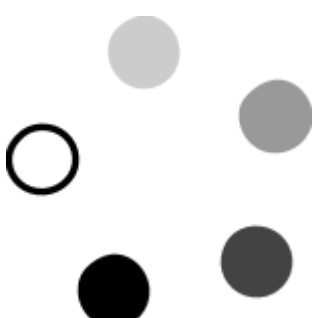


J10



Equip

Real Stories. Real Skills. Real Life.

Chapter 1

Mindfulness

Become more aware of yourself and the world around you.

Week 1

Wise Mind

My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding. Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures.

- Proverbs 2:1-4 (NLT)

Opening Bible Story

Queen Esther is Asked to Save Her People (Esther 3:8-11 & Esther 4:7-17)

8 Then Haman approached King Xerxes and said, "There is a certain race of people scattered through all the provinces of your empire who keep themselves separate from everyone else. Their laws are different from those of any other people, and they refuse to obey the laws of the king. So it is not in the king's interest to let them live. 9 If it please the king, issue a decree that they be destroyed, and I will give 10,000 large sacks of silver to the government administrators to be deposited in the royal treasury."

10 The king agreed, confirming his decision by removing his signet ring from his finger and giving it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. 11 The king said, "The money and the people are both yours to do with as you see fit."

7 Mordecai told [Hathach] the whole story, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. 8 Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the decree issued in Susa that called for the death of all Jews. He asked Hathach to show it to Esther and explain the situation to her. He also asked Hathach to direct her to go to the king to beg for mercy and plead for her people. 9 So Hathach returned to Esther with Mordecai's message.

10 Then Esther told Hathach to go back and relay this message to Mordecai: 11 "All the king's officials and even the people in the provinces know that anyone who appears before the king in his inner court without being invited is doomed to die unless the king holds out his gold scepter. And the king has not called for me to come to him for thirty days." 12 So Hathach gave Esther's message to Mordecai.

13 Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: "Don't think for a moment that because you're in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. 14 If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?"

15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 16 "Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die." 17 So Mordecai went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

More About the Story

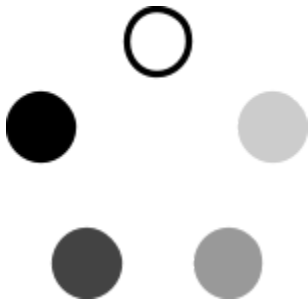
Esther was a Jewish woman who was married to King Xerxes who was not a Jewish man. Haman was a man that hated Jewish people and wanted them to be wiped from the face of the earth, so he ends up manipulating the king by telling him a certain group of people is disobeying the King. He tells him this lie and also doesn't mention that it's the same people group that Queen Esther came from just to make sure the King doesn't think anything of it. A Jewish man named Mordecai finds out and tells Esther but she is trapped in the middle of everything. She is the only Jewish person with the power to stop the evil Haman but she sees a lot of things that could prevent her from doing anything. She sees the rules the king made, the threat of being killed if you talk to him without being invited, the fear of what could happen to her or her loved ones so she freezes. Mordecai then calls her to something more, to look at what could happen if she doesn't do anything! He is inviting her to consider all the facts and all the feelings and use her position as Queen to save her people (which she later does). Sometimes we get put into situations where we feel trapped and don't know the best way through, but like Esther, we can look at all the pieces and come out on the other side with the best decision.

Story Reflection

How do you imagine Esther felt in this situation?

What would have happened if Esther only looked at the king's rules, or only her emotions?

Looking Inward. Are there any things you feel stuck in, or in the middle of? (Maybe a hard situation with friends or family. Maybe something you feel inside you that makes you feel stuck).

