

## **Recovering sound decision-making – solution focused strategies for coping**

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Before making a decision, big or small, we use some sort of reasoning technique usually weighing the pros and cons. In some cases we tend to follow a feeling or a sensation, at other times we use common sense to resolve an issue or take someone's advice. Regardless what technique we choose in a specific situation in the end there is one universal experience we all share and that is coping with the consequences. Coping can be affected by many factors, e.g.: our cultural heritage, social standing, and other deep individual experiences or our different personalities. In the next eight weeks, I intend to introduce various aspects of decision-making that can shape your understanding of how we usually arrive to a decision. These interactive workshops will consist of theme-oriented talks and step-by-step group work to explore the thinking process. The title "recovering sound decision-making" aims to take our personal processes apart to make us more aware how our thinking works while intends to equip participants with "how to" skills for those life defining decisions we all have to call at certain points in our lives. Therefore a commitment in behalf of the candidate-participant is a key element. Only consider taking part in this "recovering process" if you are able to attend most of the occasions. Keep in mind that the multicultural flavor found on-campus will certainly enrich the discussions and deepen the understanding of where we come from in terms of coping.

### **Proposed topics:**

1. Dimensions of reality – personal reality and choices
2. Defining "change" – decision making moments in life
3. Assessment of available resources - my learned techniques and personal beliefs
4. Approach to life – influence on the quality of decisions we make (mental states and their effects)
5. Influencing sub-factors – attention breakers and the rest
6. How can I distinguish superficial from "deep matter" – the fundamentals of critical thinking
7. Assessing risk taking behaviors and creative decision making
8. Arriving to balance – harmony with one's inner self and others

### **Questions we attempt to answer specifically during the workshop:**

- What methods of decision-making do I use?
- Where do they come from? (Am I a carbon-copy or an unique/original being?)
- Where are my own personal recourses?
- What kinds of mini games do I use to avert responsibility?
- What percentages of my decisions do not really work in terms of outcome?
- How do I cope and what influences specifically my coping?
- How and to what extent does my coping affect others in my network?
- What factors can enhance my authenticity?
- How can I prepare in advance for making big decisions in my life?

### **Theoretical framework:**

- Solution focused strategies – existentialist approach
- Cognitive-behavior construct
- Schema domains
- Single-tasking & critical thinking theories
- Value centered approach – where students are given tools and a nurturing environment to investigate their relationship to life issues.

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