

Why choosing can be tough

Every time we make a decision we die a little. By opting for something, we also opt against the alternatives. Like all anxiety, decision-making anxiety is a manifestation of the biggest fear of all: our fear of death. Every act of choosing is a little memento mori. In the act of choosing we are reminded that we cannot have everything. We live finite lives with a finite number of experiences. For every choice we make, there will be others for which there will not be time. Life offers us a multitude of possibilities but the time to avail ourselves of but few. No matter how many time management books you read, how many lists you make, or how efficient you become, you are unlikely to do everything you want in your lifetime. The older we get, the more evident it becomes that we too are mortal. Dying is not just something which happens to other people: it is going to happen to us too. The reality of death destroys us, but the awareness of death encourages us to live with greater reflectiveness and self responsibility.

One of the biggest choices we have is the choice to make a choice rather than let circumstances or other people choose for us. Making choice, whether it's something big, like a partner or a home, or something small such as whether to drink tea or coffee, is both an act of self-affirmation, and an act that signifies an acceptance of our own mortality. In choosing we realise that some alternative potential history is lost to us forever. This awareness is especially strong when accidents happen and we say over and over again "If only", "If only I hadn't passed this way", "If only I hadn't gone so fast", "If only I could turn the clock back".

By choosing we actively engage in our lives and recognise that our existence is finite. By choosing we affirm ourselves as the central protagonist in the drama of your own life.

There is a way to make the right choice every time. It involves embracing whatever you have chosen and finding within your chosen path opportunities for growth, self-affirmation, and service to others. It isn't a case of making the decision you will make right prospectively, but rather ensuring that the decision you have already made was right retrospectively.

© ADAM MAY, MA (Hons), ADHP (NC), MNRHP, UKCP Reg, 2 Fron Heulog, Llanddaniel
Fab, Gaerwen, Sir Fôn, LL60 6EP.
Phone. 01248 421015. e mail: adam@adammay.co.uk

Responses to this article are warmly welcomed.

This article was printed in Network News.