

| The Paradox Of Choice: Why More Is Less | |
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| | The fact that having some choice is good doesn't mean that having more and more choices is better |
| Positive liberty | Freedom to do something |
| Negative liberty | Freedom from something |
| "When Choice Is Demotivating" | 30% of the people exposed to a small array of jams bought a jar; only 3% of those exposed to a large array of jams did so <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A large array of options forces an increase in the effort that goes into making a decision |
| | Being able to change employers and even careers means people cannot relax and have to stay alert for the next big chance |
| Personal identity | Freedom to choose one's personal identity (religion, relationship, career) liberates us but also burdens us with the responsibility of choice |
| Modern life | We face more choices and more decisions today than ever before (food, healthcare, degrees, relationships, careers, political activism) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to choose in ever more aspects of life causes us more distress than we realize |
| Availability heuristic | Salience or vividness will influence the weight we give any particular piece of information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When college students deciding what course to take are presented with course evaluations from a hundred students that point in one direction, and a videotaped interview with a single student that points in the other direction, they are more influenced by the interview |
| Law of diminishing marginal utility | As the rich get richer, each additional unit of wealth satisfies them less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You won't feel twice as good with \$200 in your pocket as you did with \$100 in your pocket - You'll feel about 1.7 times as good |
| Decreasing marginal disutility of losses | Losing the first \$100 hurts worse than losing the second \$100 |
| Feeling of gain versus loss | Losing produces a feeling of negativity that is more intense than the feeling of elation produced by a gain |
| Endowment effect | Once something is given to you, it's yours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once it becomes part of your endowment, giving it up entails a |

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| | <p>loss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explains why companies offer money-back guarantees on products |
| Learned helplessness | <p>Experiment found that animals that had been given a series of shocks that could not be escaped by any response, later on were not receptive to even trying to learn to escape from the shocks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We can be conditioned to think that we don't have control <p>Learned helplessness affects future motivation to try and can lead to depression</p> |
| Benefits of having choices | <p>Enables people to get what they want, enables people to express who they are, and enables people to be actively and effectively engaged in the world</p> |
| Most important factor for happiness | <p>Close social relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People who are married, who have good friends, and who are close to their families are happier than those who are not - People who participate in religious communities are happier than those who do not |
| Reciprocal relationship | <p>Happy people attract others to them, and being with others makes people happy</p> <p>In many ways, social ties actually decrease freedom, choice, and autonomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To tie oneself tightly into networks of family, friends, and community—is to be bound by the needs of family, friends, and community - Counterintuitive as it may appear, what seems to contribute most to happiness binds us rather than liberates us |
| Time | <p>For some reason, even as one time-saving bit of technology after another comes our way, the burdens on our time seem to increase</p> |
| Opportunity costs | <p>The costs of any option involves passing up the opportunities that a different option would have afforded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The more alternatives there are, the greater our experience of the opportunity costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will feel less good about the option we choose than we would have if the alternatives hadn't been there |
| Solution | <p>Limit the set of possibilities so that the opportunity costs don't add up</p> |
| Short-term versus long-term regret | <p>When asked about what they regret most in the last six months, people identify actions that didn't meet expectations</p> <p>When asked about what they regret most when they look back on their lives as a whole, people identify failures to act</p> |

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| <p>Who is happier: bronze or silver?</p> | <p>Bronze medalists are happier than silver medalists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Silver medalists think about how close they came to winning the gold - Bronze medalists think about how close they came to getting no medal at all |
| <p>Counterfactual thinking</p> <p>Upward counterfactual</p> <p>Downward factual</p> | <p>Thinking about the world as it isn't but might be or might have been</p> <p>Imagined states that are better than what actually happened</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Silver medalist imagining winning gold <p>Imagined states that are worse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bronze medalist imagining not winning any medal <p>Upward counterfactual thinking can inspire us to do better, downward counterfactual thinking can induce us to be grateful for how well we did</p> |
| <p>Adaptation</p> <p>Hedonic treadmill</p> | <p>We get used to things, and then we start to take them for granted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lottery winners were no happier than people in general after some time had passed <p>Seeking out new commodities and experiences whose pleasure potential has not been dissipated by repeated exposure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In time, these new commodities also will lose their intensity <p>If lottery winners knew how little winning the lottery would improve their subjective well-being, they wouldn't be buying lottery tickets</p> |
| <p>Prospect theory</p> | <p>Evaluations are relative to a baseline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An experience will feel positive if it's an improvement on what came before and negative if it's worse than what came before <p>Keep wonderful experiences rare to make sure that you continue to enjoy them</p> |
| <p>Social comparison</p> | <p>Comparing oneself with others who have done better produces jealousy, hostility, negative mood, frustration, lowered self-esteem, decreased happiness, and symptoms of stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the pond containing whales, even sharks are small <p>In earlier times, we looked around at our neighbors and family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the advent of TV, movies, the Internet—we see how the wealthy live countless times every day |
| <p>Paradox of choice</p> | <p>If the ability to choose enables you to get a better car, house, or job, but the process of choice makes you feel worse about what you've chosen, you really haven't gained anything from the opportunity to</p> |

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| Solutions | Adopt the standards of a satisficer rather than a maximizer Reduce the number of options considered before making a decision Practice gratitude for what is good in a decision rather than focusing on disappointments with what is bad |

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