

How to Decide Our Path in Life

Though we have so much practice with decision making, it can still be very difficult.

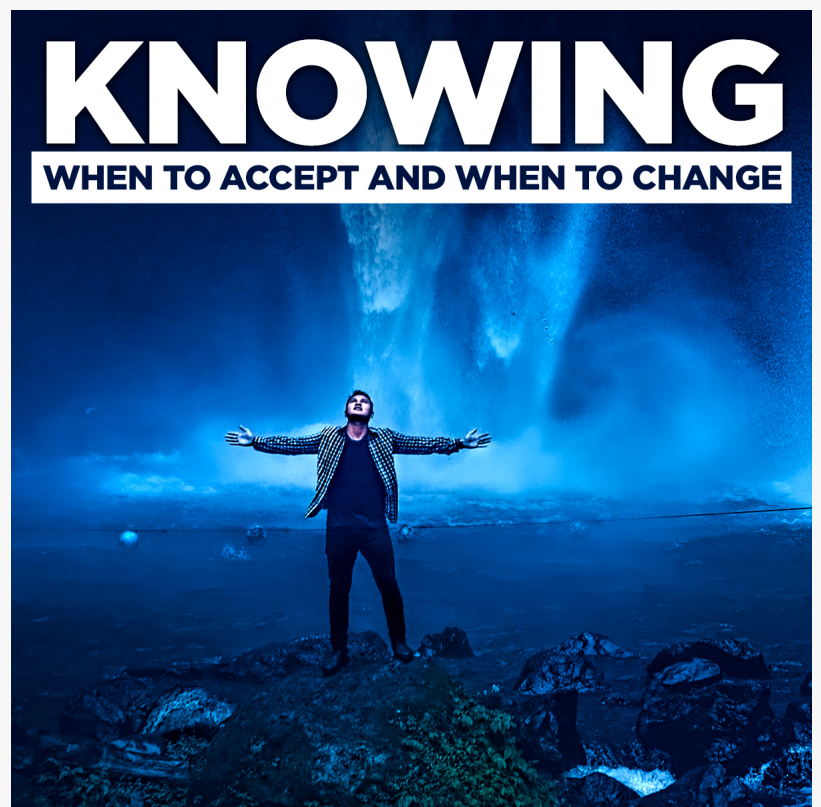
NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA, USA, May 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- We make [decisions](#) every single day. They range from big decisions like choosing who we marry to what we're having for breakfast this morning. We make these big and small decisions dozens of times throughout our days. Even though we have so much practice with decision making, it can still be very difficult. Specifically, knowing when to make a [change](#) in our lives or to accept our circumstances just as they are.

If you've listened to my podcast before, you'll know that I end every episode with the same phrase, "Accept what is, love what is." So how do we know when we should accept our circumstances or make a change? Let's look at three common scenarios to explore this.

Let's say you're dating someone whom you love very much and see a future with. But, you're just not ready to get married to this person because you argue frequently over little things. Should you accept the relationship for what it is or should you try couples therapy and see if you can improve your communication?

Another example is deciding when to retire. You enjoy your job but you are especially tired of working as you near retirement. If you keep working, you'll continue being exhausted, but you'll save more money. So you must decide between: working for another year or so, which will be exhausting but will help you save up more or retiring now and slowing down for a bit, with one less year's salary in your savings.

Let's look at a third example. You're diagnosed with cancer and the hospital near your home has



Know When to Accept and When to Change

presented you with a limited number of treatment options. Do you choose one of these treatment options because it's close to home, or do you look into other options, maybe even internationally, to see what else is out there?

