



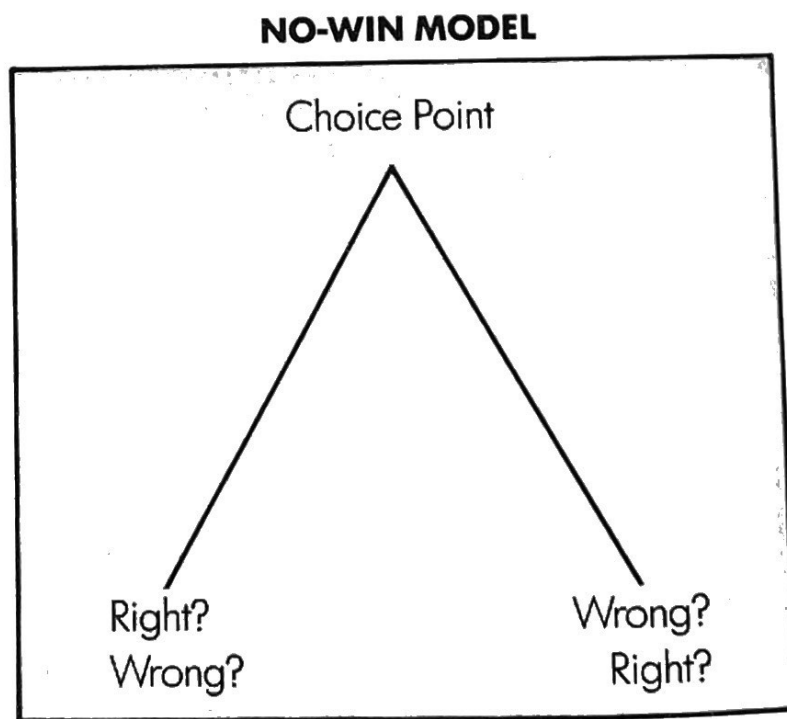
One of the biggest fears that keeps us from moving ahead with our lives is our difficulty in making decisions. As one of my students lamented, “Sometimes I feel like the proverbial donkey between two bales of hay—unable to decide which one I want, and, in the meantime, starving to death.” The irony, of course, is that by not choosing, we *are* choosing—to starve. We are choosing to deprive ourselves of what makes life a delicious feast.

The problem is that we have been taught “Be careful! You might make the wrong decision!” A *wrong* decision! Just the sound of that can bring terror to our hearts. We are afraid that the wrong decision will deprive us of something—money, friends, lovers, status or whatever the *right* decision is supposed to bring us.

Closely tied to this is our panic over making mistakes. For some reason we feel we should be perfect, and forget that we *learn* through our mistakes. Our need to be perfect and our need to control the outcome of events work together to keep us petrified when we think about making a change or attempting a new challenge.

If the above describes you, I am going to demonstrate that you are worrying needlessly. There really is nothing to lose, only something to gain, whatever the choices you make or actions you take in life. As I stated earlier, *all you have to do to change your world is change the way you think about it*. This concept works beautifully here. You can actually shift your thinking in such a way as to make a wrong decision or mistake an *impossibility*. Let's begin with decision making.

Suppose you are at a Choice Point in life. If you are like most of us, you have been taught to use the No-Win Model as you think about the decision to be made. The model looks like this:



Your heart feels heavy about the choice you have to make. You feel somewhat paralyzed as you think about the consequences in life-and-death terms. You stand at the threshold of the decision, lamenting and obsessing: "Should I do this or should I do that? What if I go this way and that happens? What if it doesn't work out the way I plan? What if" The "what if"s are out in full force. The internal Chatterbox

