

Practical Wisdom

October 07, 2011



Everywhere we turn these days, we are confronted with a dizzying array of choices, whether we're shopping at the supermarket or searching for a first home. Barry Schwartz's research investigates the decision-making processes that underlie our choices and examines how our choices make us feel. Schwartz's research has shown that, rather than making us feel better, having more freedom and choice often makes us feel worse. Specifically, the expectation of choice may cause us to question our choices before we make them and can lead us to be disappointed with them afterward. More recently, Schwartz has turned to examine the role of 'practical wisdom' – built on personal experience, ethics, and judgment – in decision-making. Throughout his work, Schwartz blends insights from psychological science and economics to understand how we make decisions, how we come to value some things above others, and how we balance our sense of morality with our own self-interest. Schwartz is the author of several best-selling books, including *The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less* and *Practical Wisdom: The Right Way to Do the Right Thing*.

[Watch Schwartz's Bring the Family Address](#) at the [24th APS Annual Convention](#).