A Travelers Gift – Summary

**1st Decision for Success – Harry Truman – Responsibility**

* We are all in situations of our own choosing. Our thinking creates a pathway to success or failure. By disclaiming responsibility for our present, we crush the prospect for an incredible future that might have been ours.
* Outside influences are not responsible for where you are mentality, physically, emotionally, spiritually, or financially. You have chosen the pathway to your present destination. The responsibility of your destination is yours.
* You are where you are b/c of your thinking. Your thinking dictates your decisions. Decisions are choices.
* The words –“it’s not my fault” should never come from your mouth. The words – “its not my fault” have been symbolically written on the gravestones of unsuccessful people ever since Eve took a bite of the apple. Until a person takes responsibility for where he is, there is no basis for moving on. The bad news is the past was in your hands, but the good news is that the future is also in your hands.
* I will never seek comfort by associating with those who have decided to be comfortable.

*The Buck Stops Here*

From this moment forward I will accept responsibility for my past. I understand that the beginning of wisdom is to accept responsibility for my own problems and that by accepting responsibility for my past, I free myself to move into a bigger, brighter future of my own choosing.

Never again will I blame my parents, my spouse, my boss, or other employees for my present situation. Neither my education of lack of one, my genetics, or the circumstantial ebb and flow of everyday life will affect my future in a negative way. If I allow myself to blame these uncontrollable forces for my lack of success, I will forever be caught in the web of the past. I will look forward. I will not let my history control my destiny.

The buck stops here. I accept responsibility for my past. I am responsible for my success.

I am where I am today- mentally, physically, emotional, spiritually, and financially – because of the decisions I have made. My decisions have always governed my thinking. Therefore, I am where I am today- mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially – because of how I think. Today I will begin the process of where I am - mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially – by changing the way I think.

My thoughts will be constructive, never destructive. My mind will live in the solutions of the future. It will not dwell in the problems of the past. I will seek association of those who are working and striving to bring about positive changes in the world. I will never seek comfort by associating with those who have decided to be comfortable.

When faced with an opportunity to make a decision, I will make one. I understand that God did not put in me the ability to always make the right decision. He did, however, put in me the ability to make a decision and then make it right. The rise and fall of my emotional tide will not deter me from my course. When I make a decision, I will stand behind it. My energy will go into making a decision. I will waste none on second thoughts. My life is not an apology. It will be a statement.

The buck stops here. I control my thoughts. I control my emotions.

In the future when I am tempted to ask the question “why me” I will ask “why not me?” Challenges are gifts, opportunities to learn. Problems are the common thread running through the lives of great men and women. In times of adversity, I will not have a problem to deal with; I will have a choice make. I will make the right choice. Adversity is preparation for greatness. I will accept this preparation. Why me? Why not me? I will be prepared for something great.

I accept responsibility for my past. I control my thoughts. I control my emotions. I am responsible for my success.

The buck stops here.

**2nd Decision for Success – King Solomon – I Will Seek Wisdom**

* Jehovah moves mountains to create the opportunity of His choosing. It is up to you to be ready to move yourself
* Seek Wisdom. Wisdom waits to be gathered. She cannot be bartered or sold. She is a gift for the diligent. And only the diligent will find her. The lazy man – the stupid man – never even looks. Though wisdom is available to many, she is found by few. Seek wisdom. Find her, and you will find success and contentment.
* And at what age are we no longer affected by those around us? Eighteen? Twenty one? Thirty? The answer, of course, is that we are always and forever influenced by those with whom we associate. If a man keeps company with those who curse and complain – he will soon find curses and complaints flowing like a river from his own mouth. If he spends his days with the lazy – those seeking handouts – he will soon find his finances in disarray. Many of our sorrows can be traced to relationships with the wrong people.
* Guard your associations carefully. Anytime you tolerate mediocrity in your choice of companions, you become more comfortable with mediocrity in your life. If a lazy man isn’t an irritation to you then it is a sign that you have accepted slothfulness as a way of life.
* Keep consul with wise and energetic men.
* Only a fool refuses the counsel of wise men. There is safety in counsel. Sensible instruction is a life-giving fountain that will help you escape all manner of deadly traps. Find a wise man, a person who has accomplished what you wish for in your own life, and listen closely to his words.
* When a king begins to act like a king, it is not long before someone else is king. Serving is a way we can place value on another. A wise man is a server.
* I can do nothing to alleviate your struggles and would not if I were able. It is never the duty of the leader to struggle for someone else; a leader must encourage others to struggle and assure them that the struggles are worthwhile. Do battle with the challenges your present, and you will unlock the prizes of your future.

