

CHOICES from Childhood through Maturity to Old Age

When we are very young we do not have a lot of choices because parents, teachers, etc tend to tell us what to do. We need guidance as we mature, and gradually we are given more choices.

Growing up can sometimes feel hard, often perhaps because we are not yet ready for the sense of responsibility that comes with making choices. Perhaps also we do not feel we have been given enough background knowledge to enable us to make good choices. We could arguably always feel short of confidence due to this, but there is no complete answer to getting this right, one just has to start finding out for one's self somewhere along the line. We have to accept that even making choices that turn out to be mistakes are still part of our learning and maturing. We can get help from researching information, talking to friends, counsellors even, but at the end of the day the time comes for us to make our choices for ourselves, without anyone telling us what to do any more.

We often forget that it might not matter very much if some of our choices are 'wrong', in fact they might not be 'wrong' in actuality, but have given us the opportunity to try something out and learn from it.

We tend to beat ourselves up if we make mistakes, but everyone makes mistakes! If we judge ourselves harshly, does this mean that we also treat our family and friends this way? If we pour scorn on others, they will tend to walk away, so why pour scorn on yourself - you have to live with yourself - so try to be understanding of your own ways.

Often there is no blindingly obvious 'right' or 'wrong' choice - we may have to try out the options anyway, and be patient with ourselves. This is just all part of life, maturing further. We never stop learning really.

If you feel stuck in a place and a job you are not that happy with, then the worst thing you can do is dwell on thoughts about how unhappy you are. One thing is for certain, the more you tell yourself you are unhappy, the more you will be! The best thing to do is to focus on the positives - for example - the area is cheap to live in and the job pays well, therefore you can save a lot for whatever you might want to do next.

So, this means you are making a choice. You have decided to be there and do this job for the meantime at least, and you can review this choice any time you want to see if it is still the best choice for that time. You have identified why it is the best choice for now, so now you can focus on trying to decide what exactly it might be that you want to do next. Again, internet research, talking to people, etc, can provoke ideas. Surely it is better to stick something out until you know what you want to do next, rather than just drift off, or walk away in anger, with no options in place?

There is no need to be manic about trying to find answers, sometimes it takes time.

Meanwhile, we can also find hobbies that help keep us interested, stimulated, active, etc. We can look at our diets too and ensure that we are well balanced and healthy - obtaining all the vitamins and minerals we need to keep us optimally functioning. A lack of something can cause all sorts of issues, often including physical and mental lethargy. It is harder to get everything we need these days from a simple diet, as our soil has become depleted and our environment polluted, so sometimes we need to keep topped up, and we also need to keep well hydrated so that our bodies can detoxify properly.

Being able to turn something around from feeling stuck in negative reactive thinking about your situation, to the fact that you have made certain choices and why, is very empowering.

Once you feel better about yourself, you will be more able to see the path ahead, and plan positively for it. You may not be so sure that what you studied at uni, for example, is the line you want to go on working in, but perhaps there is a path slightly off centre to that which would suit you. Perhaps you know somewhere deep down that all your received teaching is not necessarily one hundred percent correct, so perhaps you might want to investigate the anomalies further? Perhaps your role in life is to shed new light on a topic. You don't have to stop doing research just because you finished uni - one's whole life could be regarded as research if you want - research, then experimenting via experience, then further development from what you learn.

You can share things you discover, or even just think about, via all sorts of media, publications, talks, through writing songs, just networking. There is a whole world of people out there interested in listening.

Curiosity is one of man's greatest instincts. Many other instincts underpin our survival, but curiosity spurs evolution. Without it we become stagnant, like a blocked stream. But with it, we are able to keep moving, have the energy to consider change, be alive to our choices.

Awareness and intention are both necessary to enable us to understand our situation and then formulate what our choices might be, and the reasoning behind them. This means that we do have to think about our situation, but we must not allow ourselves to dwell on it in a negative way as this produces a downward spiral. We need to be a little detached if we can, try to look at it logically rather than too emotionally. If we pretend we are looking at someone else's life perhaps, this should reduce the emotional content. However, when looking at possible new choices, we need to have the emotion back in. We need to know what excites us, what feels like a poor option, what seems logical yet is not inspiring enough, what feels intuitively right. (You can do this by writing things into columns, scoring things, drawing brain storming diagrams, etc. You can do it alone, or you can do it with friends.)

If you still feel stuck then you probably need a boost - maybe it's a shortage of some

mineral, maybe you need a holiday in the sun, or some work experience of a different nature in your 'spare' time. Maybe you need to travel and discover some totally different place, with different perspectives on life, to reawaken your sense of adventure.

