



LIVING WITH AND BY THE FOUR-WAY TEST

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How often have we found ourselves at a crossroads and been at a total loss as to which path to take? You know, those moments of indecision where thinking about the options alone is painful enough, let alone making a real choice? It can be a rather losing proposition to make a hasty decision, but one will only stand to lose more if a decision is not made as soon as possible.

Those who call the shots in their own business companies often have to deal with such situations. They train themselves to make split-second decisions, and they also work on their decision-making skills after careful study. Many of them are visionaries, seemingly able to foresee the future and thus capable of making perfect, worry-free decisions.

For ordinary mortals like us, although the decisions we make are not considered earthshaking like those of say, presidential magnitude decisions, we still are faced with our own moments of decision-making. Because, whether we like it or not, we human beings have been gifted with intellect, and with such a gift comes the decision/s on how to use it.

The moment of decision is the moment of truth. This is why many are so scared of making decisions. We all subscribe to the saying, "Look before you leap." We turn things over and over until we get a semblance of order, not chaos. When we are faced with split-second decision making, we go by the lesser evil. Unfortunately, there are those who find that when they are constantly hung up with looking first before taking the leap, they never actually make the jump. Too scared, too inhibited, too careful. When one is thus, he never finds out what could be on the other side.

However, this doesn't mean that we should be gung-ho about things all the time. We shouldn't really be bullheaded and careless every time. What we need to do is find a balance between our options. Easier said than done, but others seem to have a certain knack for it, corporate executives most especially.

When making a decision, go by the four-way test of Rotarians: Is it the truth?; Is it fair to all concerned?; Will it bring goodwill and better friendships?; and, Will it be beneficial to all concerned? (<http://www.thefourwaytest.com/>) If one of those questions merits a NO answer, we had better reconsider our decision.

There are those who might argue that there are many decisions that are necessary to make but which have not just one but two to four NO answers to them. In such cases, the rebound is probably a long way away, or just around the corner. The choice is still whether we are ready to accept the outcome or not.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why do people often find decision-making a great bother?
2. Have you ever been in an indecisive situation? What happened?
3. What will probably make decision-making easier?
4. Is there anyone you admire for being a wise decision maker? Talk about this person in class.
5. Is there anything you currently have to decide on? What are your options? What will your choice probably be?