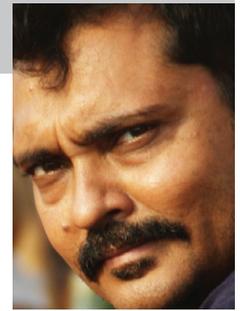


# How many sides does a coin have



**RAHUL GUPTA**

Those were early days of schooling when pocket money was not heard of and asking for it seemed to be an impossible task, so students of my age lived on parental charity. The money that was given was never enough, as it is the same for students of any age and place. My grandparents gave me some coins to spend and I almost never got any currency in hand.

The year was 1982!

I instantly fell in love with coins. They came in different size and shapes, had a character to themselves reflecting strength and offering their shine. Parting with them was a very painful separation but I always kept a few aside and we grew together as silent companions.

Coins, I realize now became an integral part of my student life- they jingled in my pocket, when I held them in my hand, I felt strong and when I was nervous, I played along with them in my pocket turning them secretly and silently.

Somewhere along the way, some of us started tossing them, catching them as they fell down; a few side bets were made and off we went to the class. During intervening classes, I would rotate the coin on its edge and watched it dance making an interesting jingle before lying still on the wooden desk.

One coin always caught my imagination – it was the heaviest and the largest, the one rupee coin. I kept one, not spending it, running my fingers over it time and again. The edge was thick and had cuts in it. I kept running my thumb over it, subconsciously. Somewhere with passage of time, I lost the coin and gave away my collection to younger children. Eventually coins became obsolete and lost their charm forever.

Before they faded away from my life, they left behind one very important lesson, which I would like to share with you.

In a recent session with the students, I asked them – “how many sides does a coin have”? A few hands were raised as it probably seemed to them to be a dead end obvious question. The answer given was unanimous – two.

You must be wondering why I am writing this. To be honest the right answer is three. You forgot the edge of the coin.

The edge denotes something which is a standstill. For me it is symbolic for people who do not take a risk, are afraid of making choices and somewhere not wanting to lose. They sit on the edge waiting for something to happen rather than making it happen.



Taking a decision is the beginning of acceptance of responsibility, making good decisions is a skill and an important trait of leadership and that is where the coin fits in.

Initially one may end up taking a few wrong decisions but that should not result in creating a fear factor about making future choices. If not corrected, then this fear will force individuals to postpone making a decision for a long time and or will delegate the decision making to someone else rather than taking on the responsibility upon themselves.

Good decision making comes from experience. It requires identification of options, clarity of judgment, firmness of the decision and following through with implementation.

The first question that comes to my mind is what problem am I trying to solve? Without a proper identification, one cannot and should not proceed further. This comes from being honest with yourself that you have not already decided of the outcome.

The skills that translate a decision in a good one are as follows:

1. Define/Identify/Clarify the issue/problem
2. Research/ Gather facts/Information
3. Find out possible options/solutions – consider and compare all alternatives
4. Select the best option
5. Stay firm on the decision with effective implementation
6. Don't have regrets if it happens to be the wrong one, start afresh

The third side of the coin, the edge does not exist for me and neither should it for you. Errors are inevitable in life and no one can be perfect. Take precautions to safeguard your decisions and go ahead and make them. If it turns out to be a wrong decision, learn from it and if it happens to be the right one, build on it.

As they say – “In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.”

Make a choice, take the plunge, hold your ground and having taken it, believe in it.

So will you keep a coin in your pocket? [CC](#)

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