

OFFICIAL FREE-TRAINING #1

HOW TO CHOOSE: YOUR GUIDE TO MAKING HARD DECISIONS

The definitive guide to navigating uncertainty, making panic-free decisions, and regaining control of your life.

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Building Confidence into Your Life and Business

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This is a free training made just for you just by me. Et voila. Hope you enjoy.

THE BEST WAY TO USE THIS GUIDE

Have a journal and pen handy while you read because you'll want to take notes and remember key points. You can print the entire thing out, but do what feels right for you; I prefer a fresh journal dedicated just to personal-development training.

You'll want to print out the exercises or make sure you write them down in your journal, because taking action is crucial to this working for you. You can do the exercises after you've read the whole guide or after each section, but *do them* while they're still fresh.

If you use just one of the tools in this guide, you'll be a step ahead of the game - take action on more than one and you'll be playing an entirely new one.

xx Ishita

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Einstein said, "Problems can't be solved in the same consciousness as they were created."

He was right. When it comes to your choices, you know the stress you feel when a decision looms over your head, whether it's picking a college, a life partner, or simply picking out dinner.

How we decide makes us feel anxious, confused and helpless, and even the smallest choices can fill us with doubt. It's no wonder we want to avoid the process all together.

But decisions aren't going away. **You'll have to make them for the rest of your life and unless you want to continue feeling indecisive, you need a new way to decide** - a way that makes you feel confident and in control of your life, not insecure. The approach you'll learn in this book will push you toward your big life, to help you step up and stop wasting time. It will help you make choices that reflect your strength and doesn't allow "I'm not smart enough" to stop you from playing a bigger game.

You need to train. An Olympic athlete ready for the big game doesn't say "Nah coach, I got this." You're ready for a new approach (and a big game) but it will look and feel different from what you're used to; What you're *used to* is the thing that's kept you from what you want. The difference between this training and others is that it's not logic-driven - it's based on un-doing stuff that's just not working anymore. That's what Einstein meant:

Once you learn to manage yourself in decision-making, you create space for new ideas to help you solve your problems.

I've used this process for the big decisions in my life - moving to New York City, quitting medical school to build my business and ending my relationship and healing from heartbreak, so I know it works first-hand.

It's time for you to regain control of yourself by making clear, strong decisions. It's simpler than you think and this training will show you how. Because **how you decide is as important as what you decide**. Your results depend on your process - a process filled with drama leads to terrible results. An excellent process leads to excellent results. Feel strong and your decisions will reflect that strength.

You don't need willpower. You don't need to know how to do it just right.

You just need to commit to having your own back: To stand up to your decisions instead of being mowed down by them.

You are a powerhouse and require a decision-making process to support you.

This book is designed specifically to give you this new approach to get clear from the beginning of the decision-making process all the way to the outcome. You'll get clarity from the process *itself* so you ultimately get what you want. If you run away from responsibility now, this guide will show you how to stay. If you panic when you have to make a decision, this guide will help you manage your emotions. Most importantly, it will build the only thing you need to make decisions and handle life: self-trust.

So, are you ready for a new system that's going to give you what you need to make swift, clean decisions in just a few days?

Are you ready for tools you can use in the next 30 minutes to change how you approach your decisions?

**Ready to change how you feel about yourself?
Let's get to it. You can start now.**

STEP 1 TAKE OWNERSHIP FOR YOUR DECISIONS

Taking ownership means you want to be responsible for your own life. It means going through the discomfort of switching from passenger to driver and **wanting to deal with your fears instead of backing away or distracting yourself from them.** 90% of the time we run away or let others decide, but ownership means you want to stay. That no matter what, you decide that life doesn't happen *to* you, it happens *because* of you.

That is a wonderful, scarce and brave way to live.

But why should you stay? Well, because you'll get tired of running and hiding from your fears soon enough. And if you're already running, you know it doesn't *feel* good to shirk responsibility, doubt yourself all the time, and still take no action. If you don't stay, your fears will grow and you'll fall into the habit of retreating, creating stress and falling into a cycle that's hard to get out of. Most harmful, you'll miss out on the chance to build self-trust, which will help you for the rest of your life. **Ownership allows you to control a process that's largely uncontrollable - it gives you a mental toughness that makes life easier.** Ownership means choosing, and choosing is always brave.

All you have to do is decide to show up *willingly and want to make your decisions.*

You have to be enthusiastic, not heavy. You have to stuff your thoughts away that you're not competent enough to decide. You have to get excited about the opportunity in front of you, about finding a solution. You're always more likely to find a good answer by being willing to dive in than hiding.

There's no teacher, no mom, no best friend to help you decide. It's up to you and ownership means feeling good about that.

When I first moved to New York City, I was excited, but scared. I had a new job in a new industry and came home every night having to Google the day's material just to understand what was going on. I felt a lot of fear and because I felt incapable of deciding, I outsourced my decisions to others and lost a lot of self-trust. After a few months, my partner said, "I can't help you anymore," which stunned me before it relieved me. I knew self-trust was the missing element and that it was up to me then and there. Once I realized that, **I saw how feeling powerless stemmed directly from the lack of ownership in my life. How I gave up power by delegating responsibility for my life to others.** So I began to show up willingly, make decisions, and rebuild my self-trust. I made small choices, asked no one's opinion, learned by trial + error, and slowly gained my confidence back. Each time I solidified my inner strength. I started taking ownership and then I didn't want to stop. I saw myself in a new light, respected this new person and knew I wanted to nurture her.

