



# CHOICE

## THE GATEWAY TO INNER PEACE



# INTRODUCTION

## *Embracing Choice to Overcome Fear, Self-Doubt, and Procrastination*

Viktor Frankl, a renowned psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, left us with a powerful insight: "The last great human freedom is to have choice in any given situation."

This phrase holds the secret to reclaiming control over our lives, even in the face of overwhelming obstacles. Frankl's words remind us that, regardless of circumstances, we possess the freedom to choose our responses, our mindsets, and ultimately, our paths forward.

However, despite this freedom, many of us struggle with procrastination, avoidance, and self-doubt.

One must ask, why?

Let's explore how our perceptions, fears, and uncertainties often prevent us from embracing our own intuition, leaving us stuck instead of moving forward.

### **1. The Power of Perception: Seeing Obstacles as Walls or Doors**

Our perception shapes our experience of life, colouring every event, interaction, and emotion. We often feel we're limited by the external world, but in truth, it's our inner world - our beliefs, assumptions, and narratives that frequently hold us back. When faced with difficult decisions or challenges, our perception often interprets these as threats, leading us to fear or avoid them.

Imagine a tough decision, like changing careers or ending a toxic relationship. If we view it as a monumental obstacle, we'll likely feel overwhelmed and stuck. However, if we shift our perception and see it as a necessary stepping stone or opportunity, the decision becomes less intimidating.

Frankl's insight reminds us that, although we cannot always control the situations we face, we can control our perception of them - and in that choice lies our freedom.

### **Perception Influences Procrastination**

When we see tasks or decisions as too difficult or painful, we are likely to procrastinate.

By changing our perception and breaking down these daunting decisions into manageable steps, we can make them feel achievable. By adjusting our mindset, we can unlock the motivation to act rather than putting it off.

## **2. Perspective: The Lens That Colours Our Decisions**

Perspective differs from perception in that it represents the bigger picture we choose to focus on. While perception is about immediate interpretation, perspective concerns the long-term view. When making difficult decisions, our perspective can significantly impact how we approach them.

Our minds are wired to focus on immediate pain rather than long-term gain. If we let this perspective dominate, we may avoid difficult choices that could lead to lasting benefits. A shift in perspective - where we focus on the positive outcomes instead of the discomfort of the present - can empower us to make bold decisions. We may not enjoy every step of the journey, but by remembering the end goal, we stay motivated.

### **Changing Perspective to Overcome Procrastination**

If you're procrastinating on a choice because you're focused solely on its immediate drawbacks, try asking yourself: "How will I feel about this decision in one year? Five years?"

Often, focusing on long-term benefits over short-term discomfort helps us break free from the cycle of avoidance.

## **3. The Role of Fear and Self-Doubt in Decision-Making**

Fear and self-doubt are powerful emotions that shape many of our choices, especially those that involve risk or uncertainty. It's natural to feel fearful when stepping out of our comfort zones.

However, fear of failure, rejection, or the unknown often triggers a self-protective instinct to avoid these risks, keeping us from embracing change.

Self-doubt, similarly, questions our abilities and worthiness. We may wonder:

- "Am I good enough?"
- What if I make the wrong choice?"

These doubts keep us immobilized. Rather than face potential failure, we delay, avoid, or downplay decisions that could improve our lives.

## Confronting Fear and Self-Doubt

Frankl's message about choice challenges us to see fear and self-doubt as emotions we can work through rather than reasons to avoid action. Why not ask yourself:

- "What's the worst that could happen?"
- "How do I know for certain the worst will happen? What are the facts?"
- "Who can act as a voice of reason to clarify your fear and self-doubt?"

These questions and their answers often clarify that many of our fears are less intimidating than they seem, and recognising this frees us to take action.

### 4. Trusting Intuition: Why We Resist Listening to Ourselves

Intuition is often described as an inner knowing, a gut feeling that nudges us toward certain decisions or actions. However, many of us ignore our intuition, often because of fear, logical reasoning, or societal pressure.

We live in a world that prioritises logic and reason, sometimes at the expense of our inner voices. While rational analysis is valuable, over-reliance on it can lead us to distrust our instincts, believing that the '*right*' choice must be strictly rational.

Fear of judgment, too, keeps us from following our intuition—what if people don't understand or agree?

#### How to Start Trusting Your Intuition

Learning to trust our intuition begins by tuning in and giving it space to speak.

Small steps, like spending time in reflection or meditation, can help you access this inner wisdom. When making decisions, try to create a balance between logical reasoning and intuitive feeling.

Intuition often nudges us in a direction that's aligned with our values and true desires; if we learn to hear it, it can guide us with clarity and purpose.

### 5. Choosing Action Over Avoidance

The most crucial lesson from Frankl's words is that even in challenging circumstances, we always retain the freedom to choose. Choosing does not mean ignoring fear, bypassing self-doubt, or suppressing intuition.

It means acknowledging these feelings and choosing to act anyway. Each time we make a choice, we exercise the “last great human freedom” that Frankl emphasised, breaking free from the forces that would otherwise hold us back.

Here are a few practical strategies to help make choices despite fear, self-doubt, and procrastination:

- Identify Small, Actionable Steps If a big decision feels overwhelming, break it down into manageable tasks. Small steps build momentum and confidence.
- Set a Deadline: Giving yourself a time limit reduces the tendency to overthink, which can lead to procrastination.
- Practice Self-Compassion: Accept that no choice is perfect. Mistakes and setbacks are part of growth, not a reason to avoid action.
- Listen and Reflect: Take time to tune into your intuition. Journaling or meditative practices can help you discern your true desires and motivations.
- Visualise Success: Focus on the positive outcomes of making a decision. Imagine yourself moving past current discomfort and achieving your goals.

### **Embracing Freedom in Choice**

At its core, Frankl’s maxim reminds us of the power within each of us to choose our responses and actions. Our perception, perspective, and intuition are tools that, when understood, can transform us from passive spectators to active creators of our lives.

By facing fear, listening to our intuition, and embracing choice, we honour our last great freedom: the freedom to design a life aligned with our values, free from the limits imposed by self-doubt, fear, and procrastination.

As a last word, please remember, that not a single soul of the human race is born, to fail. As individuals we are destined for greatness – if only we would glimpse it and believe it



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