

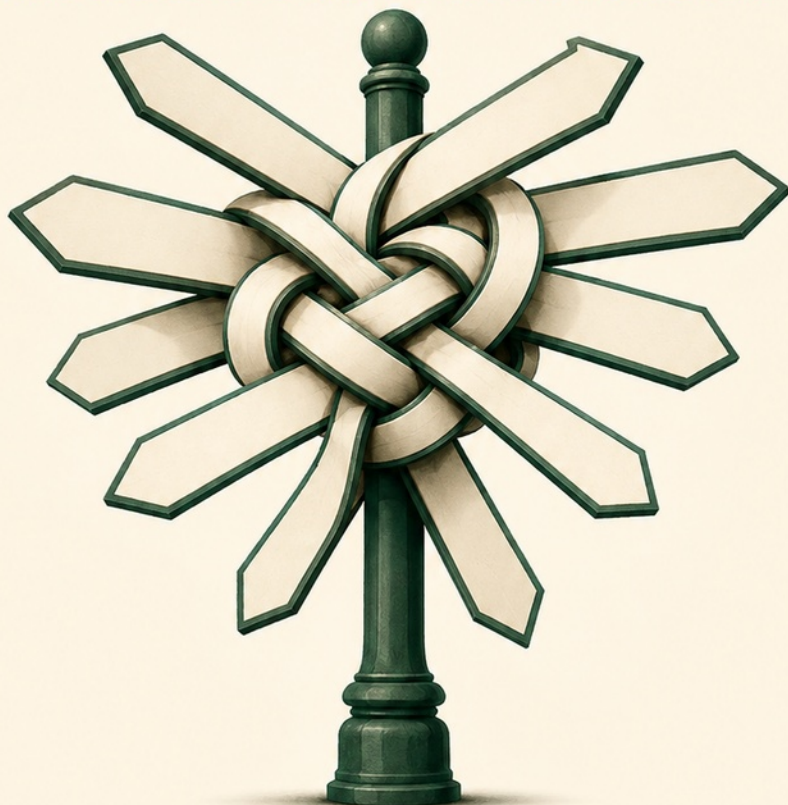
MAX PARADOX

PROBLEM? RELAX. YOU'VE GOT THIS!

Self-Help with a Sense of Humor ;)

I Have Too Many Options and None of Them Feels Right

How to Make a Decision Before Life Makes It for You



We have a problem. Relax. We can solve it—and have a laugh along the way.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRO	1
Chapter 1 - The Problem Is Not the Options	9
Chapter 2 - You Are Trying to Eliminate Regret	20
Chapter 3 - More Information Is Not More Certainty.....	32
Chapter 4 - The Perfect Choice Is a Fictional Employee.....	43
Chapter 5 - Stop Treating Every Decision Like a Court Case	58
Chapter 6 - Your Brain Keeps Moving the Finish Line	70
Chapter 7 - You Keep Confusing Discomfort with a Bad Choice.....	84
Chapter 8 - Stop Asking Questions That Cannot Be Answered.....	97
Chapter 9 - Separate Reversible Decisions from Expensive Mistakes	113
Chapter 10 - Decide What Would Make the Choice Fail.....	126
Chapter 11 - Build a Shortlist Before You Compare	140
Chapter 12 - Borrow a Tuesday from the Future.....	155
Chapter 13 - Use a Decision Deadline Before the Decision Uses You	171
Chapter 14 - When Two Options Are Both Good, Make the Choice Smaller.....	185
Chapter 15 - What to Do When the Method Still Does Not Work	200
Chapter 16 - Make the Decision Smaller on Bad Days	214

Chapter 17 - Build a Recovery Plan for When You Choose Badly	228
Chapter 18 - Stop Reopening Decisions That Are Already Closed.....	242
Chapter 19 - Create Rules for the Decisions You Keep Making	258
Chapter 20 - Choose, Then Make the Choice Better	271

INTRO

You have twelve tabs open, four reviews bookmarked, three people waiting for your answer, and one decision that should have taken approximately seven minutes.

Instead, it has become a research project.

