

Every decision you struggle with has one thing in common

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SUMMARY

Avoidance significantly hampers effective decision-making, as it often stems from fear of negative emotional outcomes. By distinguishing between choice and decision-making, and by embracing emotional experiences, individuals can enhance their decision-making process. Establishing and adhering to personal principles can automate decision-making, leading to clearer choices and improved life satisfaction.

- *Avoidance is a primary barrier to effective decision-making, driven by fear of negative outcomes.*
- *Distinction between choice (constant) and decision-making (thoughtful process) is crucial.*
- *Fear leads to emotional avoidance, complicating decision-making.*
- *Embracing emotional experiences, including discomfort, can clarify decision-making.*
- *Establishing personal principles helps automate decisions, reducing reliance on discipline.*
- *Testing and iterating on principles can lead to better life choices and outcomes.*
- *Awareness of existing principles can reveal unproductive patterns and promote change.*
- *Improving decision-making skills positively impacts all areas of life, including relationships and career.*

So there is one thing that's messing up your decision-m and it's avoidance. Period. End of discussion. So first we have to agree on some semantics. We're going to make a distinction between choice and making a decision. Choice is something that happens all the time. Every second you're choosing to watch this. You're choosing to shut this off. I'm choosing to say this word. I'm choosing to say that word. But there's not a decision being made. And then there's decision making which is oh I'm sitting down and I'm thinking about what I'm going to do. So in decision making if you're there if you're already deciding the first thing that's happening is you're in fear. You're already thinking oh there's something that could go wrong and I have to make sure that it doesn't go wrong. That's what makes it different than a choice.

And if you're in fear it means you're automatically trying to avoid something. So, if you think about a really hard decision that you have, typically what that means is that there's one outcome that you don't want, there's another outcome that you don't want, there's like maybe one outcome that you do want, and you're trying to figure out how to get it, but there's no way to 100% make sure that you get the outcome that you want. But here's the crazy thing. The thing that you're trying to avoid is an emotion. Meaning, nobody would say, "I choose to be homeless." But if you knew that being homeless would make you happier than you've ever been, more content than you've ever been, more satisfied than you've ever been, you'd at least be a lot less scared to be homeless, if not just completely okay with being homeless. So what we're trying to do is we're trying to avoid an emotional outcome. If I'm not worried about being a failure and I'm not worried about having ultimate success, well then it's easy to make a decision because I'm I don't have to try to stop everything from happening. I can

just allow my best choice to come forth and then I go and do it. It's the same thing even in like a drug addiction or a choice to doom scroll. What you're doing is you're saying, "I don't want to feel a certain way or I do want to feel a certain way and so I'm going to avoid that emotional experience that I don't want by doom scrolling." And so that's how we make our decisions. And you get clarity of decision- making when you are able to totally go into and feel and love all the emotional experiences. But there's another part of decision-m is that we never think to automate our decision-m, right? So what does that mean automate our decision- making? So one of the ways that I have learned to not be avoidant in my decision- making is that I have a set of principles and I've thought about those principles a lot. I've played with them a lot. I've iterated on them a lot.

I've run a lot of experiments and now when I have a hard decision, I go, "Oh, what would my principles do?" And I do the thing that my principles say to do. If I live by these five principles, I'm going to be successful. Period. end of discussion success as I measure it. I just know, oh, this is the thing to do. And it's a very disciplined approach, but it's only disciplined for a short period of time. At first, you're like, oh, I don't want to do that. But after a while, you start feeling like, oh, if I don't do the thing that my principles say, it doesn't work out. So, it doesn't take any discipline. It's like every time you do something, it works. And everything every time you don't do it, it doesn't work. It becomes very easy to do. And that's what principles do.

Eventually, you're like, "Oh, that thing works, so I'm just going to keep on doing that thing." And it requires no discipline. And all of a sudden, your decision- making just becomes choices. For instance, one of my principles is embrace intensity. What that means is that I don't create intensity, but I embrace it. Meaning, I will feel into anything that I find to be uncomfortable if it's presenting itself. Why do I have that as a principle? It's because when I do that, I make clear decisions because I'm not avoiding anything.

It's a simple principle that I live by. I'll do it every single time. And oddly, over time, it was I was embracing the intensity of fear or anger or failure. But then I was like, "Oh, I'm embracing the intensity of excitement, of joy, of pleasure, which by the way, far more intense." And as I lived my principle, it unfolded in such a way that it taught me how to allow for so much more joy and so much more pleasure in my life. And it's why in the decision-making course, one of the things we do is we really start teaching people about what principles are, how to create them, how to test them, how to iterate on them, how to make sure that they're the principles that you actually want to live by. One of the things we find out is that we are actually already living by a set of principles. Unfortunately, a lot of those principles aren't great principles. They're like, "Stay out of trouble, make sure everybody's happy, please people, be codependent, get angry when you don't get what you want." Like, those are the principles that you might be living by. And when you bring that into consciousness, you start seeing, oh, wait, that that those things aren't working for me. What is working for me?

I don't actually know, but I can run some experiments to see what's going to work for me. And it's such a profound experience to just bring into light what you're actually already doing. Just that awareness in itself starts to change things. And then you realize, oh wait, I can change behavior to make decisions or I can make decisions to change behavior. This is a place where my principles used to say, "Oh, I'm going to get angry." But now my principles say, "I'm going to ask a how- what question." Now my principles say, "Oh, what is it that I'm not understanding here?" Now my principles are going to say, "I'm going to embrace that intensity of anger and

I'm going to feel it in my whole body." And then something different happens. And so pretty soon you start to recognize when you really start living by your principles that the most efficient way to change your consciousness is to change your behavior. You just say, "Oh, I'm going to do something different 10 times and see what happens." That will change your consciousness. It's really, really simple when you do it this way. Figuring out how to do it is a whole another trick, which is why we created the decisions course. It's one of those few things that it's hard to like completely discover on your own. And it has been an amazing process to watch people have such a radical change in such a short period of time. And it's not just like, oh, I'm making decisions easier now.

It's that the whole life improves. When you think about all your life is is a series of choices and decisions. From the moment that you're born to the moment you die, you make choices, you have decisions, and off you go. This is the life that you get. So when you improve that skill, everything improves. The relationships with parents improve, your job improves, your life improves because it is the quintessential thing that runs our life is the choices that we make, is the decisions that we make.