



How do I choose?

A powerfull five-step blueprint
for making rock-solid decisions

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CHAPTER 2

SPINNING YOUR WHEELS



Why People Get Stuck

In the last 20 years, I have coached and counseled more than 2,000 people individually and in group/workshop formats. Decision-making ranks high on the list of challenges people face when making life changes.

Below is a compiled list of answers given from individual sessions and several seminars I have facilitated on decision-making. Participants were asked why they got stuck or struggled with decisions. Below is a list of what they said, with a brief description:

1 Lack clarity about what they want. Inability to articulate/describe it.

Have you ever found it difficult to put into words what you really want? Have you seriously thought about what you really want? Do you have a sense of what you want, but lack the words to fully describe it? Trying to figure out the “it”?

2 Desire (passion) isn't strong enough.

In Napoleon Hill's book, *Think and Grow Rich*, he identifies desire as a key element in motivation and commitment to the result. When we are not fully on board with an intention to succeed and lack a powerful drive and passion to have what we want, we often drop the ball and fall short of fulfilling our dreams. Do you stop and start?

3 Unrealistic expectations.

Do you have a clear perspective when evaluating situations? For most of us, expectations refer to the outcomes we **intend** and the **attachments** we have to those outcomes coming out the way we want or hope. In this mind-set, we enter experiences with an agenda. Overconfidence in your ability to predict outcomes might also limit your capacity to see a wide range of possibilities. Disappointment comes from having unrealistic expectations. So, expectations can positively or negatively control our life outlook by moving us forward or holding us back. Making a strong decision means getting honest and real about what is possible.

4 Negative inner thoughts.

Self-talk (the things we tell ourselves inside our heads) has a *powerfull* impact on our ability to assess situations realistically. So often when people get caught up in anticipating what may or may not happen, they lose perspective. (See above on unrealistic expectations.) Our minds can sift through facts and information that lead to practical choices of action, or scare, confuse and overwhelm us so that we come to a full stop. You know, “the deer in headlights” scenario.

5 Lack a skill or knowledge.

The good news is that what you don’t know, you can learn or you can enlist the skills of another to help you. Sometimes the key is realizing you need more information or expertise and knowing where to get it.

6 Disconnection from heart and spirit.

You lack trust in yourself, the experience, or God (whatever you call your spiritual connections). Do you ever get a gut feeling or strong sense inside about what decision is right for you? Do you follow your gut or override your instincts? If you have followed your heart in the past, how did things turn out?

7 Too many options become overwhelming/confusing.

It’s great to have a myriad of choices, isn’t it? Having so many options can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, having many choices expands the possibilities. On the other, having too many options may not only cause confusion (What do I choose?), it also allows self-doubt and distrust to creep in.

8 Financial concerns.

What information is needed to make a solid, calculated decision? Do you allow your money fears to keep you from having what you want? Do you use money concerns as a reason to say no when you want to say YES? Did you know that wealthy people DO NOT allow money to be an obstacle in achieving success? They take calculated risks that they KNOW will pay off. They do their homework to find out what they need to know to succeed.

9 Time commitments.

How busy are you? Are you using your time efficiently, or is your life in a state of confusion and chaos? Do you have difficulty prioritizing, saying NO, or following through with things to completion? Looking at how you schedule and commit your time might be the difference between staying stuck or moving forward.

10 Concern about implementation.

Do you wonder, “Do I have what it takes? Do I have what I need to make this happen?” Two things might be occurring: Fear is at the root of the concern, and there might be a need for further information or assistance.

11 Other people’s opinions.

We can be enormously influenced by the opinions of others, depending on our existing emotional state. Feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or having low self-esteem and low self-confidence makes people more susceptible to the influence of others. In that way, people give away their power.

12 Poor follow-through/wrap-up.

Do you have a history of beginning things and then dropping the ball? Do you live in a state of internal (emotion, spiritual) and external (physical) chaos? Disorganization, clutter and the lack of proper systems and structures will affect motivation and focus. * Negative self-talk and fear might also be contributing to the problem.

13 Fear.

This is a HUGE reason so many people get stuck or confused. Common fears regarding decisions include: fear of success, failure, the unknown, making a mistake, embarrassment, and hurting others.

What is your biggest fear? Why? How does this fear affect you and your life?

Are you concerned about other people's reactions? Do you worry that people may get angry or upset with you? Do you feel anxious that your decision might cause pain or distress to someone you care about? ("It will be my fault, and I'll be blamed for what happened. I will disappoint people.") These things might happen. If you are hoping to make decisions that people consistently like/love and that NEVER cause them to feel what you might call negative feelings, then you will be living your life to make others happy. What might you have to give up to achieve that? The bottom line: This is life, not the movies!

Do you feel uncomfortable about being accountable or responsible for choices or outcomes? Do others defer to you to be "the one" who decides?

Do you question your choices and look for some "guarantee" that your decision will bring about the results you want? If you look to others to tell you what is right for you or to decide on your behalf, then *who's in charge of your life?* Risking something is a part of life. Learning from choices and life experiences is part of the recipe for growth.

EXERCISE

Looking at the reasons people get stuck, list the ones you relate to the most:

How do they affect your life?

Three questions to ask yourself if you feel stuck:

1. Do you feel stuck right now because you are waiting to be 100 percent sure?
2. If not 100 percent, what is your percentage? 90 percent? 50 percent? What would that look like?
3. Look at why you are at this place. What assurance do you need to move forward?

About The Author



Lorraine Cohen brings more than 25 years' experience in personal and business coaching, psychological counseling, and sales experience to her clients. Working with the whole person, Lorraine coaches people from the inside out; to implement innovative strategies that integrate their heart, integrity, and spirituality. An expert in breaking through fear and roadblocks to success, she empowers people to take linear leaps that reshape their world.

Her deep compassion and coaching excellence have assisted more than 2,000 small-business owners, entrepreneurs, and executives from a wide range of industries, including real estate, creative businesses (such as interior design, artists, writers), psychology, and healthcare/wellness. Focusing on business development, leadership mastery and life simplification, she helps people articulate what they want and gives them the tools to succeed.

Lorraine's intuition and counseling background heighten her ability to get to the heart of the matter quickly, helping clients to live their lives in alignment with their core values and spiritual heart. Those clients include Sunoco, Sovereign Bank, Drexel University, the American Cancer Society, and Huntleigh Healthcare.

She has several professional certifications, including CoachU, training in DiSC behavioral assessments, and **Psych-K™**, a process for creating internal shifts leading to outward change.

Lorraine's articles on personal and business development are featured online, on multiple Web sites, and in local newspapers. She has spoken on the importance and value of executive coaching as a guest expert on Philadelphia-area radio and local television programs.

To learn more about Lorraine Cohen's services, programs, and products, including subscriptions to the free *Fearless* e-course and *Powerfull Living* newsletter, visit <http://www.powerfull-living.biz> Sign up for a 30-minute complimentary consultation TODAY!



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