

Huh?

I hate making choices. For thirty years I worked for a large international corporation where the dress tradition called for wearing a suit, white shirt and tie each day. I had more than a dozen white button-down-collar shirts in the closet, so after reaching for the next suit on the closet rod each morning, the only choice left was which striped tie to wear. During my last 5 years before retirement, the company allowed the choice of either a white or a solid blue shirt to go with my suit. I remember wondering if I'd be five minutes late for work each day as I grappled with the choice of blue or white shirt. Which one would look better with any of my grey suits?

Life is full of these little choices. Chocolate or vanilla? Smoking or non? For here or to go? In sickness or in health?

A close cousin to choice is opinion. I think I'm not alone in often being unable offer an opinion on an issue when asked. For one thing, the topic may not have engaged my interest. (What do you think of priests marrying?) Another reason is that I simply don't have the information to form an intelligent opinion. It makes me wonder when a News Dick (or Harry) on CNN says

the poll results were, "63% believed the President had prior information from the CIA on Cuba's invasion of Mississippi, 28% didn't believe he knew, and 9% said, 'Don't Know.'" Count me as a "Don't Know," who most likely responded, "How the hell would I know what the President and the CIA talk about."

Then there are decisions. I do them quite well, if I must say so myself. I can do the research, develop the alternatives, list the options, storm the gates of logic and come away with a well thought-out decision. Of course, I'll admit these skills don't help when choosing a tie. Or deciding whether to root for Mississippi or Cuba.

My wife tells me that when she walked down the church aisle to meet me over 40 years ago on our wedding day, she wondered if I had truly made up my mind to marry her. And if, when she arrived at the altar, I would in fact be waiting there. When that conversation starts, I always try to look as sincere as possible not over-doing it, because she can tell....and I say, "Of course, I absolutely wanted to get married, settle down and have a family and mow the lawn every weekend and spend all my money on the kids." But in my secret heart, what I was really thinking when asked if I was taking this lovely young woman to be my bride was, "OK, but I haven't done all the research, listed the options, and I'm still looking for the gates of logic."

Sometimes an uninformed decision is the best.

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