



Making Your Best Right Decisions

Making Decisions

By Dr. Margaret Paul

Do you ever have trouble making decisions? Do you get stuck behind your fear and anxiety? Does the fear of failure and of making a mistake immobilize you?

Do you ever have trouble making decisions? Which carpet to buy for your floor. Which sofa to choose. What to wear today. What you feel like doing on your days off. What kind of work you really want to do.

Making decisions can be difficult, but we make it especially hard when we try to decide from our mind, rather than from our inner experience. The arrogant mind often thinks it can figure out the "right" answer.

In a session with Barbara, who works as a paralegal, she was complaining about the decisions she had made regarding furniture. She and her husband recently redecorated their home and she was quite upset with the result. "I messed up on every decision I made. Not one thing came out right. How could I mess up 100% of the time? I have a few more things to get and I'm afraid to make any decisions."

I asked her where she made her decisions from - her mind or her inner experience. She had no idea what I meant by making decisions from her inner experience.

"Barbara, when I have a decision to make, like which tile to pick for the floor, I open myself to my deeper experience. I notice how it feels to be with this color, this texture. My feelings generally let me know what is right or wrong for me. Since there is never just one right answer, I need to go by what feels good to me. My mind has no idea about what brings me joy, what feels fulfilling to me, what is esthetically pleasing, what feels peaceful. My mind is too filled with what I've learned to know what is right for me.

"I tune in to my body and feel my inner experience. If my body feels calm, peaceful, joyous, with a sense of rightness, I know I am on the right track. If my body feels any agitation or sense of unrest, I know I'm on the wrong track. By staying tuned in to my feelings, I find I can make the decisions that are right for me quickly and easily."

For me, making decisions is a creative process. My mind doesn't know anything about creativity. My mind is logical, rational, and thinks it can logically decide on what is right or best. Yet those who are involved in

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a creative process such as writing or painting know that they have to open to their experience. They have to open to Spirit and allow the truth and creativity of Spirit to be expressed through them.

Spirit speaks to you through your inner experience, your feelings. Spirit also speaks through images and thoughts that pop into your mind. Making the right decision for you is about tuning in to your feelings and being aware of the thoughts and images that come through you.

People often get stuck in not knowing what their life purpose is - what work would bring them joy. Too often they are trying to make this decision from their mind, rather than tuning in to their feelings and experiencing what would bring them joy. When you work with Inner Bonding and learn to be mindful of your feelings in Step One, you may discover the things that truly bring you joy. True work is that which is fulfilling and brings you joy. How can you know what this is when you are trying to figure it out with your mind? Fulfillment and joy are not thoughts - they are inner experiences that we feel when we are on the right track. When you feel fulfillment, peace and joy, you know that Spirit is with you, guiding you in your highest good.

From Mind Dominion to Soul Dominion

By Dr. Margaret Paul

Is your mind or your soul in charge of your decisions? The spiritual journey is the journey of moving from the mind being in control of our thoughts and actions, to our soul/Source being in control.

What does it mean to be on a spiritual path, a spiritual journey?

There are different ways of describing this journey:

- Moving out of fear and into love and courage
- Moving out of control and into surrender
- Moving out of a closed heart and into an open heart
- Moving out of the ego and into the higher self
- Moving out of the wounded self and into the loving Adult
- Moving out of the intent to protect and into the intent to learn

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I find it very helpful to think of it as moving out of mind dominion and into soul dominion.

What exactly does this mean?

When we were born, our highest priority was survival. We went about learning how to make sure that we survived both physically and mentally. Our mind took over as our primary instrument of survival. In this process, we developed many limiting beliefs, as well as fears and behaviors that resulted from these beliefs. These beliefs, stored in the mind, governed our lives as we were growing up. We came to believe that our thoughts - coming from our mind - had validity, because they had helped us to survive.

During this process, our soul - our true Self - had to take a back seat. Our soul originally came into a body to evolve in love and joy, but our soul had to wait patiently while we attempted to learn to have control over getting love, avoiding pain and feeling safe.

Our mind learned many ways to attempt to have this control and we survived. However, at some point, many of us decided that survival was not enough. We found ourselves feeling empty, anxious, unfulfilled. We started to question what life was really about. "There must be more to life than this," we said to ourselves. We wanted more inner peace and joy in our lives. We wanted to know how to make the right, best decisions for ourselves.

And so we started on a path of learning about how to have more fulfillment. However, because we were so used to using our minds to get what we wanted, we went about trying to "figure out" how to have love, peace and joy.

The problem is that this is not something that the mind can figure out. The mind is incapable of having control over love, peace and joy. Love, peace and joy are gifts of Spirit that come into us and through us when we move our focus from our mind to our soul.

