

# Healthy & Resilient You

## CONCLUSION JUMPING

How to keep emotions, bias, and decision fatigue from impairing smart choices.



**Decisions, decisions. On any given day, we make a few dozen to a few hundred decisions—or even more.**

Daily decisions range from simple to the complex. Coffee or tea? The plaid or solid dress? Which work project should I prioritize? How should I invest my 401k? Though we like to think we use intuition and gut instinct to tackle simpler decisions and our rational brain for the big stuff—is that really the case?

### Getting All Emotional

For a long time, scientific consensus held to this dual-process theory of decision making.



**Fast Decision = Intuitive**  
**Slow Decision = Rational**

Under the dual-process theory, slowing down and applying analysis should be enough to ensure we're making important decisions rationally. But recent studies are beginning to challenge this assumption, finding that:

- **Rational decisions** can come to us just as easily and quickly as intuitive ones, and
- **Irrational influencers** like perception biases, emotion, and decision fatigue play a much bigger role in decisions we think of as completely rational

With the lines between rational and intuitive decisions blurred, it's no wonder that we sometimes get stymied by a choice between coffee and tea in the morning. Or do mind-boggling things like choosing to buy a new family car without a back seat when we know we have several kids and a Great Dane to haul around.

## Using All Your Decision Tools

With both our hearts and minds always contributing to our decisions, can we learn to lean toward smarter choices? Fortunately, with a little forethought and practice, we can.

### Here are some tips you can try to get started.

 **Don't sweat the small stuff** – Choosing coffee when you wanted tea only means you might be out a couple of bucks and a caffeine rush. *Not a big deal.* On the other hand, choosing the sportscar over the minivan means you'll be out thousands of bucks and possibly be sleeping in the dog house for a while. *Very big deal.* Use your decision time and energy accordingly, dedicating more of it to the big-impact decisions.

 **Use your EQ, not just your E** – Strong emotions are natural and important, and they can help us avoid danger in split-second crises. But they can also distract or hijack our brains when we need to make important decisions. Try this simple mindfulness practice to help process strong emotions and put them in perspective when they pop up during your decision process.

 **Deliberate twice, decide once** – You know how carpenters say, “measure twice and cut once,” because there’s no going back once you’ve made the cut? Well, the deliberation portion of the decision process is also the most important, so spend more time on it. Do your research twice, considering different angles when you do. That second time around will help you fill in any blanks you missed to make a better-informed choice.



 **Ask only one expert, not five** – When you want an outside opinion on an important decision, ask just one person you trust. Though you might be tempted to get input from multiple people, it often slows down the process without strengthening the outcome, so don't seek decision by committee unless it's a job requirement.

 **Don't decide while tired, hungry or cranky** – You won't make your best decisions when you're distracted by fatigue, discomfort or have just had enough adulting for one day. So, don't do it. Instead, say, “I need to sleep on that,” or, “I can't hear myself think over my grumbling stomach, let me think on it” and return to the decision when you're better rested, fed and refreshed.

 **Accept Uncertainty** – You'll never have one hundred percent of the information you'll need when making a choice. Likewise, you can't know in advance what the future will bring, so don't get bogged down trying to make a perfect choice. What you can do is be informed, look from multiple angles, and then execute your choice knowing that life is about adapting and adjusting. You can cross any future bridges once you get to them.

For even more ways to help cultivate mindfulness and resilience in 2018, visit the Resilience Hub™ at [www.ConcernResilienceHub.com](http://www.ConcernResilienceHub.com) regularly. First time users may be asked to enter their company ID.

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