

MAX PARADOX

PROBLEM? RELAX. YOU'VE GOT THIS!

Self-Help with a Sense of Humor ;)

I Keep Changing My Mind

How to Finally Trust My Own Decisions



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

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INTRO

You are standing in a grocery store holding two nearly identical jars of pasta sauce. One says "traditional." The other says "classic." Both contain tomatoes, herbs, and enough sodium to preserve a small civilization. You choose the classic one, put the traditional one back, walk three steps, stop, return, switch them, and then stare at the shelf as if a third jar might descend from the ceiling and explain who you really are as a person.

This is not about pasta sauce.

Maybe you do it with clothes. You buy the blue shirt, then spend the drive home wondering whether the gray one made you look more competent. You accept a job, then suddenly become fascinated by every flaw in the company you joined and every advantage of the company you rejected. You pick a restaurant, open the menu, see someone else's plate, and immediately begin an internal investigation into why you have once again ruined dinner.

Your decisions are rarely allowed to retire.

They get recalled for questioning.

A choice that seemed perfectly reasonable at 2:15 p.m. can be treated like evidence of catastrophic judgment by 4:40. You replay what you knew, what you did not know, what your friend said, what your other friend would probably say if consulted, and what some stranger online once wrote under a video titled "7 Signs You're Making the Wrong Decision." By evening, the original decision has acquired witnesses, expert testimony, and a documentary series.

The exhausting part is not simply changing your mind. Changing your mind can be smart. New information appears.

Circumstances change. You learn something. You discover that the “quiet apartment” is directly above a man whose hobby is moving furniture at 1:30 a.m. Reconsidering that decision is not weakness. That is called receiving evidence.

The problem begins when your mind changes without new evidence because discomfort has shown up.

You decide, and then uncertainty arrives. Instead of treating uncertainty as a normal companion to decisions, you treat it as proof that the decision must be wrong. So you reopen the case. Then you reopen it again because reopening it did not make you feel certain enough. Soon you are no longer making decisions. You are trying to purchase a level of certainty that life does not sell.

The store is closed.

This can look like careful thinking from the outside. You compare options. You make lists. You ask smart questions. You research. You sleep on it. Then you research what “sleeping on it” is supposed to feel like. You might even call yourself thorough, which sounds much better than “I have been comparing the same three laptops for nine days and now know more about processor architecture than the man who designed my kitchen.”

Careful thinking is useful until it stops producing clarity and starts producing new reasons to doubt whatever clarity you already had.

That is the trap. The more you revisit a decision, the more flaws you can find. Every option has weaknesses when examined long enough. You can ruin a vacation by reading enough one-star reviews. You can talk yourself out of a good relationship by comparing it with an imaginary one that contains no bad moods, no boring Tuesdays, and apparently

no actual human being. You can make a decent career choice feel reckless simply by spending three hours imagining the career you did not choose going perfectly.

The road not taken has excellent marketing.

It has no traffic, no bad manager, no delayed flight, no annoying neighbor, no awkward first month, and no unexpected bill because your brain does not have to live there. It only has to produce the brochure. Meanwhile, the option you actually chose must survive contact with reality, which is deeply unfair but apparently standard procedure.

Then comes another problem: every reversal weakens your trust in yourself.

You tell yourself you cannot decide until you feel confident, but confidence often arrives after you decide and live with the choice for a while. It grows when you see that you can handle consequences, adjust when necessary, and survive the shocking discovery that no decision comes with a ceremonial guarantee certificate. If you repeatedly choose, panic, reverse, reconsider, ask five people, reverse again, and finally let exhaustion pick for you, your brain learns a different lesson: "We cannot be trusted with buttons. Someone please find an adult."

You are the adult.

Terrible system, I know.

The goal of this book is not to turn you into a person who never changes their mind. That would be stubbornness wearing a confidence costume. The goal is to help you know the difference between a decision that genuinely needs revision and a decision that merely feels uncomfortable because you cannot see the future.

You will learn how to make choices with enough information instead of infinite information. You will learn when more research is useful and when it is just anxiety with Wi-Fi. You will learn how to stop asking everyone for advice when the real purpose of asking is not insight but emotional insurance. And you will learn what to do after you choose, because many people think decision-making ends when the decision is made. For chronic mind-changers, that is often when the second season begins.

Most importantly, you will build trust in your own process.

