

# MY MISTAKES

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When I started to think about how to address this topic my first thought was “the class is not long enough to tell that tale.” So, then I decided to try to define what a mistake really was. I decided that there is always the function of unintentionally. No one starts out to make mistakes. Then there are different kinds and levels of mistakes. There are actions or decisions that produce a result that is not correct or not intended and there are actions not taken, opportunities missed, that result in outcomes not foreseen.

I don't think either actions I have personally taken or missed interfered with world peace or put us on the brink of a nuclear war. But I am sure my decisions have affected me, my family and some of my friends. There are big mistakes and little mistakes. I am a quilter. That means I take big pieces of cloth and cut them up and sew them back together to create a pattern or design. I make lots of mistakes. The cut may not be accurate, the seams may not be straight, the colors or pattern may turn out to be wrong when you look at the whole picture. Sometimes I can rip out the seams or re—cut the pieces and corrects the “mistake.” Sometimes I just redesign the pattern to make the “mistake” look intentional. No big deal it's only a hobby and no one's going to care but me.

Some decisions have much bigger more serious long-term outcomes. Which house to buy, where you go to school, who you marry, how you save or spend your money, how many children you have, which job to take, when or where you pick to spend your retirement years. When you begin to think about these decisions you are in danger of going down the “if only path”. You can begin to do the “I should have or I should not have “questioning of your decisions. This path only leads to regrets and sometimes guilt or depression.

So, I will not let myself follow that course. I will make the choice to live in the present. Some things I thought were mistakes had good unexpected results. Some mistakes I can correct or undo. Some mistakes were really not important enough to fuss about. Some actions I did not take I can take now.

On first run through this year's income tax I thought I needed to pay several thousands of dollars. On recalculation, I found a mistake I had made and corrected it and now I get a refund. That was an unexpected good outcome so all mistakes are not bad.