

# Evaluating Your Associations by Jim Rohn

The influence of those around us is so powerful. Many times we don't even realize we're being strongly affected because influences generally develop over an extended period of time.

Peer pressure is an especially powerful force because it is so subtle. If you're around people who spend all they make, chances are excellent that you'll spend all you make. If you are around people who don't read, chances are excellent that you won't read. People can keep nudging us off course a little at a time until, finally, we find ourselves asking, How did I get here? Those subtle influences need to be studied carefully if we really want our lives to turn out the way we've planned.

These three questions will help you to make better analysis of your current associations:

**1. Who am I around?** Make a mental note of the people with whom you most often associate. You've got to evaluate everybody who is able to influence you in any way.

**2. What are these associations doing to me?** That's a major question to ask. What have they gotten me? Where do they have me going? What do they have me thinking? How have they got me feeling? You've got to make a serious study of how others are influencing you, both negatively and positively.

**3. Is that okay?** Maybe everyone you associate with has been a positive, energizing influence. Then again, maybe there are some bad apples in the bunch. All I'm suggesting here is that you take a close and objective look. Everything is worth a second look, especially the power of influence. Both will take you somewhere, but only one will take you in the direction you need to go.

It's easy to just dismiss the things that influence our lives. But remember, everything matters! Sure, some things matter more than others, but everything amounts to something. You've got to keep checking to find out whether your associations are tipping the scales toward the positive or toward the negative. Ignorance is never the best policy. Finding out is the best policy.

It's easy to let influence shape our lives, to let associations determine our direction, to let pressures overwhelm us and to let tides take us. The big question is this: Are we letting ourselves become what we wish to become?