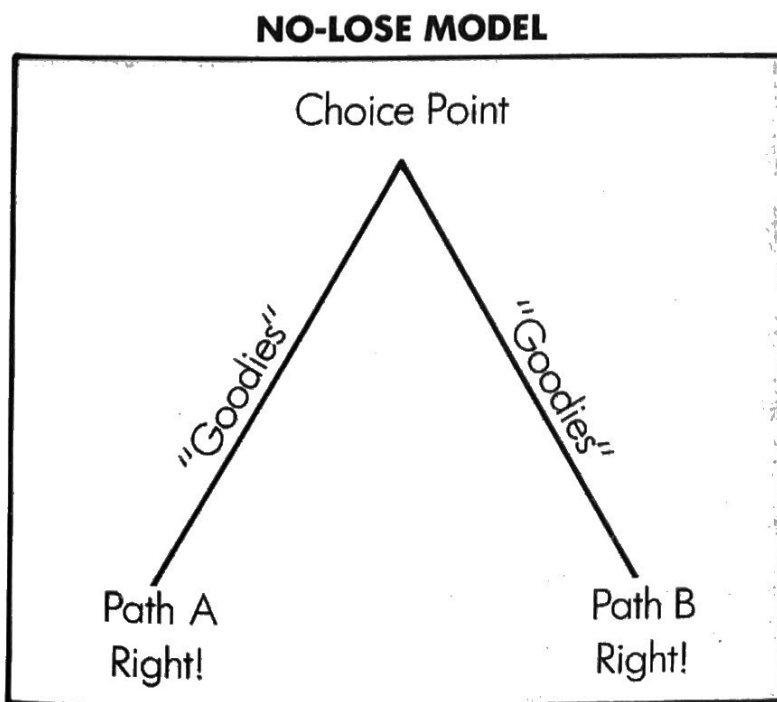
How to Make a No-Lose Decision

is at it again. You look at the unknown and try to predict the future; you try to take control of outside forces. Both are impossible. At this point you might notice you are driving yourself crazy.

After the decision is made, the No-Win Model makes you constantly reassess the situation, hoping you didn't make a mistake. You keep looking back and berating yourself with "If only I had . . ." You waste valuable energy and you also make yourself miserable.

You gain relief if the outcome is as you hoped it would be—but only temporarily. As you breathe a sigh of relief, you are already worrying that the situation might reverse itself and that it might *ultimately* prove to be the wrong decision. Furthermore, you are already fearful about the next decision you have to make, because you will have to go through the whole agonizing process once again. Look familiar? Crazy, isn't it! Clearly, this is a no-win situation. But there is another way—the No-Lose Model.

Go back and stand at the Choice Point again. This time, the situation looks like this:



Notice that what lies ahead are simply two paths—A and B—*both of which are right!* Each path has nothing but “goodies” along the way. You are clearly facing a no-lose situation. And what are these goodies? They are opportunities to experience life in a new way, to learn and grow, to find out who you are and who you would really like to be and what you would like to do in this life. Each path is strewn with opportunities—*despite the outcome*. “What? *Despite the outcome?*” Up to this point you may have been willing to go along with me, but those three words are making you a little dubious, if not downright resistant. “What if . . .” comes up again in your thinking. Let me answer your “what if”’s with an example.

Imagine you are faced with the choice of staying with your present job or taking a new one that has opened up for you. If you stand at the No-Win Choice Point, your Chatterbox takes over and craziness begins:

“If I stay here I might be missing a very good chance to move ahead. But if I go, maybe I won’t be able to handle my new responsibilities. What if I get fired on the new job, and then I have nothing? I really like it here. I’ll have more opportunity to move ahead on the new job. Maybe they’ll promote me and I’ll be making more money. But what if I regret leaving? What if . . . ? Oh, I don’t know what to do! I could ruin my whole life if I make the wrong decision!”

If you stand at the No-Lose Choice Point, your “fearless” self takes over:

“Isn’t it fantastic! I’ve been offered a new job. If I take it, I’ll have an opportunity to meet new people, to learn new

ways of doing things, to experience an entirely different work atmosphere and to broaden my base of experience. If something happens and it doesn't work out, I know I'll handle it. Even though the job market is difficult right now, I know somehow I'll find another job if I need one. Even that will be an interesting experience, since I'll learn to deal with the loss of a job and learn to solve the problems that might come up if I am unemployed. If I stay, I have an opportunity to deepen the contacts I have made here. I really feel better about myself having been offered the other job, so if I stay, perhaps I'll ask for a promotion. If for some reason it doesn't work out here, there will be other opportunities to pursue. It's all an adventure, no matter which way I turn."