In the prime of your life you should have the energy to follow your inspiration, and even to find that inspiration again if it has become lost somewhere - under a pile of old books perhaps, or under your desk or carpet at work, or perhaps you chucked it out by mistake along with an old relationship. Claim it back, it's yours! No amount of disappointment should douse its flames. Let go of the other stuff you don't need - any sourness or guilt about an old relationship, or a job, or family issues - and reclaim what you do need in order to move on. Forgive past stuff and let it go, holding onto it only hurts you. Forgive others, but also forgive yourself. Be grateful for what good you did get out of it, even if it was just a lesson, and then turn your face forwards and head on up the road. Now be grateful for the things you do have right now, and the chance to move towards fresh choices.

You are a unique being come here to live on earth. Find out what it is you really want to do and journey onwards. Remember that our earth is here to support you in many ways - keep grounded and balanced by connecting with it, and try not to harm it. Remember the universe is there to support you too, reflecting the fullness of your true being, and deepening your sense of knowing who you are. Being in touch with the world around you helps keep you steady as well as aware. Use your intuition to filter the stream of information. so that what you glean is knowledge that is right for you, rather than just swallowing whatever you are fed. Always remember that you have the power to choose.

Having a family is a very big choice to make, and too often we just fall into it without the commitment that it takes. It is your choice of course to take the proper precautions until you feel you are both ready.

As always we have to realise that choices we make on behalf of our children will not necessarily always be 'right', we can only try our best. It is better to have some experience of the world first, try out a few things, so that we have got to a place of some balance within ourselves.

Even so, there is so much room for misunderstanding in a relationship, especially one that is focused on the kids. We have to not blame each other for stuff, choices we made along the way, and try to understand and respect each other's points of view. People often feel trapped by commitment, but often it is not the relationship itself, but outside things like having to move country, not being able to give up your job because of having to provide security for the family, etc. It may be more constrained, but there are always still choices, you just have to discuss stuff properly as friends, and work primarily as a team. It is important to be honest about how you feel, but fair, taking into account also how the other feels. As ever you should try to focus on the good things instead of the negatives, find the things to be grateful for, especially in each other.

It is very sad sometimes that the best choice seems to be to split up again, but that is still better than suffocating each other slowly if you have grown too far apart to resolve things. If you love (or have loved) someone, you would surely prefer to set them free than to go on being a cause (or perceived cause) of hurt to them. It is no good clinging together because of fear of how you will manage, as that will only end up causing more resentment. Once you know you have to make the choice, you will find ways to manage.

As we become older we are hopefully even less tied to the world out there in some ways. We may be able to be more free in our choice of what we do for example. If we are lucky, we may not need to put up with other people telling us what to do too much anymore. We may have more time to talk with people, to find out details about things, such as how the world really works, and we may have more time to share what we have learned. We can be more detached from what goes on, so we can see the bigger picture more easily.

We don't have dependents anymore, so we have less to lose, thus fear is less likely to stop us from saying what we think and doing what we see fit to do, although obviously we won't get too cranky as we will want to be able to see any grandchildren who might come along! We can choose to accept people and situations for what they are, or we can still choose to make changes. Either way, by this time we figure that we must be about as informed and experienced as we are likely to be, so we accept full responsibility for our choices, and consequently tend to be more at peace.

I have the following Life Coaching Tools available as downloads on Greatvine.com

Life Coaching - Pack of All 3 Achievable Goal Planning Sections - How to Maximise Success, Help to Decide, and all FORMS - £6.50 (which gives a saving of 50p on buying them separately as detailed below).

[The sections are also available separately so that people who don't need the "help to decide" section can save by just buying the other two. And sometimes people just want the "help to decide" section and then take it from there themselves because they might already know about life coaching, but that is a unique extra developed by me. Or people might just want to use my forms and look at my examples, although I do obviously recommend looking at the 2nd section too, as there is so much useful information in it.]

Life Coaching 1 - How to HELP yourself DECIDE WHAT you really want to do - £1.50
Help with deciding on your goals in the first place. It's best to get really clear before you begin the planning stage so that you don't waste time and effort.
For example, you could be trying to decide which course to study, what to do as a career (or change of career), or for a hobby etc, but you can also apply it to any decision you are not sure about (like moving home, ending a relationships, travelling etc).

We do sometimes subconsciously block our own progress, particularly if we are not sure what we want, or if we don't have enough self esteem or confidence in ourselves.

Life Coaching 2 - HOW TO develop achievable Goal Plans, and put realistic Timescales, Support, and Rewards in place TO MAXIMISE SUCCESS - £2.50

Includes details of what to think about before starting your plan.

Includes details of how to prepare plans successfully by avoiding certain pitfalls.

Includes details of how to keep motivated and communicate your needs to rally support.

Life Coaching 3 - Goal Setting FORMS - £3

Includes blank form for your use, plus a tutor form with guidelines on, plus several examples.

Examples include: 1) paying off debts, 2) losing weight and getting fit alongside study times job, and committee member obligations, 3) planning workshops with all the admin etc included, and 4) Improving Belief in Self as Parent and as having Valuable Skills & a Right to a Career of Own Choosing.

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