While the mind is programmed with hundreds of limiting beliefs that we absorbed as we were growing up, the soul has none of these beliefs. The soul, being a spark of God, is connected to the universe. The soul's knowledge comes directly from Source - the Source of truth, love, peace and joy. When the soul is in charge, it uses the mind to access the truth, love, peace and joy that it seeks. The soul decides to

become "open-minded" rather than continue to operate based on the programmed beliefs of the mind.

The mind does not give up easily. It has been in control for a long time and it fears that if it lets go and becomes open to learning with Spirit, bad things will happen. The mind believes that our safety lies in its being in control. It does not trust that a Source of love and truth exists, other than itself. It does not believe that it is not alone.

The spiritual journey is the journey of moving from the mind being in control of our thoughts and actions, to our soul/Source being in control. This is what surrender is all about - letting go of mind dominion and moving into soul dominion. It is this surrender that allows you to make your best, right decisions.

Only through much practice of opening to learning with Guidance and taking loving action based on Guidance, does the mind gradually let go of its devotion to control. With time and practice, based on loving action guided by Spirit, the mind gradually experiences that the only true inner peace, truth and joy come from connection with our Source. Life changes dramatically when you open and allow your decisions to come THROUGH your mind from your Source, rather than FROM your mind.

The Vital Choice - Mind or Spirit

By Dr. Margaret Paul

Which part of you is making your moment-by-moment decisions - your mind or your spiritual Guidance? The course of your life, and whether you are anxious or peaceful, is determined by this vital choice.

Who is in charge of your life? Who makes your moment-by-moment decisions? Who decides what's good for you and what isn't? Is it your mind or is it your Guidance? The difference is like night and day.

The mind is the home of the wounded self. It thinks it knows things, but it really doesn't know anything. All it knows is what has been programmed into it - just like your computer. Relying on the mind for the information you need to make loving decisions in your own behalf

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is like expecting your computer to give you information without going onto the Internet. Just as the Internet contains a vast amount of information - far more than is programmed into your computer - so your Guidance has unlimited information for you, unlike your individual mind.

The mind has been programmed with hundreds of false beliefs. These beliefs have been handed down to us from our parents, teachers, peers, religious leaders, the media, books and so on. These have been programmed into the personal computer that is our mind. But most of these beliefs are not based on truth. We have many beliefs that have vast negative consequences for our lives, such as beliefs about:

- What we have control over and what we cannot control
- Resisting ourselves, others and God
- The causes of emotional pain, and how to manage pain
- What creates happiness
- What we are and are not responsible for
- Who we really are - our worth and lovability

A belief such as "I can control - with my caretaking or anger - how others feel about me and treat me" determines much of our behavior that results in pain and broken relationships. A belief such as "Resisting being controlled is essential to maintaining my integrity" leads to procrastination and being stuck in life.

The beliefs that are programmed into our mind come mostly from fear rather than from love. Anything that comes from fear and causes fear and unloving behavior, is not based on truth. The mind believes in its own programs and bases its decisions and actions on these programs, but these programs are mostly lies. There is only one Source of truth, and that is our Source.

If your mind is in charge of your decisions, the chances are that you are making decisions that are not in your highest good. Your mind has no idea what is loving to you, because it is not focused on your highest good. It is focused on what it believes creates safety - getting love and avoiding pain.

At any given moment, we are either attempting to control our lives from our wounded self - our ego mind - or we are in surrender, allowing our Guidance to guide us in our highest good.

This choice - to put the mind in charge or to put Spirit in charge - is the most vital choice you have. And only you can decide who is going to be in charge.

Putting your Guidance in charge means that you are never making decisions from just your mind. It means that you are constantly asking your Guidance, "What is in my highest good in this situation?" It means that when you are looking at a menu at a restaurant, you are asking your Guidance, "What is in my highest good to eat right now?" It means that when you are anxious, and you discover that you are telling yourself a lie that is causing the anxiety, you ask your Guidance, "What is the truth, and what is the loving action toward myself?" It means that when someone yells at you or blames you, you ask your Guidance, "What is in my highest good right now?" instead of reacting from your programmed mind.

It also means that, once you receive the Guidance, you do what your Guidance has told you to do. It means that you do not allow your mind to once again take over - with its many fears and limiting beliefs - to stop you from taking loving action.

It takes consciousness to make the choice to put your Guidance in charge. The automatic, default setting on the computer of your mind is to put your mind in charge. That's why it is so important to build a devoted Inner Bonding practice into your life. The more you consciously practice Inner Bonding, the more you will trust your Guidance and the more you will remember to put your Guidance in charge of your decisions.