

# Who Can I Trust?

We all make a conscious decision in choosing who we want to trust. Everyone has certain criteria that dictates who is worthy enough to confide in. We would like to believe that we approach everyone with an open mind and no biases that dictate our choices, but the reality is that we are all very biased when it comes to the opinions, stances, and suggestions provided by other people. That is why it is most wise to not trust anyone except for yourself.

**How can I trust my own judgment?:** Like it or not there is not a human being alive that cares for your own welfare other than you. Others might think they are looking after your best interests but in reality only you know what your best interests are. It is wise to take advice from other people, measure their advice according to your values, and then make decisions guided by that wisdom. What is unwise is to put your confidence in someone else to tell you what is right and wrong based solely on their merit and word.

Believe it or not, your judgment is just as relevant as anyone else's. If someone insists that they have incredible insight into a topic and demand that you blindly trust them, something is fishy. If this same person appears to be saying something that sounds far-fetched or just plain ridiculous, odds are that what they are trying to sell you on is just plain ridiculous. If you use your brain, your heart, and your instincts in making decisions you are likely to make the right decisions.

*Brain:* Yes, you have the intellectual ability to make good decisions. Whatever forms of media you consume make a difference in developing your values. It doesn't matter if you are the CEO of a major corporation or a worker at a fast food restaurant. You can easily observe what works and what does not. Having said that, our society has to be a little more intentional with being informed.

Reading is vitally important. Some say that watching videos, television, or listening to audios is sufficient, but reading about ideas presented by great thinkers will cultivate a healthy mind that is confident in making good decisions. It is easier to be complacent and allow other people to tell us what to think, but doing so will never yield the most desirable results.

*Heart:* Brainiacs tend to neglect this aspect of decision making. Our feelings are a part of who we are. Naturally, thinking something out should be the first level in decision making, feeling should come later. Putting feelings first can result in horrible decisions. Instead, feelings should be a filter.

Will this decision harm a meaningful relationship that I have? If a decision seems like it might be beneficial for yourself, but harmful to people you care about, maybe you should reconsider. Some things are more important than success, namely the people that we love.

*Instinct:* If something sounds too good to be true, it is. There are no free lunches and we know this in our gut. Certain propositions might sound rational enough and make us feel good about what it prompts us to do, but if it doesn't pass the gut check, beware. Many people have been burnt because of promises that sounded legitimate, but turned out to be an intricate scam.

**Wisdom from Authority:** Look at any field of study. Who do the brightest minds in each trust? They trust those who are considered authorities in their field. Good decision making must be based on a higher authority or it will not yield good fruit.

If you are a Christian your decisions should be based off of Biblical principles (what the Bible clearly teaches). There will be people who try to guilt you into believing otherwise but holding steadfast to the Word of God is where a Christian derives his or her wisdom. Deviating from Biblical wisdom is deviation from true faith.

**Really, Who Can You Trust?:** There are people you can trust but it must start with confidence in what you believe. After you have established this it is fairly easy to know who to trust. The simplicity of it is that you then can trust people who espouse similar beliefs that you hold dear.

If, for instance, Christianity is good enough for you, why would it not be good enough to guide other people? Or, let's say you are an atheist. Do you trust religious folk, or other atheists? Like-minded people tend to have similar interests. Find out who is a kindred spirit and team up with them. You will accomplish great things together.

There will be those who betray your trust even inside of your own faith tradition. It is impossible to avoid confiding in someone who will betray you. This is life. The alternative to placing trust in other people is to live a life secluded from the rest of the world. This accomplishes nothing and is extremely selfish. The risk of trusting others is plenty worth any potential trouble.