

AI-01663 Knowing vs Not Knowing

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Do I need to know what is coming to me ahead of time everytime? When is knowing what to do relevant in living well? or Not knowing what to do sometimes can be a good thing. Explain and delve. Synthesize my inquiry and list 22 examples of each in the realm of living well, health, relationships, finance and investing.

Your inquiry is profound:

Do I need to know what is coming to me ahead of time every time? When is knowing what to do relevant in living well? Or not knowing what to do sometimes can be a good thing?

This tension between **certainty and uncertainty**, between **planning and presence**, lies at the heart of how we live, relate, heal, and grow. Here's a synthesis:

Synthesis:

- **Knowing what to do** implies foresight, clarity, and preparedness. It's a mark of **agency, control, and responsibility**.
- **Not knowing what to do** invites **humility, openness, and adaptive growth**. It allows room for **serendipity, creativity, and emergent understanding**.

The key to *living well* may not be choosing between the two but learning *when* each mode serves best.

22 Examples of When Knowing What to Do Is Relevant

Living Well

1. Creating a personal morning routine that grounds your day.
 2. Setting clear boundaries with others to protect energy.
 3. Choosing where to live based on values (e.g., peace, access to nature).
 4. Practicing gratitude intentionally each evening.
 5. Saying no to activities that do not align with your "big rocks."
 6. Having a structured yearly reflection practice.
 7. Preparing for a storm or natural disaster.
 8. Planning for aging (wills, housing, support).
 9. Knowing your limits and sticking to them.
 10. Creating a rhythm between effort and rest.
 11. Knowing when to speak up and when to walk away.
 12. Having a framework for decision-making (e.g., values-based).
 13. Protecting alone time for mental health.
 14. Curating your digital environment for less noise.
 15. Being aware of your triggers and how to self-regulate.
 16. Having a go-to method to calm anxiety (e.g., breathwork).
 17. Practicing intentional boredom to recover from overstimulation.
 18. Having a philosophy that guides you (Stoicism, Zen, etc.).
 19. Creating habits that build resilience.
 20. Knowing your purpose for the week.
 21. Using calendar and task management tools wisely.
 22. Having a system for filtering advice and influence.
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Health

1. Recognizing signs of a heart attack or stroke.
 2. Following a medically recommended treatment plan.
 3. Knowing your food allergies or intolerances.
 4. Keeping up with preventive screenings (e.g., colonoscopy).
 5. Taking medication on schedule.
 6. Tracking sleep and correcting poor habits.
 7. Understanding your family medical history.
 8. Knowing how to manage your stress response.
 9. Doing pre-exercise routines to prevent injury.
 10. Hydrating sufficiently during workouts.
 11. Knowing your BMI and its implications.
 12. Having a recovery plan after surgery.
 13. Knowing when to push through discomfort vs rest.
 14. Checking food labels for nutrition and ingredients.
 15. Being consistent with dental hygiene.
 16. Prioritizing movement if sedentary.
 17. Choosing the right doctor for your needs.
 18. Knowing your own vitals (BP, HR, glucose, etc.).
 19. Understanding the side effects of treatments.
 20. Keeping a health journal for chronic symptoms.
 21. Navigating the healthcare system confidently.
 22. Knowing when to call for emergency help.
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Relationships

1. Knowing when to apologize.

2. Recognizing when to walk away from toxic dynamics.
 3. Being aware of your partner's love language.
 4. Understanding how to give space during conflict.
 5. Knowing how to listen without fixing.
 6. Being able to de-escalate tension skillfully.
 7. Understanding family patterns and not repeating them.
 8. Planning quality time regularly.
 9. Creating rituals of connection (weekly talks, morning hugs).
 10. Knowing when to stay silent and just be present.
 11. Having boundaries around work and family time.
 12. Communicating expectations early.
 13. Being proactive in resolving conflict.
 14. Keeping promises and being reliable.
 15. Knowing your attachment style.
 16. Anticipating your partner's needs.
 17. Using empathy to soothe tense moments.
 18. Knowing how to have hard conversations kindly.
 19. Recognizing red flags in new relationships.
 20. Protecting your relationship from third-party interference.
 21. Knowing what forgiveness looks like.
 22. Sharing responsibilities fairly and clearly.
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Finance

1. Having a monthly budget and reviewing it.
2. Knowing your fixed and variable expenses.
3. Keeping emergency funds separate and accessible.

4. Understanding how credit scores work.
 5. Knowing the interest rate before taking a loan.
 6. Paying yourself first (savings).
 7. Automating bills and savings to avoid penalties.
 8. Knowing your net worth.
 9. Setting financial goals with deadlines.
 10. Understanding taxes (especially capital gains, brackets).
 11. Avoiding impulse purchases with a waiting rule.
 12. Recognizing lifestyle inflation early.
 13. Knowing your income streams.
 14. Protecting against identity theft.
 15. Having health and life insurance.
 16. Understanding cash flow for your business.
 17. Choosing between renting vs owning based on math.
 18. Knowing when to consolidate debt.
 19. Timing major purchases wisely.
 20. Using windfalls wisely (bonus, inheritance).
 21. Understanding your money mindset.
 22. Reviewing finances with your partner regularly.
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Investing

1. Knowing your risk tolerance.
2. Having an investing plan aligned with your time horizon.
3. Understanding asset allocation.
4. Rebalancing periodically.
5. Avoiding market timing.