That phrase matters. Trusting yourself does not mean believing every instinct is brilliant. Your instincts are capable of many things, including ordering dessert because “we earned it” after answering four emails. Self-trust means knowing that you have a reasonable way to decide, that you can tolerate some uncertainty afterward, and that you can correct course without interpreting every correction as proof that you are hopeless at life.

A good decision is not one that guarantees a good outcome.

That would be convenient. We would all like to select “excellent future, no complications” from a drop-down menu.

A good decision is one made with the information reasonably available at the time, using criteria that matter to you, without demanding supernatural certainty. Sometimes it will work beautifully. Sometimes it will be merely fine. Occasionally it will turn out badly because life contains variables, other people, weather, timing, economics, biology, luck, and companies that redesign perfectly good apps for no reason.

Your job is not to control all of that.

Your job is to stop putting yourself on trial every time reality fails to behave exactly as predicted.

So if you keep changing your mind about work, relationships, purchases, plans, conversations, goals, where to live, what to study, what to wear, or whether you should send that perfectly normal message that has now been rewritten eleven times, you are in the right place. We are going to make your decisions clearer, faster, calmer, and much harder to reopen without a legitimate reason.

You may still occasionally stand in a grocery aisle comparing two jars of sauce.

But ideally, you will pick one and continue living.

Radical, I know.

Wklejony tekst

Chapter 1 - The Decision Is Not the Problem

You order dinner at 7:04 p.m. At 7:07, you are looking at the restaurant's menu again.

Not because the order failed. Not because the restaurant called to say they have run out of food and replaced your meal with a decorative napkin. Nothing has happened. Your order is accepted, the driver is being assigned, civilization continues.

You are simply wondering whether you should have chosen the other thing.

The burger suddenly looks too heavy. The salad now seems depressing. The pasta you ignored has acquired an almost spiritual glow. Somewhere in the back of your mind, the decision you made three minutes ago is being reviewed by a committee that was not invited and apparently has no other work.

This tiny scene contains most of the problem.

You think you struggle to make decisions. Often, you actually struggle to stop making them.

Those are different problems.

A person who genuinely cannot decide stays stuck before the choice. A chronic mind-changer may get stuck before the choice, but even after choosing, the decision remains mentally active. Instead of moving from "Should I?" to "I did," the brain moves from "Should I?" to "Did I choose correctly?" and then opens a whole new department.

Congratulations.

You have completed Level One and unlocked Post-Decision Doubt.

That doubt feels important because the brain treats unresolved possibilities differently from closed ones. As long as you keep an alternative mentally available, you continue comparing the real choice with the imagined choice. The real one develops drawbacks because you are living with it. The imagined one remains suspiciously clean.

You take the job you chose and encounter meetings, deadlines, awkward conversations, and a printer that behaves as if it has unresolved trauma. The job you rejected has none of these problems in your imagination. In the imaginary version, your manager is supportive, the commute is effortless, the salary somehow increases, and nobody has ever scheduled a meeting called "Quick Sync" that lasts fifty-eight minutes.

Reality has disadvantages.

Fantasy has a public-relations team.

This is why your mind can turn perfectly reasonable decisions into evidence of terrible judgment. It compares a lived option with an edited alternative.

That is not a fair comparison.

Why Doubt Feels Like Information

Suppose you decide to go on a weekend trip with friends. The hotel is booked. The train tickets are purchased. Everyone is excited.

Two days later, you feel slightly reluctant.

Your brain immediately asks, "Does this mean I don't really want to go?"

Maybe.

Or maybe you slept badly, have a busy week, spent too much money yesterday, dislike packing, and currently find the idea of wearing sweatpants at home more appealing than all known forms of tourism.

A feeling appeared.

That does not automatically make it a verdict.

One of the biggest mistakes chronic reconsiderers make is treating every emotional change as new evidence. Yesterday you were excited, so the decision seemed correct. Today you are tired, so the same decision seems suspicious. Tomorrow you may be excited again, at which point the investigation will presumably be suspended until further emotional developments.

This is an unstable way to make choices because feelings are real but variable.

They matter.

They are not always instructions.

You can feel nervous before doing something you genuinely want. You can feel relief after avoiding something you genuinely need. You can feel excited about a bad idea because it is new. You can feel bored with a good idea because it is no longer new.

If emotion alone could reliably identify the correct decision, nobody would ever text an ex after midnight.

History suggests otherwise.

The useful question is not:

"How do I feel about this decision right now?"

The useful question is:

"Has anything important changed since I made it?"