

UNIT 2

iChoose



Lesson 5: Relationships

*“Relationships become better when we
tear down the walls that divide us and
build bridges that bring us together.”*

JOHN C. MAXWELL

LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person
read aloud.



Next person
read aloud.



Underline what's
important to you.



Share with
others.



Take
action.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:

**Choose to build bridges to increase your
friendships and build better relationships.**



Part 1

Relationships are a Choice



All bridges have one thing in common —they take you from where you are to where you want to go. In this lesson you will discover that relationships are like bridges:

1. Bridges take effort to build.
2. Bridges bring people together.
3. Bridges make life better.

The question you must ask yourself is this, “Am I building walls or bridges?” Walls separate us from others. Bridges bring people together. Relationships are a choice. Wall or bridge? People can usually trace their successes and failures to the relationships in their lives. Building bridges to others and for others is the best way to have good relationships with others.



01

Bridges Take Effort



Every time you cross a bridge, remember it took effort to build it, and it takes effort to maintain it. That is also true with relationships. Social media is a bridge to initiating relationships. It's a good place to start; it's not a good place to stay. There is no strong commitment from either person and often it has a passive approach to others. Social media relationships have little potential to reward a person with great depth. Once you understand people, you will also understand that it takes great effort to become a good friend to them.

REFLECTION:

TEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PEOPLE

Select which things you provide people.

	SOCIAL MEDIA	FACE TO FACE
People are insecure.... Give them confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People like to feel special... Sincerely compliment them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People look for a better tomorrow... Show them hope.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People need to be understood... Listen to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People lack direction... Navigate for them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People are selfish... Speak to their needs first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People get emotionally low... Encourage them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People want to be associated with success... Help them win.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People desire meaningful relationships... Provide community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People seek models to follow... Be an example.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which one of the 10 areas do you excel in?
Which one of the areas do you need to improve in?



Check the areas that you will give more effort to improve your relationships:

- ☐ 1. I will think about the other person first.
- ☐ 2. I will think the best of my friends' behavior.
- ☐ 3. I will be a giver more than a taker.
- ☐ 4. I will try to connect in person more than by social media.

HOW MY RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT ME

What extra effort will I make to improve my friendships?

~~~~~  
**Today I will tear down the walls in my .....  
relationships and start building bridges.**  
~~~~~



Part 2

REVIEW OF LESSON 5, PART 1:

- Relationships are a Choice
- Bridges Take Effort

In Part 1 of this lesson, you made a choice to put effort into your relationships.

How well did you do this?

ANSWER BELOW:

EVALUATE YOURSELF ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:

Circle your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1 2 3 4 5



..... Why did you give yourself this rating?

Bridges Bring People Together



Bridges allow us to leave our space and go explore another's space. One of the best ways to connect with others is to ask people to share their story with you. This brings the conversation toward the person you are building a bridge with. Their story may include their interests, dreams, disappointments, uniqueness, and journey. While they are enjoying the personal attention, you are listening and gaining insight into their life. Personal stories help build bridges of connection, bringing people together.



Requesting a person's story says, "You could be special." Remembering a person's story says, "You are special." Reminding a person of his or her story says, "You are special to me." Repeating a person's story to others says, "You are special to them." The result? You become special to the person who shared their story with you.

REFLECTION:

Each person take 1 minute and share with others what is special about your story.





03

Bridges Make Life Better



Bridges allow you to go to those who have positive, healthy relationships with you. They also allow you to walk away from negative, unhealthy relationships. You can choose which friendships to move toward and which ones you need to move away from. Knowing how to maximize the positive relationships and minimize the negative ones in your life is key to living a happy and satisfying life. Having a clear picture of positive relationships will enable you to make those decisions.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS...

1. Encourage you to grow and succeed.
2. Give you support during tough times.
3. Increase your sense of purpose in life.
4. Enable you to collaborate and work together.
5. Allow you to attract more positive relationships.
6. Create feelings of pleasure and joy.



REFLECTION:

1. What positive relationship do you need to move toward?

2. What negative relationship do you need to move away from?

The background of the page is a photograph of a waterfall cascading over rocks, with a large pile of weathered driftwood in the foreground and to the right. The water is white and frothy as it falls.

