

Lesson 109: Choices & Decisions, the Karmic Weight

People make choices and decisions every day, but rarely does anyone count or take into consideration the real cost. This becomes even more problematic because the cost, whether now or in the future is unpredictable and even if the cost appears to be predictable, it is seldom the cost that is anticipated, but is often so much more, which all too often comes as a surprise. Making choices and decisions is very serious business because the reciprocal energy directly affects present and future outcomes that you rarely, if ever, see coming. When they suddenly appear in your reality, you may be inclined to think that you have no idea where the circumstance or event came from or why it happened except that you know it happened because it exists in your reality, whether it makes sense or not. Thus, exerting conscious effort when making choices and decisions, especially those that are emotionally reactive, is not only necessary, it is the only means of avoiding present and most especially a future undesirable fallout, which can affect any and every aspect of your reality and do so very unexpectedly. The discussion in this lesson examines the mental and emotional aspects of choices and decisions and the karmic weight they carry.

Choices and decisions are not independent human operations, they are causes that induce desirable or undesirable effects and they carry their own karmic weight that too produces desirable or undesirable short or long-term effects. The problem is that you have no real way of knowing whether a choice or decision you made in the past, made today or will make in the future will have a short or long-term desirable or undesirable impact in your reality. Sometimes you make choices or decisions that at the time appear to be in your favor and the outcome may even appear to be favorable, at least for a period of time. Then a condition in your reality changes and a choice or decision you made no longer produces the same outcome, but seems to have backfired and may appear to have done so without a recognizable cause. Each time you make a choice or a decision, you are at a disadvantage because you have no real awareness of how the cards will or will not be stacked against you further down the road, even though they seem to be in your favor at the time. So when things start to unravel, they catch you off guard and you fall into ditches of error in your thinking and perceiving, as you seek who to blame or something with which to find fault. What you do not know is that the karmic weight from the choice or decision you made some time ago, perhaps years ago, has finally manifested in your reality, as not all karmic outcomes rapidly manifest in your reality. Karmic effects can take years to surface; they can even cross over lifetimes. This is even more reason to give non-emotional concentrated/mindful/meditative thought to the choices and decisions you make and continue to alter those choices and decisions as you become more consciously aware of your own internal tendencies and your surrounding environment as best you can. This is a growth process and to expect more than you can give at any point along the way is an unrealistic expectation.

To understand the karmic value of your choices and decisions is to understand the terms themselves. A choice is the act of selecting between two or more alternatives or possibilities. Unlike a choice, a decision is the conclusion reached in consideration of something deemed important or of value; it is the resolution of a consideration. People typically make spontaneous choices, often emotionally driven, whereas they tend to think through a decision more carefully, as they are more inclined to weigh out its importance and value. Even though there are those who habitually throw caution to the wind, most people tend to allow for more time when making important decisions, but may be more liberal when making certain choices. It is difficult to expect to make good choices in a reactive state of mind, especially when your mind and its cognitive abilities are overcome by strong feelings and emotions; poor choices tend to be the result. Bad decisions are made whenever a situation at hand is perceived from a conceptual frame of mind that does not correspond to what is really going on, but is perceived as though it was a true reality, not that there really is such a thing. Distortions of reality along with fear and all its many cohorts, such as anxiety, failure, self-worth, self-esteem, lack, mistrust and above all the need for perceived self-preservation, when none is really necessary, wreaks havoc on your ability to make smart decisions. Good choices are just as difficult to make when it comes to selecting better or more appropriate alternatives or possibilities that are not damaging to you or others, especially when your judgment is clouded by conceptual illusions, disabling you from thinking clearly, which is really hard to do in self-preservation mode.

