WEBINARS ON DEMAND

Intertemporal choice in conflict



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Intertemporal choice

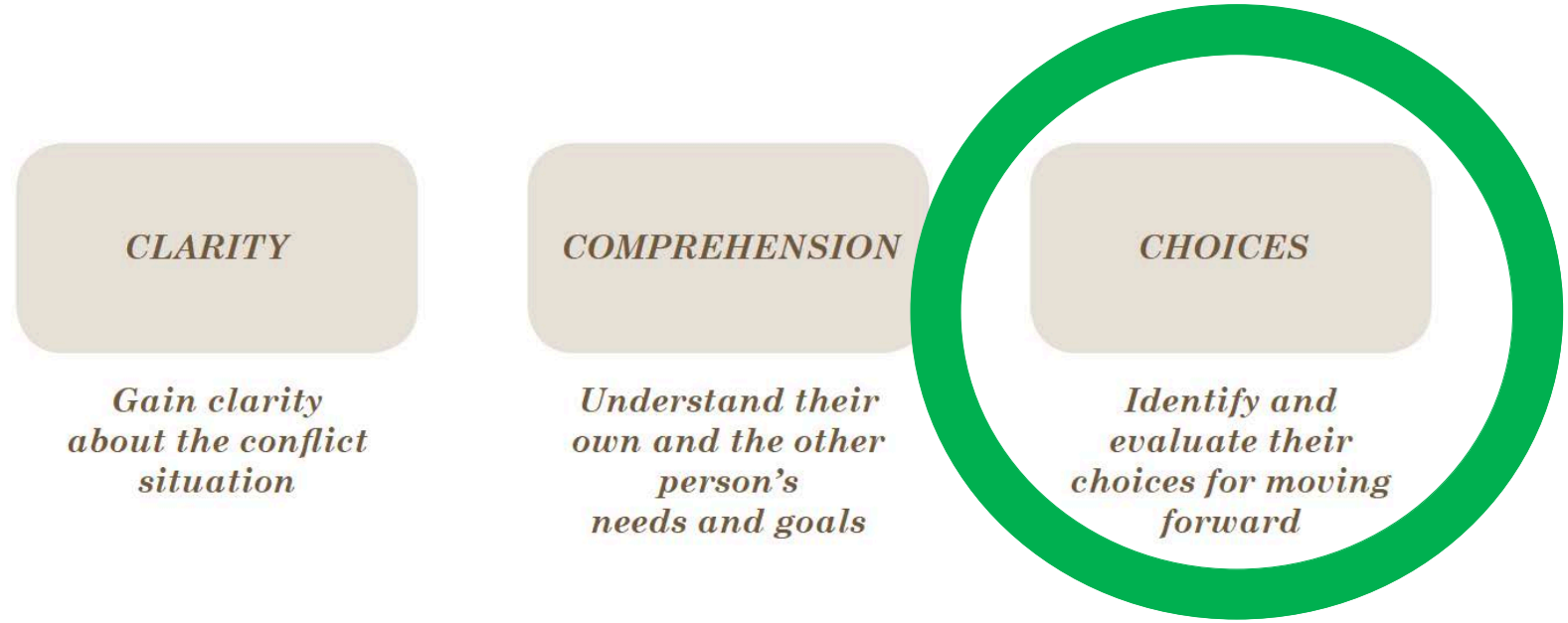
Decisions that have different consequences as time unfolds.

- Short term gain – long term pain (long term downsides)
- Short term pain – long term gain (delaying gratification)

People have typical preferences for short-term or long-term considerations in decision making, but these are also impacted by emotions and context.

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We want to support our clients to make choices that:

- promote both their short term and long term **goals**, and
- consider short term and long term **impacts**.

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Two stages

1. Review intertemporal nature of past choices.

2. Consider the intertemporal nature of future choices.

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Examples of intertemporal choice in conflict

- Avoidance now, conflict escalation later.
- People rationalising things that go against their values.
- Consequences of expressing emotions (or not).
- Competing goals – want people to like us but also want to stand up for what we believe in.
- Prisoner's dilemma – cooperation for future gains.
- Short term fix vs longer term sustainable transformation.

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Factors that impact on intertemporal choice

- Reliability of future benefits
- Opportunity costs – extra work required for future benefit
- Hypothetical rewards – uncertain future
- Is it just about changing the timing of something, or improving/devaluing something over time?
- Offsets – do other benefits outweigh the risks?
- Framing – how question asked / menu of choices under consideration

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Factors that impact on intertemporal choice

- Age
- Gender
- Personality differences
- Socio-demographic variables
- Emotions and emotional regulation
- Context
- Culture
- Fixed or growth mindset
- The amount of information available / gathered / considered
- The amount of effort required to evaluate
- The amount of time to wait
- Savouring vs dread
- Risk aversiveness

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Emotions and choice

Emotions need to be contained for self-control (important in intertemporal choice)

-vs-

Emotions are the key to self-control (and thus intertemporal choice)

DeSteno

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Emotions that hinder effective intertemporal choice

- Anger and happiness
- Jealousy
- Shame
- Fear

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Emotions that support effective intertemporal choice

- Hope
- Guilt
- Gratitude
- Compassion
- Pride (genuine, not arrogance or hubris)

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Support intertemporal choice in conflict

- Harness emotions that support intertemporal choice and help clients regulate emotions that hinder intertemporal choice.
- Support constructive effort management (information gathering, evaluation).
- Frame future perspectives as benefits rather than risks.
- Use the “future self” perspective.
- Encourage specifics for future – (easier to be specific for near future and general for far future but makes it hard to compare).
- Integrate short term goals with longer-term goals – they don’t have to be either/or.

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Additional Reading

- David DeSteno (2009) Social Emotions and Intertemporal Choice *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 18(5): 280-284.
- David DeSteno, Paul Condon and Leah Dickens (2016) Gratitude and Compassion, Chapter 47 in in Barrett, Lewis and Haviland-Jones (Eds.) *Handbook of Emotions, 4th Ed.*
- David DeSteno (2018) *Emotional Success: The motivational power of gratitude, compassion and hope.*
- Gal Zauberman and Oleg Urminsky (2016) Consumer intertemporal preferences. *Current Opinion in Psychology* 10:136-141.
- Majer JM et al (2021) Resolving conflicts between people and over time in the transformation toward sustainability. *Frontiers in Psychology* 12:623757.
- Divya Upadhyay (2021) Consideration of future consequences and decision-making patterns as determinants of conflict management styles. *IIMB Management Review* 33(1):5-14.