So how do you do it?

When you take ownership of the small decisions in your life, you'll get momentum for the big ones. You'll piggyback off the good feelings and bank on them when you feel doubt creeping in. The more you practice, the easier it becomes, and the less you'll hide from your life. **You won't be so anxious and fear your mistakes and you'll keep building self-trust.** You'll no longer outsource your decisions, which will stockpile your confidence, inner strength, and power.

Taking ownership means sitting in the driver's seat without being scared of the road ahead. **And even if you're scared, you still want to step up and meet whatever lies ahead.** You get excited about that possibility. Once you're in this mindset, the driver's seat will become enjoyable and you'll see that *wanting* to decide will help you to decide.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action on what you learned in this section, go to page 29 inside this PDF.]

STEP 2 STOP THE CONSTANT JUDGEMENT

The decision process is hard enough without us constantly getting in our own way with our judgments. “Why did **I** say that?” “**I’m** such an idiot” “**I** screwed that up.” We become our own obstacle when we do this because we bring along negative emotions that hinder any momentum we have.

When you’re in the throes of deciding, you want clear options to help you decide what’s best for you, not pressure or bias, which stem from judgments and negative self-talk.

The extent that you judge yourself is the extent you’ll judge your decisions. **Constantly internalize and attribute bad things to yourself? Your decisions will reflect that.** Think “**I’m** stupid” or “**I’m** so indecisive” too much and you *won’t* be able to decide. This is counter-productive and reduces your chance of making a good decision. Stop judging when you make decisions. Stop judging yourself, your options, and stop flooding your system with criticism and self-talk. It’s not the decisions themselves that are hard, it’s handling our emotions and not allowing judgment to take over that gets us. **Don’t keep yourself safe by not being “smart enough” to decide and not deciding at all.**

Self-esteem is the foundation of good decision-making.

You may not even know how deep your negative self-talk runs, but it impacts how you feel about yourself and your capability to decide. Even if you’re a confident person (and you may be) if you constantly assail yourself with thoughts that you’re not good or smart enough - beliefs which you’re not even sure are true or not - you erode any self-esteem you do have and it will reflect in your decisions. Plus, you’ll hate the process of deciding even more. Stop getting in your own way because it’s not worth it to reiterate “**I** can’t do that” because you **can**, or “She has more experience than me” because she doesn’t.

To stop this cycle, **start to accept all parts of yourself, even the parts you're ashamed of, like your anger and your jealousy**, and accept them as you do your humor or sense of style. Don't just accept the positive; accept the parts you're also not a fan of. Doing this gives you a far more accurate picture of yourself, instead of the skewed perception you have that you're a shitty person all the time.

ALL parts of you are necessary, even the dark spots because they all serve a function, especially insecurity. Insecurities show us we need to take more action or express ourselves more authentically.

When I started my business, I needed to build systems into it instead of feeling jealous that other entrepreneurs had (seemingly) well-oiled businesses. Once I started to take action and step up to the challenge to create those systems, I no longer felt jealous *and* I started growing my business properly. We all have shortcomings and they're nothing to be ashamed of. Once you start to accept what you're not used to, you'll put less judgment on everything else too - that'll give you more space to make clear decisions. You'll be grounded in something other than judgments, feel stronger about yourself, and the situation won't take such a hold on you.

The biggest way we judge ourselves is by thinking we should *already* know how to decide. That since we have more life experience and have been around the block we should be master decision-makers. But do you feel like a master in making life choices? I certainly didn't before I trained myself in new techniques and better methods of deciding. How can we be? We weren't taught by our parents (because *they* weren't taught by theirs) and while it *looks* like everyone has it figured out, they don't.

There's no instruction manual to make good decisions (except this one) because you have to *train* yourself to make better choices. It's a process that must be learned, so stop faulting

yourself for not having it figured out.

Give yourself a break. You weren't given a perfect method but I'm giving you a better one in this book. You'll save yourself time if you accept the fact that from here on out, the sooner you take ownership and get some new beliefs, the sooner you'll make good decisions.

Because no one in the world knows what you need from your life better than you do. You're the best equipped, most knowledgeable, the best prepared, even if you don't feel like it. No one else on the planet has a better idea of what you're here to do. No matter how lovely or smart they are, their life is *not yours*. Stop believing you should already know how to decide, stop telling yourself there's someone better out there. There isn't. You're the person for the job.

You're able (and ready) to take total control - you don't need more experience, more skills, more time.

I used to think I needed more knowledge or experience before I took action on something, but that was just my fear talking. What I needed to do was take ownership, undergo training, and realize I was the only person in the world who could decide best for my life.

You'll never feel 100% ready, but there's no better time to start and no better person to do it. You're the don, the boss, the MVP and that's that.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action on what you learned in this section, go to page 32 inside this PDF.]

STEP 3 DECIDE WHAT YOU CONTROL AND FORGET ABOUT THE REST

A spot that often trips us up in decision-making is figuring out what we can and can't control. We often get upset about this because we try to control the things we can't and when it doesn't work out, we blame ourselves.

You can only control your intention and action.

This means your behaviors, responses, and thoughts. That's it. Anything beyond that - external circumstances or the final outcome - are outside of your control. You can avoid an April wedding and have a back-up tent, but you can't predict if it'll rain in July. You can control how disciplined you are when you write, but you can't predict if your book will be a bestseller. All you can do is write like hell to make an excellent book.

