



IS YOUR MIND YOUR FRIEND?

12 PRINCIPLES FOR CLARITY OF
THOUGHT AND PEACE OF MIND

“Even as more people flock to therapy, U.S. mental health is getting worse by multiple metrics.”

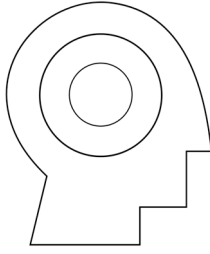
TIME Magazine, Aug 2023

TARUN GULATI

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AND PEACE OF MIND

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“Contemplation is the Mother of Clarity.”

“If you live your life largely looking outward and not inward, then you aren’t deeply connected with yourself, so you lack internal clarity, so you may tend to make choices that seem exciting in the short run but may not be right for your long-term peace of mind. This leads to stress, anxiety and restlessness. “

“The solution is to spend some time in Contemplation, alone, in silence, on the Adios principles. This helps you think more clearly, so you can find the answers that are right for you, without depending on anyone else, for the rest of your life. If you train your inner counselor, you will never need to depend on an external one.”

This book is dedicated to clarity of thought and peace of mind.

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PART ONE:
INTRODUCTION

1. HOW TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES?

YOUR GOAL IS NOT the pursuit of happiness. It is the pursuit of peace of mind. The method to get there is Contemplation.

As you go through various phases of your life, you might play multiple roles over the years - you might be a student, friend, partner, team member, business owner, leader, parent, child, believer, creator, and many more. In each of these roles, you might need to make decisions. In some of these roles, your decisions might be so important that they could shape the very quality of your life.

The quality of your life depends on how you feel. If you feel good, the quality of your life is good. If you don't feel good, the quality of your life is not so good. The question then is, how would you like to feel? If you want to feel fulfilled, purposeful and peaceful, you need to make choices that can help you feel that way. To make those choices, there are two prerequisites:

1. You need to be deeply connected with yourself, so you know yourself very well; and
2. You need your own personal, customized method or system that can help you make those right choices.

Since these choices are about your life, if you don't know yourself deeply, how will you know what is good for you, what makes you fulfilled and peaceful? You may know what you want, but what you want may not necessarily be good for your long-term fulfillment or peace of mind. Hence, a deep connection with yourself is necessary. But that is not sufficient.

You also need a personal method or system that helps you make the right choices - choices that are right for you specifically, even though they may not be right for someone else. This personal method helps you choose between various alternatives - should I do this or that - and select the one that will make you most fulfilled and peaceful.

Also, only having a deep connection without a system that tells you how to make the right choice is not sufficient because without that system, your inner connection might only amplify the wrong voice inside of you and get you to make the wrong decision. Again. Unless you have a filter that specifically says, - Does this choice make me more peaceful, or will it take away my peace of mind? - the process isn't complete.

So, to make the right choices, the two prerequisites are:

- a deep connection with yourself, and
- a personal system that helps you make the right choices.

BUT WHAT COULD BE THE PROBLEM?

The problem is that we live in a world that is extremely noisy and distracting, a world that is scientifically designed to keep your attention outside most of the time. If you live your life largely looking outward and not looking inward, you may not be able to create a deep connection with yourself. If you are not deeply connected with yourself, you may not have created your personal system or method to make the right choices, not

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because you cannot create it, but because you have been too busy looking outward. You might be paying too much attention to what is happening in the external world - what others are doing, saying, etc. - rather than looking inward and having a regular dialogue with yourself on what would make your life fulfilling, purposeful and peaceful.

If you live your life largely focused on the outside, you might tend to make choices that seem exciting in the short run but are not right for you in the long run. You may make your choices based on impulse, emotion, or imitation. They may make you feel good in the moment but diminish your long-term peace of mind. You may say something to someone that you shouldn't just because you react emotionally. You may do something just because many others around you are doing it, without asking if it will make you feel peaceful in the long run. You may make wrong decisions about your partner, work, children or other important aspects in your life.

If you live largely looking outward, you can create an exciting life, an adventurous life, a wealthy life, a famous life, perhaps. But a fulfilling, purposeful and peaceful life? Difficult. Since the world is designed to pull and keep your attention outside constantly, you need to invest specific energy and effort to counter that and turn your attention inward. You need a method that will train you to stop focusing outward, turn inward and create a deep connection with yourself.

That method is Contemplation.

A regular habit of Contemplation will help you achieve the first prerequisite for making the right choices - a deep connection with yourself.