I really do know people who think this way—and their approach to life is a joy to be around. They truly live in a no-lose world.

Alex is a perfect example. Now a practicing psychologist in Los Angeles, he originally intended to follow in his father's footsteps and become a lawyer. His college grades were excellent, and he had no trouble getting into what was considered a fine law school. He studied hard and did very well the first two years. But the time spent away from home began making a difference in his personal priorities. He came to realize that he didn't want to spend the rest of his life in the "combat zone," as he called it, that being a lawyer required. He wanted to help people in a different way, and he decided that clinical psychology was much more in line with his personality. He also realized that part of his decision to be a lawyer was his desire to please his father. But now he was much more in touch with the person inside himself, and he made the decision to leave law school and pursue a career in

psychology. His father gave him his blessing but refused to pay any more of his college expenses, thus increasing the difficulty of the decision. But Alex trusted his gut and withdrew from a situation that did not suit his needs.

Some, including his father, saw those two years at law school as a waste of time, but Alex never saw it that way. By trying it out, he discovered that being a lawyer was not for him. Finding out what you *don't* like is, paradoxically, as valuable as finding out what you do like. Also, while at law school he made a number of good friends, who remain his friends today. And the information he gathered from those first two years has helped him in many personal and professional situations since.

For Alex, the goodies didn't end there. Since his father had stopped paying his expenses, he had to work for two years to obtain enough money to get started on his degree in psychology. Were those two years wasted? Not at all. His job with a construction company was doubly enriching: he was exposed to a different way of life, and, through one of his co-workers, he met the woman who became his wife. Finally, with a fellowship and his two part-time jobs, Alex was able to complete his doctorate.

This set of events was invaluable in terms of teaching Alex to take responsibility for his own life. Perhaps neither he nor his father realized it at the time, but his father really did him a favor by making him stand on his own two feet. Alex learned that if you want something badly enough, there is a way to get it. And if there was a way, he would find it. He knew that if he hadn't been able to obtain a fellowship, he would have found another way. As a result, he approached future decisions with a feeling of power, energy and excitement. Remember that underlying all our fears is *lack of trust in*

ourselves. Each step that Alex took, *despite the outcome*, even when it meant loss of financial support and delay in his education, was an opportunity for him to learn to trust himself to provide for his own needs.

It's interesting to me that when I present the No-Lose Model to my students, the resistance is initially very high. "Oh, come on, you're not being realistic." As I said earlier, we have been taught to believe that negative equals realistic and positive equals unrealistic. When I challenge my students, they can't find more credence in the No-Win Model than in the No-Lose Model, yet the latter can move us from a position of pain to one of power, which is ultimately our goal as we learn to deal with fear. Another point to consider is that *it feels better to come from a no-lose position*. Why continue to resist coming from a no-lose position? Why continue to feel pain, paralysis and depression? Yet we continue to do it until we incorporate into our being another way of seeing the world. Then we can slowly begin to change the no-win thinking that has kept us victimized.

A critical factor in your accepting the No-Lose Model is the way you think about outcomes and opportunities. It might be hard for you to accept the fact that losing a job is a no-lose situation. Traditionally, opportunities in life are thought of as relating to money, status and the visible signs of "success." I'm asking you to think of opportunity in an entirely different light. The purpose of this book is to help you handle fear in a way that allows you to fulfill your goals in life. Every time you encounter something that forces you to "handle it," your self-esteem is raised considerably. You learn to trust that you will survive, no matter what happens. And in this way your fears are diminished immeasurably.

THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU CAN HANDLE
ANYTHING THAT COMES YOUR WAY
IS THE KEY TO ALLOWING YOURSELF TO TAKE RISKS.

Getting back to my earlier example, if the outcome of your choosing to move to a new job is for you to lose that job within a few months, you now see how you will have the opportunity to strengthen your self-esteem by facing the storm, regrouping your inner forces, reaching out once again to find a new, perhaps more satisfying, position. In the meantime, you will be meeting new people and enlarging your world. Seen in this light, losing your job becomes a no-lose situation.

I have often said to my students that perhaps the “lucky” ones in life are those who have been forced to face things in their lives that we all hope we will never have to face—things such as losing a job, the death of a loved one, divorce, bankruptcy, illness. Once you have handled any of those things, you emerge a much stronger person. I know of few people who have experienced loss and haven’t felt a large measure of pride in themselves at finding a way to make their lives work despite their adversity. They have discovered that *security is not having things; it’s handling things*. Thus, when you can answer all your “what if”’s with “I can handle it,” you can approach all things with a no-lose guarantee, and the fear disappears.

Now that you’ve learned there really are no right or wrong decisions when using the No-Lose Model, there are steps you can take to heighten your awareness about the alternatives that lie before you. This awareness will better improve the chances of the outcome being aligned with your wishes, and will give you greater peace of mind. I suggest that the

following steps be taken when you face a major decision and after you've made one.

Before Making a Decision

1. *Focus immediately on the No-Lose Model.* Affirm to yourself, "I can't lose—regardless of the outcome of the decision I make. The world is a place for opportunity, and I look forward to the opportunities for learning and growing that either pathway gives me." Push out thoughts of what you can lose and allow only thoughts of what can be gained. Use the exercises in the chapter on positive thinking.

2. *Do your homework.* There is much to learn about the alternatives that lie before you. It is most helpful to talk to as many people as will listen. Don't be afraid to approach professionals relative to the decision to be made. A few might put you off, but most will be anxious to help. In fact, they will be flattered that you came to them for advice.

Look for feedback from other sources as well. Talk to people at dinner parties, in the barbershop or beauty salon, the doctor's office, or wherever. People you meet in unlikely places can create a valuable connection for you in ways you never could have imagined, or they might give you an insight learned from their personal experiences.

It is important that you talk to the "right" people. Let me give you my definition of the right people. They are those who support your learning and growing. If you talk to people who constantly put down the possibilities open to you, they are the wrong people to talk to. Politely say thank you and go on to someone else.

One wonderful teacher of mine helped me greatly when he

taught me the phrase “First time, shame on you. Second time, shame on me.” Applied to this situation, if you discuss something with people who are insensitive to your needs, shame on them. If you continue to allow yourself to be battered by their words, shame on you. You don’t have to continue having conversations about your decision with those who make you feel bad about yourself. You should talk to people who can support you with statements like “I think it’s terrific you’re considering . . .” or “I think you’ll do beautifully at . . .” You get the picture. Why put yourself in a position to feel miserable when it’s so easy to feel great?

Also, don’t hesitate to talk about your plans just because you are fearful that if they don’t work out you’ll look like a “failure.” Swallow your pride. By not investigating as fully as you can, you are cutting off valuable sources of information that might help you enormously. Remember:

YOU’RE NOT A FAILURE IF YOU DON’T MAKE IT;
YOU’RE A SUCCESS BECAUSE YOU TRY.

One of my students was concerned about being called a “talker” rather than a “doer” if she made too many false starts. There is no such thing as a false start if you are seriously committed to advancement. My first experience in the publishing world serves as a good example.