Thinking about what's in your control and forgetting about what's not will eliminate the stress that comes from trying to force things that really can't be forced by you.

Focusing on the stuff *outside* of your control, like external circumstances, takes your eye off the big wins, the things you *can* do that will actually make a difference to your outcome.

When you find yourself preoccupied by the outcome or things outside of what *you* can do, know that it's your fear taking over and distracting you from the right things. **As you get closer to making a decision, which is scary and feels more finite than remaining in indecision, your fear will ramp up and put a bunch of things in your way to distract you from taking action.** Don't let it take over. *You* have control and you *can* control your fear. Don't keep fearing what will or won't happen, just take action on the stuff you *can* control and you'll feel better. Your time is far better spent here because you actually have a chance of influencing your outcome.

In most cases you'll be the primary decision-maker, where you express yourself fully, even if you share decision-making power with others.

If you're *not* the primary decision-maker, start stepping up to become one.

Get used to volunteering yourself and leaning forward to make decisions. You *choose* to decide because you know you *can* decide.

In my business I make all the decisions, which often have sub decisions. **I stay sane by breaking down my choices into what I can and can't control**, instead of worrying about everything (which I used to do and drove me nuts.) Now, if I want to increase my clients, I can create a marketing plan, send a few emails, and control the content of the emails. I can guide clients to the door but I can't control who walks in. **I do what I think is right, but I can't force an outcome.** It took a long time to learn this, but when I did, the quality and number of clients I saw increased.

Don't let your perfectionism and instinct to control stop your ability to decide. If you focus on what you can control, it will work out.

Remember: You control the *likelihood* of the outcome, not the outcome itself.

STEP 4 UTILIZE YOUR KEY EMOTIONS

If you're dating Jimmy and want to know if he's the "one," you might ask yourself, "How do I *feel* about Jimmy?" Or if you finish a Rome museum tour you might ask your friend, "What do you *feel* like doing now - going to lunch or to the Coliseum?"

We're used to asking, "How do I feel?" for dating or vacations, but it works brilliantly for the serious decisions in our lives too, "Should I take the job?" or "Should we move to Seattle?" The "should" signals what we would normally think about - the money, the responsibility, the time.

What we need to do is eliminate the should and listen to our emotions.

Admit it or not, **your emotions drive your life.** They dictate how you act, what you say and what you do; they're behind that new pair of shoes and the reason you stay in a bad relationship. We all move toward the feelings we want, love and connection, and away from the feelings we don't want, sadness or boredom. **Your emotions seem to be behind the scenes but they run the show.**

Think about it: you don't procrastinate your work because you *can't* do it, you put it off because you feel uncomfortable or worried or not good enough. And it's not that you really wanted to go to the party. You said yes because you didn't want to feel like the odd man out and disappoint others. Your emotions literally direct the course of your life and it's why successful people are still unhappy sometimes.

They think it's about the money so they run after it, but when they get it and still aren't happy, then they realize it's not about the "thing" itself, it's about how the thing makes you feel.

Money makes you feel free, able to choose, happy, powerful - *that's* what they're searching for.

That's why warnings like "Be logical" and "Don't get emotional" don't make sense. **We already use our emotions to make decisions; we just need to use them more effectively instead of letting them run us.** The sooner you learn this, the happier you'll be. Don't let conventional wisdom fool you, you should and must use your feelings to decide.

The best way to do this is to ask, "How do I feel?" As you do, notice your sensations and if you start hearing thoughts or people's opinions enter your head. If you do, stop them immediately. You *can* curtail them. Tell yourself to remain present and that you want to be here so that you won't be thrown off-center. Breathe and describe your sensations - heavy, light, tingly, warm, cold, open, closed. **Your sensations give you clues as to whether the choice you make will make you feel how you ultimately want to.** When I feel relieved, for example, my shoulders drop, my chest opens, and my body feels lighter. **But when I feel dread, my shoulders tighten and my breath gets fast. If I feel tightness and speed, I know I'm moving away from the right answer** because I'm moving further from relief and closer to dread. Shoot for the feelings you want to feel and pick the choice that makes you feel that way.

Do this until you feel a primary positive, gut-level feeling. Something *will* come up if you keep asking and let your sensations guide you. If you have a project that despite your hard work still gives you pleasure, it indicates that it's worth pursuing because no matter how much effort it takes, you still feel consistently good. Contrast that to a project where the work might be easier, but you feel anxious just thinking about it.

Your sensations will also tell you the difference between resistance, the nasty voice that stops you when you're about to make a decision, and a wrong choice.

To tell the difference, break down your decision and ask “How do I feel?” about each sub-part and perhaps you’ll find that you only feel resistance to parts of your decision, not it as a whole. Last week I asked myself how I felt about writing a blogpost and my heart began to race, an indication of fear. But then I asked how I felt about a *finished* post and felt relieved, even some joy. **It was clear that I resisted writing the post because it was a challenge, but not the post itself.** So I pushed through, wrote it and felt great after doing so.

This route is so worth the discomfort because it anchors you in the good feelings you want to feel *from the beginning* and helps you decide *from the start* that your decision will honor those core feelings, which saves a lot of emotional turmoil. But if you miss the signals, you’ll end up feeling bad about yourself instead of building self-trust with each decision.