*I will seek wisdom*

Knowing that wisdom waits to be gathered, I will actively search her out. My past can never be changed, but I can change the future by changing my actions today. I will change my actions today! I will train my eyes and eyes to read and listen to books and recordings that bring about positive changes in my personal relationships and a greater understanding of my fellow man. No longer will I bombard my mind with materials that feed my doubts and fears. I will read and listen only to what increases my belief in myself and my future.

 I will seek wisdom. I will choose my friends with care.

 I am who my friends are. I speak their language, and I wear their clothes. I share their opinions and their habits. From this moment forward I will choose to associate with people whose lives and lifestyles that I admire. If I associate with chickens, I will learn to scratch at the ground and squabble over crumbs. If I associate with eagles, I will learn to soar to great heights. I am an eagle. It is my destiny to fly.

 The words of a wise man are like raindrops on dry ground. They are precious and can be quickly used for immediate results. Only the blade of grass that catches the raindrop will prosper and grow. The person who ignores wise counsel is like a blade of grass untouched by the rain – soon to wither and die. When I counsel with just myself, I can make decisions only according to what I know. By counseling with a wise man, I add his knowledge and experience to my own and dramatically increase my success.

 I will seek wisdom. I will be a servant to others.

 A wise man will cultivate a servants spirit, for that particular attribute attracts people like no other. As I humbly serve others, their wisdom will be freely shared with me. Often, the person who develops a servants spirit becomes wealthy beyond measure. Many times, the servant has the ear of the king, and a humble servant often becomes king, for he is the popular choice of the people. He who serves the most grows the fastest.

 I will become a humble servant. I will not look for someone to open my door – I will look to open the door for someone. I will not be distressed when no one is available to help me – I will be excited when I am available to help.

 I will be a servant to others. I will listen to the counsel of wise men. I will choose my friends with care.

 I will seek wisdom.

**3rd Decision for Success – Tom Chamberlain – I am a Person of Action**

* I am a teacher with a cause in my heart and men to lead. These poor men… their leader has no real knowledge of warfare or tactics. I am only a stubborn man. That is my greatest advantage in this fight. I have deep within me the inability to do nothing. I may die today, but I will not die with a bullet in my back. I will not die in retreat. I am, at least, like the Apostle Paul, who wrote, “This one thing I do… I press on to toward the mark.”
* “a calm washed over him with that same familiar urging – wait, watch, listen, learn.”
* We can’t retreat, he said to himself. We can’t stay here. When I am faced with the choice of doing nothing or something, I will always choose to act. I am a person of action.
* It is true: an army of sheep led by a lion would defeat any army of lions lead by a sheep.

*I am a person of action*

Beginning today, I will create a new future by creating a new me. No longer will I dwell in the pit of despair, moaning over squandered time and lost opportunity. I can do nothing about the past. My future is immediate. I will grasp it in both hands and carry it with running feet. When I am faced with the choice of doing nothing or something, I will always choose to act. I seize this moment. I choose now.

 I am a person of action. I am energetic. I move quickly.

 Knowing that laziness is a sin, I will create a habit of lively behavior. I will walk with a spring in my step and a smile on my face. The lifeblood rushing through my veins is urging me upward and forward into activity and accomplishment. Wealth and prosperity hide from the sluggard, but rich rewards come to the person who moves quickly.

 I am a person of action. I inspire others with my activity. I am a leader.

 Leading is doing. To lead I must move forward. Many people move out of the way for the person that is on the run; others are caught up in his wake. My activity will create a way of success for the people who follow. My activity will be consistent. This will instill confidence in my leadership. As a leader, I have the ability to encourage and inspire others to greatness. It is true: an army of sheep led by a lion would defeat any army of lions lead by a sheep.

 I am a person of action. I can make a decision. I can make it now. A person who moves neither left nor right is destined for mediocrity. When faced with a decision many people say they are waiting for God. But I understand in most cases, God is waiting for me. He has given me a healthy mind to gather and sort information and the courage to come to a conclusion. I am not a quivering dog, indecisive and fearful. My constitution is strong and my pathway is clear. Successful people make their decisions quickly and change their minds slowly. Failures make their decisions slowly and change their minds quickly. My decisions come quickly and they lead to victory.

 I am person of action. I am daring. I am courageous.

