

## 10 Ways to Make Better Decisions

Decisions, decisions. Sometimes we rush into making them and can regret it. Other times, they're no-brainers, and we feel great for having made them.

Then there are the decisions that can hugely impact on our lives, which can be really challenging to make. So, how do you go about making these big decisions?

Sometimes it's only with the benefit of hindsight that we realise there was a better choice we could have made, or at least a different one, with different consequences.

Here are 10 strategies or tools you might like to consider if you're in the process of making a decision:

1. **The Big Decision Tool:** This matrix-style thinking tool was created by the founder of the [Neuroleadership Group](#), David Rock. You can see an example of it in Chapter 6 of his book *Personal Best: step by step coaching for creating the life you want*. One of the things that makes this tool work so well is that it brings together values, emotion and logic onto the same page (and into a table, with the options defined down the page, and parameters to be used to assess each option captured across the top of the page). The first phase involves developing clear parameters that will be used to determine your choice. The second phase involves carefully checking your options against your parameters by rating each option out of 10 for each parameter. So, using the example of choosing between several career choices, the options might be human resources, accounting, web design, veterinary science, drama teacher and artist. The parameters to assess each of these might be money, challenge, international, flexibility, fun. The highest scoring career (in this case out of a possible 50 points) will have the highest chance of giving you what you want overall. Sometimes people go with the top number. Other times, they go with a different choice when they realise that in doing this exercise one of the parameters is more important than the others. In some ways, the act of seeing the numbers on paper gets you thinking seriously about whether the choice at the top of the list is right for you.
2. **Values and vision:** Draw out the consequences of making any decision by noticing how it will impact on your values and vision for your life. How aligned is your choice with your core values and vision?
3. **Intuition:** I've found tossing a coin can be used as a way to tap into your intuition in making decisions. To do this, define your dilemma such that there can be a yes or no answer. Then, toss a coin and call 'heads' for yes and 'tails' for no. Notice your immediate internal reaction to the outcome of the toss. How does it feel to you? Does it feel comfortable or uncomfortable? Exciting or frightening? An interesting exercise!
4. **Mindfulness:** Our busy lives and minds can obstruct our abilities to make decisions and lead us to procrastinate. No decision is still making a decision! Becoming mindful and using mindfulness meditation can help us become fully present in the moment, present to ourselves and our experience of reality, to experience insights not available to us through reflection or analysis. For more information on mindfulness, visit [The Mindfulness Centre](#).

*For more business and life coaching tips to help you achieve your goals and create and live the life you've always wanted, visit [www.blueskycoaching.com.au](http://www.blueskycoaching.com.au) or to find out how you can work with me personally, contact Tania below.*

5. **Essential oils:** Did you know essential oils are both psychologically and physically stimulating and can be supportive in making decisions? **Young Living Essential Oils' 'Brain Power'** is a blend of essential oils high in sesquiterpenes to give your mind a boost, clarify thought, and develop greater focus. **'Common Sense'** blend includes essential oils such as frankincense, ylang ylang and lime and is formulated to enhance an individual's reasonable and rational decision-making abilities, while **'Magnify Your Purpose'** stimulates creativity, desire, focus and motivation, encouraging you to seize initiative and overcome procrastination.
6. **Imagine having already decided:** Another technique I've found helpful has been to imagine already having made a particular decision. Notice how you're feeling. What are you experiencing in your body? Is it an expansive feeling in your chest or around your heart, or a constricted feeling in your throat, or a knot forming in your stomach? These are all messages from your body allowing you to notice how making the decision will feel and can be useful to guide your choice.
7. **Find a sounding board:** A coach or mentor can act as a sounding board and help you clarify the central dilemma you're grappling with regarding the decision you're wanting to make. Sometimes this is enough to help you resolve the issue. They can also ask you questions about your thinking to help you gain fresh insights about the situation and allow you to see your situation from a new perspective.
8. **'The Clarity Of Distance' model:** This concept comes from another coaching model created by David Rock and discussed in more detail in his book *Quiet Leadership: help people think better - don't tell them what to do!* Sometimes the person charged with making a decision is too close: the volume of details they have in mind stops them from seeing the patterns, or their own filters or agendas inhibit them from processing information accurately. Questions that can help make better decisions using the clarity of distance model include: *'How clear is your thinking here? Which part of the decision is the hardest to process? What would make the decision much easier?'*
9. **'Choose Your Focus' model:** Many people launch into projects without spending enough time defining their objectives or enough time planning. Using this model (also described in detail in David Rock's *Quiet Leadership*) is especially helpful when people are lost in the details. Some questions you could ask here are: *'What's your overall goal? What's your vision of the perfect outcome? Do you know where you're trying to get to? Are you clear about your plan for achieving this goal? How well fleshed-out is your plan?'*
10. **Take a walk or have a lie-down:** According to neuroscientist John J. Ratey and author of *A User's Guide to the Brain*, any kind of physical activity helps the brain process ideas. And, although this might not sound practical, (unless you work from home like me), a recent study by Darren M. Lipnicki and Don G. Byrne, *'Thinking on Your Back: Solving Anagrams Faster When Supine Than When Standing'* (Note to self: play Hanging with Friends from now on while lying instead of sitting on the couch) showed people came up with better ideas while horizontal!

**Please call me on 0411 471 941** if you feel you could benefit from working through any of these tools with me.

**Interested in using [Young Living Essential Oils](#) and/or nutritional products for your health and wellbeing? If yes, for a short time only, until Friday 6 July, I'll be conducting complimentary 30-minute **Zyto Compass Bio-Feedback sessions**. Call me on 0411 471 941 to book in your session and learn which essential oils or nutritional supplements are the most appropriate for your body's needs right now.**

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