Last week my brother, a college graduate starting a career in politics, told me he felt burdened by what he *should* do in life. He has stellar results and an even more promising trajectory, but he doesn’t feel the way he wants to feel. “I just want to feel more alive. Like I’m active in my life, not sleepwalking!” I asked him what he could do to feel more alive in this moment. “The opposite of everything I’m doing right now,” He replied. **His feelings are so important to him now that he’ll go through the discomfort of changing everything he’s used to doing.**

Don’t send out a search party for the feelings you want to feel - **start** with them to make your decisions. This is how you’ll build a life you actually like.

STEP 5

ANNIHILATE YOUR DECISION-MAKING MYTHS

Let's tackle the myths that hold you back from deciding. Once you shed light on these, they won't trip you up while you're making a decision (and you won't be able to use them as excuses anymore!)

MYTH #1: YOU SHOULDN'T INVOLVE YOUR EMOTIONS IN DECISION-MAKING.

You already know this is wrong. Feelings drive our decisions and **it's feelings we're after in the first place**, not results. Your emotions *will* get involved and if you manage them properly, they're the best asset for you in making smart decisions. Use them as a tool and you're golden.

MYTH #2: THE MORE OPTIONS, THE BETTER.

This is false and plays into the paradox of choice. **With too much choice and too many options, we usually end up choosing nothing at all.** Just narrow down your options to a manageable number and even before you do that, define what **you** think is the ideal outcome. Get a distinct image of it in your mind and don't let the options in front of you be your only obvious choice - you'll see there's more available to you than meets the eye. Once you've narrowed your options, measure them against your ideal and only choose the one that most closely aligns with your it. Remove anything that doesn't relate + don't feel bad about it.

Keeping lukewarm options puts you further from your ideal scenario and gets you into the habit of having too many choices - options just for options sake, not because you need them.

Don't box yourself in by things that really won't work out for you later on. Keep eliminating until your decision becomes clear.

MYTH #3: YOU ARE BOXED IN BY YOUR DECISIONS.

Your options are opportunities, not prison cells. If you feel heavy and scared by them and think you're "losing out" by picking one over the other, you'll feel paralyzed.

Choosing *means* picking one thing, which isn't a "loss," we just feel it's so because humans feel loss more intensely than we do gain.

Notice your tendency to feel this way and move on - Don't get trapped in defeatist thinking. The ability to choose *itself* is an opportunity that you can and should approach positively. Keep it all in your own domain and have an even-keeled mindset about deciding. Also remember that opportunities aren't lost because you don't take them right now - they are yours for the taking and if you're ready now, you'll be ready later too. There's no rule that if you say no now, you can't say yes later.

MYTH #4: YOUR CHOICE IS FINAL AND IRREVERSIBLE.

Don't add unnecessary drama to your decision making, which will cloud your good judgment, hijack your emotions and make you feel out of control. Drama distorts your decisions so they don't feel like choices on the spectrum of life anymore, they feel life or death. Drama is thinking in black or white - that you believe you can't change your mind or that your decision is irreversible.

Neither is true - your decisions are *NOT* final or irreversible. You *can* backtrack without it being fatal, and you don't have to operate with drama.

There's no life-sentence for changing your mind, especially if the new choice serves you better, and though you may have to go through some discomfort (pay a fee, have an awkward conversation, etc) you'll survive. **Don't use drama to get down on yourself and just change your mind if you need to.** Strong

leaders change their minds all the time when given better information, and they're smart to do so. A plane headed to NYC from Chicago doesn't stop and go all the way back to New York if it's off course; it corrects course and quickly starts heading in the right direction straight away.

No drama, just forward motion.

Don't buy into these myths if you want to make smart decisions. You should and **must** use your emotions, you must narrow your options so you're not paralyzed by the choices on your plate and bring a positive, "owning it" attitude to your decisions, not a heaviness. **Because no matter what you decide, there's almost always a way to go back and re-assess or change your mind.** Don't buy into these myths because you don't have to anymore.

STEP 6 DON'T BUY UNNECESSARY TIME

If you've ever bought more time to make a decision but still didn't come up with an answer, you know that **more time does not buy more clarity**. More time just means putting off the decision longer and getting more anxious.

When it comes to deciding, less really is more.

We *think* we need more time because when we're ready to decide, all sorts of emotional alarm bells go off and we're triggered by past mistakes. **We think about our failures and self-doubt and how hard it is to decide and so we buy time to prolong the decision and distract ourselves.** What often ends up happening is that this sends us into even greater panic and we just default to the bad habits we're used to - we run away, retreat, hide.

The *only* way more time aids in decision-making is if it's also coupled with more information or more processing of your feelings.

Time allows you to Google and it allows you to decode your answer to "How do I feel?" but that's it. Clarity will come from engagement and action, not more thought. Time itself hurts more than it helps - don't bother getting more of it unless it gives you more insight and information about your decision or your feelings.

Time spent any other way, by letting it go to waste, continuing to avoid your decision, or stressing out, will only make you hate the process even more. **Don't put off deciding - it will give away any control you feel and block you from the real magic that happens when you *do* decide.** Exercising choice turns wheels into motion that you're not even aware of to help your outcome become real. But if you don't decide, you may momentarily feel safe without realizing that you're blocking potential opportunities from coming your way.

If you buy more time, use it wisely and don't be afraid to do

whatever it takes to do what you need to find an answer - ask others, research, etc. Clearly articulate how you'll use it and whether it will help you or not, and only get more of it if you're sure it will help you.

