

## **DECISION MAKING: 2 APPROACHES**

### ***The more traditional guidelines:***

Do your homework and fully explore the various options. This includes both reviewing your self-assessment results (personality, values, interests, skills) and researching options so that you don't decide prematurely – before you have enough relevant information on which to base your decision.

Don't worry about making one sole and final decision. Very few decisions are irreversible or lifelong. People mature and change as do people's goals. Don't feel guilty or ashamed about changing your goals – they must adapt to the changes that you make in your life.

Decision making is a skill that can be learned, developed or improved. Refer below to the set of principles for a cognitive approach to decision making.

Take the first step, not allowing fear, apathy or procrastination to get in your way. If you do, it is more likely that you will be stuck in the mire indefinitely.

Logical/cognitive decision making involves several basic steps:

- Be clear about the object of the decision and set a goal and several objectives.
- Explore and evaluate the resources available to achieve your goal.
- Define your alternatives.
- Evaluate the possible outcomes, considering both the opportunities and risks, both the pros and cons, of each alternative.
- Acknowledge the trade-offs that will have to be made.
- Make the decision based on a combination of the information you have gathered and your trusted instincts.

*Adapted from handout by Rachelle Cohn*

### ***The four paradoxical principles:***

- **Be Focused and Flexible about what you Want**

Will help you create your goals and discover new ones.  
What you want now may not be what you want then.

- **Be Aware and Wary of what you Know**

Will help you appraise knowing and appreciate not knowing.  
What you know may need to become unknown.

- **Be Realistic and Optimistic about what you Believe**

Will help you realize your beliefs influence your reality and your behavior.  
Believing is seeing is doing.

- **Be Practical and Magical about what you Do**

Will help you use both your head and your heart in deciding.  
What you do to decide is up to you; just do it.

*Adapted from "Creative Decision Making"  
by H.B. Gelatt and Carol Gelatt*