Years ago, I made the decision to publish a book of poems I had written. Since I knew nothing about the publishing world, I started talking to as many people as I could about how I should best proceed. I took a course on getting published; I called strangers who worked in various publishing houses (and was surprised that they were most anxious to help); I submitted my book to about twenty publishers, and received one rejection after another. But I just kept talking about my career as a writer. I’m sure there were those who said, “Who’s

she kidding? It will never happen.” Over lunch one day, Ellen Carr, a business associate and now a dear friend, and I decided to write a book for women about getting a job. We were concerned about the number of talented women we knew whose fears of rejection and failure kept them from even trying to enter the job market. Again I started talking to everyone I knew, about our project, and again a whole series of delays occurred that made some people doubt that the book would ever be published. But I just kept talking, as did Ellen, and we found ourselves meeting all sorts of interesting people who were invaluable in helping us with our project. And that joyous day did arrive when our books were finally delivered to us.

It could be said that there were many false starts in my writing career. Not so! Each step along the way made me more and more ready to enter the field, even though the outcome may not have been in the form originally pictured. And I certainly learned how to deal with rejection! Putting your ideas out into the world by constantly talking about them may create a few doubting Thomases, yet not only does talking bring valuable information, *it clarifies your intention to have it happen!* Intention is a powerful tool in creating something you want in your life.

3. *Establish your priorities.* This will require some soul-searching. Give yourself time really to think about what you want out of life. This is a very difficult thing to discover for most of us, since we are trained at an early age to do what other people want us to do. We are out of touch with those things that really bring us satisfaction. To make it easier, ask yourself which pathway is more in line with your overall goals in life—at the present time.

It is important to remember that goals constantly change as

you go through life, and you have to keep reassessing them. The decision you make today might not be the decision you would make five years from now. If you are having trouble clarifying your overall goals, don't worry about it. It may take many more decisions and much more experimentation with different situations to discover how best to order your priorities. At least you are beginning to pay attention to who you are. Allow yourself confusion in the searching process. It is through confusion that you finally come to clarity.

4. *Trust your impulses.* Although you might have difficulty getting to the "person within" through the soul-searching process, your body sometimes gives some good clues about which way to go. Even after you've done your homework, talked to many people and come up with a logical choice, it is possible that your impulse is telling you to go with the other choice. Don't be afraid to trust it. Very often your subconscious mind sends knowing messages as to which choice is better at a particular time. As you start paying attention to your impulses, you will be surprised at the good advice you are giving yourself.

I was surprised when I "trusted my gut" and found a new career. My intention after getting my doctorate in psychology was to ultimately set up a private practice. A few months after I began treating patients in a mental-health clinic the opportunity opened for me to help a friend who had become executive director of a marvelous health facility called "The Floating Hospital, New York's Ship of Health."* My instinct told me to take the job even though it didn't logically

*The Floating Hospital is an amazing health center aboard a ship. It offers diagnosis, prevention, treatment and educational services to the poor in New York City. During the summer months, it takes 800 people a day on a health cruise around Manhattan, and during the winter it provides dockside services to people of all ages.

fit into the plans I had made for myself. Something within me said, "Go for it."

Within months, my friend resigned, and I was made executive director. Nowhere in my plan was it written that I would become an administrator. Previously, I had viewed myself as a follower, not a leader, and the whole concept of being at the helm had never entered my mind. Somehow my subconscious knew I could handle it and pushed me to take the job. "What am I doing here?" I asked myself as I went through fear and uncertainty in handling the tasks of the position. But as I learned and grew with the job, I realized I loved administrative work and, in fact, became very capable in that area. In addition, the Floating Hospital brought me rich, wonderful, crazy, hilarious, poignant and exciting experiences and challenges that I never thought would be possible for me. But my subconscious had known. It had overridden my conscious, logical mind, which had said, "Don't deviate from your plan" and "You can't handle this job."

I must make it clear, following the concept that there is no such thing as a wrong decision, that if I had chosen to remain a therapist in the mental-health clinic, *that choice also would have brought me rich opportunities for experiencing life in a new and different way.* There was no right or wrong decision, just different ones.

5. *Lighten up.* We live in a world where most people take themselves and their decisions very seriously. I have news for you. Nothing is *that* important. Honestly! If as a result of a decision you make, you lose some money, no problem—you learn to deal with losing money. If you lose a lover, no problem—you find another one. If you choose to divorce, no problem—you learn to handle living on your own. If you

choose to marry, no problem—you learn to handle a new kind of sharing.