 Fear no longer has a place in my life. For too long, fear has outweighed my desire to make things better for my family. Never again! I have exposed fear as a vapor, an imposter that never had any power over me in the first place. I do not fear opinion, gossip, or the idle chatter of monkeys, for all are the same to me. I do not fear failure, for in my life, failure is a myth. Failure exist only for the person who quits. I do not quit.

 I am courageous. I am a leader. I seize the moment. I choose now.

 I am a person of action.

**4th Decision for Success – Christopher Columbus – I have a Decided Heart**

* To Columbus: “Do you not really know where you are?’ (answer) **Does that have any bearing on what I can accomplish??**
* **“Do you know where you are? Do you know what you are? I have heard that question since I was a child. Columbus, you are uneducated. Columbus you are poor. You are the son of a weaver. What do you know about the sea? The question do you know where you are affects me not in the least! Now, “do you know where you are going – that is question I can answer!” Ask me that!**
* **It took 19 years years to find a sponsorship. For 19 years I endured the agony of public humiliations for my convictions.**
* Truth is Truth. If a thousand people believe something foolish, it is foolish! **Truth is never dependent on consensus of opinion.** I have found that it is better to be alone and acting upon the truth in my own heart than follow the gaggle of silly geese doomed to mediocrity.
* If you worry about what other people think of you then you will have more confidence in their opinion than you have in your own**. Poor is the man whose future depends on the opinions and permission of others.** Remember this**, if** **you are afraid of criticism, you will die doing nothing**.
* **Getting started, getting finished –** both ends of a journey require a demonstration of passion.
* Passion is a product of the heart. Passion is what helps you when you have a great dream. Passion breeds conviction and turns mediocrity into excellence! Your passion will motivate others to join you in pursuit of your dream. With passion, you will overcome insurmountable obstacles. You will become unstoppable.
* As they look over the horizon and land is not visible this morning Columbus says, “You are looking in the wrong direction. Today, you will not see land off the bow of my ship. You will see land only by looking in to my eyes.”
* We are almost there! The hardest part of the journey is the past!
* “is this realistic? No, it’s not realistic to say we will find land. But then nothing **great was ever accomplished by a realistic person.** Will we find land? Yes! We will find land but that will be the least of your discoveries. (Pointing to his chest) You will find a heart for success that you did not know existed. You find a man inside that is able to lead me into new worlds of their own. You will find … greatness!
* **Most people fail at whatever they attempt b/c of an undecided heart. Should I? Should I not? Go forward? Go back?** Success requires the emotional balance of a committed heart. When confronted with a challenge the committed heart will search for a solution. The undecided heart searches for an escape.
* A **committed heart does not wait for conditions to be exactly right**. Why? Because conditions are never exactly right. Indecision limits the Almighty and His ability to perform miracles in your life. He has put the vision in you – proceed! To wait, to wonder, to doubt, to be indecisive is to disobey God.

*I have a Decided Heart*

A wise man once said, **“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single ste**p.” Know this to be true, I am taking my first step today. For too long my feet have been tentative, shuffling to the left and right, more backward than forward as my heart gauged the direction of the wind. Criticism, condemnation, and complaint are creatures of the wind. They come and go on the wasted breathe of lesser beings and have no power over me. The power to control direction belongs to me. Today I will begin to exercise that power. My course has been charted. My destiny assured.

 **I have a decided heart. I am passionate about my vision for the future.**

 I will awaken every morning with an excitement about the new day and it’s opportunity for growth and change. My thoughts and actions will work in a forward motion, never sliding into the dark forest of doubt or the muddy quicksand of self-pity. I will give freely my vision for the future to others, and as they see the belief in my eyes, they will follow me.

 I **will lay my head on my pillow at night happily exhausted, knowing that I have done everything within my power to move mountains in my path**. As I sleep the same dream that dominates my waking hours will be with me in the dark. Yes, I have a dream, it is a great dream and I will never apologize for it. Neither will I ever let it go, for if I did my life would be finished. My hopes, my passions, my vision for the future are my very existence. A person without a dream never had a dream come true.

 I have a decided heart. I will not wait.

 I know that the purpose of analysis is to come to conclusion. I have tested the angles. I have measured the probabilities. And now I have made a decision with my heart. I am not timid. I will move now and not look back. What I put off until tomorrow, I will put off until the next day as well. I do not procrastinate. All my problems become smaller when I confront them. If I touch a thistle with caution, it will prick me, but if I grab it boldly its spines crumble into dust.

 I will not wait. I am passionate about my vision for the future. My course has been chartered. My destiny assured. I have a decided heart.