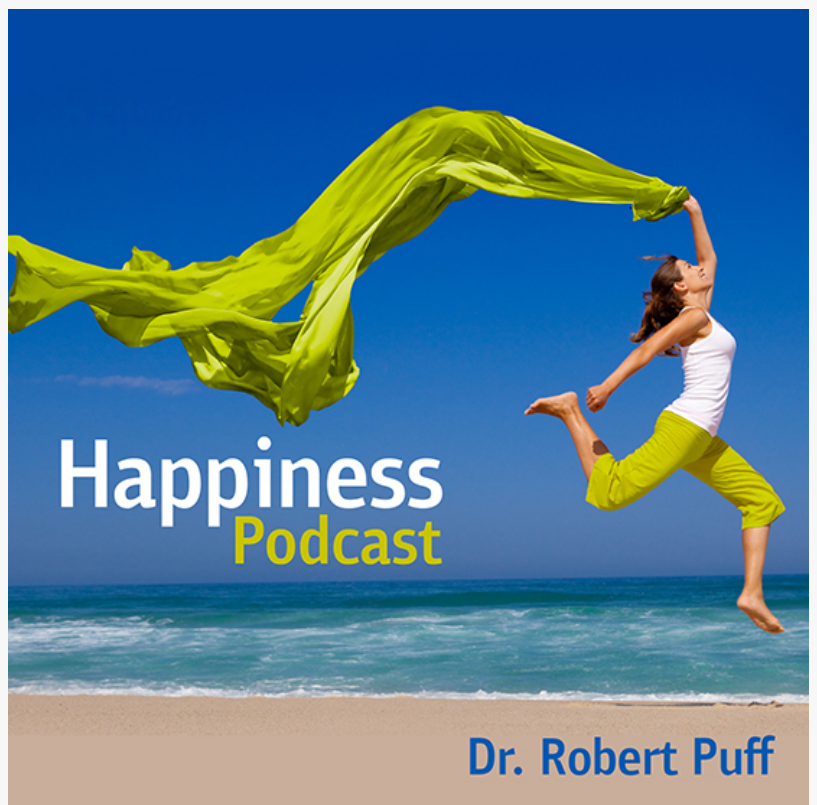
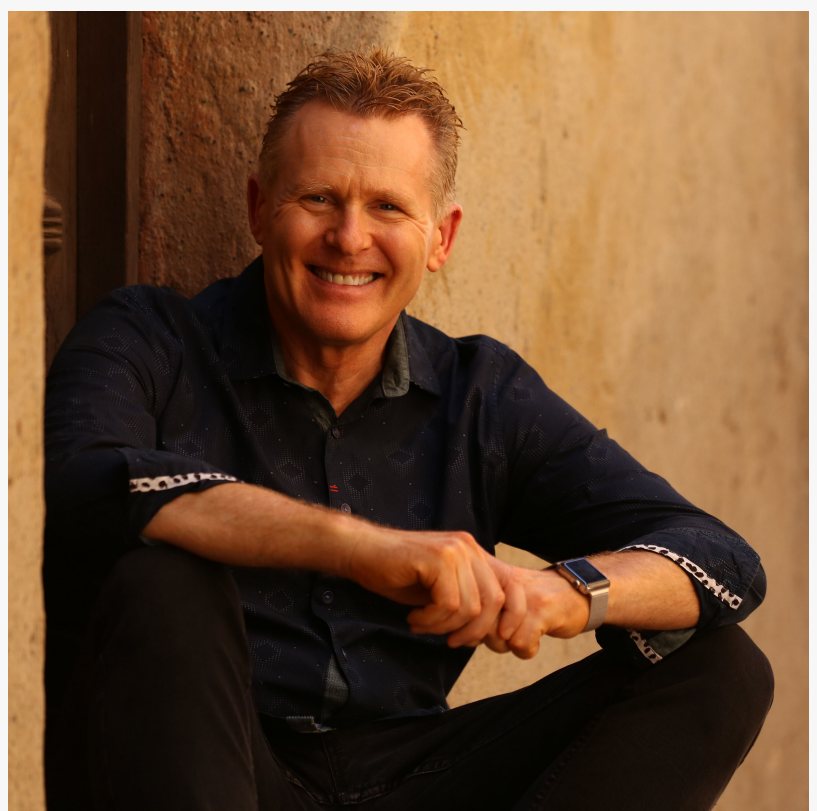
All three scenarios explore our theme today - do we accept our circumstances or do we attempt to change them? We'll explore how to answer this question, no matter the circumstances, in this blog.