To alleviate the time problem, you can also set a very short deadline based on how serious your problem is. If you're debating between Chinese and Pizza, 15 minutes is enough to decide what places deliver and how hungry you are. 30 minutes is good enough to see if you'll take Megan on a second date - Was she funny? Did you care about the same important things? Where will you make reservations? If your decision is more serious, like deciding if your partner is the one for you, you'll need more time but only if you actually use it. Then you use that time to observe your partner, see if your personality and worldviews match, and if you end up more happy than sad on the emotional spectrum.

Time expands to the amount we have, so if you limit how much you have, you also limit your decision angst.

Pretend you're leaving for Jamaica at 5pm and you only have an hour to finish your article and pack. Somehow, you'll get both done since you know you're leaving in an hour. The excitement and short deadline make you move faster and become more alert and solution-oriented because it's Jamaica, man! If you have to get it done you'll get it done. But if you have a whole day, you'll waste time and end up at the end of the day with both tasks still on your plate. **This is human nature so work with it, but don't let it work against you.**

For most decisions, extra time isn't a solution. Better to follow the process outlined in this book and make a decision even if you don't feel 100% ready. **Don't let past emotions and mistakes get in your way of deciding now.** Set a short deadline and only buy time if you'll actually use it wisely.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action on what you learned in this section, go to page 34 inside this PDF.]

STEP 7 THINK COUNTER-INTUITIVELY

Humans do the same things over and over again. Sometimes this helps, like when our minds go back to an old solution if it encounters a problem, but more often **we get stuck in bad habits and reactions that don't serve us - like getting triggered by our spouse or eating a cupcake after the gym.** When this happens, we feel terrible about ourselves and unleash self-criticism.

To break the cycle of recurring patterns that don't serve you, you need to think counter intuitively. **This shakes up the methods you're used to and find non-obvious answers to your problems.** Counter-intuitive thinking means believing the opposite of your usual thoughts and ideas, like a literal flip of a switch to do the opposite of what normally comes to mind.

This re-trains your brain away from its old judgments and default habits (that have kept you safe thus far) and forces you to adjust and get uncomfortable.

That's exactly what you need.

When I moved to NYC and tried to keep my life together, I stressed out and hid from the decisions I had to make. The more I asked others for help, the more I found they didn't know the answers.

One day I just decided to try something new and confront my problems head on. Instead of running, I sat in my fear and restlessness - just sat there with it.

After a while of doing that, I was pleasantly surprised to feel some relief. I saw that the counterintuitive approach actually helped, and I started to do it more and more. While it felt scary at first, I stopped asking for help, managed my own problems, and worried less - all things that sound logical now, but back then

were crazy. Slow down when all I wanted to do was speed up? Do less when what was required of me (so I thought) was more? I didn't understand it at first, but the **counterintuitive approach was my solution.**

It could be yours too.

Get curious and experiment with why you behave the way you do. If you find that you run from your decisions because you're scared, start changing your beliefs about yourself by acting counter intuitively. **If you always hesitate, do the counterintuitive thing and make decisions all the time, left, right, and center. If you never sit in the front row, only sit in the front row.**

If you usually say no to events, say yes to a bunch in one week. Try acting counter to what you're used to and see how you discover new parts of yourself that will make you feel better, but also help you decide better. Somehow you'll find new, appropriate solutions to your problems and decisions.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action on what you learned in this section, go to page 33 inside this PDF.]

STEP 8 USE YOUR INNER WISDOM TO DECIDE

When you make a decision what you need is self-trust, but it often feels like the one thing you don't have. The truth is, you **do** have self-trust - a lot of it - and it's available to you right now.

Self-trust is already inside of you and it's always been there.

It's what you use when you decide to do the gig despite feeling scared, or when you take a risk, make a good choice, or keep a promise. You've always used it, you just don't give yourself credit for it when you honor your promise or make good choices for yourself. You've exhibited it in the smallest decisions like breaking a bad habit to the big decisions like picking a college or a job. And **though you might be confused now as you decide, you've stockpiled self-trust your entire life.** Now it's time to bank on it and the good news is, it will always be available to you as long as you keep making decisions using this process.

To access your self-trust, ask "What feels like the right answer to me?" because "to me" makes you get clear on **what you want** instead of being fed by other people's opinions if you're used to that. **You don't need to take advice just because it's there. You need to exist in your own space, not between other people's beliefs.** Practice being alone, don't ask others for their help before you ask yourself what you want and sit with your feelings, no matter how uncomfortable they are. This is the best way to hear what **you want**. Wise choices come from knowing yourself, and you only know yourself when you can **be** with yourself.

Commit to trusting your gut and your inner wisdom will show up.

When I had questions about my career I asked my family and friends, "What do you think my purpose is?" and "Which path shall I pursue?" But my deep-seated questions required more than what they said, "Pick something with security" "Get a Plan B." **Their advice wasn't wrong, but I needed to trust myself and**

make my own choices. Once I did that, which oddly ended up being the exact opposite of what I was told, I figured out the answers much more easily. Plan A only worked if I chucked Plan B, and the reason I could enjoy my business was because I didn't feel locked into an obligation.

No one but you knows what you need to make your best life possible.

