

Transcription

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Welcome to the Samantha Leith podcast. With me, Samantha Leith. I have a passion for exploring anything and everything that can help us to be extraordinary. Each week I'm going to dive into a topic and explore it extensively. Because if there's something that makes for a better life, I want to learn about it and more importantly, share it.

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And hey, you may just get the odd song thrown in. There'll be deep conversations, fun and frivolity helpful tools for you to add to your life straight away. Random musings about anything from coffee to sex and information that may just blow your mind. This is a podcast for dreamers, believers, action, takers and achievers. It's personal development, but not as you know it.

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Hello and welcome to episode 32 of the Samantha Leith podcast. Thank you for being with me again. I really, really appreciate it. Today I want to talk about how to make decisions that your future self will thank you for. Biggie.

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And why do we want to talk about it? Well, decisions are important. We have decisions that we have to make every single day, thousands of times a day. That might be a little teeny bit of an exaggeration, but I'm sure you understand and can picture moments in your life where you feel like you've just been making so many decisions all the time. We talk about decision fatigue.

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We talk about things that we can do in life to make it easier for ourselves. We don't have to make decisions. But what is all the big deal about decisions anyway? Sometimes we blow them up to be bigger than Ben Hur and sometimes they're easy peasy lemon squeezy. Now it's really simple.

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I say that kind of a little bit tongue in cheek. Decision making really is simply the process of making a choice.

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Black coffee, coffee with milk, sugar, no sugar, dress, skirt, heels, flats, law school counseling. Like that person don't care if I never see them again. We make so many decisions and sometimes we get caught up in this thinking making a decision is really, really hard. So we don't make a decision or we flap around forever. And sometimes I think it's because we have this teeny Danny little fear that, oh no, what if I make the wrong decision?

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Bubble ten years time I'm going to sit here and go, life would have been better if I just made that decision differently. Now, you may still do that at some point. Hell, I will admit I have done that in my past until I could go, well, actually that decision led me here and he's okay, so all good. But there are things that we can do to help ourselves make decisions that our future self will actually thank us for. That's kind of critical because the quality of our decisions can quite literally shape our destiny.

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You know how I talk about dream, believe, act achieve? Well, if that action you're taking involves not making a decision, heading you towards your dream, you're not going to get to that achieve step. Okay? Now let's go back, back in my past for a brief history, brief history lesson moment in time, something like that. I've really made some shocker decisions in my life and pretty 99.9% sure I can guarantee that the decisions I would say possibly not the best ones, were those decisions I made not based on myself.

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So I made decisions based on or not based on myself in a positive light. So I made a decision based on fear. Or I made a decision because I thought I was going to get left out, or I made a decision because I was trying to numb myself in a particular moment. So I would make a decision that wasn't good for my health or for my business or insert reason here hell, the decision to be with some of the people I've been with romantically. Again, no regrets.

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However, I could have made different decisions and I think had I had these tools back in way dark Yonder, I possibly would have. That's not to say I don't love my life as it is. I'm going to stress that a lot in this because I don't want you to look at this episode or listen to this episode rather, and think, well, Sam said that my future self's not going to thank me for these decisions, so therefore my current self is not thanking myself for the decisions I've previously made. Do not use anything I say on this podcast against yourself, okay? Pretty please.

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As I said, some decisions are amazing, some are harder, but this is the same. A decision is just a decision. And we can think that decisions take so long to make. We wrestle and we go backwards and forwards with our good voice on one shoulder and the bad voice on the other shoulder, or we make 100 lists of the possible outcomes in a particular scenario. Now, whilst that can be part of the decision making process, it's not the decision itself a decision.

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Really wish I could click, but I'm going to. Don't know if I could click into the microphone, it might go goofy. A decision is made like that, like in a split second, that's when the decision is actually made. Now, today, for example, I was procrastinator googling. Yes, it's a new word and it is a doing word.

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We can now say procrastinator googling is the thing to do and someone else has probably said it, but I'm going to own it for the second. And it was because I was avoiding making a decision. Now, when I stopped the procrastinator googling, I made the decision really, really quickly, but I didn't want to make it. I was like stuck in all this blah, this swamp mess in my mind that was stopping me from actually making that decision and let you on a little secret. It wasn't even that big a decision.

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No. However, the procrastinator googling actually sent me down a path which was quite good. So you'll hear more about that later. So it was worthwhile in the end. But the decision I actually had to make was really, really quick.

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So let's look at the psychology of decision making. It's not just choosing an A or a B, okay? We can sometimes think decision making is too simple, but we may literally have hundred things going through our mind in making that choice about an A or a B, or it could have been a plus or a B and a bit. So it's actually a cognitive and a complex cognitive process and there's a whole lot of things that goes into it. Our emotions, our logic, our subconscious mind, whether we have a growth mindset or don't have a growth mindset.

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Like there's all that stuff in our heads, all our thoughts, because thoughts control everything, actually lead us down whatever road we're going to take in the decision making process. So there's a theory called dual process theory. So one is that we make decisions based on intuition and automation, and the other one is that it's deliberative and really rational. And it's a bit like all of the things we talk about, about our brains, right brain, left brain, or the good or the bad. I probably am going to say we're all somewhere on that spectrum.

