

# DECISIONS THAT WORK

## Objective:

- To identify steps to guide you in making decisions and living with them

## Procedure:

Approximately two weeks before the program, the Education Director should have a meeting of the Education Committee to delegate program preparation. Duplicate handout for the members.

## Program:

Ask the membership to record a "True" or "False" for each of the following statements:

1. When I have to make a decision, I never know where to begin.
2. I often miss out on things because I've waited too long to choose.
3. After I make a decision, I usually find out I could have done better.
4. It upsets me to settle for anything less than the best.
5. If I have to make a complicated decision, I can pull together the information, but then I get stuck.
6. Usually, I'm satisfied with letting someone else make the decision for me.
7. Family decisions usually turn into arguments.
8. Other members of my family have me make their decisions for them.
9. Decisions scare me because I'm always afraid I'll make a mistake.
10. After I've made a decision, I can't help worrying whether I should have done something different.

***“If you answered true to three or more of these statements, decision-making is definitely a problem for you. We usually don’t think of decision-making as a distinct activity that requires time and skill. But it is! Mastering the five steps will help you reduce the frustrations of making decisions.”***

### **“Step 1: Make A Plan**

***Decision planning means taking time to ask yourself ‘how’ before thinking about ‘which’. Knowing how you will make a final choice is an important step in avoiding plunging in too quickly without all the necessary information. Writing down all the questions associated with a decision can help you break down the size of the problem.***

### **“ Step 2: Gather Information**

***Before you can make a choice, you need to identify all your options. If you often find yourself learning about attractive possibilities after you decide, you may need to spend more time on this stage. If the perfect choice is not offered, can you negotiate it for yourself? If you find your decisions blocked because no option seems good enough, you may need to face the fact that perfection doesn’t exist and settle for the best of the ‘imperfect’ choices.***

**“Step 3: Weigh the Options**

***Your approach can be analytical or intuitive, but you must understand the value of the pros and cons. Consider your time, effort and happiness in making decisions. You can give a long list of pros in seeking a Masters degree, but you have to make a commitment to that option for it to be the right decision for you now.***

**“Step 4: Make a Selection**

***Decision-making involves two somewhat contradictory elements - opening up to possibilities and coming to closure. If you're good at the first, you may have trouble with the last. Consider going over your choices with someone who is good at choosing; hear yourself make an argument for your various choices.***

**“Step 5: Evaluate Your Decision**

***Here you can pat yourself on the back for some or all of your work. Even when you're happy with the results of your choice, most of us can see ways to do things differently the next time. It's important to learn and grow in confidence about making decisions. Remember that even whopping big errors can be corrected.”***

Divide the chapter into small groups and ask each group to use the process described to reach a decision on the type of activities that motivate the membership the most and plan two activities per month for the school year. You can use this process to evaluate the activities of the previous semester to identify the best, worth-repeating, what type of improvements are needed to bring an activity up to standards. The groups will have to meet outside of the chapter meeting to accomplish their task and report back to the chapter at the next meeting.

**Program Follow-Up:**

Have members evaluate program. Tabulate evaluations, record on Form K-87W and send to National Headquarters monthly.

## **Decisions That Work Handout: The Five-Step Plan**

- Step One:            Make a Plan**
- Step Two:           Gather Information**
- Step Three:         Weigh the Options**
- Step Four:          Make a Selection**
- Step Five:          Evaluate Your Decision**

Your group must plan the programming for chapter activities for the coming year. Using the process described, come up with a list of two programs for each month of the school year.