The karmic weight, created as the result of choices and decisions, is an unseen reciprocal energy that moves on its own momentum. All too often this energy is like a runaway freight train speeding right at you and you cannot get out of the way because you don't even know the train is fast approaching until it is too late or is nearly too late. Disaster is approaching and you do not even know it is heading your way and then suddenly there it is and you are reeling from the shock and the ongoing shock waves. The first reaction to a situation such as this is typically a reactive one, emotionally speaking, especially when trust has been violated or is perceived as such and the situation at hand threatens to turn your world, as you know it, upside down and inside out. Not only are you panic-stricken, you lose all sense of yourself and your ability to think with clarity goes right down the drain. It takes a strong sense of oneself to have the fortitude to stand against an oncoming personal train wreck or to pick yourself up from under the wreckage, much less to hang tight to your cognitive know how, as well as your sanity. Many people do not make it through extreme circumstances and do in fact lose touch with reality and even lose their sanity or they become depressed, temporarily or permanently.

When personal disaster strikes, taking stock of your own accountability by taking responsibility for the initial role you played in spite of the role others played is not typically the first order of business. Self-preservation is always the first order of

business when it comes to personal survival. When all your focus is turned in the direction of self-preservation, at all costs, the role you played in the unexpected karmic fallout, does indeed fall by the wayside, which further complicates an already undesirable situation. Although the answers and solutions do not magically occur, as anyone who has been through a personal disaster knows, there is a healing energy contained within the disaster, but it is only found if you are willing to look for it. When you become aware of it and grasp its significance, you realize that the event that just unfolded did not occur out of the clear blue, though it seems it did. The event occurred because the karmic weight of a previous choice or decision has been moving along in conjunction with every action you took along the way from the time you made your choice or decision, including the effect of the choices and decisions of others. Thus, the word “initial” is the operative word. Now sometimes, it is difficult to trace a cause back to its initial origins, as not all causes stand independent, but are sometimes intertwined with other causes, which can contribute to more confusion in an already confused state. But if the opportunity is there and the origin of the initial cause is there, waiting to be revealed, it is worth the exploration, especially in the midst of personal chaos, because any sense of inner peace is worth its weight in gold, even though the situation is ongoing and no answers or solutions have surfaced as of yet.

Choices and decision carry their own karmic weight, that is not only energetic, it is of a reciprocal value – like attracts like. Thus, the energy you set in motion every time you make a choice or a decision, no matter how justified, it is still a reciprocal energy that can set an avalanche of other causes and effects in motion and can even tie into other unrelated causes and effects. Unfortunately, you will be the last to know, when the weight of choices and decisions made more recently or in the past catch up with you. There is no way of pre-determining when the effects of any cause will show up in your reality as an objective experience and even the experience itself is not necessarily objective, though it may appear to be. There is always the likelihood of preconceptions or conceptions interfering, which can add an unneeded illusionary dimension to the reality at hand. Every choice and decision you will ever make in the whole of your life is based on your own concepts of reality, most of which have been handed down to you by others, some you have developed in response to your environment, most is learned...conditioned over time. These concepts grow into larger and more destructive concepts that carry their own reciprocal energy if left unattended and unexamined, at least periodically.

What is most important about this topic of discussion is that you cannot make a choice or a decision that will not have a major or minor impact in your reality, which may or may not occur at a designated time, whether the outcome is desirable or is undesirable. You cannot escape the effects from the actions of your choices and decisions. Karma is an action, it is not a thing and as action is an energy set in motion, it comes with its own natural effects to the causes you put into motion. Nothing happens by chance -

everything happens in accordance with a related cause, intentional or not. Thus, choices and decisions carry their very own karmic weight of a reciprocal value, again, like attracts like and often more of it if you are not paying attention to what is going on around you.

Another very important aspect of karmic weight and its connection to your choices and decisions has everything to do with your awareness, how acute your awareness is or is not, as the case may be. Awareness is progressive; it is a state of being that develops with lots of practice over time. Being aware implies that you become more acutely aware of the conditions in which you make choices and decisions, of course, those that specifically apply to the nature of your reality and how your reality is affected. By the nature of being human, illusions of reality are nearly unavoidable, as life on the human plane is all about survival and evolution. Thus, the evolution of your mind is paramount to your survival, but then so is your sense of survival in terms of what or whom you think you are surviving from, as opposed to a real condition, not one that exists only in your mind. Making this distinction is very tricky, as there is a very fine line between illusion and reality. Einstein was quoted as saying, “Life is an illusion, albeit a very persistent one” because life is an illusion, it is a grand concept created in the mind of every human being, all of which carries its very own karmic weight enforced by the law of cause and effect, the law of manifestation, attraction and reciprocity. Everything that exists on the human plane is a concept, even material objects, as these too had to start as a concept in the mind before they could become a material object manifested in reality.

