

Powerful Choices, Powerful Life



Sharon Good

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The names of all clients mentioned in this book and identifying details have been changed or omitted to maintain anonymity.

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Introduction: Choices and Decision-Making

Decision-making is something we do every minute of every day. Everywhere we turn, we have choices to make, from simple decisions like which route to take to work or what to have for lunch, to life-changing decisions like where to live or what career to pursue. We choose, consciously or unconsciously, our attitudes and beliefs, which have tremendous impact on our lives. And we do all this without being taught how.

Choosing can be a haphazard process, and we may find ourselves clutching for a lifeline when a major decision comes our way and we don't have the tools to make a considered choice. We may think we have too many options or too few, or the ones we have seem equally weighted or confusing. We become overwhelmed and throw up our hands or let someone choose for us. And in doing so, we give away our power.

Living is a constant process of deciding what we are going to do.

Jose Ortega y Gasset

Making choices is a skill and an art, more than an exact science. It's a very individual process, one that's usually developed by trial and error. Having a methodology can be particularly useful when your decision is urgent or life-changing, when you are often thinking the least clearly. By practicing wise decision-making every day, you prepare yourself to grapple with the big decisions in a calmer, less-panicked or haphazard way.

If a particular method is working for you, don't throw it away. Use the concepts and tools offered in this book to expand your resources and open up new possibilities and, in the process, create your own "Toolbox for Choice." As you work with your tools and have some successes, you'll come to trust them more and choose with greater confidence, perhaps daring to take bigger risks.

And there's a bonus: Once you get the hang of it, you'll find your problems clearing up and so many wonderful things happening that you'll want to make active choices all the time!



Just a note . . . some people make a distinction between "choices" and "decisions." Some use one to signify picking from a given number of options and the other as an open-ended selection. You may see a different distinction. If you find making a distinction between the two terms useful, I encourage you to do so. I find it to be more an exercise in semantics with little practical value for me. In this book, I use the terms interchangeably.