

■ The Mastery of Self – Week 9

Comparison and Competition

Chapter Summary – Comparison and Competition

In Chapter 9, *Comparison and Competition*, Don Miguel Ruiz Jr. explores how society conditions us to compare and compete with others from a young age. We are taught to measure our worth based on how we stack up against peers—through grades, sports, career success, appearance, or possessions. While a small amount of competition can inspire growth, Ruiz shows how fear-based competition leads to suffering.

The Scarcity Mindset

When we compare ourselves to others, we often operate from a scarcity mindset: believing there is a limited amount of success, love, or happiness to go around. This creates insecurity, jealousy, and the illusion that another person's success somehow diminishes our own. As a result, we judge ourselves harshly, feeling "behind" or "not enough."

Comparison vs. Healthy Growth

Ruiz distinguishes between harmful competition and healthy striving. Fear-based competition is about proving our worth or avoiding failure. Healthy growth is about collaborating, celebrating others, and learning without judgment. When we release the need to be "better than," we can embrace abundance and mutual support.

Practical Shifts

To shift out of comparison, Ruiz encourages us to:

- Notice when self-judgment or jealousy arises and pause before reacting.
- Practice gratitude for your unique path and progress.
- Reframe comparison as inspiration instead of judgment.
- Remember that someone else's light doesn't dim yours—there is enough success and love for everyone.

True Self-Mastery

Ultimately, this chapter reminds us that self-mastery is not about winning the race, but stepping out of it entirely. When we stop competing from fear, we reclaim our energy for authentic growth and deeper connections.

Reflection Questions

- When do you most often find yourself comparing to others?
- What beliefs about scarcity or 'not enough' show up when you compare yourself?
- How might your relationships change if you celebrated others instead of competing with them?

- What would healthy, love-driven growth look like for you?

Journal Prompts

- I feel most triggered to compare myself when...
- One person I often compare myself to is... and the story I tell myself about them is...
- A belief I want to release about competition is...
- A small way I can shift from jealousy to inspiration this week is...