

Read the following passage and answer the questions below.

The Courage Not to Compare

“We should grow not by comparing ourselves with others but by comparing ourselves with ourselves,” said Michel de Montaigne, the French Renaissance philosopher.

5 ⁽¹⁾The more closely one looks at modern society and the more ambitious one becomes, the more evident it becomes that comparison, once praised as progress, has become the seed of misery, among the illusions of which one is sure yet by which one is deceived. Each image of success we see on social media invites
10 silent competition, and every unseen failure deepens our insecurity.

We become prisoners in invisible cages built of others’ expectations, mistaking approval for worth.

15 Montaigne believed that wisdom lies not in outshining others but in quiet dialogue with one’s own mind. True growth comes when we measure progress by overcoming our weakness rather than surpassing others. Such inner peace restores our dignity and frees us from envy.

20 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, too, saw freedom as an inner state, not a social privilege. He distinguished *amour de soi*—a natural love of self—from *amour-propre*, the vanity born of comparison. ⁽²⁾It is not just the moment, that deceptive point at which man begins to compare himself with others, that marks his fall, but also the enduring desire, that silent tyranny of the heart, which makes him measure his worth only by surpassing others.

25 Both philosophers remind us that to stop comparing is not indifference but the first act of wisdom.

Q1.

Translate the underlined part (1) into Japanese.

Q2.

Translate the underlined part (2) into Japanese.

Q3.

According to the essay, what do Montaigne and Rousseau have in common in their views on human freedom and self-growth?

(Answer in English, in one or two sentences.)

Q4.

The author argues that true wisdom begins when we stop comparing ourselves with others.

Do you agree or disagree? Explain your opinion with one or two concrete examples from your own experience or observation.

(Write about 80 – 100 words.)