

Decisions often come with a hefty price

by Mark Pavilons

There is no decision that we can make that doesn't come with some sort of balance or sacrifice.

Simon Sinek

We're all familiar with the phrase 'the lesser of two evils.' I'm not sure why life presents many of its challenges in this way. Why can't it ever be the better of two fortunes?

Free will can be a bummer sometimes!

We all make hundreds of decisions each day, the majority of which centre around mundane things like lunch, weekend plans and what to watch on Netflix.

We're not really aware about all the ebbs and flows of time currents and the importance of these decisions in the reality that becomes our future. Would our errand to the grocery store on the way home be a life-or-death decision? Would a detour to the gas station forever impact our life? Sure, these aren't monumental choices and most of the time our lives just carry on as intended.

But life is also filled with second guesses, hesitation and procrastination. We also make mistakes, sometimes fatal errors.

Maybe we all have stories or anecdotes about near misses, close calls and things that ended badly.

A relative of mine was in a head-on collision many years ago on his way to work. The kicker was he forgot his wallet and returned home to fetch it. Had he not done so, would this awful incident have been avoided? No one knows for sure. 'Fate,' if it's a factor, is a very strange concept.

We also meet people every day, most often just strangers or those proverbial 'passing ships.' But, every so often we meet special people who become more than acquaintances, clients, customers or colleagues. In my lengthy career, I have met thousands upon thousands of people. I'd like to think I remember many of them. I have encountered so many interesting souls that they're impossible to forget. I have lost track of many, and some have left this earth, but I still recall, and smile inwardly, when I remember a face, expression or sentiment from those special encounters.

I often ask myself whether these were random interactions, or mathematical probabilities, because my job brought us together. Again, this is one of those daily decisions, routine in my line of work. But what happens during, and after those interviews and articles is often unexpected.

There have been until pleasant surprises during my tenure so far here in King Township. Many of these routine moments have led to lasting relationships and friendships. It's a real bonus.

Maybe it is all part of the grand scheme 'God's plan if you will. Are we meant to bump into certain people in our life's journey?

Some people, especially politicians and business types - those A-type personalities - have to be cautious, guarded even. I am even reminded that I must remain objective, impartial and emotionless. However, fostering those relationships is often key to my work. If I happen to like and even respect those I deal with, all the better. I hope they feel the same about me and I have earned their respect as well.

When Jesus roamed the land and our species transitioned to Christianity, we developed beliefs, morals and ethics to another level.

We began to bond and maybe love one another a little bit more.

Sure, those were harsh times and our kind has always had to struggle to survive. Our decisions were much simpler back then.

Today, while life is definitely more comfortable and we have access to almost everything we need, our decisions have become more complex, more difficult and even more painful. In this market economy of ours, almost everything comes down to money. We work to make an honest living, attaining enough to provide for our families. We take risks, or decide not to make waves. We choose job A over job B for many reasons, and hope we made the right choice. Today's statistics aren't as positive, indicating most people would leave their jobs if a better one came along. Loyalty today is becoming rare. Looking out for number one has never been more true and that approach changes everything.

It's no longer about running into people with excitement, awe and passion. It's about leveraging contacts and networks, who can help us the most. In my line of work, I realize that I offer something valuable good publicity. Some of my interview subjects take advantage of this and I get it. I have learned a lot over the years and have a pretty good handle on human behaviour and human nature.

But I enjoy what I do and approach every assignment, every encounter, with joy and optimism. Today, I get to meet someone new and learn something new, I say to myself as I head out to meet someone over coffee.

I am really dumfounded by people who have the Midas touch. I know several who, even when they step in the poop, find hundred-dollar-bills stuck to their shoe!

Most of us toil and struggle, trying to make the best decisions possible, with our heads and our hearts. Most often, the results are mediocre at best.

I told my son the other day, when something went horribly wrong with his car in the shop, that I failed him. I must protect my children, and prevent bad things from happening. It's my fault, and I will fix it, because that's what I'm supposed to do.

He didn't like seeing me so deeply troubled by this and unfortunately he felt my sadness.

Decision, Paul Tillich once said, is a risk rooted in the courage of being free.

It's been said that life is a risk, all by itself, and there are no guarantees. Still, it would be nice to rely on being treated well by others.

I stand by my word and my decisions. It would be nice if everyone did the same.