**5th Decision for Success – Anne Frank – Today I will choose to be happy**

* I do not complain. Complaining is an activity just like turning on the radio or jumping rope. One may choose to turn it on or one may choose not to turn it on. I choose not to complain.
* Our very lives are fashion by choice. People make choices and choices make people.
* My life- my personality, my habits, even my speech – is a combination of the books I choose to read, the people I choose to listen to, and the thoughts I choose to tolerate in my mind.
* At the end of a concert a bunch of red, blue, yellow, and green balloons were let into the sky. The little girl asked her dad, ‘Which will go the highest?” He replied, “It’s not the color of the balloon that is important. It’s what’s inside that makes all the difference.”
* Fear is a poor (dull) chisel with which to carve out tomorrow.

*Today I will Choose to be Happy*

Beginning this very moment, I am a happy person, for now I truly understand the concept of happiness. Few others before me have been able to grasp the truth of the physical law that enables one to live happily everyday. I know now that happiness is not an emotional phantom floating in and out of my life. Happiness is a choice. Happiness is the end result of certain thoughts and activities, which actually bring about a chemical reaction in my body. This reaction results in a euphoria that, while elusive to some, is totally under my control.

 Today I will choose to be happy. I will greet each day with laughter.

 Within moments of awakening, I will laugh for seven seconds. Even after such a small period of time, excitement has begun to flow through my bloodstream. I feel different. I am different. I am enthusiastic about the day. I am alert to its possibilities. I am happy!

 Laughter is an outward expression of enthusiasm, and I know that enthrusiasm is is the fuel that moves the world. I laugh throughout the day. I will laugh while I am alone, and I will laugh in conversation with others. People are drawn to me b/c I have laughter in my heart. The world belongs to the enthusiastic, for people willfollow them anywhere!

 Today I will choose to be happy. I will smile at every person I meet.

 My smile has become my calling card. It is, after all, the most potent weapon I possess. My smile has the strength to forge bonds, break ice, and calm storms. I will use my smile constantly. Because of my smile, the people with whom I come in contact on a daily basis will choose to further my causes and follow my leadership. I will always smile first. That particular display of good attitude will tell others what I expect in return.

 My smile is the key to my emotional makeup. A wise man once said, “I do not sing b/c I am happy, I am happy b/c I sing.” When I choose to smile I become the master of my emotions. Discouragement, despair, frustration, and fear will always wither when confronted by my smile. The power of who I am is displayed when I smile.

 Today I will choose to be happy. I am the possessor of a grateful spirit.

 In the past, I have found discouragement in particular situations until I compared the conditions of my life to others less fortunate. Just as a fresh breeze clears smoke from the air, so a grateful spirit removes the cloud of despair. It is impossible for the seeds of depression to take root in a thankful heart.

 My God has bestowed upon me many gifts, and for these I will remember to be grateful. Too many times I have offered up the prayers of a beggar, always asking for more and forgetting to give thanks. I do not wish to be seen as a greedy child, unappreciative and disrespectful. I am grateful for sight and sound and breathe. If ever in my life there is a pouring out of blessings beyond that, then I will be grateful for the miracle of abundance.

 I will greet each day with laughter. I will smile at every person I meet. I am the possessor of a grateful spirit.

 Today I will choose to be happy.