To achieve the second prerequisite - a personal method and system to make the right choices - this book will provide you with a few principles using which you will be able to construct

your own personal system of making choices that are right for you. This system is personal, very specific to you because you will construct it using the priorities, phase and architecture of your own life. Your system can be very different from mine, or your best friend's system, or the system of someone successful that you admire, even though all of us are using the same underlying principles. This is because the choices that you make will be very specific to your life, and only you know how something makes you feel. Only you can decide whether something makes you more peaceful or less peaceful. No one else can.

Not only might your choices be different from other people, but they might also be different from your own choices depending upon your phase of life. Even within your own system, you might make a particular choice today, but at another time in your life, for the same situation, you might make a very different choice because your phase of life might have changed, your circumstances might be different. That is why it is important to have your own personal, customized system that works for your life specifically.

If you train your inner counselor, you may never need to depend on an external one. Using these two tools - Contemplation and your personal method of making choices - you can find the answers to any questions that might arise in your life. These questions could be mundane - should I do the laundry, should we buy this television, what should I wear, what music should I listen to, or they could be profound - what is my life's vision, how should I do meaningful work, should I be in a relationship, should I have kids, how should I raise my child well, etc.

Contemplation of these principles will help you find your answers to many important questions in your life.

A regular habit of Contemplation will help you create and maintain a deep connection with yourself, and the principles will help you create your personal system of making the right choices -

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your own decision-making framework - that you can use in any dimension of your life, for the rest of your life.

To recap, the quality of your life depends on how you feel. If you wish to feel fulfilled, purposeful and peaceful, you need to make choices that make you feel that way. To make the right choices, you need a deep connection with yourself and a system to make the right choice in each situation. Contemplation helps you create a deep connection with yourself, and the principles will help you create your own system to make the right choices. Make the right choices, and you will create a fulfilled, purposeful, and peaceful life.

WHY DO YOU NEED A PERSONAL DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK?

A personal system or framework helps you think through matters in a systematic manner and make the decisions that are right for you in the long term. Without such a system, you might make decisions impulsively or based on an untrained instinct, sometimes merely based on what feels good at the moment, or at other times by getting unduly influenced by someone else or by imitating others just because many people seem to be doing a particular thing.

Making impulsive decisions without thinking through well could be considered normal today. But merely because it is normal - merely because many people do it that way, does not necessarily mean that it is the right way to do it. A unanimous decision is just that - a unanimous decision. It is not necessarily a correct decision. Just because everyone has agreed on something does not necessarily mean that they have agreed on the right thing.

To make decisions that are right for you, you need your own, customized decision-making framework that contains your

personal set of lenses through which you can examine every decision - personal or professional - and make only those decisions that are right for you in that phase in life. They may not be right for someone else, but that does not matter. Your colleague, neighbor or friend may not agree with you. But the question is, have you thought through it well, using your own framework? Your decision must be right for you because the outcome will affect your peace of mind, not someone else's. That is what matters.

'What should I do in this scenario' is a very important question, the answer to which can sometimes change the course of your life dramatically. If you choose a wrong partner, behave wrongly with the right partner, choose the wrong work or organization, maintain a wrong attitude about your work, choose to live in the wrong place, fail to create a healthy environment for your kids, surround yourself with wrong friends or colleagues, you may never get to live a fulfilled, purposeful, and peaceful life. That is true for a very large number of people in the world today.

That is why it is important that you have your own, personalized decision-making system that helps you think clearly in each scenario, so you make the right choices. In all the above scenarios and many more, you need to make decisions on a regular basis. If you don't have your own inner compass clearly guiding you, you might tend to make decisions in a hurry or be influenced by what your friend or colleague is doing in that situation. You may not consider whether it is good for your own fulfillment and long-term peace of mind. Having your own system keeps you on the right track.

The method outlined in this book will help you create that personalized decision-making system for yourself. That method is called ADIOS - A Dialogue In Objective Silence, because that is what it is. It is a dialogue that you have with yourself, objectively, in silence.

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The ADIOS framework combines the skill of Contemplation and certain Adios principles to help you create a personalized decision-making system for yourself. By following the ADIOS method, you will improve your clarity of thought and make such choices that leave you more peaceful. Having a clear mind isn't enough. A violent husband, a cheating wife, an unethical businessman or a toxic boss might also possess extreme clarity in their mind as to what they are about to do. But the quality of that clarity should be such that it leads to a more peaceful mind. If you fail that test, if your clarity leads to you becoming more restless or less peaceful eventually, that is the wrong kind of clarity of thought.

