

The Art of Decision-Making

workshop summary

Whether you are facing big decisions like where to buy a house, or smaller decisions like what to eat for dinner, decision-making drains our limited time and energy resources. The good news, however, is the more efficient you become at making decisions, the better you are able to move towards the life you truly want to live. I hope you have walked away from this workshop with enough insight to tackle the next decision that comes your way with efficiency and confidence.

10 tools for making better decisions

1. Differentiate between big and small choices.

How important is this decision? Prioritize what is urgent and important. Give a decision the time and effort it deserves based on its importance.

2. Eat something. Low glucose levels lead to energy depletion, making it more difficult to make good decisions. Further reading: *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, by Daniel Kahneman.

3. Set a hard time limit. The longer you allow yourself to make a decision, the more work you are creating for yourself. Set a time limit, make a decision and move on. Avoid analysis paralysis, which is the state of over-thinking a decision to the point where a choice never gets made, creating a paralyzed state of inaction.

4. Reflect on your past decision making history. What does your decision making past say about you? What lessons can you learn from your past decisions?

5. Make room for new and better. We don't like uncertainty and we fear risks/giving up options, but sometimes you must be willing to accept a loss in one area in your life, for a potential gain in another.

6. Reduce choices, automate when possible.

Eliminate the worst choices right away. Turn small decisions into routines and plan them out the night before (what to wear, eat, errands, etc.) to save mental space and energy for important decisions the next day.

Avoid decision fatigue, which is the notion that people tend to make worse decisions after having made a lot of decisions. A consequence of decision fatigue in our daily lives is that our willpower is reduced, increasing the likeliness of making poor decisions (example: going over budget or eating unhealthy food).

7. Just pick one. Very few choices in life are make or break decisions. Sometimes there is no wrong choice. You just need to do something. Accept "good enough." If the alternative is not to decide, what will that bring you?

8. Fast forward. Imagine your life a year from after the decision was made. What would your life be like? Ask yourself the same questions for each option, as well as what it would look like if you made no decision at all. Be as detailed as possible. Which outcome is the most appealing? What would be the first steps to implementing the decision?

Further reading: *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying: A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing*, by Bronnie Ware.



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9. Follow your heart (gut/intuition). Rational decision making requires research and careful thought to reach a probable outcome. On the other hand, we shouldn't undervalue our intuition. When making an intuition-based decision, ask yourself:

- *Do I feel good about this choice?*
- *Am I letting myself be convinced by others rather than trusting my own knowledge or intuition?*
- *Does this choice give me energy or deplete it?*
- *Do I feel empowered or the opposite?*
- *Am I choosing for adventure or running from fear?*
- *Am I listening to lessons learned from the past?*
- *Would I make the same decision if I had a million euros in my pocket?*
- *Do I feel respected and valued?*
- *After sleeping on a decision, what is the first thought that comes to mind when you wake up?*

10. Know yourself. When we know what our values are (what we stand for) we can make decisions with more confidence and clarity. Determine your core values based on your experience of happiness, pride, and fulfillment. Choose up to five core values from the list on the following page and order them according to their importance to you. How does the decision you are about to make hold up to your personal core values?

Defining and understanding the life you want is the first step in making decisions.

"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions." -Stephen R. Covey



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List of Core Values

Achievement	Hope	Revolution
Adventure	Honesty	Risk Taking
Affection	Humor	Romance
Autonomy	Inclusivity	Safety
Altruism	Independence	Saving
Caring	Innovation	Seeking Truth
Challenge	Integrity	Self Control
Community	Intimacy	Self Esteem
Completion	Joy	Self Expression
Connection	Justice	Self Mastery
Creativity	Keeping Things	Self Reliance
Doing the Right Thing	Leadership	Self Respect
Doing things My Way	Learning	Sensuality
Elegance	Leisure Time	Service
Emotional Health	Looking Good	Setting Example
Empowerment	Love	Simplicity
Enlightenment	Loyalty	Socializing
Entrepreneurship	Mastery	Solving Problems
Equality	Maturity	Spiritual Growth
Excellence	Nature	Spirituality
Excitement	Nurturing	Spontaneity
Fame	Openness	Strength
Family	Opportunity	Synergy
Feeling Good	Orderliness	Teamwork
Financial Security	Partnership	Team Spirit
Fixing Things	Passion	Trust
Frankness	Peace	Truth
Freedom	Personal Growth	Uniqueness
Friendship	Playfulness	Vitality
Fulfillment	Pleasure	Wealth
Fun	Power	Winning
Giving	Privacy	Wisdom
Happiness	Quality	
Harmony	Recognition	
Health	Reliability	
Helping	Respect	

