



Human Optimization

Pod Club Discussion Questions



E23 The Art of Decision Making: How to Make the Right Call at the Right Time

Guest: Andrew Danielsen, Chief Business Development Officer | Mayo Clinic – Rochester, MN

The three big questions explored in the podcast:

Question 1

What are the key elements needed for us to make a good decision?

Question 2

Why do so many of us struggle to make effective decisions in a timely way?

Question 3

What concrete practices can we adopt to improve both decision quality and timing in work, home, and leadership settings?

Discussion Questions:

1. Andy Danielsen said, "Our lives are downstream of the decisions we make." Can you identify a significant decision in your past that profoundly shaped your current life path?
2. In this episode, we discuss three core components of a high-quality decision: 1) data, 2) awareness of emotions, and 3) a framework. Which of these three do you typically prioritize? Which one might you strengthen in your decision-making process?
3. The concept of "decision velocity" (speed + direction) is introduced. When faced with a decision, how do you currently determine if speed is most important, or if a slower, more deliberate approach would be more helpful?
4. Andy discusses Jeff Bezos's "one-way door" versus "two-way door" analogy, combined with impact, to guide decision speed. Can you think of a current decision you're facing and classify it using this framework? How does that classification influence how quickly you should act?
5. The "40-70 rule" (make a decision when you have 40-70% of the information) is presented as a way to combat analysis paralysis. How comfortable are you making decisions with incomplete information? What emotional barriers (e.g., fear, ego) might prevent you from acting within this range? This one is tough! Spend some time discuss with your group.
6. Andy highlights "decision fatigue" as a real phenomenon. What strategies do you currently use limit your decision fatigue to save your decision-making capacity? This week, commit to delegating one or two tasks or seeking input from your "team" (personal or professional) to lighten your load.
7. The podcast suggests that saying "I need 100% of the information" often masks an emotional block. When you find yourself delaying a decision due to a perceived lack of information, what emotional barrier (anxiety, pain avoidance, ego) might truly be at play?

8. Another common strategy to prevent decision fatigue is to replace recurring decisions with “rules” (i.e. I don’t eat anything after 8PM or I don’t get on my phone for the first 1 hour of the day). What recurring decisions can you replace with simple rules to reduce decision fatigue and help you make “good decisions” automatically?
9. Andy encourages listeners to develop their own decision-making framework. What elements from this discussion, or from your own experiences, will you incorporate into a personalized framework to improve your decision quality and timing?
10. Based on this episode, what is one small change you are going to make to help improve in this area. How are you going to keep yourself accountable to that and measure your success? (Be sure to keep it simple, start small, and make it very clear).