



CLARIFY AND CHOOSE

“I Clarify and Choose Mindfully.”

Core Concept

CLARIFYING AND CHOOSING is the mindful process of objectively assessing emotional states—your own and others’—and identifying the needs of a situation before taking action. It is the practice of pausing to accurately interpret what is happening so that your choices are calm, wise, and compassionate.

Why It Matters

When we are not clear-headed, stress or emotion can activate the limbic brain, reducing our ability to think logically. Without clarity, we may react impulsively or miss the underlying needs driving one’s behaviour. Clarifying ensures decisions are based on awareness, not automatic programming or emotional hijacks.

How to Practice Clarifying and Choosing

Before responding, continuously and consciously Catch and Calm yourself. Then objectively assess:

1. What safety measures are needed right now?
2. What are this person’s needs and how can I meet them?
3. How can I build trust and security?
4. Am I reacting emotionally?
5. What action will best enrich this person’s life?

Rules to Remember

1. Never assume behaviours are only for attention or avoidance—they often express deeper needs such as pain, loneliness, or confusion.
2. Respond using approaches that have worked before and meet the criteria of being respectful, patient, kind, and safe.
3. Follow each person’s individualized response plan.
4. Use logical consequences sparingly—focus on calming, safety, and connection.
5. Speak and act with compassion, usefulness, and authenticity.

Practical Example

A person receiving support became agitated and escalated verbally to their supporter because of a change in schedule with little notice. By catching, calming, clarifying, and choosing, the supporter stayed present, reframed their emotion of fear, and responded with empathy instead of defensiveness as they determined that the person needed validation and to feel safe. Through mindful awareness and compassion, the situation de-escalated safely.

Key Insight

Clarifying and Choosing helps transform moments of conflict into opportunities for understanding. It is the bridge between awareness and responding wisely, ensuring that every choice is made consciously, compassionately, and with purpose.