ADIOS has 'peace of mind' as the ultimate objective of all decisions you make. So, you find solutions or answers to critical situations or questions in your life by practicing regular Contemplation on the ADIOS principles, but those solutions or answers must be such that make you more peaceful. As you think through your questions, you use the ADIOS principles as your personalized system of making the right choices and based on what makes you more or less peaceful, you might sometimes decide to change your actions or thoughts to make them more aligned with your overall inner peace. Once you practice and apply the principles for a few days and make your choices accordingly, at home and outside, you start to notice a conspicuous feeling of lasting peace inside of you.

Peace of mind is a skill, just like riding a bicycle or playing a musical instrument - you can learn it by using certain principles and practicing them for some time. Adios teaches you, slowly, step by step, how to understand your thoughts, observe the resulting actions, and notice the impact of those thoughts and actions on your peace of mind.

Once you have understood the Adios principles and acquired a habit of Contemplation to think deeply about them, you have

learned the skill of keeping your mind peaceful. Remember, peace of mind is a skill that you can learn and improve with practice. You first understand the principles that help you think more clearly and in a manner that leads to a more peaceful mind, and then you apply them to your daily life. Contemplation is the tool you use to engrave these principles on your mind, and to analyze important life situations or find answers and insights you are looking for in a particular situation, personal or professional. So, while this will help you find answers to your personal questions, it will also help you get better at the work you do.

By consistently applying the Adios method for a few weeks, you will slowly build your own set of personal lenses through which you can look at any, and I mean any, situation in life, and be absolutely clear as to what you are supposed to do, and not supposed to do, and why. You will construct your own personal moral compass that will guide you at various junctures on your journey. In many instances, you will have your answer even before you have asked your question - a very powerful mental state to be in. This will happen for sure. Very naturally. It is just a matter of time and some practice.

ROLES IN LIFE

You would need to make decisions in many roles you might play in your life. Some decisions could define the very direction your life might take in the future, while others might not be so profound but still be important.

Student

As a student, there are many decisions you will have to make, from choosing your academic focus to deciding where to study and which institution to attend. With so many options available, it can be challenging to know where to start.

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You may need to consider various factors, such as the quality of education offered, the reputation of the institution, the location and cost of living, and the potential career opportunities available in your chosen field. Once you have chosen your course of study and institution, you will need to make decisions about how to prioritize your time and focus on developing skills and experiences that will help you achieve your career goals.

After studying, you may need to decide whether to pursue further education or enter the workforce. If you choose the latter, you will have to consider which organizations and roles best align with your interests and qualifications. This may involve researching companies, networking with professionals in your field, and weighing various factors such as salary, location, and company culture.

As a student, it is normal to feel overwhelmed by these decisions, but by using Contemplation on the Adios principles and adequate research in the respective matter, you can make informed choices that not only set you up for success in your academic and professional life, but also ensure that you live a fulfilling, meaningful and peaceful life. A fairly high number of people choose to study or work in a domain that is not right for them and pay for this dearly through lack of fulfillment most of their life. Contemplation will help you avoid making such mistakes.

Business Leader

As a business leader, one major concern may be deciding on the right product or service to offer and developing a strategy to bring it to the market successfully. The skill of Contemplation enables you to think deeply and find hidden insights. It will help you look closely at what you do, identify your key strengths, and understand the uniqueness of your business so you can differentiate and position yourself in a noisy, competitive market.

It is very tempting to do what many others are doing, in a manner that many others are doing, but that may not add any real value to the customer. After many months of consistent but mindless busyness, you might realize that you don't really have anything unique or even useful, and that might lead to an uncomfortable feeling of hollowness within - What am I really doing? How will we survive if we have nothing useful to offer? Contemplation and the Adios principles will help you find the right answers to these and many other questions.

You may have concerns related to hiring and retaining the right team members, particularly if you are operating with limited resources. This may require you to consider your company culture, values, and vision, and to create an inspiring workplace that attracts and retains top talent. A leader passionate about their non-financial vision has a much better probability of attracting and retaining the right people. Contemplation will not only help you gain clarity about your values and purpose but also provide you with the conviction you need to present them to your current and future employees and partners.

