

How to Mature: Mature Counsel. (October 8, 2026)

“As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”
(Prov. 27:17)

Jesus answered the scribe’s question by telling him that the most important commandment of God is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...mind...and strength.” (Mark 12:30) However, Jesus quickly followed that answer with a second instruction that “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:31) Clearly, God highly values these relationships.

As we conclude this section that has focused on how to mature our character and develop our relationship skills, we want to consider those people that can help us change and grow. If the saying is true, “show me your friends, and I will show you your future,” then we need to more seriously consider who and what we are allowing to speak into our lives.

When seeking guiding relationships that produce vision and growth, look for people who are...

1. **Mature and Growing.** You know someone is able to do something, not when they talk about it, but when they actually do it. Check the track record of those you receive counsel from before you accept their advice. If they are where you want to be someday, ask them a lot of questions and listen carefully to their answer. You can learn from them.
2. **Able and Willing to Explain the Process.** Many people want the results of successful people, but they don’t want to do the work that gets those results. If you receive counsel from a mature friend, listen for their process. What are their daily habits? What do they do? What do they refuse to do? These are their secrets to success.
3. **Accountable, but Not Condemning.** The key to character development is discipline. When you choose to act according to your values and goals rather than your immediate desires and impulses, your character grows. People who hold you accountable to your stated goals are helpful. Let them discipline you when you cannot discipline yourself.

In the book “*Grit*,” Angela Duckworth says that when feedback was preceded by the sentence, “*I’m giving you these comments because I have very high expectations and I know that you can reach them,*” effort doubled on the given project. Character and relationship growth require grit.

Iron doesn’t sharpen iron by accident. It takes fire, skill, and effort to fashion a sword.

Seek out friends that can sharpen your countenance...and let them love you.

You will grow to be sharper than you ever thought possible.