

# The Paradox of Choice

by Barry Schwartz



[http://www.ted.com/talks/barry\\_schwartz\\_on\\_the\\_paradox\\_of\\_choice.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/barry_schwartz_on_the_paradox_of_choice.html)

**Task 1 – Follow the link above to watch the TED Talk and complete the spaces with the words from the talk.**

1. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ to talk to you about some stuff that's in this book of mine that I hope \_\_\_\_\_ resonate with other things you've already \_\_\_\_\_.
2. if people have freedom, then each of us can act on our own to do the things that will maximize our welfare, and no one has to decide on our \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The more choice people have, the \_\_\_\_\_ freedom they have.
4. This is \_\_\_\_\_ deeply embedded in the water supply that it wouldn't occur to anyone to question it
5. if by some chance you haven't seen that in your store \_\_\_\_\_, you can rest assured that one day soon, you \_\_\_\_\_.
6. "Do you have a phone that doesn't do \_\_\_\_\_ much?"
7. "Doc, what \_\_\_\_\_ I do?"
8. "If you \_\_\_\_\_ me, Doc, what would you do?"
9. I teach wonderfully intelligent students, and I assign **20 percent less work than I \_\_\_\_\_ to.**
10. All of this choice has two effects, two negative effects on people. One effect, paradoxically, is that it produces paralysis **rather \_\_\_\_\_ liberation.**
11. if you buy one and it's not perfect -- and what salad dressing is? -- it's easy to imagine that **you could \_\_\_\_\_ made** a different choice that **would have been** better.
12. And so when people make decisions, and **even though** the results of the decisions are good, they feel disappointed about them; **they blame \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Task 2 – Discussion.** Think about the following extracts from the talk:

- 1- "The way to maximize freedom is to maximize choice." Do you agree with this statement?
- 2- "One effect, paradoxically, is that it produces paralysis rather than liberation. With so many options to choose from, people find it very difficult to choose at all." What does the author mean here? Do you agree?
- 3- "...whenever you're choosing one thing, you're choosing not to do other things, and those other things may have lots of attractive features, and it's going to make what you're doing less attractive." Another speaker at TED Talks, Patrick McGinnis, invented the concept of FOBO (Fear Of Better Options). (Here's an article about it: <https://www.nowtolove.co.nz/health/mind/fobo-the-fear-of-better-options-could-be-fuel-for-anxiety-44447> ) Have you ever felt unsatisfied about a choice because maybe another choice would have been better?
- 4- "...the secret to happiness is: low expectations. (...) Clinical depression has exploded in the industrial world in the last generation. I believe a significant -- not the only, but a significant -- contributor to this explosion of depression and also suicide, is that people have experiences that are disappointing because their standards are so high, and then when they have to explain these experiences to themselves, they think they're at fault." What does the author mean? Do you agree?