Start thinking about yourself as a lifetime student at a large university. Your curriculum is your total relationship with the world you live in, from the moment you're born to the moment you die. Each experience is a valuable lesson to be learned. If you choose Path A, you will learn one set of lessons. If you choose Path B, you will learn a different set of lessons. Geology or geometry—just a different teacher and different books to read, different homework to do, different exams to take. *It really doesn't matter.* If you take Path A, you get to taste the strawberries. If you take Path B, you get to taste the blueberries. If you hate both strawberries and blueberries, you can find another path. The trick is simply to make whatever place you're in your educational forum and learn everything you can about yourself and the world around you. So—*lighten up!* Whatever happens as a result of your decision, *you'll handle it!*

After Making a Decision

1. *Throw away your picture.* We all create expectations of what we would like to happen after a decision is made. The picture in our mind's eye might have served a valuable function in helping to make a decision. But once the decision is made, let the picture go. Since you can't control the future, the picture can create unhappiness if it's not fulfilled. Disappointment may make you miss the good that can come out of every situation in which you find yourself. Don't forget to look for that silver lining. If you see the outcome of a decision as looking a certain way, you will increase the likelihood of missing other opportunities. Yet the unexpected opportunities can create more of value than your original pic-

ture. If you are focused on “the way it’s supposed to be,” you might miss the opportunity to enjoy the way it is or to have it be wonderful in a totally different way from what you imagined.

2. *Accept total responsibility for your decisions.* This is a tough one! We all have a tendency to look around for someone to blame if things are not working out to our liking. I really hated my stockbroker when the stock he recommended went down instead of up. It took great fortitude to admit to myself, “I made the decision to buy. No one twisted my arm.” I lamented until I created an “opportunity” from my ill-fated decision. What did I learn? A lot! I learned I had to find out more about the stock market, instead of relying totally on my stockbroker’s opinion. I learned that I was terribly insecure about money, and had to work on that. I learned I could lose money in the stock market and yet life went on just as it did before. I learned that if in the future I lost money in the stock market, it wouldn’t be such a big deal, and that stocks can go up again, as mine did eight months later. When looked at in that light, it wasn’t a bad decision after all. When you can find the *opportunity* in any decision, it is much easier to accept the *responsibility* for making it.

When you take responsibility for your decisions, you become a lot less angry at the world, and, most important, a lot less angry at yourself!

3. *Don’t protect, correct.* It is most important to commit yourself to any decision you make and give it all you’ve got. But if it doesn’t work out, *change it!* Many of us are so invested in making the “right” decision that even if we find we don’t like the path we have chosen, we hang in there for dear life. To my way of thinking, this is the height of craziness. There is tremendous value in learning you *don’t* like

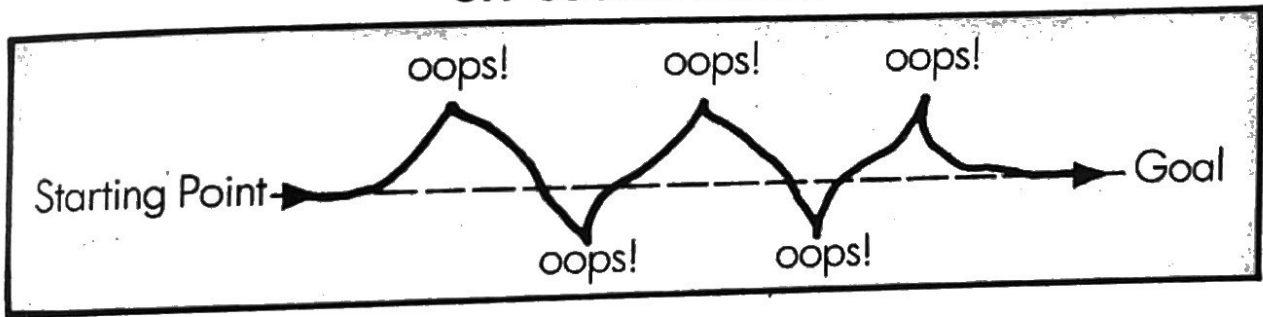
something. Then it is simply a matter of changing your path. Yes, there are those who keep flitting from place to place, using “change it” as an excuse for noncommitment. I’m not talking about that, and you’ll know the difference within yourself. If you’ve truly committed yourself to something, given it everything you’ve got, and then concluded that it is not for you—move on to something else.