You may need to raise financial resources to support your business, such as securing funding from investors or bank loans. A deep connection with yourself will help you choose the right financial partners, rather than rushing into that decision and choosing someone who might look more attractive today but may not be aligned with your values and vision. If you don't feel energized and feel that you are strongly aligned when you speak with them, you should think twice before saying yes. Contemplation will help you slow down, go deep within, and understand how you really feel about the partnership, so you don't make a wrong choice. A wrong investor could change everything. The same goes for the right investor. In some cases, you might even settle for a lower valuation because you see a better match in terms of values and non-financial vision. The Adios principles will ensure you don't make such decisions in a hurry.

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You may need to develop an appropriate product and marketing strategy. Using Contemplation strategically, you can find the voice for your product that your sales and marketing strategy can follow. Your go-to-market strategy can also be very specific to your own long-term vision. In a noisy world, it is tempting and easier to follow what someone else is doing. But if you don't find your own unique voice, it will come back to bite you, eventually. Contemplation will help you find your uniqueness. It will help you unlock your you.

If this sounds too simplistic and theoretical, ask yourself - how much time do you and your leadership team spend each week doing nothing but only thinking deeply about the uniqueness of your business? If you don't put in the effort, do not expect a result.

Partner

As a partner in a relationship, there may be several decisions to make. The first is deciding on the right person to be your partner, and then developing a strong and healthy relationship with them.

You must identify your personal values and priorities and find someone who shares them. If you choose someone based on superficial factors or to quickly fill a void in your life, the relationship may bring more misery than joy. Before you find your partner, you must find yourself. If you don't know who you are, what you really want, and who you want it with, you might choose the wrong person. Multiple times. Contemplation of the Adios principles will help you think about what would make you feel fulfilled and peaceful in a relationship, what kind of partner might enhance or reduce your peace of mind and what you really value in that relationship.

Once you are in a relationship, maintaining a fulfilling and happy relationship will also require some thought and energy.

Choices must be made each day in terms of what to say, do and what not to. Contemplation will help you make the right choices. The Adios principles will help you keep your cool in challenging situations, which might be important to maintain the relationship in the long term. Internal clarity helps you focus on what really matters - care, love, attention and respect - to maintain the warmth in your relationship.

Parent

As a parent, you may have concerns about various aspects of your child's life. You might want them to grow up with the right values so they can live a peaceful life. It's natural to feel concerned if your child displays worrisome behaviors like aggression or unnecessary rebellion. You might be concerned about them falling into bad company. This could be due to what they see at home, the kind of friends they have at school or the type of online activities they engage in. Unless you possess clarity of thought about your values and the kind of environment you wish to give your child, such problems are difficult to handle and, if not handled well at the right time, can have long-term negative consequences.

Many parents struggle with finding the right balance between work and family life. You may worry that you're not spending enough quality time with your children. This is quite common, especially in larger cities where people struggle to balance their stressful jobs with their family responsibilities. Contemplation will help you find that right balance. You might also tend to negatively compare yourself with other parents or your child with other children and feel bad about their upbringing. The Adios principles will help you think through such issues clearly and find the right answers.

Effective communication with your children is crucial, and it's common to have concerns about it. You might worry about understanding their needs or expressing your thoughts and feel-

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ings in a way they can comprehend and connect with. There could be issues around growing irritability or aggression in their communication. This can also be very relevant and sensitive depending upon the age of the child. The Adios principles will help you think clearly in such situations and apply them in your daily life when you speak to your kids, partner and others at home, so you maintain the right environment for your kids.

Doubts about your parenting style can also arise often. You may question whether you're being too strict or too lenient. You and your partner might have very different backgrounds and hence different parenting styles that you might need to balance. Trying to always project your approach as the best may not be the best way to deal with such situations. Contemplation will help you remain calm and think deeply about the right solution so you can continue to maintain a healthy relationship with your partner as well as your child. Questions such as 'Am I being a good parent?' or 'Are we meeting our child's emotional and physical needs in the best way possible?' can also come up frequently. Your internal clarity of thought is very important in such scenarios. The Adios principles will ensure that you focus on looking inward to find your answers rather than getting unduly influenced by the external world while making your choices.

By practicing Contemplation on the Adios principles, you will also be motivated to personally embody the qualities of calmness and peace of mind so you can create the right environment for your child. A child learns a lot from what is happening around them. They are significantly influenced by the way their parents behave on a regular basis at home. Living a life that feels fulfilling, purposeful and peaceful is the best way to enable your child to set up a peaceful life for themselves. You can't do it for them, no matter how badly you wish you could. Only they can do it, with their own mind. So then what can you do as a parent? How can you help?