Maybe you are choosing a new laptop. At first, the job seems simple: buy a laptop. Then you discover processors, screen types, battery tests, keyboard travel, ports you did not know existed, and a man on YouTube who appears genuinely furious about the placement of a charging socket. Two hours later, you have learned that Model A has a slightly better screen, Model B is cheaper, Model C has longer battery life, and Model D is apparently "the obvious choice" according to someone whose entire personality is benchmarking computers.

You do not feel better informed.

You feel like you have accidentally joined a committee.

This happens with bigger decisions too. Which job should you take? Should you move? Stay? Break up? Try again? Buy now or wait? Start the course? Change careers? Go with the safe option or the exciting one? Every path seems to contain something good, something annoying, and at least one future version of you standing in the distance saying, "Interesting choice."

So you wait.

Not because you do not care, but because you care so much that you want to make the right decision. Ideally, the perfect decision. The one that gives you the advantages of Option A, the excitement of Option B, the security of Option C, and none of the irritating parts of any of them.

This option is usually called “not available.”

Unfortunately, the modern world has not accepted this limitation. It keeps offering alternatives. You can compare almost anything with almost anything else. Before buying a toaster, you can read 847 reviews written by people who apparently consider toast a matter of national infrastructure. Before booking a hotel, you can examine every bathroom tile from six angles. Before choosing a restaurant, you can compare menus, photos, ratings, parking, noise levels, table spacing, and whether someone named Greg thought the risotto was “underwhelming” in March 2023.

Greg has moved on.

You have not.

The problem is not simply that there are too many options. Sometimes there are only two, and you can still spend three weeks pacing between them like a judge on the final episode of a talent show. The deeper problem is that we often expect a decision to remove uncertainty before we make it.

We want to know how the job will feel six months from now. We want proof that the relationship will work. We want certainty that the expensive purchase will not go on sale next Thursday. We want confirmation that choosing one city will not make us miss another. We want the future to fax us a signed document saying, “Yes, excellent choice. No regrets expected.”

The future has terrible customer service.

So the brain tries another strategy: more information. Maybe one more review will settle it. One more spreadsheet. One more conversation. One more comparison. One more night to sleep on it, although at this point you have slept on it so many times the decision technically qualifies as furniture.

Sometimes more information helps. Often, however, you eventually cross an invisible line. Before that line, research reduces uncertainty. After it, research produces new uncertainty faster than it removes the old kind. Every new fact creates another angle. Every new opinion introduces another standard. Every option that looked good five minutes ago develops a small defect, and your brain immediately zooms in on it like a detective in a crime drama.

"Enhance."

There it is.

The hotel is perfect except for one review mentioning slow elevators. The job is excellent except that another company offers two more vacation days. The apartment has everything except a slightly smaller kitchen. The phone is exactly what you need except another model has a camera feature you have never used and may never use but now suddenly feel entitled to.

This is how a choice stops being a choice and becomes an audition for perfection.

The stakes also grow in your imagination. A decision about what to buy becomes a test of whether you are financially responsible. A career choice becomes a referendum on your entire future. Choosing where to live becomes evidence about who you are as a person. Even ordering dinner can become strangely philosophical when you are tired enough.

"Do I want Thai food, or am I merely trying to become the kind of person who orders Thai food on a Wednesday?"

Please order something. You are hungry.

Another reason decisions become difficult is that choosing something means not choosing something else. This sounds obvious until you actually have to do it. We enjoy having

options because options feel like freedom. The moment we choose one, the others disappear—or at least become less available. Suddenly the restaurant you did not choose looks charming. The job you rejected develops excellent qualities. The vacation destination you skipped appears on Instagram under suspiciously perfect lighting.

Your brain compares the real choice, with all its imperfections, to imaginary alternatives that never had to survive contact with reality.

Imaginary options are extremely competitive.

They never have delayed flights, difficult bosses, maintenance costs, awkward first weeks, annoying neighbors, or Wi-Fi problems. They exist in premium condition inside your head, where no one has yet spilled coffee on them.