HOW MY RELATIONSHIP AFFECTS OTHERS

What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of relationships?

How can you apply this lesson to your family and friends?

What relationship choice will you make today that will positively affect others?

~~~~~  
**Today I will be the friend to others** .....  
**that I would like to have myself.**  
~~~~~



Lesson 6: Character



"The value of a balloon is that it brings joy to people's lives as it becomes bigger on the inside."

JOHN C. MAXWELL

LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person
read aloud.



Next person
read aloud.



Underline what's
important to you.



Share with
others.



Take
action.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:

**Understand that the character choices you
make today are building blocks for your
character tomorrow.**



Part 1

Character is a Choice



Often, balloons are a part of festive activities. They may be different in color and how they are displayed, but they all have one thing in common: they are filled with air. Before the party, effort is made to make sure that the balloons are full on the inside so they look good on the outside. A balloon that is empty on the inside is not attractive on the outside. The inside of the balloon determines what the outside looks like.

That is true of our character. What is on the inside of us, our character, determines what we become on the outside. The Greek philosopher Socrates said, “The first key to greatness is to be in reality what we appear to be.” Who we really are is our character. Who we appear to be is our reputation. People of character are bigger on the inside than they are on the outside. The result? They become bigger on the outside.

What does it mean to be bigger on the inside than the outside?

- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means that your character is greater than your reputation.
- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means that your walk speaks louder than your talk.
- Being bigger on the inside than on the outside means your attitude is better than your circumstances.
- Being bigger on the inside than the outside means you do what you ought to versus what you want to.

Strive today to focus on your inside development more than your outside — your character more than your reputation.

REFLECTION:

What needs to be inside of me? Check what is inside of you right now.

- ☐ 1. Kindness
- ☐ 2. Courage
- ☐ 3. Reliability
- ☐ 4. Trustworthiness
- ☐ 5. Authenticity
- ☐ 6. Forgiveness

01

Character Choices



We don't get to pick our talents or IQ; they are gifts we are born with. But we do choose our character. In fact, we create our character every time we make choices.



Character choices such as...

- To do what is right or to do what is easy.
- To follow your heart or to follow the crowd.
- To honor your word or not to honor it.
- To value people or devalue them.
- To be honest or to be dishonest.

Making the right character choices makes you bigger on the inside. Making the wrong character choices makes you smaller. It's your choice.



02

Character is More Than Talk



Anyone can say they have integrity, but behavior is the real indicator of character. The outside reveals what is on the inside. When the inside gets right, the outside becomes right. How do we get the inside right? Fill your mind with good thoughts instead of bad ones. Think about the best in others, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to compliment, not things to curse. Your thoughts determine your choices. Your choices determine your actions.

*Your actions reflect
your character.*

What you do speaks louder than what you say. Your talk talks and your walk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.



REFLECTION:

Review what you have underlined. Choose the most important thing you underlined. Take 1 minute and share with the group why it was important to you.

REFLECTION:

HOW MY CHARACTER AFFECTS ME

Is there a place in my life where my reputation is in conflict
with my character?



Character is what we are on the inside. Reputation is what people think we
are on the outside. Are you stronger in your character or reputation? Why?



~~~~~  
**Today I will live a life of character .....  
that will positively affect me.**  
~~~~~



Part 2

REVIEW OF LESSON 6, PART 1:

- Character is a Choice
- Character Choices
- Character is More Than Talk

In Part 1 of this lesson, you made a choice to value your character above your reputation.

How well did you do this?

ANSWER BELOW:

EVALUATE YOURSELF ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:

Circle your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1 2 3 4 5



..... Why did you give yourself this rating?

All Character Needs Improvement



Nobody is perfect. Therefore, developing our character is a continual effort. Our attitude often needs adjustment. Our motives need to be managed. Our thoughts need to be checked.



A person with good character will not be good all the time but will have the desire to get better. The openness to admit wrongdoing with a change of behavior is the beginning of good character. The desire to do right is the mark of good character. A willingness to make positive changes is the root of good character.

Life is filled with continual choices between doing right and doing wrong. Good character may start off down the wrong path, but it will quickly turn around when it realizes a bad choice was made. Authenticity, not perfection, is what good character strives for.

