

## Why you should choose what you have (or move on)

Unless you have lived a very predictable life, you could never have guessed at some earlier point in time how your life would be now. Of course, a life does not unfold by accident, and for sure, we have exerted some influence and gone some way to create the circumstances in which we find ourselves, but equally clearly, bigger forces than ourselves have played their part too. For most of us, the life in which we find ourselves cannot be said to be the one that we intended.

Some people make themselves unhappy by being resentful and angry about this but we can choose the life we have now even if we didn't choose it before. "Given that this is where I am starting from," we can say to ourselves, "this is the life I choose for myself for now."

When some people review their lives they decide that they want change. When is deciding to settle for what you have an act of self-betrayal and when is it simply counting your blessings?

Nobody else can tell us when to be satisfied with our lives and when to keep on striving for something else. Countless hours of psychotherapy involve exploring this issue.

To celebrate what one has or to move on: this is the judgement call that every person must make for themselves. We will never know whether we have made the right decision because we will only be able to experience just one of the many possible lives open to us.

There is only one choice that seems to me to be a clear mistake and that is to stick with what one has *and* to wish otherwise. The only honest choices are to accept and celebrate what one has, or to move on. You may not have chosen the life you have now, but now you have a choice to celebrate what you have or to seek another way.

People who choose to stick with what they have and to feel resentful get the worst of both possibilities. In trying to hang on to what they have and yet also to imagine what they could have had they invest in neither. They protect themselves from the grief of losing either choice but they are not able to enjoy either properly because they have not made a proper choice

There are points in all of our lives when we wonder how we ever got ourselves into the life we have. We can recognise the forces that have acted upon us, and the fact that our degree of conscious choice before the event has been quite limited, but it's important that we take ownership of our lives. To cry "Look what I am stuck with. It's not fair!" and yet to do nothing is not a position one can hold very long before it erodes our self respect and damages us.

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Comments and feedback on this article are warmly welcomed.