

## INDECISION

Many of us have great difficulty making decisions. Does this have something to do with our upbringing, our low self-esteem, or our lack of confidence? Could it be fear of failure?

Even simple everyday decisions can sometimes render us almost immobile. Choices such as which route to take to the store, which purchase to make, which task to do first can be overwhelming. We think if we make the wrong decision it will drastically affect the course of our lives.

Major decisions such as choosing a college or career, buying a car or a house can be difficult. These may seem impossible to us, and we may not feel up to the task. Asking others for their opinions can help, but this might cause us to become more confused. We may resent others when their advice does not work for us. This reliance on others may become a habit, and then we may make our decision to suit them rather than ourselves.

Perhaps our indecision stems from a dislike of ourselves or a lack of confidence in our abilities. It could stem from not wanting the responsibility of accepting the consequences of our decisions. Maybe we are just afraid to make mistakes — afraid of not being perfect or afraid of failing.

Our minds may be filled with "what ifs" or "if only's." What if we make the wrong decision? What if someone disagrees or disapproves? When we do make a decision, we may continue to have doubts about it. We might berate ourselves, change our minds, or rehash decisions made yesterday or many months ago. We think if only we had done something else, had chosen another path, things would have turned out better.

By attending Emotions Anonymous (EA) meetings, we realize others have had this same problem. By working the twelve-step program, they have found help. Our self-esteem improves as we share our feelings with others and work the Steps. We begin to realize the fallacy of projecting the results of our decisions into the future or questioning what we have done in the past. The future holds potential, but it has not yet happened. Many of us spend too much time dwelling on the past. Nothing new ever happens there, and nothing in the past can be changed. Today is the only place to be. It may be scary and threatening, but it is in the present that we must learn to make decisions.

There are no perfect decisions which will guarantee magical results. Making a different choice would not necessarily make things better. We make decisions by using the best information we have available at the time. We keep in mind that we are human and may sometimes make a mistake, but that is no reason not to decide. We learn it is all right to make mistakes. We can learn from our mistakes and use that knowledge at a later time. We use the slogans "First things first" and "Look for the good" to keep us focused.

Sometimes we are aware we are not emotionally able to make a decision. If this is the case, it is all right to put it off for a brief time. It is also all right to hold off on a decision until we have the necessary facts, but at some point we must take action and choose our own direction. We must make the choice. We learn it is all right to change our mind, if warranted, but not just because of our problem with indecision.

In EA we learn it is necessary to begin to rely on a Power greater than ourselves to help us with decisions. Having done our part in decision-making, we turn things over to our Higher Power. When the guidance comes, we accept it and follow it. If we begin to question our choice, we turn it over again... and again and again, if necessary. Turning it

over takes practice because it is new to us, but it is at this point that the concept of guidance from a Higher Power is so valuable.

As we learn to trust our Higher Power to help us with decisions, we gain trust in ourselves as we experience some of the Promises of the program. "The feelings of uselessness and self-pity lessen. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life changes. We intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us." Making decisions becomes easier. We begin to realize that only we, with the help of our Higher Power, can make the best decisions for ourselves. Life is no longer such a struggle.

Sometimes our days are filled with decisions. When we fight a decision, we learn it only increases its difficulty. We accept decisions as they come, and thank our Higher Power for the opportunity to practice decision-making. We accept this responsibility, but through EA we know to leave the results to our Higher Power.