

Lesson 34: The Art of Making Good Choices and Decisions

There are those who prefer to give thought to what the potential outcome or results would be in response to the choices and decisions they make throughout the course of their lives and then there are those who just go forth blindly making choices and decisions without regard to the consequences. If we think our choices and decisions through before we act on them we can avoid the pitfalls of having to experience unpleasant consequences. There are well-founded age old fundamentals that when applied to the thinking or cognitive processes will enable us to make choices and decisions that are desirable and in our best interest. But even when we make choices and decisions that are not necessarily in our best interest we are never locked into the cause and effect of those choices if we know how to convert the negative affects into positive karmic experiences. The lesson this week will focus on the fundamentals of how to make better choices and decisions as well as the reasons why and what to do when we make not so good choices and decisions.

When it comes to making choices and decisions we often have a tendency to be impatient in the sense that we want what we want when we want it regardless of who is involved or what it involves. But as is the case with our human nature we seldom give thought to the consequences that will follow. This demanding approach has a tendency to backfire and when it does the results can be quite devastating. Suddenly we find ourselves in the midst of some very uncomfortable and undesirable circumstances or an event occurs that we end up regretting but not without having to pay a price that sometimes can be quite hefty and even painful to ourselves and perhaps to others. The trick is to learn how to avoid falling into these particular ditches of error which begins with the thinking process as it relates to not just how we think but also relates to the justifications we attach to our thinking which is usually erroneous to begin with.

Unfortunately these ditches of error that we fall into so easily are the result of us being consciously unaware of the potential cause and effect from those undesirable consequences that follow right on the heels of the choices and decisions we make. It is important to know that we are not just focusing on the minor choices and decisions we make on a daily basis but that we are focusing on those that actually change the course of our lives and that affect us on a much deeper level; on the mental and emotional plane and that usually results in consequences that affect those who are involved or who become involved as well. This is not to say that the choices and decisions we make are always going to backfire but it is to say that there is a strong probability that they will backfire and produce undesirable consequences when our thinking is not processing in a way that promotes the enhancement of our desired experiences.

There are adages such as ‘thoughts become things’ and ‘like attracts like’ as well as ‘shifting our conscious awareness’ that while they can have the appearance of being nothing more than pop-culture clichés, they are in fact truly adages because the fundamental basis of these sayings are no less credible today than they were ages ago. Yet there are still so many people who continue to overlook them as being credible fundamentals in our modern day society. Then there are those who are not even aware of these valuable adages in spite of their modern day popularity and who continue to

blindly dive into the sea of cause and effect never realizing that they possess the means to change or alter the course of their life experiences from being undesirable to unselfishly desirable; hence they too also affect those involved on this same level of experience.

The road to changing or altering our life experiences and how we directly or indirectly affect the experiences of others as the result of the choices and decisions we make begins with a close examination of how we process our thinking and the reasons why. Once we have a thorough understanding of what makes us tick in this regard we become mentally and emotionally equipped to know how to make good choices and decisions that become an investment in our lives versus becoming a liability on the balance sheet of life. The more consciously aware we become of how and why we make our choices and decisions the more we are investing in our personal growth which of course leads to a spiritual expansion. When we are expanded, spiritually speaking, we no longer view the matters of life from a limited perspective but rather we are able to view life from a much broader and non self-centered perspective which dramatically changes or alters the course of circumstances and events in our lives as well as the lives of others globally speaking. But before we concern ourselves with changing the course of life globally lets first focus on changing the course of our lives individually so that we can ultimately have a positive global affect.

The act of thinking involves many cognitive processes on a day to day basis which of course begins from birth. After arriving on the earthly plane via the birthing process we embark on the long and sometimes arduous journey of defining ourselves which inevitably begins with how we are defined by those in our immediate circle of life in the form of external influences from our parents, siblings, family members, then from culture, society, school, and religion. This is a very important starting point because it is so often the means by which we will continue to measure and define ourselves. This measuring gauge then sets the stage for the circumstances and events we will experience throughout the course of our lives as we make choices and decisions. These external influences first flow into our conscious minds and then they settle into our subconscious minds where they become programmed data that is stored in the memory bank of the subconscious mind as well as the biological effects of cellular memory that are very subjective to our thinking processes. This subjective data then becomes the underlying factors that will influence our cognitive processes in terms of how we perceive ourselves and the world around us as we journey through the course of our lives. This includes the very important perceptions we develop as the result of those early external influences in terms of how we define or measure our individual self-worth. Lack of a healthy and balanced self-worth opens the path wide to a lifetime of undesirable experiences or excesses as well as the need to blame someone or something when things don't go right.