People can support and love you, but they cannot **save you from the decisions you need to make.** You have an inner wisdom and it will help you find the answers only you can find. **You have all that you need inside of you to make the decision at hand** - you need to truly believe that you have what it takes and trust your gut inner wisdom. These resources are available for you to use and if you trust them, they won't lead you wrong. There are times you may need to stretch for it, but once you make the effort, your self-trust is there waiting for you to grab it.

STEP 9 ASK THE RIGHT PEOPLE

If you find yourself still stuck with no decision, it's time to get help to think about it differently.

I said "Get help to **think about it" not "Get help to **make the decision**" because you're not outsourcing your responsibility here, just acquiring more insight for **you** to ultimately make the final decision.*

You may be used to going to family and friends - I know I was - but while they're useful, loving, and necessary, you need more than emotional support right now; **You need people who already align with the best and boldest version of your life**, who see the direction you're headed and have experience with your problems. You want people **already** on board with you owning it, and who'll ask you hard questions to bring out your desires.

If that's your family and friends, keep them around. But it's also unlikely that they will be unless you have someone close to you who leans forward like you do (My brother and I got lucky here - We support each other as siblings, but also believe in self-reliance, controlling our lives, and pushing each other to our big dreams.)

Your family and friends just don't have what you need and that's not their fault. Their job is to love you, keep you safe, and make sure you're happy - your job is to be grateful they're around for this. For the rest of your path + purpose questions, however, **you'll need to trust yourself and find people who've asked these same questions and come out on the other end.** You don't have time to convince people at this stage in your life.

Only you know what you need **to access your potential, what you're capable of, and what you're here to do.** You need people who understand this and have done the hard work of figuring it out themselves. People who consistently force you to step into discomfort and acknowledge that you're vulnerable but still strong will be able to share their experience with you and won't allow you to let

up on your dreams just because it's not easy or safe. They know that uncertainty is a given, so they lift you up through the hard moments and remind you what's possible. They won't, like your mom who cares if you get hurt or feel unhappy, let you make excuses or let missteps deter you from your path.

I know this first-hand. For the last decade I've sought opinions and figured out who to listen to and when.

I used to go to my partner, family, or friends, but when their advice felt off (not their fault), I realized it was because I needed people who aligned with the version of how I wanted to live. So I created relationships with people with whom I shared worldviews, not simply history.

Online, in workshops, in my neighborhood, I was strategic about who I let into my world. At first it took a lot of faith that I was doing the right thing, but I actively sought out people who made me stretch for what I was after. Like Seth - no one in my life pushes me to get uncomfortable and "fail fast" like he does. No one tells me to enjoy my challenges because they force me to grow like Rev. Kelly. No one gets *it* like Susan or Al does because they're in the trenches with me. **My camp of people helps keeps me on my path in very specific ways.**

This bevy of experts, friends, business consultants, online buddies, relationship experts, media trainers, mentors, my circle of girlfriends, my sister, a personal trainer, a spiritual guide - all help me feel strong and decisive about where I'm headed. While I still go to my parents for support all the time, I no longer pose big questions about what the right next step is to them.

It doesn't have to take a village and, in fact, you may already have some of these people in your corner (they don't always have to be *new*) but **you need to find people who align with the vision you want for your life.**

Make the effort to keep them close, be vulnerable and strategic, and ask them

for help. **Be genuine and request specific help and answers to your problems.** Then receive whatever comes back. I've seen over and over again the rewards this brings.

You can't possibly know all the answers in life. No one does.

Don't judge yourself because you don't have them or let it stop you from getting the help you need. Keep your loved ones close for support and build a group of people who understand the heights you want to reach.

Have faith in your search, in your people, and mostly, in yourself.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action on what you learned in this section, go to page 35 inside this PDF.]

STEP 10 STOP SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

If you've taken all the right steps, even gotten help from your crew, but you still don't have an answer, **stop searching**. Sometimes we get too caught up looking for clarity because it gives us control over an uncontrollable process (and makes us feel good), but in doing so we miss important lessons right under our nose.

The search is deceiving. We think we're running to clarity, but we're actually running away from our own pain, from the messiness of life and the stuff we can't control, like our fear.

The moment uncertainty or confusion hit, we instinctively take off and think the way out is Clear-Cut Answers "Yes, take the job." "No, don't go back and get your MFA." These answers don't actually give us what we're looking for. As Parker Palmer says, **what we're looking for is the "courage to live with hard questions," not just black or white solutions.**

We search for answers because it's just too hard to deal with the fears big questions force us to face. It overwhelms us so we avoid it, but what we need to do is stop running from the messy stuff and stay squarely in it. This won't feel good, but **what you really need to hear will come from the stuff you avoid, not just the good stuff.** Confusion isn't just meant to be *gotten* over; it's meant to reveal unexpected answers to you.

When I formalized my business, I searched for clarity like a madwoman.

I spent weeks in confusion and sought big-time answers. A few weeks into it I emailed my mentors - brilliant people - and asked, "What would you do if you were me?" Wonderful, encouraging support came back my way. It helped emotionally, but I took none of the advice and it didn't clear up my confusion. I was dumbstruck because **these were the smartest people in the world, and**

not only wasn't I acting on their advice, but it didn't *feel right* to.

