from cooking. So, instead of focusing on going out to dinner, **think of something he would really appreciate.**

Since you still don't feel like cooking, you could offer to pick something up that the two of you would enjoy and then you could sit with him while he watches the sports event he wanted to see on TV.



4.5 If you can't have what you want, think about what you need.

Let's say that you have absolutely no interest in watching the sporting event your husband is looking forward to. You're disappointed that the two of you won't be spending time together that evening, but you still want a break from cooking and to get out of the house. You could then **look for other ways** to get those needs met. You could take this opportunity to invite a friend to go with you.

Think of something you've wanted but have been unsuccessful at attaining. Go through this exercise to determine how you can create change to get what you want or at the very least to get more of what you need.

Next Steps



Next Steps

We hope you have enjoyed this overview of Choice Theory. Several new concepts were introduced here. If you didn't do the exercises, go back and complete them now. Then, try implementing what you've learned.

This eBook is merely an introduction in the quest of fulfilling Dr. Glasser's mission to **teach the world Choice Theory**. If you want to learn more, the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory (GIFCT) has other products to offer. They will help you to implement these concepts into your life – both personally and professionally. And, once you do, you'll wonder how you ever survived without them!

You can start by reading some of **Dr. Glasser's books**. They may be purchased from [William Glasser Inc.](#)



GIFCT sponsors weekly broadcasts about various topics relating to Choice Theory and how it can be applied to aspects of your life. These videos spotlight experienced members who tell their stories about how **Choice Theory has made a big difference for them**. There is a question and answer period following their talks. The broadcast is called **Making Sense of It**, because the intent is to help people **make sense of their lives**.

The recorded broadcasts are available to anyone who creates an account on the GIFCT website. However, only members can attend the broadcasts live and view the question & answer portion. **Memberships begin at \$50 per year**. (Student rates are also offered.)



You can enroll in the [Take Charge of Your Life eCourse](#). This course will take you step-by-step through the concepts of Choice Theory, literally **enabling you to take charge of your own life**. As an option to this course, you can work with an instructor to better understand and apply these concepts.

You can sign up for a [Basic Intensive Training](#). This is a comprehensive 3 or 4-day course that will give an in-depth view of the concepts of Choice Theory and allow you to practice what you've learned. This course is the first step in **becoming certified in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy**.

We hope this information has been helpful and that we see you at one of our events.



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