PRACTICE

Too Many Options, No Clear Path

Curated by Simon De Los Rios

WHO IS THIS FOR

This practice is for anyone with several good options in front of them and no way to choose between them.

PAIN

Endless looping between good options, replaying the same decision without ever landing on one.

SOLVES

Gives you a structured way to compare paths side by side, so you stop cycling through the same thoughts.

TOPIC

CAREER TRANSITION | BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

READ TIME	TIME REQUIRED	WHAT YOU NEED
2 minutes	25 to 35 min	notebook, pen

BEFORE YOU START

My invitation, take some time for yourself. Put your phone somewhere else and avoid distractions. Put on music you like and if you feel like it, brew yourself a nice cup of coffee or a tea. And lastly, but most importantly, try to have fun... this must be an activity to be enjoyed.

Step 1: List every option

More options can make choosing harder, especially when you are not sure what you want. Barry Schwartz calls this the paradox of choice. Write down every path you are genuinely considering, the ones you could take this year, and leave out the fantasies. If you have more than four, keep the four you would seriously take.

– *How many of these have I been thinking about for more than three months?*

Step 2: Score what matters

Pick the four things that matter most to you right now, money, growth, location, people, meaning, whatever is true for you, and write them in the first row of the table. Score each option from 1 to 5 on each one, then add up the row.

OPTION	CRITERION 1	CRITERION 2	CRITERION 3	CRITERION 4	TOTAL
What matters to me					

– *Which option scores highest overall?*

– *Does that surprise me, or confirm what I already suspected?*

Step 3: Notice what you are afraid of

For the option that scored highest, write down every reason you have not already chosen it. If two options are within one point of each other, do this for both and compare.

– *Am I avoiding this because it is wrong, or because it is the one I am most afraid to fully commit to?*

Step 4: Set a decision deadline

Pick a date, no more than two weeks away, by which you will choose. Write it down somewhere visible.

– *What would I need to know or feel by that date to choose with confidence?*

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THIS

Tell one person your deadline and the option you are leaning toward today.

CONTINUE WITH

UFS, once you have chosen a direction, this practice helps you map the obstacles between here and there.

Curated by: Simon De Los Rios

Source: SDLR (original). Paradox of choice: Barry Schwartz, The Paradox of Choice (2004). When it happens: Chernev, Böckenholt and Goodman (2015)