When you decide to change paths, you will often face criticism from those around you. “What do you mean you want to change your career? You’ve invested five years in building up your dental practice! All that time and money down the drain!” Explain that none of it has been a waste. At one time it was the right thing for you to do. Much was learned and much was gained in the way of experience. It simply doesn’t feel right any more—it’s time to change. I know many people who stay locked in unsatisfactory situations that no longer work for them because they’ve invested so much and it would be a shame not to continue. How illogical! Why invest more, if it’s no longer paying off? Remember—the quality of your life is at stake!

In his book *Actualizations*, Stewart Emery presents an excellent model for changing your direction in life. He learned it while seated on the flight deck of an airplane on the way to Honolulu. He noticed a console, which was identified by the pilot as the inertial guidance system. The purpose of the system was to get the plane within one thousand yards of the runway in Hawaii within five minutes of the estimated arrival time. Each time the plane strayed off course, the system corrected it. The pilot explained that they would arrive in Hawaii on time in spite of “*having been in error 90 percent of the time.*” Emery takes it from there, stating: “So the path from here to where we want to be starts with an error, which we correct, which becomes the next error, which we correct

and that becomes the next error, which we correct. So the only time we are truly on course is that moment in the zigzag when we actually cross the true path.” From the analogy, we see that the trick in life is not to worry about making a wrong decision; *it's learning when to correct!* My concept of the model looks like this:

OFF-COURSE MODEL



There are many inner clues that help you know when it is time to correct. The two most obvious are confusion and dissatisfaction. Ironically, these are considered negatives, instead of positives. I know it is hard to accept, but *an upset in your life is beneficial*, in that it tells you that you are off course in some way and you need to find your way back to your particular path of clarity once again. Your confusion and dissatisfaction are telling you that you're offtrack, and, as a friend once suggested to me, "If you don't change your direction, you're likely to end up where you're heading."

Physical pain is easily seen as beneficial, even though it can be very uncomfortable. It is an obvious symptom that something is wrong with your body. A pain in your right side might save your life by signaling an appendicitis attack. If you don't pay attention to it, you could die. Mental pain is just as much a "blessing," because it is telling you that something is wrong with the way your life is going. It is a sign that something needs correction—whether it is the way you think about the world or what you are doing in the world—or both. The pain is simply saying, "Hey, that's not it!"

The way to figure out how to get back on course is through the exploration process—reaching out through self-help books, workshops, friends, support groups, therapy or whatever seems right for you when you reach out for help. As long as you are open to reaching out, help will be there. Remember, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” You will never be ready if you are busy protecting the course you have chosen for yourself. You will be perpetually off course and never reach your destination. When you are constantly aware of the clues that signal “time to correct,” you will always end up in the right spot—or at least in the vicinity.

As a handy review, here is a summary of the steps in the decision-making process. By applying these, you’ll breathe a lot easier as you make choices throughout your lifetime.

NO-LOSE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

BEFORE MAKING A DECISION

1. Focus on the No-Lose Model.
2. Do your homework.
3. Establish your priorities.
4. Trust your impulses.
5. Lighten up.

AFTER MAKING A DECISION

1. Throw away your picture.
2. Accept total responsibility.
3. Don’t protect, correct.

If you don’t think the above makes absolute sense, let me summarize the steps we usually take when using the No-Win Model:

NO-WIN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

BEFORE MAKING A DECISION

1. Focus on the No-Win Model.
2. Listen to your mind drive you crazy.
3. Paralyze yourself with anxiety as you try to predict the future.
4. Don't trust your impulses—listen to what everyone else thinks.
5. Feel the heaviness of having to make a decision.