I believe there are five steps we can go through to help us know if we should accept or change our path.

The first step is to gather information. We can do this by looking at the consequences of each potential decision, and place ourselves in either outcome to see if there is a favorable choice. Gathering information around our choices can help us gain a deeper understanding of which path is ultimately the best one for us, at this moment.

The next thing we should do is make a list of the pros and cons of both of the paths before us. If we choose to accept our circumstances, what are the potential good and bad outcomes? Or if we choose to change our path, what are the potential good and bad outcomes?

Once we have a better understanding of the pros and cons of either option, the third thing we can do is ask other people to weigh in on our decision. I urge you to move through this step with a bit of caution because some people, simply put, give bad advice! So it's important to ask someone who you trust and to remember that ultimately this is YOUR decision to make.



My job is centered around helping people decide what the best decision is for them. I do this by not telling them what to do, even though I have a lot of experience in understanding how things might turn out. What I do is listen to my clients. I listen to the pros and cons of the paths before them, and all of the pieces that go into making their decision. From there I direct the information that I've learned through my listening, back on them. When you're looking for advice from others, make sure it's someone you can trust who will help you think about what's best for YOU, not what's best for them.

Once we've gathered our information, taken the time to weigh the pros and cons of each path, and asked for a second opinion, it's time to sit with everything. I call this fourth step, retreat time. The purpose of this step is to simply listen to what our hearts are telling us. Retreat gives us the opportunity to quiet the turmoil of our surroundings, and listen to our inner selves. When we take the time to sit still and listen, I believe that we will find the best path for us. Sometimes this looks like sitting still for an hour, or going away for a weekend, or going on retreat for a month. The most important thing we must remember is to use this time for reflection and quieting the mind. In this stillness, we will find what we're supposed to do next.

And now we're on our last and final step, making a decision. When we typically make a decision, we waffle. It's human instinct to question our own decision-making. But, because we've put in the work in the four previous steps, we can feel confident about our choice and move forward.

Making decisions is not easy. But I do think we can have beautiful lives, even when there are tough decisions to be made. We can find the right answers by gathering as much information as possible and staying true to ourselves. There may be times where the decision has to be made for us, like if your partner wants a divorce even though you don't. So we're left with the only option, to accept the divorce, because there is no changing our partner's mind. And in this scenario, it may seem like we don't have a say in the matter, but we can choose how we react to the news and how we live our lives after the fact. Our focus shifts from how do I change my circumstances to how do I live my life well, under these new circumstances.

At the center of our ability to make decisions is having a connection to who we truly are. If we set aside time to explore our inner self and where we see ourselves in the future, I do believe that we can make better decisions and lead beautiful lives.

I'll close this post out with one of my favorite quotes from Reinhold Niebuhr, "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Over the course of our lives, we make a lot of decisions. We choose who we marry, where to live, what career path to take, when to change jobs, even what we choose to have for dinner. We make these big and small decisions several times throughout the day. And even though we have a lot of practice with decision making, sometimes it's hard to know when to make a change, or

accept things the way that they are.

If you've read these blogs or listened to my podcast before, you'll know that I end every podcast with the same phrase, "Accept what is, love what is." But how do we decide when to accept our circumstances vs. make a change? Let's look at three examples to illustrate this.

Let's say you're dating someone whom you love, and think that they are a great match for you. But, you're just not ready to get married to this person because you argue frequently. Should you accept this person for who they are or should you try couples therapy and see if you can change your frequent arguing behavior?

Another example is deciding when to retire. Your job is good, but is especially exhausting as you near retirement. If you keep working, you'll continue being tired, but you'll be able to save more money. So you must decide between - working for another year or so, which will be exhausting, but will help you save up more vs. retiring now and slowing down for a bit, with one less year's salary in your savings.