6. Knowing the fees on your mutual funds or ETFs.
 7. Understanding the tax implications of selling.
 8. Staying invested during downturns (if appropriate).
 9. Diversifying across sectors.
 10. Using dollar-cost averaging in volatile markets.
 11. Avoiding individual stock hype without research.
 12. Knowing the role of bonds as you age.
 13. Using Roth, traditional, or taxable accounts wisely.
 14. Matching investment goals to specific funds (e.g., VTI).
 15. Knowing when to exit an investment.
 16. Recognizing bubbles.
 17. Staying clear from emotional investing.
 18. Understanding inflation impact.
 19. Choosing between passive vs active strategy.
 20. Researching before joining an IPO or private placement.
 21. Evaluating real estate cash flows before purchase.
 22. Avoiding scams and too-good-to-be-true schemes.
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22 Examples of When Not Knowing What to Do Can Be Good

Living Well

1. Moving to a new place and learning its rhythm slowly.
2. Saying yes to a spontaneous trip or invite.
3. Letting a day unfold without a plan.
4. Following curiosity into a new hobby.

5. Sitting with uncertainty during a life transition.
 6. Journaling without a prompt—just exploring.
 7. Going on a walk without a destination.
 8. Letting silence answer a question instead of words.
 9. Allowing space for grief without a timeline.
 10. Trying a new food without asking what's in it.
 11. Embracing a mistake as a lesson.
 12. Trying meditation without structure.
 13. Wandering into conversations with strangers.
 14. Embracing stillness without guilt.
 15. Discovering your purpose through trial and error.
 16. Not knowing where your next inspiration will come from.
 17. Choosing spontaneity over routine.
 18. Letting intuition lead your schedule one day a week.
 19. Accepting the unknown in spiritual practice.
 20. Leaving a creative project open-ended.
 21. Not answering right away, giving time for clarity.
 22. Letting life surprise you.
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Health

1. Trusting your body's healing without over-intervening.
2. Not rushing to self-diagnose symptoms on Google.
3. Exploring non-linear recovery after surgery or trauma.
4. Trying new forms of movement without a plan (e.g., dance).
5. Letting go of a rigid diet and learning from your body's feedback.
6. Pausing to listen before reacting to pain.

7. Not knowing your exact weight and feeling good.
 8. Accepting emotional health isn't always explainable.
 9. Discovering rest through burnout.
 10. Letting your body guide you back to movement after illness.
 11. Not measuring sleep obsessively.
 12. Trying new therapy modalities with openness.
 13. Choosing nature over structured gym routines.
 14. Accepting cycles of health (not linear).
 15. Listening to hunger cues rather than schedules.
 16. Letting go of constant productivity pressure.
 17. Allowing uncertainty during diagnosis process.
 18. Exploring functional medicine out of curiosity.
 19. Surrendering to the slowness of deep healing.
 20. Letting yourself cry without fixing it.
 21. Doing breathwork without counting seconds.
 22. Letting the body lead in yoga or tai chi.
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Relationships

1. Meeting someone new without expectations.
2. Entering a difficult talk without a script.
3. Learning a child's needs without manuals.
4. Letting someone cry without offering advice.
5. Discovering a partner's love language through play.
6. Going on a date without knowing what it'll lead to.
7. Sitting in discomfort instead of solving it.
8. Trusting silence between you and another.

9. Exploring new ways of loving after heartbreak.
 10. Letting others help you even when you feel undeserving.
 11. Navigating new in-laws without a game plan.
 12. Listening to intuition when something feels off.
 13. Letting children teach you how to parent.
 14. Being vulnerable first without knowing the outcome.
 15. Laughing your way through miscommunication.
 16. Apologizing without rehearsing it.
 17. Allowing friendships to evolve naturally.
 18. Letting go of needing closure.
 19. Staying even when unsure.
 20. Allowing others to have their process.
 21. Not defining the relationship too early.
 22. Letting trust build slowly, organically.
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Finance

1. Living frugally without tracking every cent.
2. Starting a side hustle not knowing where it will go.
3. Giving generously even when unsure of returns.
4. Letting your values guide spending, not numbers.
5. Declining a job without a backup, trusting something better.
6. Investing in a passion project with joy, not ROI.
7. Taking a sabbatical without clear income plans.
8. Sharing finances in a relationship without rigid control.
9. Not having all the answers in early career.
10. Exploring minimalism by trial and error.

11. Traveling cheaply with little planning.
 12. Building financial resilience through life experiments.
 13. Letting go of comparison with peers.
 14. Asking for help without knowing the result.
 15. Saving what you can without a perfect budget.
 16. Choosing what "enough" means for you intuitively.
 17. Supporting family even when it's not in the spreadsheet.
 18. Moving toward simplicity instead of optimization.
 19. Pausing a career to realign priorities.
 20. Trying cash-only life just to reset.
 21. Not having a perfect emergency plan.
 22. Learning from every mistake slowly.
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Investing

1. Entering the market not knowing everything, but willing to learn.
2. Exploring index funds before fully understanding them.
3. Sitting in a market downturn without reacting.
4. Accepting short-term losses without panic.
5. Exploring crypto or new assets with play money.
6. Listening to diverse perspectives before deciding.
7. Trusting time more than timing.
8. Saying "I don't know" during analysis.
9. Investing for impact before clear benchmarks.
10. Participating in a startup for belief, not certainty.
11. Buying real estate abroad as a lifestyle trial.
12. Allowing your investing thesis to evolve.

13. Relearning after financial trauma.
 14. Not rushing into the latest trend.
 15. Accepting that no strategy is bulletproof.
 16. Taking a break from markets to reset perspective.
 17. Admitting you don't have an edge and using index funds.
 18. Letting a professional manage part of your portfolio.
 19. Not knowing how long a bear market will last—and staying.
 20. Understanding volatility is normal, not failure.
 21. Holding cash during chaos, waiting for clarity.
 22. Being okay not knowing everything—and still investing anyway.
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If you'd like, I can turn these into a printable chart or a personal reflection guide.