REFLECTION:

Why does developing your character require continual effort?





04

You Cannot Rise Above the Limitations of Your Character



The size of your inside determines the size of your outside. Lack of growth on the inside stunts our growth on the outside. If I think wrong thoughts on the inside, soon my choices will cause me to behave wrongly on the outside. If I am a dishonest person, my actions will be dishonest. The result? People will not trust me. That puts a limitation on my relationships and my potential. How do you remove those character limitations? You remove them by thinking about doing the right things and choosing to do them.



REFLECTION:

In what ways do you think your character might be holding you back – with friends, at home, or at work?

Benefits of Good Character

Your growth on the inside will show on the outside.

You are appreciated because you strive to do what is right.

Your inside and outside live in harmony.

You remove character limitations from your life.

You increase the odds of making good choices.

You feel good about yourself because you live true to who you are.

Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you.

What benefit did you circle? Why?



REFLECTION:

HOW MY CHARACTER AFFECTS OTHERS

What is the most important lesson you have learned from the value of character?

What character choice will you make this week that will positively affect others?

~~~~~  
**Today I will make character choices** .....  
**that will positively affect others.**  
 ~~~~~





Lesson 7: Forgiveness

*"All possibilities are on
the other side of forgiveness."*

JOHN C. MAXWELL

LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person
read aloud.



Next person
read aloud.



Underline what's
important to you.



Share with
others.



Take
action.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Choose to allow forgiveness to make
a beautiful mosaic of your life.**



Part 1

Forgiveness is a Choice



Everyone needs forgiveness. The humanity in our lives causes us to not always do the right thing. All of us at some time have wronged others. That action separates and damages the relationship. It causes a brokenness between ourselves and others. The result? Over time, we become broken people.

Forgiveness is like a mosaic. A mosaic is a decoration made up of small, usually colored pieces of inlaid stone, glass, or tile. These small broken pieces are put together in such a way that they display a fragile beautiful picture for others to see. Sense has been made out of brokenness. Beauty is a result of it. That is a picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness takes the brokenness of our lives and allows us to choose to create something of beauty from it.



REFLECTION:

What did you underline that was important to you?



Forgiveness is Not...



To make a beautiful mosaic of your life, you need to have a clear picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice to not hold something against another person, in spite of what he or she has done to you. Forgiveness is not...



- ***Forgiveness is not approving of what they did.***

It's not saying, "Well, it's okay. Nobody's perfect. Everybody makes mistakes. It's no big deal." It is a big deal; what they did hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not denying what was done.***

It's not saying, "It didn't happen. I forgot all about it. I just moved on. I didn't let it affect me." It did happen, and it hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not waiting for an apology.***

You may say, "I'll forgive them as soon as they say they are sorry." Don't wait. Some people will never apologize.

- ***Forgiveness is not forgetting.***

Often people say, "Forgive it and forget it." It's impossible to forget if you were raped, molested, abandoned, beaten, or abused. "Forget it?" Impossible!

- ***Forgiveness is not ceasing to feel the pain.***

The wrongs committed toward you may always hurt. It's okay for that to bother you. Just because it hurts doesn't mean you can't forgive. It may not eliminate the pain, but forgiving will lessen it.

- ***Forgiveness is not a one time event.***

Forgiving someone doesn't mean they stop doing wrong. They may need forgiving again. Forgiveness is a process.

- *Forgiveness is not a matter of trust.*

Forgiveness does not mean trust. Forgiveness is a choice — a gift to others and yourself. Trust must be earned over time. To forgive someone immediately does not mean to trust a person immediately. Trust is built slowly based upon behavior, not words.

- *Forgiveness is not reconciliation.*

Just because you have forgiven someone does not always bring closeness or compatibility. Forgiveness is the choice of one person. Reconciliation is the choice of two.

Without forgiveness you remain broken, detached, and jagged. With forgiveness, you become an image of beauty within brokenness, inclusive and peaceful.



REFLECTION:

..... What is the most important thing you learned about what is **NOT** forgiveness?

HOW FORGIVENESS AFFECTS ME

What is one positive benefit to me if I forgive someone?