AFTER MAKING A DECISION

1. Create anxiety by trying to control the outcome.
2. Blame someone else if it doesn't work out as you pictured.
3. If it does work out, keep wondering if it would have been better the other way.
4. Don't correct if the decision is "wrong"—you have too much invested.

Does this last summary sound painfully (and comically) familiar? Yes, we certainly do know how to drive ourselves crazy!

Now that I've demonstrated the No-Win and No-Lose Models as they pertain to decision making, I trust you can see how it is impossible to make a mistake. Just as each decision is an opportunity to learn, each "mistake" is also an opportunity to learn, rendering it impossible to make a mistake. A great researcher, having "failed" two hundred times before he found the answer to one of his burning questions, was asked, "Doesn't it bother you that you failed all those times?" His answer was, "I never failed! I discovered two hundred ways *not* to do something!"

After much consideration, I have come to the conclusion that if you haven't made any mistakes lately, you must be doing something wrong. You'll never get to Hawaii! You haven't even left the airport yet! You've never even gotten off the ground! You are taking no risks—nor are you enjoying the “goodies” life has to offer. What a waste!

I remember a time in my life when I was frightened of just about everything—fearful that I would fail in all my attempts to fulfill my dreams. So I just stayed home, a victim of all my insecurities. I'd like to report that it was an ancient Zen master who snapped me back into awareness. But it wasn't. It was actually an Eastern Airlines commercial that used the slogan “Get into this world.” When I saw the commercial, I suddenly realized that I had stopped participating in the world. With this “enlightenment,” I started pushing myself out there once again. I realized I had to shift from being afraid of making a mistake to being afraid of *not* making a mistake. If I am not making any mistakes, I can be sure I am not learning and growing.

When you consider that mistakes are an integral part of living, it is amazing how we are taught to think we must be perfect. This “mistake” in our thinking has created many fears about being adventurous and trying out new territories. Let's take an example from a favorite national pastime, baseball. It is extremely rare for a baseball player to attain a .400 average. Translated, that means having a hit four times out of ten at bat—four successes out of ten tries. That's a champion's performance—and most of us are just beginners!

You are not going to succeed in everything you attempt in life. That's guaranteed. In fact, the more you do in life, the more chance there is *not* to succeed in some things. Look at how rich your life can be, however, from your many adventures. Win or lose, you just keep winning! Using the Off-

Course / Correct Model, you can now have a new freedom in flying.

Although you now know how to minimize your fears about decision making and making a mistake, you might notice that adopting the concepts presented are more difficult than they sound. Again I remind you of the lengthy process involved in behavior change. *Simply begin!* Keep working on it. Keep reinforcing the new way of thinking presented here by using the exercises below to help you push through your fears about making decisions or mistakes.

Are you making any mistakes lately? I hope so!

Exercises

1. Using the No-Lose Model, consider some decisions you are now facing. Write down all the positive things that can happen by using either pathway—even if the outcome might not be what you picture.

2. Learn the concept IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER by starting with little decisions you face each day. As you ponder which suit to wear to the office, notice that it doesn't really matter; which restaurant to eat at tonight, it doesn't really matter; which movie to see, it doesn't really matter. Each choice simply produces a different experience. Slowly you will be able to apply this concept to larger and larger decisions. Put signs in your home and office that say

IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER

to remind yourself when you are being needlessly obsessive.

3. Also, put signs in your home and office that say

SO WHAT! I'LL HANDLE IT!

If things don't work out the way you want, so what! What's the big deal, anyway? This reminder will help you lighten up about life as you learn you can handle whatever happens after you've made your decision.

4. Look at clues in your life that suggest you are off course and begin making your game plan to correct the situation.