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Sometimes we use a little bit more of our intuition and sometimes we're a little bit more rational and wanting to really be logistical about things. So we want to strike a balance between the two or a flow between the two. Okay. And it does improve with age and experience and be 50 next year, so maybe I'll have it all nailed by then. Getting there.

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And it's really important that we get better at it. It's really important that we look at it. It's tied to how resilient we are and how we can solve problems and ultimately linked to our emotional intelligence. And as I just briefly mentioned before and talked about a thousand times on this podcast, and we'll keep talking about that growth mindset thing, being able to make decisions quickly is part of that. Being able to make decisions in a more productive or efficient manner is really good for our courage.

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It's really good for our confidence. It's so good for our clarity. Like we want it to be a part of everything we do, being able to make decisions. And by the time we got to my age or your age, we got a little bit of experience happening with the decisions. Okay, what do we wear today?

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Did we put lipstick on? Did we not put lipstick on? Well, the bubble bath or the bath salts in our baths tonight? Let me think, shall I? Now, life's not picture perfect all the time.

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We know it's 50 50. So some of those decisions are going to be really, really happy ones and some of them be a lot harder. But it doesn't mean we don't get to own the narrative of that decision making process. It doesn't mean we don't get to be proud of the decisions we make and feel that we're making decisions in a really confident way or in a way that's really beneficial to, as I said, our future self. So why is it so freaking complicated if ultimately we want to live our best lives?

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Why is making a decision so hard sometimes? Because we have those sneaky little brains that pop up and go, oh, this is really scary or oh, I might get rejected or it might not be the right choice. Oh, someone will judge me for doing this so often. Our inability to get to that second of decision making is based on those fear negative kind of voices and emotions and feelings that we have running through us. What we want to do is flip that and really concentrate on making decisions that align with our values, our dreams and ultimately align with that extraordinary life that you want to create for yourself.

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That's what we all want to do, right? So I'm going to give you couple of strategies, okay? And some action steps. Some things I want you to have in your toolbox, your makeup kit, whatever you want to call it, that you can pull out when you need to make a decision. And some of these things you just want to work on all the time anyway.

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So number one is about defining your values. And I've talked about it lots. You can go on to Samanthleith.com Freebies and get some values work there if you'd like to do it that way. And what I want you to know is that knowing your values really helps provide a roadmap or compass or a guide or a signpost, like a goal at the end of the goal field. Why on earth would I have a sports analogy to help us stick to what we want to do?

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Knowing those when we're trying to make a decision, knowing our values can really help us stick to get to the one that's best for us, that go back to the beginning our future self will thank us for. So if you look at a lot of the research in positive psychology or in personal development, general psychology, there's so much that shows that being in alignment with your personal values really correlates with a higher level of happiness and satisfaction and things like that. Now, again, remembering life 50 50. But imagine if doing things that really, really aligned with your values meant that 50% that's really positive is even more positive. Imagine that if the good is even gooder.

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I know that's not a word but felt right in the moment. So what I want you to do is I want you to list your top five values or you could list ten. Don't do any more than that. And I would definitely say five. Some people like three.

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And if you don't know how to do it, as I said in the freebies, there's an exercise that you can go through to do that. But when you write out those top five values, want you to think about a decision that you could make this week or that you need to make this week. And I want you to write next to it what decision would align with your value? Okay? So if one of your values is family, for example, is there a decision in your life this week that you can make that really aligns with that?

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Could it be taking an afternoon off and picking up the kids from school? Could it be having a sleepover in a giant tent in your lounge room this weekend with your kids and they can all bring a friend, something like that. Come up with something now, for me, one of my values is authenticity. And when I'm looking at something and going, oh, I'm not sure what to do. If I feel like I'm putting on a bit too much of a cloak within a decision, it's not the right decision for me.

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Now, in saying that I'm one of those people that, yes, I'm always authentic, I never ever lie about who I am. But I would definitely, as a lot of people do, be a little bit bigger for some people, be a little bit smaller for some people, a little more political chameleon ish, but still well, being myself. But if at any stage I'm thinking that something's not going to be authentic, baba do not want to know about it. And really sticking to that has made a big difference in my life, I can tell you with decisions as simple as offers to go out to places I'm like, no, it's not right for me at this moment. Okay?

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And you'll get to be able to have better boundaries when you get clearer on that as well. So there's so many benefits to doing that values exercise. Another one I want you to do future proofing your decisions. Are you ready? So have you heard about the marshmallow test?

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It's very, very famous test and should have Googled who did it. When I made these notes, I can't remember. Damn. We'll try and put it in the show notes. If you kids were asked if they could not eat any of the marshmallows now, they could have more later.

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Or if they wanted to eat the marshmallows now, they didn't get more later. Very oversimplification of it. But a lot of the time we make decisions based on what feels good in that moment. And that's why I use that example. So how about if you go, that third glass of champagne is going to feel great now, not going to feel so good tomorrow morning.

