

# The complexity of choices

Business



A common, daily hardship in life is making choices. From pressing the snooze button to deciding to which time to turn in at night, humans are forced to make both trivial and critical choices throughout their day. Choices can cause an overwhelming feeling of anxiety; every choice, regardless of severity, is an inner battle of deciding between two figurative paths. The paths further spiral into more choices and outcomes as time progresses.

The choices previously made build off of each other to form one's identity. Unfortunately, in most cases, decisions cannot be reversed. Choices hold a lot of weight; even small choices can affect mood and identity. In every profession, lifestyle, and hobby, there are choices, some rather severe and some simple. The realistic-fiction novel, *If I Stay*, by Gayle Forman and modern sources show the complexity of making choices. Forman and modern sources use hobbies and other activities people enjoy to show that choices can be time-consuming.

When the main character of *If I Stay*, Mia, first sees a cello, she was bewildered by its looks. Forman writes, " Then, in third grade, I walked over to the cello in music class— it almost looked human to me. It looked like if you played it, it would tell you secrets, so I started playing" (Forman 8). This was the start of Mia's infatuation with the cello. Since the first time she saw the instrument, she had played it religiously.

Mia's choice of spending a large amount of time on practicing the cello, her hobby, shows that she could be neglecting other duties. Instead of spending large amounts of time on her school work, doing extra chores, spending time with her boyfriend, watching television, or reading, Mia chooses to spend her

time with her instrument. The amount of time she spends playing is her choice; she does this knowing she is sacrificing her time. Furthermore, Robert Strom, Paris Strom, and Tricia Sindel-Arrington conduct a study to indicate how much time adolescents spend doing non-study or social related activities in their article “ Tracing the Decision-Making Process of Physicians with a Decision Process Matrix.” The authors write, “ Surveys of how adolescents use time show that, on average, they spend nine hours a day with social media watching television, listening to music, playing video games, visiting social networks, texting friends, and talking on the phone (Turkle, 2015)” (Strom et al. 49).

Teens and other adolescents spend, on average, a total of nine hours a day on some sort of media. If adolescents sleep for eight hours, go to school for seven, there are only nine hours left in the day. This means that children and young adults are spending all of their free time on devices on a school night, rather than spending time with family or talking to friends. In both Strom, Strom, Sindel-Arrington, and Forman’s texts, they discuss how hobbies and other activities not pertaining to school drain time away from adolescents; children choose their hobby and they choose how long they want to dedicate to the activity. Because adolescents choose their hobbies, they simultaneously choose which activities they will sacrifice. This choice ultimately affects one’s identity, personality, and friend group; having a hobby can be time-consuming, dedicating hours to that hobby shapes who a person is.

Forman, Hausmann, Zulian, Battegay, and Zimmerli exhibit the fact that last-minute, one-solution decisions are part of the job description of a doctor. In If <https://assignbuster.com/the-complexity-of-choices/>

I Stay, Mia's doctors must decide where to start with Mia for her surgery. Forman writes, " There are a lot of things wrong with me. Apparently, I have a collapsed lung. A ruptured spleen. Internal bleeding of unknown origin" (Forman 40).

As in many medical situations, doctors often fight about which treatment plan is best and in what order. In Mia's case, a cardiothoracic surgeon may want to start with the lungs, where a general surgeon may want to start with the spleen, and a trauma surgeon would want to start with the internal bleeding. Whatever the doctors decide, they must decide quickly and choose the correct option, or else they will end up with a corpse on the operating table rather than a human being. A doctor's career is full of choices, and as significant as medical choices are, they can dwell on the smaller, insignificant choices as well. In the operating room, the various surgeons could not decide which genre of music to play. This shows that they, too, have a lot of choices to make, and debates could arise among the doctors from both small and large decisions.

Daniel Hausmann, Cristina Zulian, Edouard Battegay and Lukas Zimmerli conducted a study in " Tracing the Decision-Making Process of Physicians with a Decision Process Matrix" to map out the decision-making processes doctors have to do on a daily basis. They tested their Decision Process Matrix (DPM) in real life settings and the results showed that the surgical residents felt a high level of confidence with their quick decisions when using the matrix. The authors describe decision-making as: " In practice, medical decision making processes are often complex, dynamic, and under time pressure, especially in emergency departments" (Hausmann et al. 2). The <https://assignbuster.com/the-complexity-of-choices/>

authors prove here that physicians constantly have to make quick, smart decisions in short amounts of time; they must be the right decision or else their patient may not live; doctors have the hard assignment of making tough decisions quickly.

Forman and Fielding show that there are small choices that everyone makes for friends and family, some may be simple, some may be hard. In *If I Stay*, when a snow day was announced to the town, Mia's family decided to go for a drive. Forman writes, "' Indeed. But we might take advantage of this unexpected boon and go somewhere,' Dad says. ' Take a drive'...Am I dead? I actually have to ask myself this. Am I dead?" (Forman 9, 19).

Forman shows how a small choice to take a drive to visit a friend can turn into a catastrophic disaster that involves the death of three of four passengers. A simple decision, that most people would not even think twice about doing, spiraled out of control into this unfortunate catastrophe. Ellen Wilson Fielding, talks about her life in her memoir, " Making Choices." She talks about her past experiences and her child life. Fielding writes, " In fact, we have only made a choice if we can say the words ' If only...' expressing by that phrase our regret that it cannot be undone" (Fielding 8).

Here, Fielding shows that choices are only truly a choice if the words " if only..." cross the human brain. Associated with this statement is the awful feeling of regret. Every day, every person makes hard choices; some choices may seem insignificant to some, but to others, they can be major decisions; sometimes, small decisions lead to big reactions. The realistic-fiction novel, *If I Stay*, by Gayle Forman and modern sources show the complexity of making

choices. Choices are around all humans every day and in every action; they can be in hobbies and careers, as well.

Unfortunately, they are hard to avoid and it can be tough to come to a conclusion when a difficult decision must be made in a timely fashion. Both simple and hard choices can spiral into more difficult decisions, making choices an exhausting cycle that continues on forever. In addition, those choices can be mentally and/or physically taxing on a person, especially when they are in a complicated field of work. Choices are like paths; once a person finally settles between left or right, a potentially hard decision, they are again confronted with the same left or right situation as before, only a couple steps further down the path. Even when someone wants to go back on their decision, it can be extremely hard to reverse it. Ultimately, choices are extremely difficult to make and endure, and are prevalent everywhere in life; they can be overwhelming and stressful, however, they can create wonderful outcomes.

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