**This week I will begin making a mosaic
out of the broken pieces in my life.**



Part 2

REVIEW OF LESSON 7, PART 1:

- Forgiveness is a Choice
- Forgiveness is Not...

In Part 1 of this lesson, you made a choice to forgive someone.

How well did you do this?

ANSWER BELOW:

EVALUATE YOURSELF ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:

Circle your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1 2 3 4 5



..... Why did you give yourself this rating?

Forgiveness Gives You Healing and Health



There's an old saying that unforgiveness towards someone is like drinking poison and waiting for them die. When we hold on to old wounds or grudges, we are in essence choosing to keep a wound that prohibits us from being fully healthy. If we embrace anger, resentment, and bitterness, we will never be able to truly heal from our hurts.



Only by choosing to forgive can we begin the healing process. It may sound cliché, but forgiveness is medicine for the soul —medicine we all need if we want to live life to the fullest.

REFLECTION:

WHICH PATH WILL YOU TAKE?

There are three paths we can take when it comes to relationships.
Check one path and discuss why you chose it.

- ☐ **The Easy Path:** We treat people however we like.
- ☐ **The Better Path:** We treat people the same as they treat us.
- ☐ **The Excellent Path:** We treat people better than they treat us.





03

Three People You Need To Forgive



There are three people you need to forgive if you desire to change your life in a positive way:

1. Forgive Yourself.

Part 1 of this lesson stated, “Everyone needs forgiveness.” We are all broken. When we accept our brokenness, we judge ourselves less harshly and find ourselves more compassionate toward others. Place the broken pieces of your life into a beautiful mosaic by forgiving yourself. You can live a life you are proud of. If that’s not happening now, forgiving yourself will give you the strength to start over again.

2. Forgive Your Parents.

Whether living or dead, you need to forgive them for the mistakes they have made in bringing you up. Forgiving your parents may seem insignificant, but forgiving your mother or father is actually the best thing you can do for the quality of your life. Even low-grade parental blame and resentment can negatively affect your current relationships, future relationships, finances, and overall wellbeing. This can prevent you from achieving the love, abundance, and happiness you deserve. Being willing to forgive your parents can have a profound effect on your relationship with your mother or father.

On the other hand, if you are unwilling to forgive your parents, you will remain forever a child. You block your own chance to grow up and become a fully functioning adult, and you will continue to see yourself as a victim.

3. Forgive Others.

Forgive everyone. Living a life of forgiveness is to live a life of freedom. Forgiveness is about letting go of your past so you can go forward with your life.

Lewis B. Smedes said,

“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.”

Benefits of Forgiveness

- You will improve your psychological well-being.
- You will feel a sense of peace as you let go of pain and anger.
- You will see yourself and others with greater clarity.
- You will be able to treat others better than they treat you.
- You will be able to live a life without unfinished business.
- You will be able to ask for forgiveness from others.

Circle the benefit that is most desirable to you.
 What benefit did you circle? Why?



REFLECTION:

Who do you feel that you should forgive first? Yourself? Others? Your parents?

~~~~~  
**Today I will forgive someone and reap the positive possibilities of my action.** .....  
 ~~~~~



Lesson 8: Self-Worth

A person with dark hair, wearing a dark blue t-shirt, is holding a rectangular sign with both hands. The sign is divided into three horizontal sections: a red top section with the word 'HELLO' in white, a white middle section with 'i am' in black, and a red bottom section with the word 'PRICELESS' in black. The person's face is obscured by the sign. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

HELLO
i am

PRICELESS

“The price tag we place on ourselves is the same price tag others place on us.”

JOHN C. MAXWELL

LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person
read aloud.



Next person
read aloud.



Underline what's
important to you.



Share with
others.



Take
action.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 6 to 8 people within the classroom.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!

**THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:**

**Know your value so you can make the choice
to not sell yourself short.**



Part 1

Self-Worth is a Choice



Your self-worth is the feeling that you have good qualities and have achieved good things.

Who Are You?

You are special

You are important

You are unique

You are gifted

You are accepted

You are essential

You are significant

You are worthy

You are priceless

You matter!!!

It is important to know this about yourself. It is more important for you to accept and express these qualities about yourself. Write down these qualities as the first step to embracing them as a part of your life.

