

# AI-01664 Approach vs Avoidance

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## Explain the concept of approach and avoidance. List 22 examples

The concept of approach and avoidance comes from psychology and refers to how humans (and animals) are motivated to act based on either:

- Approach motivation – the drive to move toward or achieve positive outcomes, rewards, or desirable experiences.
- Avoidance motivation – the drive to move away from or prevent negative outcomes, threats, or undesirable experiences.

These motivations often operate together or conflict with each other (e.g., approach-avoidance conflict), influencing decisions, emotions, habits, and relationships.



## 22 Practical Examples of Approach and Avoidance

#	Scenario	Approach	Avoidance
1	Job Interview	Seeking a new opportunity	Avoiding rejection or failure
2	Romantic Relationship	Wanting love and connection	Fear of heartbreak or vulnerability
3	Exercise	Aiming for better health or fitness	Avoiding weight gain or disease
4	Studying for Exam	Desire to achieve a high grade	Fear of failing the test

5	Speaking in Public	Wanting to inspire or influence	Avoiding embarrassment or anxiety
6	Investing in Stocks	Hoping for financial growth	Avoiding financial loss
7	Starting a Business	Pursuing autonomy and success	Avoiding the risk of failure
8	Making Friends	Desire for social connection	Avoiding rejection or judgment
9	Eating Healthy	Aiming for vitality and longevity	Avoiding illness or guilt
10	Saving Money	Building security and future freedom	Avoiding debt or instability
11	Moving to a New City	Seeking adventure and growth	Avoiding discomfort and loneliness
12	Talking to a Boss	Wanting a raise or recognition	Avoiding confrontation or criticism
13	Conflict with Partner	Seeking resolution and intimacy	Avoiding tension or escalation
14	Posting on Social Media	Desire for validation or sharing	Avoiding criticism or scrutiny
15	Learning a New Skill	Desire for mastery or competence	Avoiding feeling inadequate
16	Attending Therapy	Wanting healing or insight	Avoiding facing painful truths
17	Parenting Decisions	Seeking best for the child	Avoiding being judged as a bad parent
18	Retirement Planning	Seeking peace of mind and freedom	Avoiding future regret or poverty
19	Traveling	Seeking fun, culture, or novelty	Avoiding discomfort or danger
20	Volunteering	Wanting to help or contribute	Avoiding guilt for doing nothing
21	Saying "No"	Preserving boundaries or energy	Avoiding guilt or disappointing others

22	Confronting a Fear	Seeking personal growth	Avoiding anxiety or risk
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### **Summary**

- Approach is fueled by hope, desire, curiosity, ambition, or values.
- Avoidance is fueled by fear, shame, doubt, trauma, or perceived danger.
- Many decisions are shaped by a tug-of-war between the two.
- Understanding your dominant pattern can help you make more conscious choices.

Would you like to explore how this relates to your life areas like relationships, health, finance, or work?