The ability of guilt to mold a person is greater than that of any other characteristic of a human being. The ability to mold or guide a person into that of a good or bad person is what sets guilt apart. The effects of guilt can be positive in the way of building a person to fully understand who they are as a being who works for the good of himself and those around him or negative as a manipulation and destruction of trust and growth as person. Others create destructive guilt when they inform you of the wrongs you’ve committed; a general term for this is guilt trip and people use a guilt trip as a tool for controlling other people. This guilt is false and leads to shame and a false sense of knowing ones self by creating a block between you really feel and how others say you should feel. Good guilt comes when you realize your own actions were not just. When you understand you have done something wrong then your own guilt becomes a guide.

Guilt is a guide for people’s actions whether in the present or in the future. As a guide guilt acts as a catalyst to someone’s personal growth. This growth takes places once a person feels guilt. A better perception of guilt is a judgment that a person puts on himself or herself. People desire to not feel guilty so they act in ways that allow them to avoid this judgment on themselves; in this way guilt is acting to motivate people into good acts. Using “motivation” to spur on good acts seems as if there really is no growth, but instead a desire to avoid feeling bad. Growth instead comes as a product of knowing that they good people for feeling guilt during the initial act of guiltiness. Self-understanding that they have done wrong and won’t do the same again. The growth aspect of guilt however leaves the question of where are people starting from before learning to feel guilt? If people use guilt as a form of growth to become a morally righteous person, then the starting point would have been a child who does not know right from wrong. People then are born without an understanding of moral correctness; they are inherently evil just as Thomas Hobbs once stated.

The motivation factor is the really true of all emotions. People act in ways that will make them happy or avoid sadness. Guilt is similar to other emotions in this way, but guilt is distinct in the acts in a way that intertwines with morals unlike other emotions. People like to see themselves as good people and the feeling of guilt for doing bad things gives people a sign that they are good people. Guilt is then used as a reassurance. The thought of ones self as being evil can tear a person apart, or they can learn to accept themselves for who they are in order to grow as a person in order to reach their full potential. Two prime examples of people wrestling with their own capacity for good rather than evil are Ender and Harry. Each of these characters feels that their actions are evil, but the guilt that they feel is the defining factor in their own realization that they are not bad people. By feeling bad for their actions they show that did not want to go forward with their actions or wouldn’t have done so if there were another way. The incentive to go forth and atone for past mistakes is what really makes guilt so powerful in molding people into wholesome, understanding people.