

It Is Your Choice by Tony Robbins

Take control of your decisions and your life with these strategies.

What is the single force that shapes the quality of our lives? What power do we have that can change everything? As you and I both know, the answer is the power of choice.

During the past 30 years I've had the privilege of working with an incredibly diverse group of people, from presidents of countries to professional athletes, from managers to moms, from gang members to high-powered business executives. I've had the unique opportunity to see people in the midst of real challenges, whether it's the professional athlete who wants to regain his competitive edge, the business leader who wants to expand her influence or the political leader who struggles with a difficult decision. I may not have all the answers (who does?), but after working with so many people and observing the patterns that make them succeed or fail, one thing I am sure of is this: It is our decisions, not our conditions, that determine the quality of our lives.

Take a look at your own life. Are you where you want to be? Are you as healthy or financially secure or as happy in your relationships as you would like to be? Or, even if things are going well, are you looking for that extra edge to retain the competitive advantage? Perhaps you feel that in spite of your success, there's more out there for you, but for some reason, you haven't grasped it yet. Your first instinct may be to blame the economy, or the housing market, or someone who has treated you unfairly.

Before we go any further, we need to understand that we are where we are today because of the decisions we've made—decisions about what to focus on, decisions about where to place our priorities, decisions about what things mean and decisions about what to do. For example, if your business or career has been affected by the recession, do you feel that you are being punished or challenged to find a new path? What are you going to do about it? Are you going to give up or give more? No matter what we have experienced in the past, our history is not our destiny—we all have the power to make new decisions today.

Here's another way to look at it: Success is a result of good judgment; good judgment is a result of experience, in most cases. And what about experience? Yes, experience is most often a result of bad judgment.

So here's the good news: The experience gained from bad judgment and bad decisions is unbelievably valuable—it's priceless! So don't waste time beating yourself up over poor decisions you've made; learn from the experiences. Really, failure is actually one of the best ways we learn. When people succeed, they celebrate. When they fail, they ponder. They stop and think, What happened here? What could I have done differently? It's only through self-evaluation that we learn how to make better decisions. So, when you make mistakes, learn from them; use your experience to improve your judgment and make better decisions.

The Path to Freedom—Financial or Otherwise

We're living in extraordinarily difficult times. Every day we read about and experience more challenges, often related to things we can't control, whether it's the economy, the environment or unemployment. We can allow the stress and uncertainty caused by these events to overwhelm us or we can transform our lives by making different decisions.

One of the decisions we can make is to live with a mindset of abundance. What I mean by this is if we live as though wealth has more to do with what's in our minds than what's in our wallets, if we understand that how we feel is more important than what we have, we can discover an immense sense of freedom and happiness.

Think about it: Do you know anyone who has a lot of money but doesn't feel free, doesn't feel loved, doesn't feel like he has a choice? Sure you do. You may even feel that way yourself. That feeling happens when

you're not in control of your emotions because you're looking for someone or something external to fill internal needs.

I don't care what you've achieved or how much money you've earned, if you live with an attitude of scarcity and limitation, if you wait for someone or something else to fulfill you, you're not going to be happy. You must make the decision to live with a mentality of abundance, and you will experience true freedom.

It's Your Time

Everything that happens in your life—what you're thrilled with and what you're challenged by—began with a decision. Your life is the outcome of the decisions you've made and the actions you've taken as a result of those decisions. Different decisions produce different results.

If you want to control the direction of your life, you must consistently make good decisions. It's not what you do once in a while that has an impact on the direction of your life—it's what you do consistently. Make decisions today about how you are going to live in the years to come. For your decisions to really make a difference in your life it's imperative to decide what results you're committed to—and know specifically how these results will transform your life. It's equally critical to decide what kind of person you're committed to becoming. Get clear about what you want to be, do and have, and what your life will be like after you accomplish this. With that clarity, you'll find it becomes easier to make the kinds of decisions that will move you in the direction you desire.

What are your standards? What will you demand from life? Decide today if you'll accept life as it is or if you'll live your life on your own terms, at the edge and at the highest level.