If they are going to define their life using their own mind, you can help by training their mind in the right direction by creating an environment of self-reflection, prioritizing long-term peace of mind over short-term excitement and by demonstrating these qualities by living them yourself. If they watch you use profanity regularly, but you give them a dead moral stare saying “Language!” when they use a bad word, that isn’t going to help. You will lack credibility in their eyes, whether they tell you this or not. You need to lead the way through your actions.

Respect cannot be demanded. It must be earned through your actions. Contemplation will help you do that.

Life is, in essence, feeling. How you feel determines the quality of your life. How you feel depends largely upon what you do, say, and think. If you aren’t deeply connected with yourself and don’t know what really makes you fulfilled and peaceful, you might make the wrong decisions. If you make wrong decisions in the roles you play in your life, you may not feel very peaceful.

WHY MUST CONTEMPLATION BE THE BASIS OF YOUR DECISIONS?

Our ultimate objective is to live a fulfilling, purposeful, and peaceful life. To do that, you must be deeply connected with yourself. The world might encourage you to mostly look outward and not inward, because of which you might lose touch with yourself. If you are not connected with yourself on a regular basis, creating a fulfilling and peaceful life is quite difficult. Contemplation helps you create and maintain that connection with yourself, so you can create a life that is worthwhile.

Life entails a series of decisions almost every day. Hence, the quality of your life - peaceful or restless, fulfilling or wanting, meaningful or shallow - will also depend on the quality of these decisions you make daily.

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If you make decisions using a distracted mind, one that mostly looks outward into the world, is restless and lacks clarity, your decisions will most likely not be right for you - they will not lead to long-term peace of mind. The world continues to present more and more avenues to distract you and keep your attention outside. Contemplation is the method to safeguard yourself from this continuous onslaught of distraction and restlessness. The Adios principles will help you make decisions that make you more peaceful, the ones that are right for you.

What you see many people around you do quite often may not necessarily be right for you. It might be right for them, but not for you. Sometimes, it is not even right for them, but they do it anyway because they haven't thought about it deeply.

You must.

Focus on the inside before you take a plunge into the outside. Let Contemplation be the basis for all your decisions that matter.

What could go wrong if you make wrong decisions? A lot. As you read through these examples, think about whether they apply to your life or someone you care about.

John stood at the edge of the cliff, watching the waves crash against the rocks far below. He was a student, just out of college, and he had made some wrong choices in his life.

He had always been a bright student, with a head full of ideas and a heart full of dreams. But when it came time to choose a stream of study, he was unsure. John had looked at the various options, but nothing had really resonated with him. In the end, he had chosen a course in business management, thinking it was the safe and sensible option.

But as he sat through his classes, he felt increasingly bored and uninterested. He found himself daydreaming about other things, about the adventures he could be having if he wasn't stuck in a

classroom. He started skipping classes, and soon enough, he had fallen behind in his studies.

As graduation approached, John began to panic. He didn't know what he wanted to do after college, and he felt like he had wasted his time and money on a degree that he didn't care about. He started frantically searching for jobs, sending out countless resumes and attending job fairs. But nothing seemed to fit.

Eventually, he took a job at a small company in a city he didn't know much about. He hoped that it would be a fresh start, a chance to reinvent himself and find his place in the world. But he quickly realized that he had made another mistake. The job was boring and unfulfilling, and he struggled to make friends in a new place.

As the weeks turned into months, John began to feel trapped. He had made so many wrong choices, and he didn't know how to get back on track. He felt like he was standing at the edge of a cliff, with nowhere to go.

John looked down at the waves below, and for a moment, he thought about jumping. But then he closed his eyes and took a deep breath. He knew that he couldn't keep making the wrong choices forever. It was time to find clarity.

He opened his eyes and turned away from the edge of the cliff. He didn't know where his path would lead him, but he knew that he had to start somewhere.

Joan's passion for graphic design had always driven her. She knew that starting her own business would not be an easy task. Despite this, she was ready to take on the challenges and make her dream a reality.

As she started her business, Joan quickly realized that she had a lot to learn.

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"What sets me apart from other graphic designers?" Joan pondered.

"How can I position myself to attract the clients I want to work with?"

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sound of her phone ringing. It was a potential client who had found her website online. Joan was excited but nervous. She knew this was her chance to prove her worth as a professional graphic designer.

During the phone call, the client asked about Joan's experience and pricing. Joan spoke too much, way too fast, stumbled over her words and ultimately failed to communicate her value clearly. She sounded desperate. It happened again the next day, and the next. The clients were hesitant, and Joan could sense it. Something was clearly missing. She had to figure this out.

