

# 10 Habits to Achieve Emotional Maturity

Emotional maturity is not just a goal, it's a practice of life.

In the same manner you repeat the motions of what you believe will slam dunk the score in your weekly basketball game, or your presentation for work, emotional maturity is also obtained through careful, strategic actions. Following these ten steps will take you there.

**Step One:** Rehearse reaching your goals. The saying is correct, practice is perfect. Regardless of our goals in life, we must want it enough to strive for our aims over and over. This is true of emotional maturity. Putting in a concerted effort to grow in the dealings of your relationships reinforces your emotional muscle memory.

**Step Two:** Daily affirmations keep your eye on the prize. We must tell ourselves what we want to be each day so we believe in what we are saying and what we stand for. After all, no one else is going to buy your spiel if you don't! You can repeat your affirmations in the shower, or in the mirror. And you might feel silly at first, but it's vital to have a mantra which we embrace, such as "I am great, or "I am strong", or "I will make good decisions today." With enough positive self talk, if we believe in what we are saying others will as well.

**Step Three:** Set healthy boundaries. Being mature means stating what is acceptable to you and what you will and will not allow. Once you define that line, defend it. Don't let anyone to cross it. Boundaries are important because when they are set, our character also sets, becoming more resistant to nonsense and drama. When someone charges ahead and breaks through our boundaries, we are compromised. Don't kid yourself. We suffer emotionally and can sustain lifelong damage. Don't assume people will know your limit either. It's your job to tell them.

**Step Four:** Learning to pause. Ahhhh...I love this step. It's such an important tool to add to your tool belt. Pausing gives us an extra few seconds to allow ourselves to choose to respond rationally, whether we are in the heat of an argument, or simply muddling over a major decision. Speaking or reacting in haste can sometimes have a negative impact and it guarantees you will have to take care of the cleanup that will come later. Try to remember to never make long-term decisions when you're feeling emotional. It's not fair treatment to you, or anyone else. Take a minute, an hour, even a day if you need it. Mull over what the right thing is to say, then follow through with supportive actions.

**Step Five:** Know when to say when, or more accurately, *learn* when to say when. So few of us are born with this capacity. As humans we are privy to needing to experience results from lessons and negative choices. There's nothing wrong with this mode of learning, and hey I've been there, too. The trick is to learn before you punish yourself. Remember, self control is a

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fundamental giant, which shapes the way people perceive you. When you're out having drinks for example, monitoring yourself and staying in control makes a positive impact.

**Step Six:** Infuse emotional maturity into your work. Maintaining your emotional edge plays a significant role in your employment growth and can reward you with large dividends, which will spill over into many areas of your life. Leading by example, improving your active listening skills and saying thank you carries a lot of weight with your subordinates. Humility is a tenet of emotional maturity.

**Step Seven:** Behavioral growth. When you make a mistake in life (and we are all guilty!) learn from it. Recognizing when you screwed up without belaboring your own mistakes to the point of penalty is valuable. Simply, note the mistake, determine to improve your decision next time and be kind to yourself about your failings. Learning from mistakes means growing behaviorally and spiritually. It means accepting you are not perfect and getting nice and close with that fact.

**Step Eight:** Stop making poor choices, There comes a time when we have to give up selecting options designed to bankrupt us mentally, spiritually, and financially. Yep, we all have to grow up whether we like it, or not. Resist the desire to live beyond your means and the urge to do anything against your moral compass. Living well and consciously isn't always easy, but it is always fruitful.

**Step Nine:** Change your friends (only if the friendship is detrimental to you). Everyone grows out of things like a baby blanket, their toys, and clothes, but this analogy can also apply to people. You may not hold commonality with everyone you meet in life, and that's alright. So sometimes old friends must be left behind as we move ahead. Other times, growth is uncomplicated: tastes change and our ideologies do, too. If a person leaves your life because your paths don't converge, let them go find themselves without difficulty. Don't hold them back from where they are supposed to go, even if it means you can't accompany them.

**Step Ten:** Fall in love for the right reasons, When we are young we often fall in love strictly on the basis of physical attraction. We forget mutual interests are superior to physical attraction and that without these shared pursuits we will have a hard time having a healthy relationship. Don't dismiss red flags because someone is physically beautiful, red flags are still red flags. Being able to turn away from outward appeal because it doesn't mesh with your internal monitor is a sign of a healthy and mature person.