



# Rifka Schonfeld **STRATEGIES**

THE NEWSLETTER FOR OPTIMUM SUCCESS

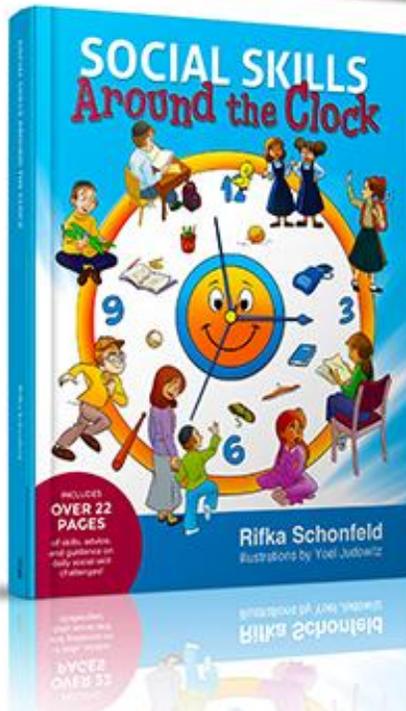
TIPS ON SOCIAL SKILLS FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN

## **IS THERE A BETTER WAY TO MAKE DECISIONS?!**

Dear Readers,

This week's newsletter includes a question on the topic of making decisions. This is something many people struggle with on a daily basis... from small decisions to life-changing decisions, read on and gain peace of mind!

*Coming Soon?*



*NEW!*  
**SOCIAL SKILLS  
COMIC BOOK**  
*by Rifka Schonfeld*

Rifka Schonfeld  
**STRATEGIES**

**QUESTION:**

**Is there a better way to make decisions?**  
How come I can't seem to just make a decision and stick with it?

**Why is it so hard to make decisions? Why do we make so many poor decisions?**

Why do so many lawyers (or doctors or other professionals) fail to recommend their own career path to others? Why do so many young fail to save for retirement? Why do so many people eat too many helpings of dessert? What's the problem with our decision-making process?

Chip and Dan Heath examine these questions in their book *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work*. The Heath brothers identify the four villains of decision making that interfere with making good choices. I've outlined these four villains below:

- **Narrow Framing.** Often we look at decision as a binary choice. Should I do this or that? Should I take a weeklong vacation or stay home and go to work? Should I buy that wacky purple sweater or not? Should I move to the big city or stay in the small town. The Heaths argue that restricting yourself to two choices limits your alternatives – and that in reality you might not even consider other options that would be better. Maybe you should take three days off and go away, maybe you should take the week off and stay home. Maybe you should buy a different wacky sweater, or wacky purple socks. Narrow framing ultimately limits your options and can lead to poor decision-making.
- **Confirmation Bias.** Confirmation bias is the phenomenon that when you want to believe an idea to be true, you pay more attention to the information that supports that idea. In other words, if you think that vegetarians are calmer and kinder people, whenever you see someone who is a vegetarian doing something nice, you will pay attention and spotlight that connection. When you see people who love to eat meat acting in mean ways, you will pay attention to that and make the connection between meat eating and cruelty. This means that you will end up “seeing” more things that confirm your belief simply because you are paying more attention to those things.
- **Short-term Emotion.** Short-term emotions are in the moment emotions that can cloud our decision-making process. Short-term emotions can make you replay conversations over and over again until you can't think straight – even if nothing has changed since you first started thinking about it.
- **Overconfidence.** Sometimes, we believe we know what the future holds and overestimating our “gut” on decisions. In reality, sometimes we make decisions before we have even fully thought about them and those decisions can end up hurting us in the long run because we did not consider all of the various alternatives.

Instead, Chip and Dan Heath suggest the WRAP method for making decisions. Below, I've explained their ideas to counterattack the villains of decision making:

- **Widen your options.** Don't go with a “whether or not” decision. Instead think “and” instead of “or.” If you find that you are stuck, find someone else who has solved this problem in the past, seek people who you are close to, then research people outside your circle.
- **Reality-test your assumptions.** Confirmation bias (discussed above) leads us to collect information that only confirms what we want to believe to begin with. To fight against that bias, ask questions that will go against your assumptions. Talk to people who might not share your opinions.
- **Attain distance before deciding.** When we let our emotions control our decisions, we might end up making poor decisions for the long term. Therefore, try to shift perspective. What if your friend asked you what to do about this issue? What would you counsel him or her? This distance will help you look at the decision more objectively and not approach it through an emotional lens.
- **Prepare to be wrong.** It's ok to be wrong, but it is a huge amount of pressure to go into a decision thinking that you are always going to be right. In reality, we all make mistakes and none of us can see the future, so preparing yourself for this inevitability will make the decision-making process easier.

Decisions will never be easy – but if you stay away from the four villains of decision making and make an attempt to WRAP it up, you just might be a more decisive and successful person!



**THE-**  
**WRITER'S TOOLBOX**  
STRATEGIES FOR EVERY LEARNER  
GRADES K-12

**Create Your Own Writing Toolkit!**

by **SARA G. SCHONFELD**  
*Founder, Curriculum Resources*

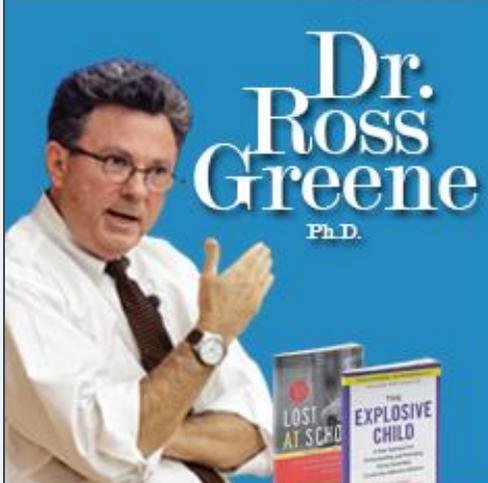
**TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY**  
**AUG. 22-23. 2017**  
10:00AM - 2:00PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:  
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*Rifka Schonfeld Presents*



**Dr. Ross Greene**  
Ph.D.

**RETHINKING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS**

OF CHILDREN | TEENS | ADULTS

TUESDAY  
**NOV. 14. 2017**  
8:30AM-4:30PM



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