Paul was passionate about his business idea and was determined to bring it to life. He knew exactly what he wanted to create, and he had assembled a team of talented individuals to help him meet his goals. However, he soon realized that his hiring process had been a significant mistake.

Paul's mistake was clear, and he voiced it to his mentor, "I have realized that I have made a mistake in the hiring process. I hired people too quickly only on the basis of their intelligence and where they had worked earlier, but some of them did not share our vision and values. This has created an unhealthy culture where making money has now become the primary purpose. The employees have become transactional in their conversations, sometimes even hostile enough to threaten resignation if their unreasonable financial needs are not met. We are clearly headed for a disaster."

His mentor nodded in agreement, and Paul knew that he had to make changes if his business was to succeed. He had to focus on hiring people who shared his passion and values, even if

they were less experienced than other candidates in certain roles.

Paul knew this was important if he had to create an inspiring institution that his team members would be proud to be a part of.

Emily and her partner Steve had been together for over a year when Steve started to notice a concerning pattern in her behavior. Emily loved to party and drink, often to excess, which led to her neglecting her responsibilities and commitments. Steve tried to talk to her about it, expressing his concerns and hopes for their future, but Emily always dismissed his worries and replied, "I'm still young. I need to live a little! I'll get to work and responsibilities later. Right now, I just want to have fun!"

As time went on, Steve found himself increasingly frustrated with her behavior. He loved her and wanted to build a future with her, but he knew that her wild lifestyle would not be conducive to a healthy and responsible relationship, let alone raising a child together.

"Emily, I'm worried about you," he said to her one day. "I love you, but I can't keep watching you neglect your responsibilities and commitments. It's not fair to me, and it's not fair to yourself."

Emily listened, but she didn't take his words seriously. She continued staying out late regularly and drinking excessively, even when it started to negatively affect their relationship.

Eventually, Steve was exhausted. He had tried enough, but he knew that he couldn't continue to be with someone who didn't share his values and wasn't willing to make changes for the better.

"I'm sorry, Emily," he said as he ended the relationship. "I care about you, but I can't be with someone who doesn't take responsibility for their actions and neglects their commitments. It seems

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your personal lifestyle is more important to you than our relationship so I think I should leave you to it. I wish you love and luck, but it is best that we go our separate ways."

Emily was heartbroken. She couldn't believe what had just happened. She was devastated, but deep down, she knew that her partner was right.

If you lack internal clarity and do not know what will make you feel more fulfilled, what will make your work meaningful and what will make you more peaceful, then you might make wrong decisions in your personal and professional life.

HOW CAN ADIOS HELP YOU?

ADIOS stands for A Dialogue In Objective Silence. It is a dialogue that you have with yourself, objectively, in silence. When you train yourself in Contemplation on the Adios principles, you are essentially training yourself to become closer to yourself. You are taking a journey back to yourself, a journey you perhaps forgot to take because you were too busy with the outside world. You must be one with yourself on the inside so you can make the right decisions on the outside.

The Adios method trains you to think deeply about matters that matter to you. You analyze them and try finding answers to your questions by thinking deeply about the Adios principles.

The Adios framework is based on peace of mind as the objective. You practice making such decisions that lead to a more peaceful state of mind, not decisions that provide short-term excitement, advantage or pleasure. When you train yourself in this manner for a period of time, you develop the skill to find answers to all your questions on your own, without relying on anyone else, and you know which answers are right for you and the ones that are not.

The Adios approach is - if you train your inner counselor, you will never need to depend on an external one. Contemplation on the Adios principles will help you do that. You will learn these principles in the chapters that follow.

There are two primary problems today:

1. People are more restless and distracted. They are spending much more time looking outward and very little time looking inward.
2. Many people do not have a well-defined, written down set of internal guidelines to refer to before making a personal or professional decision.

Combine the two, and you get:

- someone who is trying to make decisions almost daily
- but with a restless mind, mostly looking outward, and
- does not have an internal reference point to draw the right guidance from.

This leads to you making some wrong choices based on looking at what others are doing (who themselves may not be very clear and peaceful), or on the basis of impulse, emotion or short-term satisfaction rather than what will make you peaceful in the long run. This eventually leads to an agitated mind, and sometimes stress, anxiety or worse.

We do not have a mental health problem in the world. We have a mental clarity problem.