The last example is the most dire one of the bunch - you're diagnosed with cancer and the hospital near your home has presented you with several different treatment options, but they're limited. Do you choose to work with this hospital which is close to home, or do you search other places, maybe even international options, to see what else is out there? I.e., do we accept our circumstances, or do we attempt to change them?

We'll explore how to answer this question, no matter the circumstances, in this blog.

I believe there are five steps we can go through to help us know if we should accept or change our circumstances.

The first thing that we need to do is gather information. We can do this by looking at the consequences of each potential decision, and place ourselves in either outcome to see if there is a favorable choice. Gathering information around our choices can help us gain a deeper understanding of which path is ultimately the best one for us, at this moment.

The next thing we should do is make a list of the pros and cons of both of the paths before us. If we choose to accept our circumstances, what are the potential good and bad outcomes? Or if we choose to change, what are the potential good and bad outcomes?

Once we have a better understanding of the pros and cons of either option, the third thing we can do is ask other people what they think. I urge you to move through this step with a bit of caution because some people, simply put, give bad advice! So we want to be careful that we ask someone who we trust, and remember that ultimately this is OUR decision to make.

My job is centered around helping people decide what the best decision is for them. I do this by

not telling them what to do, even though I have a lot of experience in understanding how things might turn out. What I do is listen to my clients. I listen to the pros and cons and all of the pieces that go into making their decision. From there I reflect the information that I've learned through my listening, back on them. When you're looking for advice from others, make sure it's someone you can trust who will help you think about what's best for YOU, not what's best for them.

Once we've gathered our information, taken the time to weigh the pros and cons of each path, and asked for a second opinion, it's time to sit with all of this information. I call this fourth step, retreat time. The purpose of this step is to simply listen to what our hearts are telling us. Retreat gives us the opportunity to quiet the turmoil of our surroundings, and simply listen to our inner selves guiding us towards the right answer. When we take the time to sit still and listen, I believe that we will find the best path for us. Sometimes this looks like sitting still for an hour, or going away for a weekend, or going on retreat for a month. The most important thing we must remember is to use this time for reflection, because some of these decisions are massive. In this stillness, we will find what we're supposed to do next.

And now we're on our last and final step, making a decision. When we typically make a decision, we waffle. It's human instinct to question our own decision making. But, because we've done the four previous steps, we're able to simply make a decision without questioning it.

Making decisions is not easy. But I do think we can have beautiful lives, even when there are tough decisions to be made. I believe we can find the right answers by gathering as much information as possible and staying true to ourselves. There may be times where the decision has to be made for us, like if your partner wants a divorce even though you don't. So we're left with the only option, to accept the divorce, because there is no changing our partner's mind. And in this scenario it may seem like we don't have a say in the matter, but we can choose how we react to the news and how we live our lives after the fact. Our focus moves from how do I change my circumstances to how do I live after my divorce.

At the center of our ability to make decisions is having a connection to who we truly are. If we set aside time to explore ourselves and where we see ourselves in the future, I do believe that we can make the best decisions for ourselves, and lead beautiful lives.

I'll close this post out with one of my favorite quotes from Reinhold Niebuhr, "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

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Do you ever wonder what it takes to lead a peaceful, happy life? Are you curious about the specific steps involved in a self-actualized, limitless life? Are you struggling with anxiety or

depression? Or are you just plain tired and want some help? We explore all these concerns and more every week on the Happiness Podcast, which has been downloaded over 9 million times since its inception. Happiness does not happen by chance, but because we take specific actions in our lives to create it.

Dr. Robert Puff, Ph.D., author of 13 books, TV show host, Psychology Today blogger, and corporate trainer, has been studying the actions it takes to reach the highest levels of human achievement for decades, and he wants to share what he knows with you. Come and explore, along with millions of others from the Happiness Podcast, Dr. Puff books and Psychology Today blog, private clients and corporate workshop attendees, the specific steps to take so that you can soar in your life.

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