Unfortunately the thinking process does not begin or end with how we perceive our self-worth but rather it includes a host of subjective mental and emotional variables that ultimately influence the choices and decisions we make. These variables contain but are not limited to such things as how others see us in terms of whether or not they think we are smart enough to succeed in general or in a particular endeavor; that we possess the talents, skills and abilities to succeed or that what we desire to succeed in is not deemed

useful and worthy in their eyes. The way in which we process their subjective perceptions is very likely to affect us in one of two ways. We will either fail at most everything we set out to accomplish because we have internalized their perceptions of us and we really do believe we are worthless, consequently we are destined to fail or we will become overachievers to compensate for their distorted perceptions of our self-worth. I am reminded of a story about a young boy who was labeled a dunce by his teacher. This teacher was so strong in her convictions that this young boy was indeed 'stupid' that she actually attempted to justify why the boy should be thrown out of school. As she was attempting to coerce the man in charge to expel the young boy, the boy's mother was stated as having busted through the doors of the school and gave that teacher an earful. She described her son as being very intelligent and so much as accused the teacher of being the one who was stupid for not recognizing her son's talents. Now this story could have played out one of two ways. The young boy could have chosen to internalize the negativity of the teacher and his fellow classmates or he could ignore her and hold fast to his mother's very obvious and surprising support of him. He opted for the latter and went on to become one of our greatest entrepreneurs and inventors. His name was Thomas Edison.

It is these very limiting and disabling perceptions that can dramatically alter the course of our lives in that they can trip us up and causes us to not fulfill our life purpose or at the very least delay it for years to come. The good news is that we do not have to remain stuck in these wrongful and undeserving mental and emotional ruts once we become consciously aware of how others have viewed our self-worth, intellect, talents, skills and abilities or anything else that threatened to undermine our efforts which may have occurred during our childhood or at any time in our lives. The choices and decisions we will make once we become aware of information such as what has been described above becomes a matter of great importance because the awareness of such information can throw open wide the doors of success and opportunity regardless of where we are along the path of our lives just as long as we do not engage in the wrongful act of blaming the people whose negative influence affected who and what we were supposed to become. We can still fulfill our life's purpose even if it is only an aspect of what was originally intended or desired. Very often these situations usually turn out to be very valuable karmic lessons that bring about life-changing experiences which often times are quite dramatic and far more meaningful. The approach we take by the way we act and react to any external influences will determine the course of events that follows now and in the future. If we choose to allow ourselves to be mentally and emotionally overcome by the knowledge of how or by whom we were negatively influenced we in turn place unnecessary limitations on our current and future experiences.

The fundamentals we can learn and benefit from is simply to recognize the ways in which we were negatively influenced during childhood, as an adolescent or even as an adult and how those influences have affected our cognitive processes in terms of how we think, what we believe and how we perceive ourselves as they relate to our experiences today and the good choices and decisions we are now free to make. It is crucial to your own well-being that you not fall into the trap of thinking, believing or perceiving that you are a victim or have been victimized by those who negatively influenced you because you are not. However, you can actually victimize yourself mentally and emotionally as

the result of the choices you make today; the direction you will choose to go from here and the state of mind you will choose to maintain. This is where so many people are stopped dead in their tracks and cannot move forward along the path of success, personal growth and spiritual expansion. While most everyone is affected in some way by external influences that typically occurred in childhood, no one is ever a victim. Victimization is a state of mind; it is not a condition nor is it a permanent branding. All that is required is to see the truth which is that you might have been unfairly treated because of the distorted perceptions from an authoritative figure who was not as knowledgeable as they appeared to be but were in fact limited in their scope of understanding on a deeper level things that were outside of their own conscious awareness or things that they were exposed to in the course of their lives. We are, after all, a product of our environment but be careful of this mindset because it can become a mental and emotional crutch if you allow it to be. When you view the negative effects their influence had on you in this fashion it is much easier to see it through lenses that are not clouded by limited thinking, disabling beliefs and deceptive perceptions. Not to mention it makes the act of forgiving that much easier.

Sometimes we are often greeted by such negative influences along the road of life for karmic reasons which of course were set up in advanced so as to afford ourselves the opportunity to experience and learn something of value that would later serve as a catalyst in fulfilling our life purpose. While it may seem incredulous to even consider such a situation as being a chosen reality it is a reality that many people choose to experience again and again as they strive toward their individual and collective paths of evolution. In this sense we use each other as a karmic learning tool to help us overcome certain obstacles along the path of life. Such karmic lessons not only help us to evolve but from them we learn how to overcome the difficulties of life in third dimension. Unfortunately many people remain stuck in the ruts of their undesirable circumstances and events in which they continue to fuel their negative experiences by the choices and decisions they choose to make that are based on the limiting manner in which they elect to view their circumstances.