**6th Decision for Success – Abraham Lincoln – I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit**

* The good Lord would rather me pray and work, not pray and wait.
* Personal Growth leads to power. There is a certain level of personal growth that will provide the skills necessary to feed and clothe ones family. There is another level of personal growth that will furnish influence and wisdom in sufficient quantities to be perceived a leader. But to do great deeds great power is essential. Do not run from power. Gather it as you would the finest fruit. Power in the hands of a good person is like a cool drink of water on a hot summers day. It refreshes everyone with whom it comes in contact.
* Some people want enough power to get by. Some want enough power to make things comfortable for their families – they will include some less fortunate souls if it doesn’t make things to uncomfortable for themselves. There are few of us who believe we can change the world. We will develop the power to ignore what is popular and do what is right. One person can attain the power to lead thousands of people to the promised land of their dreams.
* As children we were afraid of the dark. Now as adults were are afraid of the light. We are afraid to step out. We are afraid to become more. But how can we lead others to a destination we have not reached? Keep searching son. I am urging you to seek the light that seems so far in the distance. It will be worth the journey. You will become a lighthouse of personal growth and power, and by your example and leadership, you will prevent many a worthy man from crashing his life upon the rocks of mediocrity.
* When you become a person that others want to be around, then you will have become a person of influence.
* I am speaking of honing the rough edges you might find in your physical appearance and actions such as manners or speech. Of course, I continue to find fertile ground for change in my attitude.
* To seek the approval of someone who is lazy or jealous is to cast your pearls before swine. You will find that God rarely uses a person that whose main concern is what others are thinking.
* Sooner or later every man of character will have that character questioned. Every man of honor and courage will be faced with unjust criticism, but never forget that unjust criticism has no impact whatsoever upon the truth. And that the only sure way to avoid criticism is to do nothing and be nothing!
* My platform, however, is that while public opinion may sway back and forth, right and wrong do not.
* Do I believe that God is on our side? To be quite honest, I haven’t given that question very much attention. I am much more concerned with whether we are on Gods side.
* Why will Grant make such a difference in the war? Because he cares as much as I do! – He fights! I’ve heard it said that he drinks too much. Well, if I can find out exactly what he’s drinking, I’ll send a few cases to the other generals.
* Grant wants to win as badly as I do. If you are determined to win, you will have to surround yourself with winners. Don’t be discouraged by the people you might choose for your team who talk big but produce little. Grant is my tenth try. I just keep putting them in the boat and see who wants to paddle as hard as I do.
* The first morning after all the hostilities cease, I will greet the day with a forgiving spirit.
* It is the single most important action I take on a regular basis. Forgiveness allows me to be an effective husband, father, friend, and leader of this country.
* The secret of forgiveness? It is hidden in plain sight. It costs nothing and is worth millions. It is available to everyone and used by few. If you harness the power of forgiveness, you will be revered, sought after, and wealthy. And not coincidentally, you will be forgiven by others.
* The unmistakable truth about forgiveness is that it is not a reward that must be earned; forgiveness is a gift to be given. When I give forgiveness, I free my own spirit to release the anger and hatred harbored in my heart. By granting forgiveness, I free my spirit to pursue my future happily and unencumbered by the anchors of my past. And forgiveness, when granted to others, becomes a gift to myself.
* Don’t be mad at you. Forgive yourself. Begin anew.

I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit

For too long every ounce of forgiveness that I owned was locked away, hidden from view, waiting for me to bestow its precious presence upon some worthy person. Alas, I found most people to be singularly unworthy of my forgiveness, and since they never asked for any, I kept it all for myself. Now, the forgiveness that I hoarded has sprouted inside my heart like a crippled seed yielding bitter fruit.

 No more! At this moment, my life has taken on new hope and assurance. Of all the worlds’ population, I am one of the few possessors of the secret to dissipating anger and resentment. I now understand that forgiveness has value only when it is given away. By the simple act of granting forgiveness, I release the demons of the past about which I can do nothing, and I create in myself a new heart, a new beginning.

 I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit. I will forgive even those who do not ask for forgiveness.

 Many are the times I have seethed in anger at a word or deed thrown into my life by an unthinking or uncaring person. I wasted valuable hours imagining revenge or confrontation. Now I see the truth revealed about this psychological rock inside my shoe. The rage I nurture is often one-sided, for my offender seldom gives thought to his offense!

 I will now and forever more silently offer my forgiveness, even to those who do not see that they need it. By the act of forgiving, I am no longer consumed by unproductive thoughts. I give up my bitterness. I am content in my soul and effective with my fellow man.

 I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit. I will forgive those who criticize me unjustly.

 Know that slavery in any form is wrong; I also know that the person who lives his life according to the opinions of others is a slave. I am not a slave. I have chosen my counsel. I know the difference between right and wrong. I know what is best for the future of my family, and neither misguided opinion nor unjust criticism will alter my course. Those who are critical of my goals and dreams simply do not understand the higher purpose to which I have been called. Therefore, their scorn does not affect my attitude or action. I forgive their lack of vision, and I forge ahead. I now know that criticism is a part of the price paid for leaping past mediocrity.

 I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit. I will forgive myself.

 For many years, my greatest enemy has been myself. Every mistake, every miscalculation, every stumble I made has been replayed again and again in my mind. Every broken promise, every day wasted, every goal not reached has compounded the disgust I feel for the lack of achievement in my life. My dismay has developed a paralyzing grip. When I disappoint myself, I respond with inaction and become more disappointed.

 I realize today that it is impossible to fight an enemy living in my head. By forgiving myself, I erase the doubts, fears, and frustration that have kept my past in the present. From this day forward, my history will cease to control my destiny. I have forgiven myself. My life has just begun.

 I will forgive even those who do not ask for forgiveness. I will forgive those who criticize me unjustly. I will forgive myself.

 I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit.