

## Decisions

We feel that we have the power to make decisions. But we know that as separate body-minds we don't choose our thoughts. And since decisions are just choosing-thoughts, we don't choose our decisions either. All thoughts and decisions come from the universe. So how are our apparent decisions made? Is there really any deciding or choosing happening? What does Francis mean when he advises us to take the impersonal option, whenever we are faced with a choice? How can some decisions be 'personal' if all 'deciding thoughts' come from the universe as a whole? The following dialogue explores some of these questions:

*Q: Sometimes when you answer people you've said 'pick the impersonal response when you have a choice of things to do, try to see the impersonal response'. But I was thinking that there's nobody to respond. There's no person. So consciousness is choosing the response?*

FL: Yes, but consciousness may choose your responses in two ways. Because there is a prior choice which may be made or not, which is to believe to be a separate consciousness, to believe to be limited to and by this human body. So that's the first decision made by consciousness.

*Q: OK, but that decision is also made by consciousness?*

FL: Yes. But then once this decision is made it has implications. It will dictate all the decisions that are going to be made down the road, because they will be then consistent with this first decision being made.

*Q: OK. I've noticed that since I've been participating in these dialogues, I don't take things as personally. Decisions seem to be made from a bigger perspective. So it's much easier. So I want to say thanks, because life seems to be much more harmonious and simple.*

FL: And it's a perspective in which there are no people. Of course, this saying 'there are no people' applies to just a subset of the set of decisions we have to make. Because there might be decisions that are not related to other people. But as far as decisions relate to our relationships with other people, it's very important to eliminate all decisions that have their foundation in this belief that there are separate people. It's a very insidious way of falling back into ignorance. It seems very innocent to believe 'there are other people, I am one of them, and we have relationships'. But pretty soon there are bad people, good people, jerks etc. And then there are enemies and then there is aggression and defence.

[Francis Lucille, 29/1/2023 [A Very Insidious Way to Fall Back into Ignorance](#)]

We know from our own experience that decisions made by the universe are not random. They conform to patterns. We describe the patterns we notice in our own behaviour as 'habits', or 'conditioning'. That suggests that more generally, just as there are patterns in the unfolding of physical phenomena that we call 'laws of the physical universe', so there are patterns in the unfolding of phenomena in the mental realm. Physical scientists develop models of physical phenomena, and psychologists develop models of mental phenomena in the human species.

Francis uses the metaphor of a computer game to describe the process of choosing and un-choosing ignorance:

FL: The way it works is that once we choose to believe to be a separate entity this choice remains in effect, no matter what happens, up until we un-choose it. It's like a preference we choose on the menu, and we can choose the default state, or we can choose to work in 'separate mode'. So the moment we have chosen 'separate mode' then the universal computer

– not just this body-mind but the entire universe is a computer and we as universal consciousness have chosen ‘separate mode’ on this universal computer – then everything happens according to the mode we have chosen, up until we uncheck this option, and we go to the default functioning which is universal consciousness. And then the entire computer works differently.

I'm not an expert in computer games, but we can see each individual as an avatar. And there is a menu for each avatar. So the master of the game, which is us, can choose for each of these avatars the option to work in in this mode or that mode. And because all these avatars are part of one single computer program – there is not one program for each avatar, all the avatars are in the program – there's just a list of parameters for each avatar that corresponds to the choice that has been made, 0 or 1, these two parameters. (Or perhaps 1 for non-duality and 2 for duality!) But the point I was making with this metaphor which is interesting, is that it's all in one single computer, which is a universal computer, although the choice which is made about *this* avatar is going also to have implications on the behaviour of all the other avatars, and also on the mountains and inanimate things and acts of gods that are going to happen in the game.

[Francis Lucille, 6/6/2023, [\*Who Makes a Decision if There is no Doer? It's a Computer Game\*](#)]

So what does it mean to live an impersonal life? How should we spend our time? And what approach should we use to make decisions? In the following dialogue, Francis explains the decision-making process and gives a guiding principle:

FL: The mind is really an instrument of celebration. We should pursue whatever interest we have. We are not meant to live in a cave. That's not wisdom. We are meant to enjoy the world which is given to us. ...

Follow your enthusiasm. For a while it's possible that your enthusiasm is just to investigate your true nature to sit and meditate – that's possible. But it has to be your enthusiasm. It has to truly be what you want to be doing, your heart's desire. But at some point, we enjoy again being in the world.

*Q: Is it just about a balance, taking into account all the other body-minds, beauty, love?*

FL: When I talk about that, I usually refer to decisions we make, and these decisions first have to be realistic. In other words, they cannot be based upon our imagination, about imagined facts, but about the facts on the ground. And the facts on the ground are in two parts: there are the facts in the world, and there are the facts within us, past experiences, knowledge etc. So we have a set of facts, and then out of this set of facts we have to come up with a decision. So the first condition is to look at all the facts – at least all the facts that we deem to be relevant, of course. Not to omit any facts, especially not to omit any external facts. Some people tend to omit external facts, others tend to omit internal facts – their own experience, how they feel about the situation etc.

So first to be completely open to the totality of the relevant facts, and then in order to come up with a decision, we need to have a guiding principle. And the guiding principle here is that there is only one reality, that there is only one consciousness. So this guiding principle is also love and truth. This guiding principle is going to lead to a decision which is going to be to maximize the harmony in the world and in us, as a result. Even if we are not smart enough, but if we do our best to find the impersonal decision, *that* will be the impersonal decision. In a miraculous way, or serendipitous way, the mistake we may have made will be fixed by the universe. It won't have negative effects. It would be an opportunity for us to learn about our mistake. That's the saying

in the scripture 'peace on Earth to all men and women of goodwill' I don't know the exact quote in English. 'To all men of goodwill' – I guess that patriarchal 'all men' would have to be translated by 'men and women' – 'to all human beings of good will, peace on Earth'. And it's very beautiful because it doesn't say 'peace in the thereafter' it says 'peace right away', 'peace on Earth' meaning more harmony to those who are of good will. And what does 'goodwill' mean? It means good intention. In this case it means loving and intelligent intention in the decision-making process. That's what it means, what I call impersonal decision.

[Francis Lucille 25/11/2022 [The Guiding Principle for Impersonal Decision-Making - "Peace on Earth"](#)]

If all decisions are made by universal consciousness, should we remain passive? It might seem that 'doing nothing' is the only truly impersonal option. But as Francis explains, the 'do-nothing' option is just another possible decision, among the set of all possible decisions. If the decision is not time-critical, and none of the other options stands out as being the best, postponing the decision is the rational choice, as it allows for the situation to change or more information to emerge:

*Q: Sometimes I have a hard time understanding what is right, what is necessary in the moment, and when the necessary thing to do is to do nothing.*

FL: I cannot tell you, because doing nothing is also a decision. So in the set of all possible decisions about what to do, all the possible lines of action, one option is to do nothing. But there might be other options. It's not like there is either a or b. There is a, b, c, d, e, f, ... but there is always the option of doing nothing. And it is not a special option – it's just an option among others. It's just an option which is there all the time as a possibility. And in fact, the true definition of this option is not to do nothing, it's to do nothing for the time being. Because we cannot decide ahead of time about what the context will be in the future. It's to do nothing as long as the context doesn't evolve. But the context always evolves because we evolve, and we are, as a separate body-mind, part of the global context. So the zero option, if we can call it that, or the minimal option is to do nothing for the time being, which doesn't preclude us from doing something later on, should the situation evolve, and it always evolves.

[Francis Lucille 4/8/2023 Summer Retreat]

A few months ago, Francis was asked about how to apply the principle of impersonal action in times of conflict, for example in relation to the situation in Israel and Palestine:

FL: What I recommend is to try to always make the decision which is based upon the assumption that we all share the same consciousness.

*Q: It's very difficult to take this kind of decision.*

FL: Yes. But our duty is to do our best to come up with a right decision, and that's all there is to it. So it's not as complicated as you seem to think. First you have to ask yourself 'do I really have to make this decision right now?'. In other words if time of the essence, do I have to make any decision regarding this issue at all? And then if the answer is 'yes, I absolutely have to make a decision regarding this issue, and this decision has to be made right now' then that's when the advice is do your best to make the impersonal decision. But don't make a decision if you don't have to make the decision right now, or at all. So for us common mortals – we are not Kings or Presidents – quite often the decision boils down to for whom do we cast a vote in these political matters? And other than that, is how we relate with our friends, children, family, relatives, neighbours and with the strangers we come in contact with in our daily life.

Society starts with us, as Krishnamurthy used to say. Otherwise 'society' is simply a theory. In my remote political past as a college student, I could see other activists, young men, who were very vehement about women's right etc, and yet they treated their girlfriends very poorly. And I am very polite! So the theory was correct perhaps, but the practice was awful. So it's better not to have a theory, but have a good practice, than a perfect theory and a terrible practice. Because if we put that to the extreme, Hitler and Stalin had a perfect theory for the happiness of their people. But the practice was not too good!

So it's for us to make our decisions based upon 'do we have to make them?'. It's very dangerous to feel I am entitled to be the saviour of mankind. I don't think Jesus or Buddha felt that they were going to be saviours of mankind, although Jesus was called the Saviour by his followers. But I don't think that it was in his DNA, so to speak. I think there was a lot of humility in him.

What is paradoxical is that two well-meaning people in a given situation would make different decisions, and apparently contradictory decisions. What we have to understand is that the goal of life is not in the world. The world is a school of life. And it teaches us in a sense, perfect action. So the perfect action for Bob and the perfect action for Alice, in this world, may be different. Bob and Alice Smith may find themselves in opposing camps, meaning there is not necessarily one camp which is right. Because the righteousness of action is not to be determined by the nature of the act, but rather by the intent and the origin of the decision. And that's simply a school.

[Francis Lucille, 15/7/2023 [What is Right Action?](#)]

It's inevitable that some of our decisions will turn out to have unintended consequences which seem to make the situation less harmonious. But even if, in hindsight, we see that we made a mistake in the decision-making process, there's no need for regrets. As Francis explains, what is important is to do our best to always make the impersonal decision. That way there is never any need for regret. We learn from our mistakes rather than feeling guilty about them or having regrets:

*Q: Have you ever encountered, while making a decision and choosing one, regretting it and saying, wow, I regret the road I haven't taken?*

FL: It may have happened to me in the past. But now, no, because even if the decision happens to be a wrong decision, if I feel that I've done my best at the time to make the best possible decision, why would I have regrets? The regrets only come if I believe to be a person who has made the wrong decision. But the decision has been made, taking the best possible steps. I may have revisited the decision-making process and say, 'oh, here, I made a mistake on that point', but at the time, I was not aware of that mistake, so I still have done the best I could. In the future, I am not likely to make the same mistake again because it was costly.

But if you do your best and if you don't live from the vantage point of a person, you live without regrets. It's important to live without regrets, without leaving behind 'stuff'. And the way to do this is two-fold: first in our decisions to try as much as possible to the best of our abilities – and we are all different – to try to make an impersonal decision. That's the first aspect. And the second aspect is to follow your enthusiasm from moment to moment. In other words, to try to ascertain at every moment whether you really want to be doing what you are doing, whatever it is. Because that's called 'to live from your freedom'. In this way, there is nothing you could regret.

[Francis Lucille, 11/4/2020, [Practical Guidance for Making Decisions from Truth & Living without Regrets](#)]

## **Contemplation**

*You can really only make decisions when you accept the situation. In acceptance, the situation belongs to your wholeness, your completeness, and the decision comes out of this global perspective. There's nothing passive about this accepting. It is ultimate alertness. And the decision that results is an action, not a reaction.*

*(Jean Klein, Ease of Being)*