That makes regret feel dangerous. You start trying to avoid not just a bad decision, but the possibility of ever wondering whether another choice might have been better. This is an impossible standard. You can make a good decision and still occasionally wonder about the road not taken. You can choose wisely and still discover disadvantages later. You can even make the best decision available with the information you had and then watch circumstances change.

That does not automatically mean the decision was wrong.

It means you made it while living in time, which is currently the only package available.

This book is about getting out of that trap without becoming reckless, indifferent, or the kind of person who decides major financial matters by flipping a coin over the sink. You do not need to stop thinking. You need to know

when thinking is helping and when it has quietly put on a fake mustache and become procrastination.

We are going to separate decisions that deserve serious analysis from decisions that merely enjoy the attention. We will look at why more options often make choosing harder, why searching for certainty keeps you stuck, why “keeping every door open” eventually leaves you standing in a hallway, and why the fear of regret can make you create the exact outcome you were trying to avoid: no decision at all.

More importantly, we will build practical ways to choose.

Not mystical ways. Not “listen to the universe.” The universe is busy.

You will learn how to reduce the number of meaningful options, decide what actually matters before comparison begins, set a stopping point for research, distinguish reversible choices from expensive ones, use deadlines without turning them into panic, and make a good-enough decision without spending the following month conducting an internal appeal.

You will also learn what to do when no option feels right.

Because sometimes that is the real problem. Not “Which one is perfect?” but “Why do all of these make me slightly miserable?” Occasionally the correct answer is not choosing better from the existing menu. It is changing the menu.

And when there really is no perfect answer, you will learn how to choose anyway.

That may sound less comforting than a promise that every decision can become obvious if you analyze it correctly. It is also much more useful. Life rarely hands you Option A marked “CORRECT” in green and Option B surrounded by cartoon skulls. More often, it gives you two reasonable possibilities,

incomplete information, limited time, competing priorities, and a brain that has suddenly decided both choices require a twelve-part documentary series.

You do not need certainty.

You need a decision process you can trust.

Then you choose, move, adjust, and continue living instead of standing at the crossroads comparing road surfaces.

Because eventually, refusing to decide becomes a decision too.

And annoyingly, it is often the one you researched least.

Wklejony tekst

Chapter 1 - The Problem Is Not the Options

You are standing in front of a shelf holding twenty-seven versions of basically the same thing.

Maybe it is coffee. Maybe toothpaste. Maybe headphones. Maybe a streaming service. Maybe a retirement plan, which is admittedly a slightly more consequential shelf.

You pick one up.

Then another.

Then the first one again because it suddenly looks more trustworthy now that you have met its competitors.

Five minutes later, you are comparing ingredients, features, reviews, pricing tiers, hidden fees, cancellation policies, and whether the blue package feels more competent than the white one.

This is not decision-making.

This is an hostage negotiation with packaging.

The natural conclusion is that your problem is too many options. And sometimes that is true. Twenty-seven nearly identical products can make a simple decision harder than it needs to be. But the number of choices is only the visible part of the problem.

The deeper issue is what happens after the options enter your head.

You start comparing them without first deciding what matters.

That is where the trouble begins.

Suppose you are choosing between three jobs. Job A pays the most. Job B offers the best work-life balance. Job C seems the most interesting. If you do not know which of those things matters most to you right now, you can compare forever.

A wins on money.

B wins on time.

C wins on meaning.

Then A becomes tempting again because money pays bills, which have shown remarkably little interest in meaning.

Then B looks better because exhaustion is not technically a career strategy.

Then C makes a comeback because you imagine yourself doing something interesting instead of dying slowly inside a spreadsheet named FINAL_v7_REAL_FINAL.xlsx.

Now you are not deciding.

You are rotating priorities.

Each option gets judged according to whatever criterion happens to feel most important in that particular minute. This creates the illusion that the decision is impossible, when the real problem is that the scoreboard keeps changing during the game.

Imagine watching a basketball match where points count differently every possession.

"Excellent shot. Two points."

"Actually, today we value defensive positioning. Minus four."

"That player has a nice attitude. Add seven."