

9 Practices for Achieving Emotional Maturity

Maturity, the essential characteristic of a leader, does not just come with age. It is a goal we work to achieve.

Mental health is synonymous with maturity, and maturity is born of responsibility. You cannot be mentally or emotionally healthy if you are irresponsible. People with maturity understand a great truth; they understand that life is difficult. In being able to accept this fact about life, mature people learn to handle life in all of its difficulties, not expecting it to be different. They have learned to accept that not everything in life is going to be their way, show up in the way they thought it would and nor will the world change on its axis to make them happier. Mature people know for any change to happen it has to come from within themselves, and this is where success or failure develop. The only way to live a more fulfilling, successful and purpose-driven life is when the choice is made to fully develop and live the attitudes and principles of a matured person. To follow is a list of those attitudes and principles.

1. Seekers of self-mastery.

Mature people are passionate about self-development, psychology and understanding the inner workings of themselves and the workings of the world. They are open to learn and apply the principles they gain from their explorations in personal development to all areas of their life. This type of growth-mindset keeps mature people living more conscious and aware lives because they are able to live according to the life principles and wisdom gained both through their own and the experiences of others.

Mature people typically have a team around them, from therapists to coaches to keep them in check and on the path to living a life they love. Because they are supported, guided and in the action of practicing the right attitudes and life principles, mature people more easily overcome the challenges that life inevitably brings them. Through self-mastery mature people learn the art of turning life's lemons into lemonade.

2. Emotionally intelligent.

Life is going to be full of problems. The acceptance of this allows mature people to stay calm and think more clearly during life's more difficult moments. The whole process of meeting and solving problems is what gives life its deeper meaning. Mature people have established the emotional intelligence necessary to understand that life's difficulties are the cutting edge of what distinguishes one from being a success or a failure.

Problems call forth our courage and wisdom. It is only through being able to walk calmly and bravely through difficulties that the mature develop any sense of trust in God, life or in themselves. It is through this process they grow emotionally and mentally. As Benjamin Franklin

9 Practices for Achieving Emotional Maturity

says “Those things that hurt, instruct.” The emotionally mature learn not to dread, but to welcome life’s challenges for this very reason.

3. Positive attitude.

A positive attitude comes naturally to the mature person. They have faith in the concept that with enough hard work, patience and persistence things will work out. This type of attitude keeps mature people in a state of harmony with themselves and others because from their vantage point there is a way to make every situation a win-win experience. They have mastered the principles of being in mutually beneficial relationships and staying out of relationships which do not serve them or their highest good.

4. Independent.

Mature people have lived life and sought personal growth which allows them the freedom of their independence. Through commitment and life experience mature people have developed an independent mindset and live life following the principles and purposes they have set for themselves, regardless of what other people say and think. This sense of independence brings fearlessness to their personality, and the resilience to be true to who they are. These are not people who follow the crowd, or the establishment; they follow their hearts, passions and desires.

5. Delay gratification.

Mature people have found a way to ground themselves in self-control. They know that those things worthy of their time will require their patience, persistence and effort. Mature people are able to delay gratification. They enhance their experiences of pleasure by first dealing with and experiencing their pain and getting it over with. In other words, they place their responsibilities before leisure as the only successful way to live.

The mature are willing to tolerate feelings of discomfort long enough to find solutions to their problems. An immediate solution may represent gratification to many, but mature people know that the best solutions come with delaying the need to get rid of the problem quickly. The most lucrative solutions are found in the process of thinking through the problem.

6. Truthful.

Mature people live with high integrity. They are committed to knowing, hearing and working within the truth no matter how hurtful or stressful that truth may be. Mature people are also

9 Practices for Achieving Emotional Maturity

willing and committed to telling the truth even when it is humiliating and difficult for oneself or another. They have an open mind to hear counsel and to respond to reproof.

7. Responsible.

Those with maturity live successful lives because they spend zero time blaming others for their problems. They take accountability for their actions as a way to further learn and grow. Life and life's circumstances, at the end of the day, have to be dealt with from our own will and volition, and admitting wrong is woven deeply into the fabric of mature people because they view humility and admitting wrong as steps up the mountain, not steps going backward. The mature person is able to understand that life is what they make it. That every person's destiny is within their choice. Those with maturity live life making conscious decisions knowing that whatever the result is, they are the ones responsible.

8. Accessible.

The emotionally mature understand the most important thing they can give relationships, projects, goals or business is their time. When a person with maturity loves something and it is of value to them, they spend time with it, working on it, taking care of it and enjoying it. They value themselves and therefore see their time as valuable and they have the deep desire to use their time well. For this reason, they are open to interruption and will make themselves accessible whenever it is important. Because they value themselves and their own time they also value the time they give and spend with others, and make those commitments a priority in their lives.

9. Gracious and giving.

Mature people live with a natural feeling of thankfulness and appreciation for the expansive range of people, events and circumstances in their lives. Because maturity is based in responsibility, mature people live with higher levels of happiness and lower levels of depression and stress. The emotionally mature turn their happiness into sharing and generosity. They offer helpful services to others as a way to spread their own wealth and joy in ways that circle back. When their giving circles back, the emotionally mature experience even deeper levels of pleasure, personal satisfaction and gratitude for what they have been given in life to now gift back.

In short, maturity is a choice for everyone. The more you value who you are and what you have to offer, the more responsible you will be in taking care of yourself, your finances, your time, and your personal life. You can choose to live as a mature person. You can choose to live consciously with established principles and attitudes, or you can choose to live continuously

9 Practices for Achieving Emotional Maturity

beaten up and defeated by the struggles and miseries of life. Albert Ellis says it best, "The best years of your life are the ones in which you decide your problems are your own. You do not blame them on your mother, the ecology, or the president. You realize that you control your own destiny."