So when you wake up in the morning, your own concepts of your life and the environment which surrounds you, as well as those whom you interact with is merely the unfolding of countless concepts all throughout the day, each its own cause, each brings with it its own effects. Every choice and decision you make is oriented around a concept you hold in your mind, which over time becomes a fast held belief. Thought patterns are molded and shaped around your own concepts, as are your expectations, whether of yourself or of others. Your thought patterns, behaviors, beliefs, perceptions and expectations all center around your concepts of life, most of which are more of an illusion than they are actually real, as nothing in life is actually real. The concepts of life are all thought oriented, so whatever you think, feel, believe, perceive or expect is the reality you experience. The moment you change anyone one of these mental or emotional elements, your reality changes at the same time. These changes vary, sometimes they are abrupt, and sometimes they are subtle. Some choices and decisions carry a reciprocal energy that results in an immediate manifestation in your reality, whereas others may take much longer to surface. Some are already manifesting, perhaps they have been for a long time, it is just that you are not aware that there is a connection between a recent or past manifestation that is directly linked to a choice or a decision you made in the past. This takes some serious thinking; you must open your

mind by pushing past the borders of concepts and illusions, past delusions and even visions of grandeur, as nirvana does not await you on the other side of the fence.

Being more aware of the mental concepts that trigger your choices and decisions is a worthy exploration into the dark regions of your mind. But this takes patience and discipline, because the human brain is already wired for survival, thus survival instincts kick in immediately in the face of real or perceived threat. These instincts are necessary as a protective means in the face of eminent danger. However, the brain is notorious for over-reacting because the profiles stored in your brain are historical, thus the brain acts on past events. Your brain actually calls up the same feelings and emotions experienced during past events or it will call up an actual event as if it was occurring just the same today as it did in the past and there you are responding to it today just as you did in the past. Psychologists and neuroscientists, among a host of other fields of inquiry are certain that neural paths can be overwritten or rewritten as the result of new patterns of behavior, but your brain cannot write a new profile on its own accord. Your brain needs your mental intervention, it needs you to be more consciously aware of your own manner of thinking and all that thinking entails, which includes the reality you create by way of your own concepts. Thus, your brain is very instrumental when it comes to making choices and decisions. Your brain operates in an input output mode, it responds and reacts to every choice and decision you make and it does not make distinctions between those that you deem are significant and those you do not, it just responds to your commands. The more you react, the more your brain reacts on your behalf, whether it needs to or not and will do so habitually.

Making any choice or decision based on historical events in your life is a risk, unless the choice or decision you are about to make is the result of a lesson well-learned and is a mistake you are choosing not to repeat. Some folks today prefer to use the word misjudgment in place of mistakes, as life really is a hands-on learning lab, thus holding to the belief that there are no mistakes, just experiences, may or may not be an open invitation to denial and/or avoidance of responsibility or accountability. It is a fine line, and one could easily walk on some pretty thin ice. Just because something in your reality was a certain way, whether it really was or you perceived it was does not mean everything about your reality from that point forward has to be the same exact way. You actually have control over the choices and decisions you make, but again, this empowerment is not experiential, it is internal. Every choice and decision you make that impacts your reality, desirable or undesirable is an internal operation, even though some of your choices and decisions are in response to an external condition.