Who I Am

I am special.

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I matter!!!

REFLECTION:

Which one of the qualities was the easiest for you to list?

Which one of the qualities was the most difficult for you to list?

Why? Share with others.



01 Self-Worth Statements

The price tag you place on yourself is important because...

1. It is the same price tag others will place on you.

How do you feel about yourself? Check your price tag. Perhaps you have marked yourself down. It's you that determines your worth. Get off the "Clearance Rack" and put yourself in the glass case where the "Valuables" are kept. Bottom line: Value yourself.

Why? If you place a low value on yourself, rest assured that others will not raise your price. Your value doesn't decrease based on how someone else feels about you. It decreases by how you feel about yourself. Low self-worth occurs when you imitate others instead of being yourself. High self-worth is when you appreciate yourself and back it up with good behavior.



Eleanor Roosevelt said,

*“No one can make you
feel inferior without
your consent.”*



The price tag you place on yourself is important because...

2. It is the same price tag you will place on others.

Brian Tracy says, “There is a direct relationship between your own level of self-esteem and the health of your personality. The more you like and respect yourself, the more you like and respect other people. The more you consider yourself to be a valuable and worthwhile person, the more you consider others to be valuable and worthwhile as well. The more you accept yourself just as you are, the more you accept others just as they are.”



**Today I will begin raising
the price tag of my self-worth.**



yourself



Part 2

REVIEW OF LESSON 8, PART 1:

- Self-Worth is a Choice
- Self-Worth Statements

In Part 1 of this lesson, you made a choice to raise the price tag of your self-worth.

How well did you do this?

ANSWER BELOW:

EVALUATE YOURSELF ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5:

Circle your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1 2 3 4 5



..... Why did you give yourself this rating?

02 Self-Worth Steps



1. Fill your self talk with self-worth.



You have a running conversation with yourself going on all the time. It's the most valuable conversation you will ever have! Most of your emotions are determined by the way you talk to yourself. You naturally move toward the conversations you have with yourself. What you say about yourself, you tend to believe. What you believe, you tend to act. How we act, we tend to become. No world record was ever set by someone who said, "I cannot do this."

REFLECTION:

Check the one that applies to you:

My self talk is...

- ☐ Encouraging
- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Motivating
- ☐ Discouraging
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Procrastinating
- ☐ Harmful
- ☐ Helpful
- ☐ Makes Me Better
- ☐ Makes Me Worse



2. Invest in yourself.

You must see value in yourself before you add value to yourself. Self-image will determine more than anything else how much you will invest in yourself. Why is it important for you to add value to yourself?

Because you cannot give what you do not have. When you get better, you can help others get better. Your personal development is the belief that you are worth the effort, time, and energy that is needed to develop yourself.

TAKEAWAY TRUTH:

When nobody else celebrates you, learn to celebrate yourself. It's not up to other people to keep you encouraged; it's up to you. Encouragement should come from the inside.



3. Add value to others

Self-worth is the feeling you possess good qualities and have achieved good things. How do we achieve good things? By adding value to others.

SELF-WORTH GUIDE:

1. Feel good about yourself. If you don't feel good about you, it's hard to feel good about anyone or anything else.
2. Feel good about others. The better you feel about others, the more you will want to add value to them.
3. Do good for others. It is impossible to feel badly about yourself when you are doing something good for others.
4. Think of ways to add value to others.
5. Look for ways to add value to others.
6. Add value to others every day.

REFLECTION:

1. Who will you add value to this week?



2. How will you do this?



FINAL THOUGHT:

Your self-worth is defined by how you feel about yourself and how others feel about you. Adding value to others will enable them to feel good about you, and you will feel good about yourself.

At the end of each day, silently affirm that you are the type of person you would like to spend the rest of your life with.



Today I will add value to others.





John C. Maxwell, a #1 New York Times bestselling author, coach, and speaker, was identified as the #1 leader in business by the AMA and the world's most influential leadership expert by Inc. in 2014. His organizations — The John Maxwell Company, The John Maxwell Team, EQUIP, and the John Maxwell Leadership Foundation — have trained millions of leaders touching every nation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT JMLF.ORG