What I needed was to sit in my confusion without panicking and not implement advice right away. **My gut told me to remain confused because it was my prep time for the journey ahead and the processing time for all that I'd learned.** It was only by staying in my confusion, which felt so uncomfortable, that I started to see that it wasn't about answers, but about allowing uncertainty to be there without freaking out. I saw that I had been running from my fear up until now and it wasn't answers I wanted, but the strength to know that I could handle whatever was to come. **I didn't want to know how to do it; I wanted to know that I *could* do it.** By staying here without panicking, I learned the most important business lesson of all - don't bolt when uncertainty hits. I launched my business two months later and confirm that lesson every single day.

Your search for clarity *might* produce an answer, but you'll find more of what you're looking for when you stop running from the stuff that scares you.

Don't fool yourself into thinking you're searching for clarity when you come up against tough questions because you could just be running from dealing with them. **Real answers will come from not panicking about the messy stuff,** so don't skip or disregard these phases. Own the hard stuff (because you'll encounter it far more on your path than clear answers) and you'll get what you're looking for.

[NOTE: To jump to the exercise that will help you take action and put all the decision-making pieces together, go to page 37 inside this PDF.]

WHERE TO HEAD FROM HERE

Congratulations. You've just made it through the training and now that you're done reading, I have some worksheets to get you into action. You didn't think I'd leave you to your own devices right away, did you?

These exercises will help you take what you've just read and get very specific to you, because **YOU'RE really what this is all about**. Apply the tools when you get stuck and **don't give up**. It will take time to learn the new approach, but don't let the novelty overwhelm you - just try one thing at a time.

Do not implement everything at once!

If you make an effort, I guarantee you'll get better answers, especially if you're used to panicking or doing stuff repeatedly with no results.

All it takes is sheer willingness. As long as you *want* to improve your life and your decisions (a prerequisite), **this will work for you**. I changed my terrible decision-making abilities and if I can do it, I know you can too. My clients tell me all the time that this new approach has changed the way they think about themselves - they feel more in control and not beaten

down by their decisions.

Your decisions are a reflection of YOU. You are strong and totally capable, and your decisions should reflect that. You control your life and stand on your own, and now you can make choices that you feel good about.

You're the boss. There's no one more qualified for the job. You've got this.

If you enjoyed this training and thought it was useful, please share the guide with others. Email this PDF to them or better yet - send them to ishitagupta.com so they can get this and other free trainings.

Thanks for reading. I love hearing about your results and how it went for you, so email me at ishita@ishitagupta.com once you're done with the exercises. I hope to hear from you.

Onward. Let's get started with the exercises.

EXERCISE 1: THE "SHOW UP" LIST

You've definitely taken ownership and shown up responsibly in the past and we're going to capitalize on that momentum. **With ownership, each time you do it you want to do it more.** In this exercise, remember the times you took ownership and write down examples or moments in time where you've stepped up and proved to yourself how capable + wise you are. It might be a decision that's improved your life or someone else's, or a **choice where you listened to yourself, owned a hard situation or stayed when you could have run.**

Write down when you've taken ownership before and how it made you feel.

I TOOK OWNERSHIP WHEN:

IT MADE ME FEEL:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Dig deeper. You know there's more. Think of times you've felt good about trusting yourself and when you made a good choice - there are hundreds to choose from.

_____	_____
_____	_____

We're scared to take ownership because of the emotions we'll have to face, i.e. when I started my new job and was embarrassed people would find out I was a beginner. **Write down what it means to you take ownership and why you're scared of it.**

Write down one area of your life where you want to take ownership, step up, or have more control right now. Only focus on **one** area.

What is the cost of not taking ownership here? How does it make you feel to avoid, outsource your power, or run away?

How do you typically avoid responsibility? What does running away usually look like for you? For example, I used to always ask my boyfriend and cry instead of making a decision. Do you wait until the last minute and then flip a coin? Do you freak out internally? Do you always call the same person and complain? Write these down so you remember how you run away and what you'll avoid when you start taking ownership.

What is the benefit or reward for taking ownership here? How does it make you feel to be in control in this area and show up?

Good work. This isn't an easy exercise because it forces you to identify self-created patterns that have held you back. The good news is now that you're aware, you can remove these from your repertoire of tools because **you have new tools that will get you much farther.**

EXERCISE 2: SPEAK-NO-EVIL

Judgment is soul crushing but we do it automatically to ourselves without even realizing it. In this exercise, become aware of the most common ways you judge yourself daily and write down the negative self-talk - the comments, rebukes, and criticisms you use against yourself in your exact phrases. **"I should already know this"** **"Everyone else has this figured out"** **"Why do I always do this to myself?"** "You have nothing interesting to say!" Write down every last remark, and your list will fill up fast.

Cross-check this list daily and start intentionally stopping yourself when you hear yourself say these comments - these are the phrases you need to remove from your vocabulary. Day by day, make it a habit to stop repeating these to yourself and, once you do, watch your self-esteem and confidence rise. Something this simple really does work.

I TELL THIS TO MYSELF:

HOW I FEEL WHEN I SAY THIS:

EXERCISE 3: THE SELF-TRUST LIST

Trusting yourself is the most important skill you'll ever learn. And guess what? You've already learned it. **You've used self-trust your entire life to make good choices and take opportunities.** Just like in your "Show up" list, here you'll make a "Self-trust" list and stockpile all the moments you've used to make good decisions in the past. Your lists may overlap, but it's a good idea to do them both. You can include childhood moments all the way to the present and write down any example where you feel you listened to yourself and used your gut to make a choice. **Maybe you weren't sure you were making the right decision, but you trusted yourself anyway.**

Here are some of my examples where I exhibited self-trust:

- * I moved to Boston to find a likeminded community of artists and entrepreneurs
- * I flew a small plane to try to work through my fear of turbulence
- * I trusted myself to join an expensive workshop last year, which turned out to be exactly what I wanted.

