

Quality #4: Discipline and Structure

Resistance and Rebellion Barometer

An Intentional Creator is disciplined and structured. Whether acting as an employee, manager, business owner, companion or parent, they can be their own boss providing needed structure, supervision and motivation. They respect authority. They are always looking for better ways to do things yet are open to other people's ideas. They keep distractions in their proper perspective, maintain beneficial systems and appropriately enforce rules.

Let's have a moment of truth. Do your current thoughts support or rebel against discipline and structure – the very structure needed to succeed? Let's quickly review the Six Characteristics that support the Quality of Discipline and Structure and some of the most common thought processes that will attempt to sabotage these characteristics.

In preparation for studying the ways in which your thoughts support or sabotage these six characteristics, let's turn to Og Mandino for some sage wisdom. In scroll VII, Og writes, *"I will laugh at the world. And most of all, I will laugh at myself for man is most comical when he takes himself too seriously. Never will I fall into this trap of the mind. For though I be nature's greatest miracle am I not still a mere grain tossed about by the winds of time? ...Will my concern for this day not seem foolish ten years hence? Why should I permit the petty happenings of today to*

disturb me? What can take place before this sunset which will not seem insignificant in the river of centuries?"

The single most important action you can take before exploring these characteristics and sabotaging thought processes is to smile. These sabotaging thoughts do not have a funny bone as you may sense as you listen or read!

1. Disciplined: Do you consciously surrender your resistant and often rebellious nature and willingly submit to rules, order and structure that can add value to your life?

or...

Do your thoughts want you to spend a lot of time resisting and rebelling against structure? We are not talking about the things you want to do. This resistance occurs when unwanted structure is imposed on us . This could be as simple as being forced or forcing yourself to go on a diet or exercise program. It could be as complex as new and burdensome tax law that adversely impacts your bottom line or mandated rules and regulations imposed on your business that just don't make any sense. Not saying you have to like it, but do you find yourself resisting and rebelling and even trying to find "creative" ways around the rules and regulations?

2. Teachable: Do you respect authority and recognize the practical value in following rules and taking direction?

or...

Do your thoughts want you to push or fight back when someone tries to use their positional authority to impose unwanted structure? How do you react when someone in a position of authority or influence insists on doing something their way and you know there is a better way, but they won't listen? Ever throw the baby out with the bathwater? Ever been called a loose cannon? Ever had challenges with a boss?

or...

Do you surrender your power and allow others in positions of authority to make all the decisions without question?

3. Analytical: Are you open to and do you consider new ideas that have the potential for solving problems or improving situations?

or...

Do you constantly and even obsessively think? What do you do to shut off your mind? Ever get really attached to your thoughts? How might those closest to you respond to the previous question? Ever obsessively worry? Ever make mountains out of molehills? If this measurement is orange or red, smile.

4. Methodical: Can you clearly see the risks in new and different ideas and appropriately challenge change that is not sound?

or...

Do your thoughts want you to be closed to ideas that threaten your ideas? Is it ever difficult to find good in someone else's idea especially when you don't agree with it?

or...

Are you ever too open to new ideas and get resistance from partners or mates when you want to make a decision? Do you do it anyway or find a way to get your way?

5. Consistent: Do you manage interruptions and distractions in order to maintain schedules and keep your commitments?
or...

When faced with a difficult task, do your thoughts want you to hang a metaphorical sign on your door that reads, "Interruptions welcomed!"? Please anything of value – anything to help justify avoiding this task." Or...Do you force everyone else to follow the rules with exactness (if I have to, you have to)?

6. Loyal: Do you protect the rules, policies and procedures needed to maintain appropriate levels of order and structure?
or...

Do your thoughts want you to be too lenient or too strict?

I want you to imagine one or several of these sabotaging thoughts wrapped up into one person, one mean, lean fighting machine. I want you to imagine that this person leaps up on the table in a single bound, flexes its muscles and angrily proclaims, "I won't be controlled by anyone!" Now imagine this formidable person jumping down from the table and boldly getting in your face and while poking its index finger in your chest and emphatically adding, "Not even by you!"

You have just met the enemy – thought processes accumulated over a lifetime, thought processes that want you to resist order and structure; thoughts that want to be right; thoughts that want you to fix everything and everyone. Is it time to step back and take charge of your life again? Success or failure, in large part, may be dependent on doing just that.