

Ambiguity Exercise: Most of life is ambiguous and we really don't know how things are going to turn out, where our decisions are really taking us and what is coming next. Aligning our psyche and nervous system with this fact of life can reduce stress and free up energy. It can allow you to attune to your deeper wisdom and intelligence.

Consider things you'd like to do with your own life. Especially consider things with fairly high stakes. Will I get married, will I get divorced, will I have children, what will do I with my career? Ponder one of these that feels significant for you. Try doing this while intentionally not deciding one way or another, without evaluating or drawing any conclusion. Rather than decide or conclude, let yourself wonder what you will do. If you notice yourself deciding or weighing the pluses and minuses, gently let go of that process and come back to the question. Repeat the question gently to yourself, listening with care to each word. If you find yourself concluding, "Well, I'm not really going to do that" or "Sure, that's a good idea," let yourself notice you are drawing conclusions about an unknown future. Your conclusions may indeed be the most likely outcome, but sometimes very very unlikely things happen. As many times as you find yourself concluding or deciding, gently come back to the question and linger. Let yourself wonder for a few minutes. Notice how quickly you are ready to move onto the next thing or topic to think about.

Most of the things in life we truly care about are very ambiguous, and if we can't tolerate ambiguity, we are doomed to act in the service of its elimination. Learning to love ambiguity can be very powerful. By love here I don't mean the feeling state of love. I mean love as an act: to care for or relish ambiguity, to make an honored place for it at the table, to sit with it quietly and see what it has to say to you. Life is ambiguous, uncertain and unknown. The more we can align with how life actually is, the more anchored we are in reality, and the calmer our systems are. Being with ambiguity is the "don't know" mind of Buddhism. We really don't know what is going to happen in the next minute or tomorrow. Aligned with this reality is freeing.