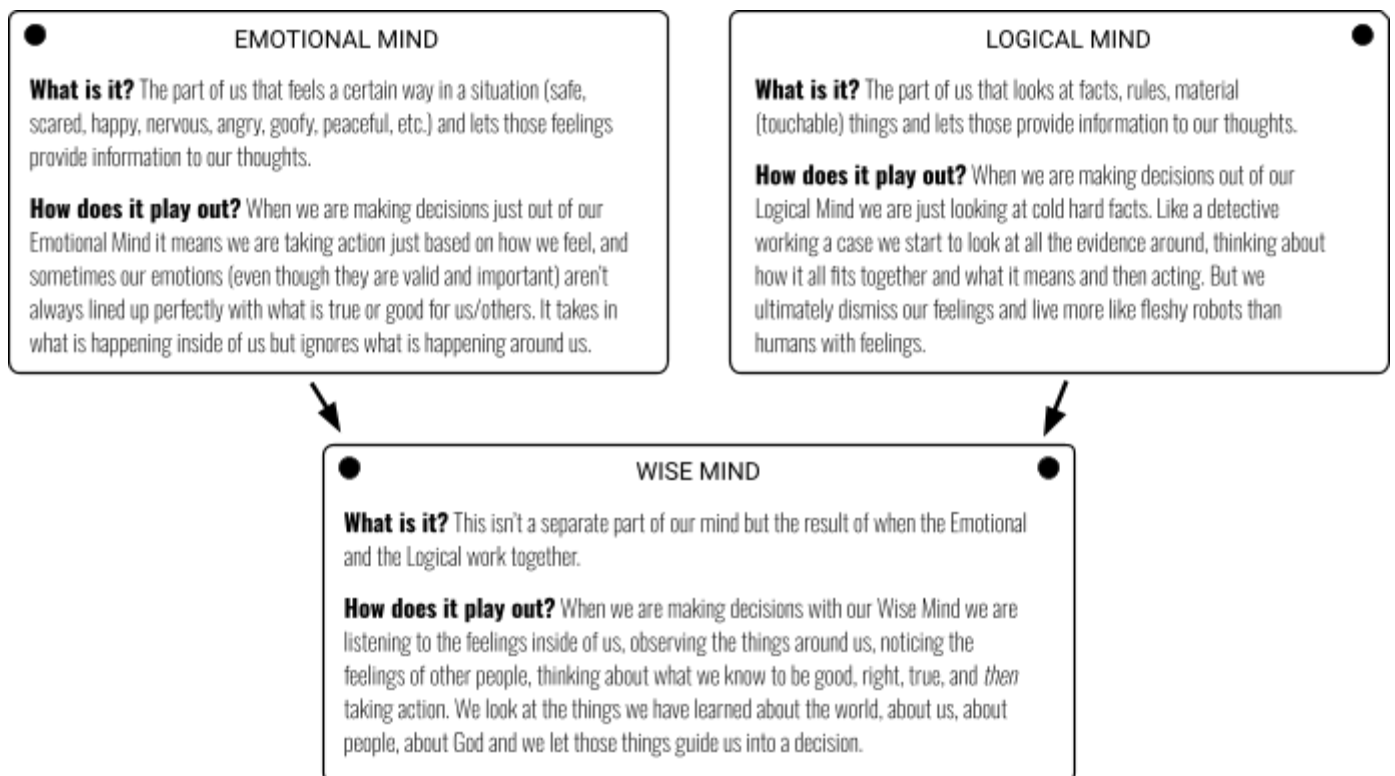


Let's Chat!

Get Practical!

There are two main sides of our mind, often separated into what people call our Logical Mind and our Emotional mind. Both are good and we know this for a fact because God said so. In the book of Genesis where we learn about how the world was made it says, "Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!" When He created mankind, part of what He placed inside of us was our Emotional Mind and our Logical Mind. Because God made us that way from the start, that means those parts of us are **meant to be there**, and if they are meant to be there we should learn how to best use them. However, because we live in a broken world and not a single one of us is perfect, there are times and situations where one side of our mind seems to try to take over and steer our actions without leaving room for the other half of our brain to speak up and share its thoughts.

What happens when they do work together is we get to live out of our Wise Mind, which is what God intended for us. When we live out of our Wise Mind we make better decisions because we let both our emotions (the valuable signals that act like sign posts pointing to what we are experiencing) and the logical side of our brain (the problem solver that thinks through and weighs the scales of what is right and wrong, good or bad, true or false, etc.) work together to fill in any gaps in our thinking. Take a look at the mind map below to help put it all in perspective:

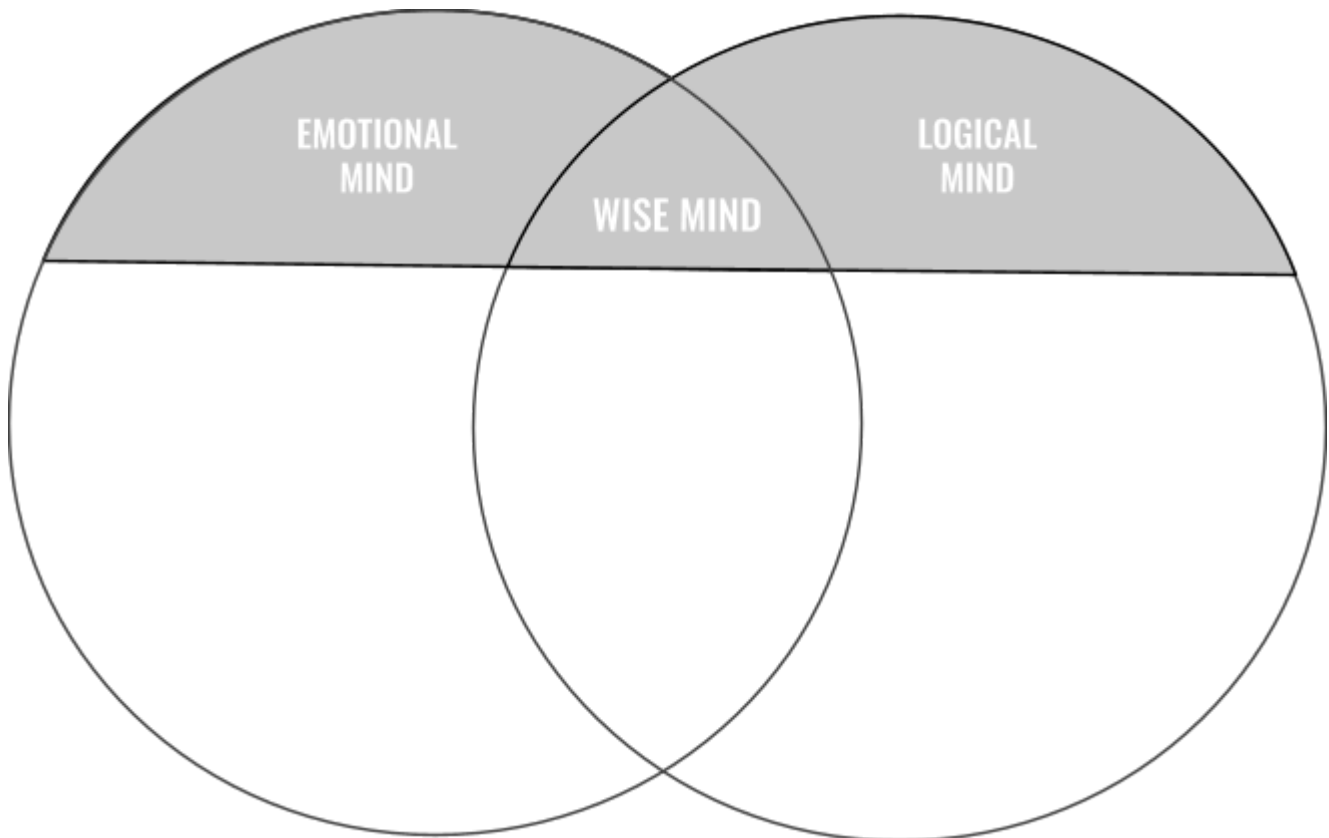


How do we put our Wise Mind to use?

Well...we have to give space and time to both sides of our mind. And in order to do that we have to slow down, even if it's just a little bit. We have to consider both perspectives of each half of our mind. We have to notice, name, and listen to what our feelings are saying but ALSO listen to the part of us that can think and reason and follow logical steps to work through things one at a time.

A good way to think about it is like a venn diagram since our Wise Mind is the combination of our Emotional and Logical Mind.

Take this realistic situation and fill in how each mind would think. Start with the outside ones and then end with Wise Mind in the middle: You wake up in the night and are really thirsty, you get up to go grab water from the kitchen but you realize the house is completely dark, you think you hear a sound down the hall.



“Wise Mind” in my life:

What are some problems you could imagine coming up if you or a friend only used the Emotional Mind to make a decision?

What are some problems you could imagine coming up if you or a friend only used the Logical Mind to make a decision?

Do you more often use your Emotional Mind or Logical Mind to make decisions in your life? Why do you think that might be the case?

Level Up!

(Let's put it into practice)

Activity 1: Three Minds Dilemma Challenge

Everyone group up in groups of 3-4. Your group will receive a situation that could happen in real life. Imagine you are actually experiencing it. Together, figure out what each of your three minds might tell you to do.

1. **Emotional Mind:** What would your feelings make you want to do right away?
2. **Logical Mind:** Forget your feelings for a moment. What do the facts and logic say?
3. **Wise Mind:** Now bring them together. What choice listens to your feelings and considers the facts? What response would you probably feel good about later?

Be ready to share your group's three responses.



Activity 2: Looking Back With Wise Mind

Think about one decision you've made recently. It can be something involving friends, family, school, sports, or anything else important to you.

Step 1: Write about it...

What happened?

What situation or decision were you facing?

What did I feel?

What emotions did you notice? What did you feel like doing?

What did I think?

What facts, consequences, or logical thoughts did you notice?

What did I do?

What choice did you make?

Step 2: Reflect on the Decision

Which mind was mostly in charge?

- ☐ Emotional Mind — My feelings and urges were mostly in control.
- ☐ Reasonable Mind — Logic and facts were mostly in control.
- ☐ Wise Mind — I listened to both my feelings and the facts.

Looking back, what might your Wise Mind have told you to do?



Send-off

What is something in your life that you typically feel emotions about? What are some logical thoughts you can bring into it to help you get to using your Wise Mind?

How can you use the activity we did together, this week (and beyond) to help you?