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So my future self is not going to thank me for that. One, the long term benefit or reward is not there for that. So write a letter to your future self, okay? Tonight, before you go to bed, write yourself a letter and imagine all the choices that you made today, every single decision. Which ones would impact you for better or for worse?

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And how could you have made a better decision or a different decision? Sorry? How could you have made a different decision? It's really interesting. We don't often think things are so significant that when I do this exercise with my clients like, oh yeah, there were ten decisions I made out of the 60 that I made today, that my future self would go, what were you thinking?

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So do that tonight. Another one I encourage you to do. Next one. Number three is remembering baby steps. So whilst a decision can happen in an instant and it can create massive, massive change in your life, I want you to remember that those small marginal gains, those small itty bitty, incremental steps have that cumulative effect and will make a bigger change over time.

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So instead of thinking, as I've done a gazillion times in my life, I'm going to wake up tomorrow morning and I'm never going to have sugar again, I'm never going to drink again, and I'm going to exercise for 4 hours a day and I'm going to ditch all those people in my life that want me to go that will cut your nose off despite your face. All or nothing kind of mentality. Instead of doing that, how about just going to go for a walk for 30 minutes tomorrow morning? A big one. So many of my clients and friends swapping soft drink for water.

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Now I'm really glad I'm not a soft drink person. Maybe, I don't know, three times a year I'll have a soft drink. So that's not a big one for me. However, there are so many people in my life that were drinking liters of especially diet soft drink every day. And then they'd go to and they couldn't necessarily go from three liters of a diet soft drink every day to just drinking water, but they went from the diet soft drink to drinking water with a cordial, to drinking a flat but water.

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See what I mean? So they could take the little itty bitty steps. And that can be you think it's not a big decision because it's like, well, it's not doing enough, but it really is, because those little decisions like that will help you to actually sustain a new habit, which is what you want to do to have longevity in any of those changes. Okay, an itty bitty one itty bitty teeny weeny yellow, polka dot bikini do say some random things, don't I? Thank you for bearing with me.

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And the next one I want you to think, is there somebody maybe like a coach nudge nudge, wink wink. Or a friend or a community that you can be a part of that can help you stay accountable when you're doing these kind of things. So just if there's a decision that you made today that you feel is significant, share it with someone that you trust, okay? Share it with someone that you trust and ask them just to maybe check in on you in a month or whatever time frame is suitable for the decision that you made and check in with you and see how you know if that decision was to not stay up till midnight every night watching Netflix. Maybe you need them to ask you in a week's time how'd that Netflix go?

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Let me look at your screening history. Don't even know if you can do that actually. But you get the idea. Find someone that can help you stay accountable. Because sometimes we're not so good at being accountable to ourselves.

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That's why friends and coaching and masterminds and support groups and all those things really, really help. Okay. However nearly then also want you to remember that in all of these steps within this process of making a decision and me saying and suggesting and offering up to you how you can make decisions that your future self will thank you for, I also want you to know that if you don't make one that you're going to thank yourself for it's. Okay? Part of having that whole growth mindset and part of living an extraordinary life where we get to take chances and make changes and push our absolute limits to be our most extraordinary person is that belief that failure is not a negative.

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Okay? We learn from it. So if you make a decision today and go, oh, I really beat that up, it's okay. What did you learn from making that today? Okay, I want to say go forth and decide my people what?

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I'm just going to give you a little quick recap, okay? Remember, decision making is a really quick process. The decision is just dunsy it's all the hubble, bubble, boil, and trouble in our brains and our minds that takes the time. And to help you get over that process, I want you to define your values. Want you to future proof your decisions.

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Remember that small steps can have a big impact. So those little tiny decisions to take you to that you make to help you get to the bigger one can have a big impact. Want you to leverage your community and help find someone or a group somewhere that can help keep you accountable. And then I'm going to give you one more exercise to want you to do right now. When you finish listening to this podcast, unless you're driving, which don't do that, pause the podcast.

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And then when you're in a space where you can do it, actually do it. I want you to pick one decision that you're facing right now. So one that's like in your mind right now that you're going yo yo and back and forth, or you're like a hills hoist going round and round around, and I want you to run it through those strategies and see what happens at the end of that for you, okay? Thank you so much for listening to this week's episode. Thank you for sticking with me.

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I really, really hope it helped. I know I've struggled with the decision making in the past, and I'm definitely improving. So I want to help you make decisions that your future self will thank you for. It is so worth it. Now, if you like this episode, don't forget to share it, tag me in a post, send it to a friend or leave a review.

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I would really, really appreciate it. So until I see you next week, have an extraordinary week, my friends. Thank you for listening to this week's episode of the Samantha Leith podcast. If you enjoyed this episode and want to dive deeper into the world of personal development and what possible for you, then I'd love to invite you to join the club. It's my monthly membership, designed to guide and support you with the tools and the coaching you need to be extraordinary.

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Head on over to Samanthaleith.com theclub for more information. I'd love to see you on the inside.