Accepting responsibility for the choices and decisions we make changes the mental and emotional energy attached to them which in turn changes or alters the consequences. It is one thing to make choices and decisions that are not based on sound judgment and that lack clarity but it is another thing not to accept the responsibility for the outcome – the consequences. Moreover it is even worse when we unjustly blame someone or something for the outcome just as it is wrong to blame ourselves. Taking responsibility is one thing but placing the burden of blame on our shoulders is no more productive than if we were to blame someone or something else. Accepting responsibility for the outcome is to learn something of value from the mistake or misjudgment on our part so that we do not repeat it again later down the road of life. You cannot blame yourself for what you were not consciously aware of but you are accountable for your choices once you are consciously aware. Life is a series of lessons that unfold as we journey through physical life that will always be relative to the extent of our wisdom and knowledge. The art of making good choices and decisions is truly a personal learning experience, thus the more wisdom we gain from having learned valuable life lessons the more

knowledgeable we become and the less likely we are to fall into ditches of error in terms of how we process our thinking in this respect.

Turning around habitual ways of making choices and decisions begins with an understanding of what underlying internal and external factors contributed to how we think today. Sometimes trying to dissect these factors can be an exhausting exercise because what first began as external negative influences during childhood over time becomes integrated with our own core beliefs and perceptions as we journey into adulthood to the point where those negative external influences are no longer separate but are meshed and blended all together. With some internal work we can extrapolate those early negative influences from our core beliefs and perceptions, thus enabling us to alter or completely change ourselves from the inside out which in turn will definitely alter or change our experiences. These days there is hardly a positive thinking guru, business entrepreneur or successful business mogul who does not quote the old metaphysical/spiritual adage, "Change your thinking, change your experience." The two just go hand in hand in all cases. So what it boils down to is that when you change your thinking you in turn alter or change your core beliefs which also alters or changes your perceptions. Thus, the quality of your life experiences changes as well. However, the domino affect does not stop there because when you change your thinking process you also affect your own personal growth which in turn leads to a spiritual expansion simply because every part of you is interconnected. Imagine if you will having the ability to see below the surface, to see beyond the superficial and to see the matters of life with such clarity that any choices and decisions you make will manifest in unselfish desirable circumstances and events and are ones that do not negatively affect others, which incidentally has a global impact.

So now you can see how it is possible to know ahead of time what potential probabilities can occur in the form of consequences as we contemplate making important choices and decisions that can ultimately change the course of our life experiences. When we take the time to think through our choices and decisions before we act on them, we afford ourselves the opportunity to see the potential results with more clarity; thus avoiding the pitfalls of undesirable experiences such as being hurt and/or hurting others. If we know coming right out of the starting gate that we are today making habitual choices and decisions that are based on negative external influences from the memory of past experiences we will then have the freedom to make much wiser choices and decisions that we can truly benefit from. In the event we still choose to make a choice or a decision that can potentially cause more trouble than it's worth we should always do so with the willingness to accept the consequences for the realities we choose to create and not blame anyone or anything if the results turn out to be undesirable, and hopefully no one gets hurt in the long run. Although the game of life does not contain absolutes everything involved in life is always relative as nothing in life happens by chance but that everything occurs through the unfolding of synchronistic events that abide by natural universal laws; the law of cause and effect and the law of attraction.

There are so many great leaders, teachers and masters who down through the ages have mastered the art of making good choices and decisions and who have written about their

experiences, the paths they traveled on and the trails they blazed. I would like to quote some of my favorites which speak to the essence of this lesson as follows:

“Life consists of what a man is thinking about all day.” –Ralph Waldo Emerson

“You are today where your thoughts have brought you. You will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you.” --James Allen

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” –Philippians 4: 8

“You have to think anyway so why not think big?” --Donald Trump

*“If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.”
--Pearl S. Buck*

“For what is the best choice, for each individual, is the highest it is possible for him to achieve.” –Aristotle

*“I don’t think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday.”
--Abraham Lincoln*

“Experience teaches only the teachable.” –Aldous Huxley

“People with vision master the ability to see through to the heart of issues and investments. They value transparency.” –Robert Kiyosaki

“The best vision is insight.” –Malcom Forbes

*“Everyone who got where he is has had to begin where he was.”
--Robert Louis Stevenson*

“Learning without thought is labor lost.” –Confucius

*“Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting in a particular way.”
--Aristotle*

And lastly:

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” –Ralph Waldo Emerson

We sincerely hope that we have shed light on what otherwise might have been a darkened area of your conscious awareness. It is also our hope that you will now give

thought to the choices and decisions you make so that you will not needlessly suffer any undo hardships in the way of consequences as the result of not being consciously aware of the relationship that exists between cause and effect and attraction. We also hope that your journey through life continues to lead you on the path of becoming more and more enlightened so that your personal growth leads you to a spiritual expansion that ultimately enhances your own evolution as well as the evolution of those who share time and space with you on this earthly plane.

With love,
Linda, Z and the Collective We

***This lesson was a collective writing collaboration; hence there are no resources or recommended reading.