

HOW **NOT** TO BE YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY

Listen.

Have you ever doubted information based upon where you got it, only to find out later that it was indeed totally accurate? One of the fallacies we're all tempted to fall into is that of assessing information based upon the source, rather than the merits of the information itself. In other words, we may write off warning signs and helpful hints that we're trending in a bad direction by trying to discredit the people giving us indications that something is wrong. The fact is, it usually takes intention and practice to pay attention to the voices of wisdom around us.

Start Talking

1. We've all been fooled by a satirical website or fake news headline. What's the one that got you? (Example: For me, it was The Onion's "McDonald's Secret Menu" expose.) Why? (With fake news and satire, researchers observe that we're most likely to be fooled by lies we want to believe, those that confirm our biases.)
2. What's the problem with a personal decision making strategy always guided by the question, "What do I *want* to do most?"

Looking Back

1. Did you make any progress replacing your own internal narratives with the vision of Jesus over the past week?
2. What changed this week as you fought your internal narratives in order to see people as Jesus sees them? Were your interactions different? How?
3. If you found it difficult to fight your internal narratives as Andy's message faded from the front of your mind over the course of the week, what can you do moving forward to stay vigilant after a message is no longer fresh?



What About You?

1. Are there sources of information that immediately make you suspicious? Why?
2. When do you tend to fall for the “genetic fallacy?” Can you think of a time when you discounted good advice or information because of the source?
3. What qualities make a “good counselor” in life? What should you look for in a person you go to for advice?
4. Do you find it easy or difficult to seek counsel? Why?
5. Do you find it easy or difficult to enact difficult advice once you’ve sought it out? Why?
6. Do you think it’s necessary to seek outside counsel for private decisions? Why or why not?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: 1 Kings 11: 28–31, 34, 40. 1 Kings 12: 1–14. 16–19.

7. Why do you think the elders were able to give such measured, compassionate advice? What was different about them compared to Rehoboam’s childhood friends?
8. What was the problem with Rehoboam trusting his friends and employees as advisors?
9. Why did Rehoboam ultimately make such poor decisions, here? Why did he discount the voices of the elders? Lean towards the advice of his subordinates?
10. What could have lead to a better outcome for Israel?
11. What should have been his primary priority?
12. Technically speaking, Rehoboam was not required to seek outside counsel, here. He could have claimed that there was no need to consult anyone else for a decision that was his. Nonetheless, despite the fact that it was solely his to make, why wasn’t this a purely private decision? Further, are there really *any* purely private decisions?

Putting It All Together

1. What advice are you currently ignoring? What is the internal narrative you’re using to reinforce your resistance? (example: “what could ___ possibly know about ___?”)
2. We’re all prone to lean on our own understanding. Who should you invite into your decision-making circle starting this week?
3. What is your go-to excuse that keeps you from asking, “what would you do in my shoes?” (For instance: You think you already know what they’re going to say. You think it’s nobody’s business. Success is intoxicating, so you feel you don’t need anybody’s advice.)
4. Where do your private decisions have the potential to carry public implications this week? Out of all your available options, which would be best for those around you?

