



WHOLISTIC DECISION-MAKING

Or *How to Get Through Life Without Making More Karma*

A 6 Step Process to help you make decisions that are true to yourself.

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Is life demanding more from you these days? Many people say life seems to be speeding up. How can we stay centered and peaceful in our hearts, yet move along with life, even at its increasing pace? How can we be empowered when we are reacting to life's events? How can we be sure we are making decisions that won't add to the stress, but will allow us to be in harmony with what is natural, healthy, and loving?

When we automatically react from habit, we may find that we have not considered all of our options. That's when we are burdened by 'shoulda, coulda, woulda' regrets. Even when you must respond quickly in a circumstance, you can take control of your instinctual patterns of reacting. In a few moments, you can access virtually all of your decision-making capabilities so that you make wholistic, empowered decisions. Life may not get easier, but it will be more fulfilling when you become 'cause' rather than 'effect'. To feel more in control of your life, try this simple six step process for wholistic decision-making.

The most basic, automatic way that we react to life's challenges is through the function of the oldest part of our brain, what is called the 'reptilian brain'. It is the source of the urge to flee, fight, or play dead. Its function is to ensure survival of the physical body and it is most useful when we are in actual danger, like when an accident is occurring. Thankfully, most of us have little need to rely solely on this function on a daily basis. However, life is stressful, so the reptilian brain can be inappropriately activated and can be influencing some

of our non-life-threatening decisions.

If you are not in physical danger, the first step in the wholistic decision-making process is to **ASK YOUR PHYSICAL BODY, "Body, what is dangerous at this moment? What do you want to do?"**

You don't have to change anything—just become aware of your body's response. Notice where any tension is building up or being held in your body. **Place your hand there and breathe in and out through your nose.** You can do this without anyone noticing. If you are alone, you might allow your body to move into whatever position it wants to. Just go there with it and breathe in and out through your nose. This is an opportunity to honor your body's amazing ability to survive under the most challenging conditions. **Say thank you to your body and reassure it that it is safe, here and now.**

Much in the same way that our reptilian brain reacts from habit or programming, our emotions can cause us to respond automatically in ways we learned early in life. As adults, especially in business, we are always being told to keep our feelings in check, and to keep our emotions out of our decisions. The fact remains that they are a functioning part of human life and must be acknowledged if we are to become 'cause' and not 'effect'. Examining our feelings can be helpful in making wholistic decisions.

The second step in this process is to recognize the emotions that come up around the decision you are making. You may find that your feelings are

connected to your physical reaction, or not. If possible, close your eyes, then ask, **"What is just one emotion I am feeling right now?"** Then address that emotion directly by asking **"[Feeling], what do you need?"**

Don't change anything—just quietly notice the answer. All emotions are valid and deserve to be acknowledged. Is this need something that must be met by the decision you are making? Your feelings may or may not be appropriate in your present decision-making process. By acknowledging your feelings, you can move past the automatic responses. This can take the pressure of fulfilling your emotional needs off the decision. *When your most basic physical and emotional needs are met, you can function from your higher levels of perception.*

The human mind is a complex system that includes memory, reasoning and ideas, and aesthetics, among others. Just like the physical body and the emotions, the mind is a tool for us to use in experiencing life and relating to others. It is a tool that is being refined and honed our whole lives. It is like a computer—some of the programs are hidden behind the scenes to run the basic functions, some are used daily in our life tasks, others we have acquired are not useful to us in particular, and some may even be harmful. When assessing the role of the mind in our wholistic decision-making process, it is helpful to remember that *the mind can only process information according to its programming. The mind never really has the whole picture.*

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3 The next steps in this process address the complexities of the different parts of the mind. First, **ask, “Memory, what information do I already have to help make the decision? How have I experienced something like this before?”** Make a list of pertinent information that comes forward to your conscious mind. You will be surprised at how one memory can lead to another when you are focusing on a specific task. If memories cause your attention to shift back to the physical body or emotional responses, go back to Steps 1 or 2, as needed.

If you are trying to make a decision about something in which you have little or no experience, you may need more input in order to make a wise choice. Then you can ask, “Do I need to find out more about this?” In most cases, you may be able to go forward with what you do know.

4 The next part of this process utilizes our wonderful capability for unique reasoning. **Ask, “Logic, what makes sense?”** This is the time to sort your list of information from memory. Can you group certain bits of information you have based on their relevance to your decision? Can you rank them in importance to making the decision or its outcome? The creative mind may be able to see new options through this step.

There is another part of the mind that allows us to live in harmony with each other. It is the social mind, and is where we get our sense of ethics from. When we are trying to make a decision that benefits us without taking away from another, we can use this part of the mind in our process. In

his book, *Whatever Happened to Justice?*, (Bluestocking Press, 1993) Richard J. Maybury presents two fundamental, natural laws underlying all other laws created by mankind. They are:

- Do all you have agreed to do; and**
- Do not encroach on other persons or their property.**

5 When assessing the ethics of your decision, **ask your social mind, “Is this decision in agreement with the two natural laws?”**

There is one more aspect of the mind that is meant to ensure our survival: the ego. Its job is to move us on through life by giving us a sense of self-importance. It is a common misperception that the ego is who we really are. That is the ego just doing its job. We are so much more than the physical body, feelings, thought processes and ego. The sum of the parts does not even come close to being the Whole. How can we sidestep the ego and make our final decision from the True Self? **Ask, “Heart (or Spirit), what would unconditional love do in this situation?”** Here is where you will find a decision that gives you peace and the confidence to go forward.

As you practice this technique over time, you will notice how easy it becomes to peel away the outer layers of your perception to reveal your True Self and get to the heart of the matter.

The questions to ask in the Wholistic Decision-Making Process are:

- 1. Body, what is dangerous in this moment? What do you want to do?**
- 2. [Feeling], what do you need?**
- 3. Memory, what information do I already have? Do I need more information?**
- 4. Logic, what makes sense?**
- 5. Social Mind, is this decision in agreement with Maybury’s two natural laws?**
- 6. Heart (or Spirit), what would unconditional love do?**

Rarely are we faced with the need to make split second decisions. Take the time to put this six step process in place for all of your challenging decisions. That gift of time you give yourself will benefit your sense of well-being for years to come.

This technique integrates the components of humanness with your True Beingness. It ultimately provides you with a heightened point of view from which you can observe all of the influences and options and make a decision that meets the needs of your whole self in harmony with Life.

Wishing you much success,

Patti

For one on one help with your decision-making process, make an appointment with me for a private session by visiting my websites at:

www.ClearYourPatterns.com or www.ResonateWithSuccess.com.

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