Other than those who might have a medical condition and need clinical intervention, for most other people, confusion, anxiety, and an uneasy mind are the result of a lack of clarity. Most people are not unwell. They are unclear. Most modern stress is due to the two problems mentioned above.

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That is actually a good thing. Because the solution then is not as hard as it is made out to be. Clarity of thought and peace of mind are skills that can be learned, much like playing a musical instrument or riding a bicycle. You don't have to be gifted. You don't have to be a genius. You can learn them, practice them, and master them and create a fulfilling, purposeful and peaceful life for yourself.

This book will show you how.

As you read, please work with me. Please break down your thoughts and actions you might carry out during your day, analyze them, and think about them for a few minutes each day. Think about specific questions or situations in your life that are important that you want to find an answer to or resolve. You will learn certain principles and tools that will enable you to think more clearly and create a more peaceful state of mind. As you read this book, use these principles to find answers to the questions or situations in your life.

We will use the Adios framework to do this. Adios stands for A Dialogue In Objective Silence. It is a system that trains you:

- i. To improve your clarity of thought,
- ii. Using that clarity of thought, make such decisions that lead to a more peaceful state of mind, and
- iii. To be able to do this on your own, independently, without relying on anyone else, forever.

If you train your inner counselor, you will never need to depend on an external one. This book will show you how to become completely independent in making your own decisions. You can take inputs and guidance from others when needed, but you will train yourself to take all that external information and use Contemplation on the Adios principles to find your own answer, the answer that is right for you, in your current phase of life.

These could be questions relating to your education, work, relationships, parenting, self-growth, finances, retirement, or any other dimension in your life. The questions could be mundane or profound. The goal is to enable you to find all the answers, on your own, forever. And only such answers that will make your life more peaceful, not more restless, in the long run overall.

I say “overall” because certain actions might reduce your peace of mind in the short run to achieve larger peace of mind in the long run. You will make these decisions on your own, including deciding whether you wish to sacrifice your peace of mind in the short term to gain a much longer-term peace of mind.

I will not provide you with any answers to your specific life situations, because I cannot. No one really can. It is your life, only you will live it and feel it, so only you must find that right answer – the answer that is right for you. This book will instead train you to think deeply so you can make the decisions that you believe are right for you, and make those decisions on your own, independently, without relying on anyone else, forever. And also take responsibility for the consequences of those decisions.

This is not difficult. It might take a few days of practice, but it is not difficult. Commit to practicing the Adios system for 10 minutes each day, for at least three days a week. If you do that, you will start to see a conspicuous difference in about three weeks.

I have personally practiced, experimented with, and experienced the tools in this book for more than 15,000 hours over the last 15 years consciously, and subconsciously for over 25 years. The Adios principles you will learn come from my endless hours of thinking deeply, observing my own actions and what impact they have on my peace of mind, observing others, making changes in my behavior to test whether it improves my peace of mind, and training countless other people. It is an ongoing process that continues every day. As I try these experiments, and

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many more, I make my own customizations. You will too. That is the goal. You need to take these tools and make them your own.

It is your life. It is your decision.

Never believe. Not me. Not anyone else. Try it yourself and see if it helps you.

Experiment. Experience. Evaluate.

Resolve to work with yourself for about ten minutes a day each day. Resolve to create a deeper connection with yourself, a connection that will stay forever. Resolve to become your best friend, forever.

I suggest you read this book in the following manner. If you wish, read it cover to cover once so you understand what it is about. Then read it again, but this time, read it very slowly, deliberately, over a few weeks, focusing on specific chapters each week and practicing those principles. If you prefer a more guided and systematic approach, you can read it while also going through the online Adios Contemplation Program on www.adiosworld.com.

For the next few days, I propose a division of labor. I will focus on training you. You focus on practicing what we discuss for 10 mins each day. I will be true to my word. You be true to yours.

Let us begin.

CHAPTER TAKEAWAYS:

- Your goal is not the pursuit of happiness. It is the pursuit of peace of mind. Contemplation of the Adios principles is the method to get there.
- You need your own personal decision-making system so you can make decisions that are right for you, that make you feel more fulfilled and peaceful.

- Adios principles help you create your own personal decision-making system.
- Without Contemplation, you may tend to focus outward and make decisions based on external influence. These decisions may not be right for you.
- You need to make critical decisions in various dimensions of your life - education, relationship, parenting, work. Use the Adios principles to make the right decisions.
- Experiment, experience and evaluate. Try Contemplation on the Adios principles yourself and assess what impact it has on your peace of mind.



