

# Summit To Success, Inc.

*With opportunity comes obligation. Together, we climb. One child, one community, one nation at a time.*

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## ***Life Skills Curriculum***

### **Module 4: Decision-Making Under Pressure**

**Updated: May 12, 2026**

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This module helps you make clearer decisions when you feel rushed, stressed, judged, pressured, or unsure.

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#### **What This Module Is About**

This module teaches one core skill:

#### **How to slow down your decisions when pressure is pushing you to react.**

Most people can make reasonable decisions when things are calm.

Fewer people do so when:

- time feels limited
- emotions are high
- consequences feel heavy
- other people are watching
- embarrassment feels possible
- or everyone else seems to be moving quickly

Under pressure, decisions are often driven by:

- fear of judgment
- urgency
- short-term relief
- fear of missing out
- avoiding discomfort
- or following other people

This module helps you learn how to:

- recognize pressure when it appears
- pause before reacting
- separate urgency from importance
- choose deliberately instead of automatically

The goal is not perfect decisions.

The goal is fewer decisions you regret later.

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### **The One Idea to Carry With You**

**Pressure changes how you think — so you must slow your thinking before you choose.**

Students who understand this:

- react less impulsively
- follow fewer bad defaults
- make decisions they do not need to undo
- protect their long-term direction under stress

- recover faster after mistakes

Everything in this module points back to that idea.

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## **How This Module Works**

This module uses three simple steps:

1. Notice when pressure is present
2. Pause before deciding
3. Choose with consequences in mind

There are:

- no grades
- no tests
- no forced sharing

Short answers are okay.

One or two sentences is enough.

Disagreement is okay too.

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## **Part 1: How Pressure Affects Decisions**

### **Exercise 1 — Pressure Patterns**

Answer briefly:

- What situations make me feel rushed, nervous, pressured, or afraid of choosing wrong?
- How does pressure usually change my behavior?
  - rush

- avoid
  - freeze
  - follow others
  - overreact
- What is one decision I regret because I acted under pressure?

Recognizing patterns is the first step to changing them.

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## **Exercise 2 — Common Decision Traps**

Answer:

- Have I chosen something mainly to avoid embarrassment or judgment?
- Have I rushed a decision because I felt left behind?
- Have I followed others even when I felt unsure?
- Have I avoided a decision because I was afraid of making the wrong choice?
- Which of these traps affects me most often?

These traps are human, not personal failures.

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## **Part 2: Separating Urgent from Important**

### **Exercise 3 — Urgency Check**

Answer:

- What feels urgent in my life right now?
- What is important but easy to delay?
- How does urgency affect my long-term thinking?

- When I feel pressure, do I usually think more clearly — or less clearly?

Urgent does not always mean important.

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### **Part 3: The Pause-and-Decide Skill**

This is the core skill of the module.

#### **Exercise 4 — Pause-and-Decide Framework**

For a pressured decision, write:

##### **1. Pause**

What am I feeling right now?

##### **2. Name the pressure**

What is pushing me to decide quickly?

##### **3. Consider consequences**

What happens if I choose this:

- today?
- in six months?

##### **4. Choose deliberately**

Which option best protects my longer-term direction?

You do not need certainty.

You need space.

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### **Part 4: Taking It Into Real Life**

#### **Exercise 5 — One Decision Done Differently (Activity)**

Choose one small, real decision you expect to face within the next 3–7 days.

It should feel:

- slightly pressured,
- uncomfortable,
- or socially difficult —

but not be a major life decision.

Examples:

- responding to a message
- speaking up once
- avoiding vs. facing something small
- following others vs. thinking independently
- starting vs. delaying a task
- saying no to something
- slowing down before reacting

Answer briefly:

- What decision do I expect to face?
- What pressure is affecting me?
  - time,
  - judgment,
  - discomfort,
  - approval,
  - fear of missing out,

- or pleasing others?

Use the pause-and-decide steps once.

Before deciding, answer:

- What would a responsible decision look like here — even if it feels uncomfortable?

Small decisions count.

Practice matters more than stakes.

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### **Optional Activity — Slowing Down Once**

This section is optional.

The next time you feel pressure to:

- react quickly,
- reply immediately,
- follow a group,
- avoid discomfort,
- or make a rushed choice —

pause for one minute before deciding.

Afterward, answer:

- Did slowing down change anything?
- Did the pressure feel different after pausing?
- Did I make the same choice more deliberately — or a different one entirely?

Sometimes one pause changes the direction of a decision.

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## **Part 5: Locking the Learning**

### **Exercise 6 — What Changed?**

Answer:

- What type of pressure affects me most often?
- Did pausing change how I thought about decisions?
- What situations make me react too quickly?
- What helps me think more clearly under pressure?

Progress often starts with slowing down.

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### **You're Done When...**

You are finished with this module when you can honestly say:

- I can recognize when pressure is influencing my decisions
- I can name at least one decision trap I fall into
- I practiced pausing instead of reacting automatically
- I considered consequences beyond the immediate moment
- I practiced slowing down under pressure
- I understand that clearer thinking usually leads to better long-term choices

You do not need perfect outcomes.

You do not need certainty.

If you noticed pressure, paused, and chose deliberately — you are done.

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### **About How Long This Takes**

- Reading and writing: 60–90 minutes total
- Real-life decision practice: one upcoming decision
- Optional activity: one intentional pause before reacting

You can take this slowly.

You can come back to it later.

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### **What This Module Is Not**

This module is not:

- risk avoidance
- fear-based decision-making
- perfection training
- overthinking
- a promise of certainty

It acknowledges:

- uncertainty,
- pressure,
- emotion,
- and social influence —

while teaching you how to choose more deliberately anyway.

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