

Don't Pretend You Don't Have an Exit Option

Most of the worst conflicts we deal with come to us because we lie to ourselves about our exit option.

Bad relationships we don't end, draining jobs we don't quit, stifling life-phases we don't leave behind – all of these begin to torment us when we begin to pretend that we can't leave them.

We already create angst and conflict because we don't leave destructive parts of our life behind. We create an even worse situation when we lie to ourselves that we **can't**.

It's hard to leave. No one **wants** to quit their job. No one **wants** to quit a relationship. In fact, we (oddly) fear quitting, leaving, or being fired more than we fear the long, drawn-out, miserable conflict that comes from staying. We choose fighting endless battles with our managers. We choose endless shouting matches with our partners. We choose a desperate clinging to the past.

I think that's because we haven't realized the cost of forgetting our exit option.

When we lie to ourselves about our exit option, we're voluntarily choosing to feel like we're trapped. Trapped animals do not have good lives, and they aren't very nice to deal with. Humans who feel trapped take the ferocity of trapped animals and add hate, spite, and cynicism on top.

You're not a trapped animal. You have the choice to leave. Sometimes the cost is greater than you might be willing to bear. But you do always have a choice to just up and leave.

Leaving the tribe/the known/the mapped terrain is an essential part of being human. And as long as you know and remember and feel and exercise your right to declare independence and walk away, you won't find yourself fighting the battles which drain most of us.