2. CLARITY AND PEACE

Let us be clear about what we are trying to do. Recall the two primary problems:

1. People are more restless and distracted. They are spending much more time looking outward and very little time looking inward.
2. Many people do not have a well-defined, written down set of internal guidelines - a personal decision-making system - to refer to before making a personal or professional decision.

This process of decision-making, where you focus mostly on the outside and very little on the inside, leads to you making choices that may not necessarily be right for you. Because you are not deeply connected with yourself, you might tend to make your choices by imitating others. What others do influences you a lot more if you lack internal clarity. Your internal voice is missing, but you still need to make a decision, and you are looking outside most of the time. So, the only influence you have is external.

You might look at a successful business leader and think – I should be doing that too. You might look at another parent and

say, – I should do what she does for her child. You might look at your boss who always carries a serious and angry attitude and think – That is what being professional means so I should be like him. You might look at your classmate many years later and think - they are more successful than I am, so I am a failure. You might look at someone else’s partner and say – Mine should be like them.

Maybe you are right. But maybe you are not, and you are only getting unduly influenced by the external environment. It helps to be sure as to what you really want, and also to be sure what you want is actually good for your long-term peace of mind.

Once you have thought through your options, the decision is always yours. It is your life. Only you know best how you would like to live it. Only you know what will make you feel peaceful. It is just that sometimes you might not have thought through things in the right manner for a sufficient amount of time, so you might make a decision that pleases you in the short run but does not bring peace in the long run. You may not have run your decisions through your personal, customized decision-making system.

Over the next few pages, you will learn to create such a personal decision-making framework for yourself.

Let us restate our objective:

- i. To achieve better clarity of thought,
- ii. Using that clarity of thought, make such decisions that lead to a more peaceful mind, and
- iii. To be able to find all your answers on your own, independently, without relying on anyone else, forever.

Keep these objectives before you at all times as you undertake this journey. Our goal is to see a conspicuous, measurable positive difference in your state of mind over the next few weeks.

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So, as you start practicing these methods, ask yourself every few days:

- i. Did I practice for at least ten minutes almost every day?
- ii. Have I done this for at least the last three weeks consistently?
- iii. Do I see any improvement in my clarity of thought and peace of mind?
- iv. Do I see any improvement in my ability to make such decisions that will make me more peaceful?
- v. Do I believe I will be able to find all my answers on my own in such a manner that makes me more peaceful, if I were to practice these methods regularly?

We have spoken about two primary problems above. How will we solve those two problems?

The first problem is spending too much time and energy looking outside, and very little looking inward. We will solve this problem by training you in a regular habit of Contemplation.

The second problem is not having a well-defined set of internal guidelines to follow before you decide, personal or professional, mundane or profound. We will solve this problem by providing you with a set of Adios principles and tools that will help you construct your own set of personal guidelines, your own decision-making system, that you will use before making a decision.

Please remember these two steps. Add them to your notes and put a box around them. You will follow this process throughout this book. One, train yourself in regular Contemplation. Two, learn a set of principles on which you can contemplate to make the right decisions in your life.

You will use two other tools during this process – your Vision Planner and the Adioscope. We will explain these as we go along.

What should you expect? When you have practiced the Adios system for some time, you would have become accustomed to regular Contemplation, and you would have a decision-making framework of your own that will help you make your decisions in such a manner that makes you more peaceful. You may not have become a master yet, but that is just a matter of time and more practice. So, what should you expect? You should expect:

- i. better clarity of thought,
- ii. using that clarity of thought, being able to make such decisions that lead to a more peaceful mind, and
- iii. being able to find all your answers independently, on your own, without relying on anyone else, forever.

You should find yourself becoming more thoughtful about what makes you more peaceful and what takes away your peace of mind. You should find yourself choosing thoughts and actions that make you more peaceful. You should find a few of these principles hovering on your mind as you go about your day.

To achieve the above, this is what you need:

- A regular practice of Contemplation, and
- Contemplation on the Adios principles to make your decisions thoughtfully.

Let us now understand what Contemplation is. Then we will explain the Adios principles in detail.

CHAPTER TAKEAWAYS:

- The two key problems today are living your life looking outward and the absence of a personal decision-making system. Contemplation will help you look inward and

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the Adios principles will help you create your personal decision-making system.

- When you practice this for a few weeks, you will notice a conspicuous improvement in your clarity of thought. You will clearly understand what makes you more peaceful vs less peaceful. You will make your choices in alignment with what brings you long-term peace of mind.