Write down your own examples. **After you create your list, don't just put it away, keep it visible, look at it, and actually use it when you feel doubt creeping in** to remind yourself just how capable and trustworthy you are. Use this when you're trying to remember what it feels like to trust yourself.

TIMES I'VE TRUSTED MYSELF AND IT'S WORKED OUT

EXERCISE 4: BUY TIME ONLY IF YOU'LL USE IT

You already know that time alone - without more information or processing - will only make you anxious. **Unless you use that time wisely, it won't get you closer to your decision.** In this exercise, think of something you're stalling on right now because you *feel like* you need more time. Go through the questions below to see if you really need more time or if you're just stalling out of fear.

Write down one thing you're stalling on because you need more time:

Why do you need more time to decide in this case? (Is it fear? Uncertainty? Do you need more information?)

What will buying more time give you?

What, specifically, will you do with your time to get you closer to making your decision?

Now that you see what your time will buy, do you still think you need more of it?

Or can you simply make your decision here and now and be done with it?

EXERCISE 5: BUILD A TEAM OF TRUSTED ADVISORS

Since you can't (always) do it alone, build a group of trusted people you can go to for wisdom who also hold a big, bold vision of your life. You should feel strongly aligned with these people and it doesn't matter if you know them personally or if they're dead or alive. There is wisdom available to you from people who came before you; you just have to believe it. Include people who you can get help from (metaphorically) and people you can call up tomorrow.

Think of ten people you admire for different reasons - idols, friends, mentors, even celebrities. Why do they inspire you? What qualities do you want to learn from them? What do they embody that you want for yourself? Could be savviness or confidence. Could be someone who's built something amazing.

Here are some examples from my list:

- 1. Arianna Huffington:** For her media + business savvy. For her ability to grow a successful media entity from scratch.
- 2. Seth Godin:** For his intuitive understanding of business, his ability to give exactly the right type of feedback, and his powerful approach to fear.
- 3. Al Pittampalli:** For his critical thinking ability and skill in articulating a message. For his discipline with self-experimentation.
- 4. Albert Einstein:** For his creative quirkiness + unabashed lack of fear being himself. For his ability to apply knowledge across multiple fields.

Now make your own list. Write down the name of the person and why they're on your list just like the examples above. Practice asking these people for help when you're confused (even if you feel silly doing it.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

The more the merrier. Now that you've created your top-tier list, add a few more people who could help you tomorrow if you asked.

11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

EXERCISE 6: PUT IT ALL TOGETHER & DECIDE

You've gone through the entire framework and now it's time to put it all together. Think about a decision that's been weighing you down or that you're worried about, doesn't matter how big or small. Use the steps below to systematically go through the decision-making process and make a choice by the end of step 10.

Pick only **one** decision and go through each step. Refer back to specific sections if you need more information on a step and after you complete it, check the box on this page before you move on to the next step. Keep checking in to remind yourself not to rush and don't try to use all the tools at once. Go step by step, do each individually. A calm, positive process will lead to a positive result.

- 1 TAKE OWNERSHIP
- 2 REMOVE JUDGEMENT
- 3 DECIDE WHAT YOU CAN & CAN'T CONTROL
- 4 UTILIZE YOUR EMOTIONS + ASK "HOW DO I FEEL?"
- 5 DISPEL ANY DECISION MAKING MYTHS
- 6 DON'T BUY UNNECESSARY TIME
- 7 THINK COUNTERINTUITIVELY
- 8 USE YOUR INNER WISDOM AND SELF TRUST
- 9 ASK THE RIGHT PEOPLE
- 10 STOP LOOKING FOR THE "RIGHT" ANSWERS

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU FINISH THIS TRAINING

This training *will* pay off if you make the effort to practice next time you have to make a decision. **Here are some ways you can get more free training on how to make even better decisions, build confidence, and magnetize the things you want into your life and work.**

MORE FREE TRAINING:

To download my other free trainings, go [HERE](#). You'll get my guide to building confidence and attracting the right resources to yourself along with articles on building self-trust and overcoming fear.

WANT MY FREE ADVICE?

If you have a question or want help with a problem, email me at ishita@ishitagupta.com and I'll get back to you with my insight. I offer a brief free audio consultation for people interested in getting more from me, so email me and let me know what you're facing. Put "Want free consultation" in the subject.

I love hearing from you, so let me know if you found this training helpful and what you want to hear more of - I may create a training especially based on what you're going through.

[Sign up for my free newsletter here](#) which gives you unconventional advice on business, love, confidence, and overcoming fear. I share stuff I talk to my clients about and

other tips I use in my own life, and also talk about what you read in this training.

SHARE WITH OTHERS

If you enjoyed this, please pass it on to someone who'll find it useful to start making better decisions today. You can also tell them to sign up [HERE](#) so they can download the other free trainings, that way they'll have all the same free resources you do.

FOR MORE HELP:

This training is a part of what I work with people on through my Decisions Sessions program. If you want help in this arena, go [HERE](#) to learn more about the different sessions I offer.

**You are so worth everything you want in your life.
Act from that belief and it'll change everything.**

xx Ishita