Even under the best conditions, it really is difficult to discern or predict the short or long-term outcome of any choice or decision, even when the outcome seems to certain. Others, acting on their own choices and decisions can certainly sway your reality in a direction you do not desire or that is not favorable. Thus, the choice or decision you

made previously, which really may have been a good one, can end up costing you in a way you did not anticipate. It can be even more difficult to get the pendulum to swing back the other way, even though you may not have triggered the event yourself. However, everyone views these situations differently. Some people may measure the situation by what is lost or is perceived as lost and may even freeze in their tracks, unable to cognitively process, because fear has them in such a tight grip, they can barely breathe. Others may view the situation as an opportunity for some new adventure and are even bold enough to embrace the challenge with open arms. Again, it is all about concepts and to each his own. The value of the karmic weight corresponds to the concept the moment the concept is acted on (karma). A more positive attitude stands a far better chance of a more favorable karmic energy put into motion than a self-defeating energy that will put into motion a reciprocal energy of equal value – once again, like attracts like.

There is a prevailing concept that speaks to self-defeat, attached to fear and fear itself is a very powerful and crippling force of energy that literally drains your mental faculties, brings your feelings and emotions front and center. The karmic weight is nonetheless reciprocal as you act in accordance with your fear, as well as your feelings and emotions. Once this energy is set in motion, it too sets in motion an avalanche of potential things to come, effects to causes that just keep piling up, as you cling to fear. Shock takes its mental and emotional toll and time is needed to sort through the sudden upheaval in your life. How you respond to such situations has a lot to do with your own mental and emotional constitution. Some people are innately more in control of their mental and emotional faculties, whereas others learn by one or more tough experience and some continue to be reactive rather than proactive because they have been traumatized by events in the past and cannot let go of their internal pain if they have not yet healed from a past trauma. Making choices and decisions while in the midst of a personal crisis is not typically the best time to do so, as the pressure of the circumstances at hand may impair your thinking. However, this individualized matter corresponds to your own constitution. Some people are at their best under pressure, others are not. Being in touch with your constitution under best and worst case scenarios serves as a compass that can direct your course of action and will influence your choices and decisions, the energy of which will follow along the same course and move on its own momentum.

Although it is not necessary to dredge up details relative to events that occurred in the past, even the recent past, it is definitely beneficial to have some real concept of the role you played that triggered the event, if that is indeed the case. However, this too is a slippery slope because there is a very fine line here that requires the utmost honesty, as things are seldom what they appear to be on the surface. Perceptions and beliefs play a very big role in discerning fact from fiction, distortion from truth, illusion from disillusion. You can easily fall into any one of these mental ditches of error and not know you did for years to come, if ever in some cases. Making rational choices and

decisions is not a safeguard, as what is rational to one person is irrational to another, but each is a component of one's own conceptions. Although you think you may be making a rational choice or decision, you could ultimately be making a very irrational choice or decision in the end because the concepts you are basing your choices or decisions on are not as realistic as you think. The schematic you use to measure or gauge your concepts with may have been heavily influenced by any number of external sources, further defined and developed by your own internal mechanisms. Thus, making good choices and smart decisions begins by being in touch with your own concepts of life and your surrounding environment. If you are inclined to be a follower, your concepts will be easily swayed by the mindset of others, which may or may not be a good place to be. However, if you tend to be more of a leader, it is likely you will blaze your own trails, right or wrong, good or bad, ultimately you will learn from your own mistakes, as you witness the effects of your choices and decisions as they play out in your reality. You will decide on your own accord what works and what does not work and you will adjust accordingly. Those who follow will not have the benefit of self-examination for the simple fact that others are leading them; consequently, they will not know to think or take a stand for themselves. They will just continue to be led, influenced by outside dogmas and doctrines that in all likelihood are more a hindrance than they can possibly be liberating.

In closing, we hope that the aspects of making choices and decisions, as well as the karmic weight they carry, as was discussed in this lesson has elevated your awareness. As always, feel free to share your thoughts, comments or personal experiences.

Many Blessings,

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If you are interested in knowing more about concepts as it pertains to reality, we highly recommend *The Book of Not Knowing, Exploring the True Nature of Self, Mind, and Consciousness* by Peter Ralston, 2010.