

## JUDGE THE FRUIT – AXE THE ROOT

- Are you someone who likes to try new things and take risks? Why or why not?
- Have you ever wrongly or rightly judged someone? What happened?
- Do you believe you are producing the results in Life you are hoping for? How so?

They say that in Life, you can only be sure of one thing—and no the answer is not death or taxes—it's change. But change is not always a welcome thing for everyone. While some have the ability to embrace the new and unknown, others feel queasy and even afraid of it. Whether it is a physical habit, mental model, emotional pattern or even spiritual belief, there is something in all of us that hesitates when introduced to any kind of change—it's natural.

- **When was the last drastic change in your life? What happened and how did you feel?**

There are many healthy reasons of why we need to change. Sometimes change must be initiated internally. But there are also times that our environment and circumstances trigger change. And it's not always a positive change either. There are even times when you might be forced to change for the right or wrong reasons. It might be a change necessitated by a health or financial situation. Other times it might be change because of a conflict or in the worst cases, oppression from an external party.

- **When do you personally believe it is a good or bad time to change? How do you decide?**

The problem with change is it typically involves some type of judgment. And we as people have a tendency to take judgment personally when we shouldn't. For example, if someone asks us to correct a professional behaviour at our workplace, we might feel our employment is in jeopardy and that we are being judged as a bad employee. So the question becomes, how do we actually become receptive to positive changes we need to make without feeling condemned or motivated by our Gaps?

The strategy is to *judge the fruit, then axe the root*. What do we mean by this? Imagine a tree that was known to produce really great oranges season after season. But let's say that one year; its oranges were undersized and withered. Would you just go out and axe down the tree? Of course not. Any good orange farmer would investigate and see if what conditions needed to be adjusted to restore fruitfulness. The fruit is just a symptom of an underlying issue.

But let's say you discovered that a particularly nasty strain of weed was choking out the orange tree. Would it be enough to just pull what was on the surface? That's only a temporary solution. In the case of weeds, we need to pull the entire root system. Sometimes we make the mistake of axing the tree and not the roots!

So ask yourself, what fruit are you producing in Life? Is it pointing to some changes you need to make? Do you need to lay the axe to certain roots that are preventing your fruitfulness? Sometimes change is necessary to advance Life!

- **What have you recognized and reframed from this strategy and how can you practically respond with a higher regard for Life?**

This week reflect on the fruit you see produced in you and others. Don't judge the fruit by the Gap. Don't let the Gaps cause self-condemnation, potentially causing you to axe the wrong roots. But instead reflect on what changes in Life that the fruit needs to be a part of. Then seek the courage to pull the proper roots which leads to transformation.