



Decision-Making Guide: Tips and Tricks for When We Get Stuck

Diagnose	Learn how to get unstuck	Commit: I will...	Commit: We will..								
<p>Hanging Out in I Don't Know Land</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">ME</td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">WE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	ME	WE	1	1	2	2	3	3	<p>Hard decisions are not easy! Gather information, use a smart process, pilot to lower risk, develop options, tune in to the danger of not acting.</p> <hr style="width: 30%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>Tip: Adaptive challenges by nature require LEARNING. Make "decisions" that allow you to learn and iterate as you go (e.g. "let's do a pilot" or "let's go visit our local partners to see what's happening")</p> <p>Mindset Shift: See that confusion is actually a way of hiding behind something external. "I Don't Know" serves us by giving us permission to not decide.</p> <p>New Frame: Ask "What is the cost of not deciding?" Ask "Who is hurt if we do nothing?"</p>		
ME	WE										
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<p>Fear and Doubt are my Ugly</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">ME</td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">WE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	ME	WE	1	1	2	2	3	3	<p>We all prefer to avoid loss... even more than we want to acquire gains. We will work harder to avoid loss. This also keeps us playing small and not thinking big enough. Knowing this helps us position, prioritize and value exploring the space of possibility. Many MCH challenges are generational in scale.</p> <p>New Frame: What would you do if you had a generation to get the change you most desire?</p> <p>Mindset Shift: Think like an investment portfolio manager. Invest at least some of your resources in high-opportunity investments.</p> <p>New Frame: What is the cost of doing what we know doesn't work well?</p>		
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<p>Putting the Decision Off Repeatedly</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Procrastination is a cover for something else... which is usually fear.</p> <p>Mindset Shift: Take the time to uncover what the fear is about. What assumptions you are making about what will happen if you make a mistake?</p> <p>Tip: Add more structure around the process. Go slow, get lots of coaching.</p>		
<p>Relying on Higher Ups to Make Decisions</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>It certainly is easier to rely on others to make the tough decisions. Know that they don't see what you do. Be bold.</p> <p>Tip: Revisit the structure of how decisions are made. Reconsider what method will work best for this particular decision. Articulate who will decide, who will provide input.</p> <p>Mindset Shift: How is playing it safe serving the goals you have set forth? How might it be limiting?</p> <p>New Frame: We are all leaders with our own evolving sphere.</p>		

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<p>Past Bad Decisions Haunt Me</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Turn "Haunting" into TEACHING. In what way did past decisions go badly? What exactly were the bad consequences? (Staff were frustrated, I felt shame at a stakeholder meeting, needs of the population weren't met). What can you learn going forward?</p> <p>Tip: Explore WHY a past decision is haunting you still:</p> <p>-My decision-making process left important voices out (i.e.: lack of family engagement perspectives). (Can you fix it this time?)</p> <p>-Other people expressed frustration. (Is it reasonable to want everyone to be pleased? Is conflict bad?)</p> <p>-I felt shame at a misstep. (Why is this feeling important?)</p> <p>If we prioritize feeling safe in our decisions, the cost is in opportunity to innovate and change.</p> <p>Mindset Shift: If your ultimate goal was realized, at least in part, but there were bumps along the way, was it really a bad decision?</p> <p>Every big decision is an opportunity for learning. Instead of being haunted by past negatively perceived decisions.... What opportunity for learning and evolution did the experience provide that can be of help now?</p>		
<p>I Worry About Being Seen as Wrong or Stupid</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Oh good, this means you are human. Hard decisions often stir up emotions of anxiety and stress. All normal.</p> <p>Return to process and prioritize transparency.</p> <p>If your decision-making process involved ample opportunities for learning and feedback you can rest easy.</p> <p>If your choice is in alignment with your personal and team/ organizational values you can rest easy.</p> <p>If you build in opportunities for reflection, feedback and iteration then you are inviting people to show you blindspots and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Shift your thinking to one of appreciation for this input as it will strengthen the ability to move forward positively.</p>		

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<p>Going With What's Familiar</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>We all tend to have our go-to people to give input into decision-making. When like-minded people sit and generate solutions (instead of ideas) it limits options considerably.</p> <p>We limit our options when we "stake" ourselves to what has worked in in the past.</p> <p>TIP: Look at emerging and best practices from across the country, and from different sectors.</p> <p>TIP: Use Design Thinking tools to refocus entirely on your customer's "Job To Be Done."</p> <p>Mindset shift: Is my frame too narrow?</p>		
<p>Seeking Out Ways to Validate Our Original Thought</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Believing you already know the right choice limits your ability to consider information to the contrary.</p> <p>Mindset Shift: Actively seek out new information, and be open to it. Stay curious. Ask "what do you see? How would your idea work?"</p> <p>Flexible leaders think about their personal and collective thinking...and consistently try to find ideas and solutions that push and question their own assumptions about what FEELS right.</p>		
<p>I Know Too Much/I'm In Too Deep</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Innovation is easier the less we know.</p> <p>Tip: Actively pursue perspectives of those not entrenched in the work. Try to reality check ideas and options with fresh perspectives and then ask them... what else?</p> <p>Mindset shift: Adopt the "beginner's mind." Allow yourself to come up with really bad ideas.</p> <p>Occasionally developing scopes of work to loosen and build in flexibility into existing ways of doing things is the scope of work that will open the gates for improvements.</p>		

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<p>The Stakes Feel Too High</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Ask yourself why?</p> <p>Is it because the population need is so critical? Is it because relevancy or funding is it stake? Is it because years of invested work could be at risk? Is it because resources are so limited? Is it unknown consequences?</p> <p>Be assured that if the stakes feel high its likely because the work is high impact. This confirms that your efforts thus far are on the right track.</p> <p>Try to reframe your decision in the frame of connecting it to the possible positive impact.</p> <p>Building in lots of opportunity to learn, reflect and iterate as you go along will allow for that flexibility to shift if necessary and minimize that risk.</p>		
<p>Everything Is In Flux</p> <p>ME WE 1 1 2 2 3 3</p>	<p>Do we ever really know how things will roll out? Accepting the state of uncertainty is a step in the process of being able to make good decisions and planning during disruption. Light the first few steps, not the whole stairway.</p> <p>Mindset Shift: Have coffee with uncertainty- what would you ask it?</p> <p>Would you ask for clear parameters? Is that the right question?</p> <p>New Frame: How can we phase our work such that there are lots of mini mileposts along the way, so we can revisit decisions and tweak process?</p> <p>How far can we go towards implementation without knowing all the parameters for resources (yet)?</p>		