

Decisions by intuition

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Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to help a client make decisions using their intuition.

Description

Some clients have difficulty making decisions. A useful but often under-used tool here is intuition. Often, a person does not know deep down what is best for them. Consider the old example of tossing a coin. If it comes down heads and you notice yourself disappointed with the result you know to go with the other option. The strategy presented here is a slightly expanded version of the same principle, which has the advantage of allowing the client to feel that a situation has been more fully reasoned and thought through. As authors such as Malcolm Gladwell (2000) have suggested, this thinking is probably not necessary. Your brain can make the right decision for you in an instant. However, it can be reassuring for some to consider something more fully. You may use this strategy to help clients increase their confidence in their decision-making ability.

Process

- 1 Guide the client through separate visualizations for each option open to them. Ideally, visualizations will not be too close in time. Perhaps the client will do one or more of them alone outside of the session.

- 2 If the client is going to do the visualization outside of the session, you may assist them by giving a print-out of the visualization wording or even recording an audio version for them.
- 3 For each option, ask the client to visualize the situation were they to take that course of action. What would they say? Do? See? Hear? Where would it take place? When? What would they wear? If another person is involved, what would they say? Do? Etc. Help them to make the visualization as detailed and vivid as possible.
- 4 Once you have done this, ask the client to notice how they feel.
- 5 Your client may wish to note down or draw any words, picture, emotions that come to mind. On the other hand, they may not. Often intuition cannot be put into words.
- 6 Repeat this process for each of the options the client is considering.
- 7 Once all options have been visualized and the feelings relating to those visualizations noted, it is often startlingly clear which choice the client wants to make.
- 8 The effectiveness of this exercise may be strengthened by the client putting their hand on their heart or stomach during the visualization process.

Pitfalls

Everyone has a different way in which they prefer to make decisions and for some they may simply not be happy with this exercise as it does not appear to have sufficient logic. As with all exercises, you want it to be useful for the client. If it does not work for them, simply encourage them to make confident decisions in a way that is more suitable for their thinking style.

Bibliography

- Gladwell, M. (2002) *The Tipping Point*, New York, NY: Back Bay Books.
- Spence, R. (2006) *Information Visualization: Design for Interaction*, London: Prentice Hall.