

The Soft Road

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HOW CAN I BE SURE? - SIX STEPS TO TRANSFORM PERSONAL DECISION MAKING

How often do you ask: *How can I be sure?* Whether out loud or simply inside your own head, and about what do you ask it? Does it pop up often, like a judge, or a referee, when you approach a choice or a decision?

How can I be sure this is the right one, the best job, the place to live, the person to commit to, the purchase to make, the food that's good for me...

How can I be sure I won't regret this, how can I be sure they won't change, the job won't get better, that I'm not better off staying where I am, that I won't look a fool...

It's a great leveller, this seemingly innocent question. It affects almost everyone, no matter how strong, how successful, how confident we may be.

Yet, as we dwell on it, and in it, "how can I be sure?" slows us down—not only in the process of making a particular decision, but also in the overall progress of our lives. This question, with its underlying need for certainty, has the power to chip away at our sense of self.

These **Six Steps** can help to transform our personal decision-making, releasing us from the need for certainty and from the fear of getting it wrong:

1. **You Can't Be Sure.** Let this truth set you free and save hours of procrastination. *You cannot be sure.* There are no guarantees, ever.
2. **Get Out of Your Head.** Analysis breeds paralysis. Overthinking ties us up in knots and often takes us further away from a decision. For clarity, get out of your head and engage your feelings. Sit quietly with a decision and observe how your body feels, does your energy level rise or fall?
3. **The Known is not actually the Safe Place.** Fear of future regret is the mind's way of maintaining the status quo in our lives. This is where our thoughts of "better the devil you know" are sourced. But this is not the safe place. It's where stagnation sets in, where we shrink and lose our confidence in life.
4. **Recognise This Fear:** "One is never afraid of the unknown; one is afraid of the known coming to an end." So wrote the philosopher Krishnamurti. Consider this wisdom together with the previous step. Let's exercise compassion for our fear of the known coming to an end, and choose to move beyond it. Embrace the unknown and all its possibilities.
5. **Substitute Different for Better.** How can I be sure "it" will be better? Refer to Step 1. You can't. We can, however, be sure of difference. There is no guarantee the new job will be better. There is certainty it will be different. And in some of

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the ways that it is different, it will be better. Some things could be worse, some could be similar – all will be different.

6. **Less Looking and More Leaping.** “How can I be sure” is a trap that keeps us stuck doing research, looking for clues, answers, and reassurances—all in the realm of speculation. Leap! Make a choice, take a risk, move forward with life through actions and firsthand experience. And if we don’t like where we land, we leap again.

Imagine how different life can be when we make decisions faster, more lightly. Then we make another decision based on the new information that is yielded from the previous one.

What happens when we embrace this new approach? Each individual step is powerful, and collectively they are dynamite. The cumulative and compounding effect of activating these Six Steps transforms our experience of life and releases us from fear and hesitation. It’s that significant.

“One is never afraid of the unknown; one is afraid of the known coming to an end.”

Krishnamurti

Melanie Kirkbride is an exceptional coach and master teacher of Vedic meditation who works with people to empower them to unlock their potential and thrive. [Email us](#) to enquire about Melanie’s services, and to receive her Teachings.