



THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES



LESSON 7

WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE DO BAD THINGS?

7



SESSION 1

DRAWING YOU IN

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Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility

STRAW POLL STARTER



**Show of hands:
how many of you
would harm an
innocent stranger?**

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Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility

UTOPIA



A Utopia is a perfect place, a perfect city, a perfect state.

Using the materials in front of you, with the people around you, construct a Utopia.

Pay close attention to making it excellent.

7

Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility

- # UTOPIA: YOUR NEXT INSTRUCTION



- Now that you have finished your Utopia, go around in your groups and appreciate the other utopias that have been created.

- # UTOPIA: YOUR NEXT INSTRUCTION



**Destroy the work in front
of you.**

- **That's right. Destroy it.**

UTOPIA: SILENT QUESTIONS



What did you think and feel when you were given the order to destroy?

What did you think and feel when you saw your work being destroyed?

What do your emotions tell you about this experience?

Why did you follow the order?

Did you see any of the following virtues in the room: **Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion, Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility?**

Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility

IMAGINE...



You volunteer for a scientific experiment. You are told that you are helping to discover new ways of learning. You are shown into a room where you meet a scientist in a white coat and another person: the 'learner'. You are going to be the 'teacher'. You are taken by the scientist into a different room. In the room is a large box with lots of switches. The box is designed to help the learner's memory. The learner, who is in the next room, has had to remember a lot of word pairs. You will call out one of the words through a microphone and the learner has to call out the word that goes with it. If the learner forgets, the box gives an electric shock to the learner. Each switch increases the shock by 15 volts, up to a total of 450 volts. If you want to stop at any time (perhaps because you can hear the cries of the learner through the wall) the scientist in the white coat tells you to carry on, as the experiment requires you to go all the way to 450 volts. The electricity in a wall socket is 240 volts.

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UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU DID



Milgram says that to get good people to do bad things you need:

An authority figure.

An ideology (a 'good' idea to believe in).

No exits from the situation.

Increments: it gets worse slowly.



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**Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility**

REFLECTING



What elements of Stanley Milgram's experiment were present in this classroom to get you to follow a bad order?

Remember how you felt (e.g. Joy, anger, frustration, delight, anxiety). What do your emotions tell you about this experience?

What questions does this experience raise for you about yourself? What does it tell you about your own character?



SESSION 2

MORAL VIRTUES: DECIDING WELL

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Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
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RECONNECTING



What did you experience in the last session?

What did you come to know or learn in the last session?

What questions do you have arising from your experiences?

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**‘All that is required
for evil to triumph
is for good men to
do nothing.’**

The Bystander Effect

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Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
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What does this expression mean?

What questions do 'good Samaritan' stories raise?

Do you know any 'good Samaritan' stories?

'A GOOD SAMARITAN'

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KITTY GENOVESE



Kitty was attacked outside the entrance to her flat in New York, in 1964.

The attack happened at 3:15am, as she returned from work.

At least 12 people heard her being attacked. Only one person phoned the police.

One person shouted at the attacker and the attacker ran away. When nothing else happened, the attacker came back and continued the attack.

Kitty died on the way to hospital, she was 28 years old.

Why do you think so few people went to Kitty's aid?



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BYSTANDER APATHY



Kitty's death provoked outrage in the USA.

People wondered how neighbours could sit back and not intervene when someone was being attacked.

Psychologists began to research why nobody came to help Kitty.

They came up with the theories of 'bystander apathy' and 'diffusion of responsibility'.

These theories suggest that people often don't intervene because they are afraid of causing a fuss: 'mind your own business'. They also suggest that if we are part of a group when someone needs help, we will tend to assume that other people will act, so we don't have to.

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THE VIRTUES AND KITTY GENOVESE



Which of the virtues would have made a difference to Kitty?

What difference would they have made?

What would the virtues have looked like in action in this story?

COURAGE

JUSTICE

COMPASSION

HONESTY

**SELF-
DISCIPLINE**

GRATITUDE

HUMILITY

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SESSION 3

PRACTICAL SKILLS OF AVOIDING BAD THINGS

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Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility

SCENARIOS: HOW COULD YOU BRING ABOUT A VIRTUOUS OUTCOME?



Someone posts a really nasty, personal comment on your best friend's wall.

Being pressured into drinking alcohol when you don't want to.

A supply teacher is being given a hard time during a lesson. The teacher is on the verge of tears.

Your school decides to exclude 10 people for truanting to go on a protest march against animal cruelty.

You see a homeless man having a fit. Other people are walking past and ignoring him.

You want to go to a party. Your Mum says no. You want to lie and say you are going to a friend's.

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SO WHAT'S STOPPING YOU FROM DOING GOOD?



FEAR

NOT WANTING
TO BE
DIFFERENT

RUSHING INTO
A DECISION

WHAT ELSE?

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PROFESSOR ZIMBARDO'S 10 STRATEGIES



1. "I made a mistake!"

2. "I am mindful."

3. "I am responsible."

4. "I am ME. The best I can be."

5. "I respect Just Authority, but rebel
against Unjust Authority."

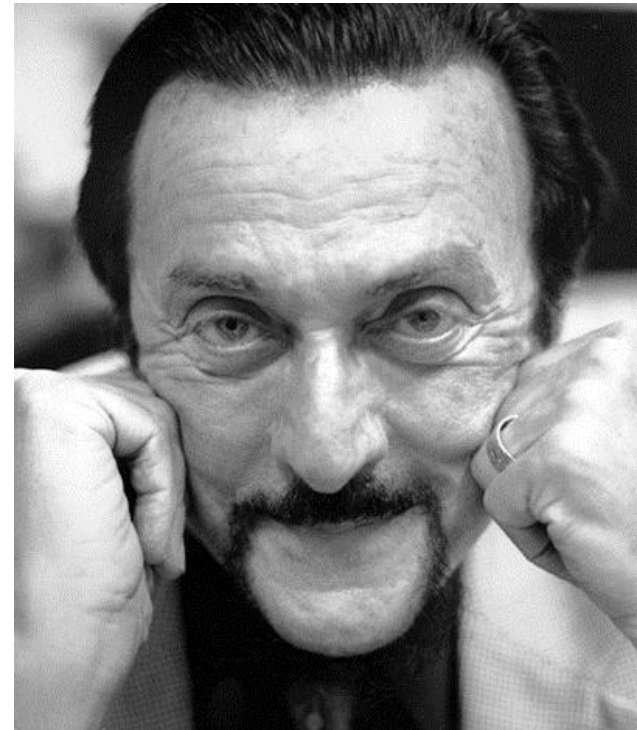
6. "I want group acceptance but value
my independence."

7. "I will be more Frame Vigilant."

8. "I will balance my time perspective."

9. "I will not sacrifice personal or civic
freedoms for the illusion of security."

10. "I CAN oppose unjust systems."



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SESSION 4

CIVIC VIRTUES

Getting good people to do good things in their communities

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THE LONDON RIOTS OF 2011



How does what you have learned over the past three sessions help to explain why good people rioted in 2011?

What was lacking in their character?

What was lacking in their communities?



● HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN GOOD PEOPLE DOING GOOD THINGS?



● The day after the riots, thousands of people across the country got together to clear up and protest about what had happened in their communities.

● How does what you have learned help you to explain this?



RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS



Our history is full of stories of human resistance to injustice and tyranny.

Many of these stories are bloody and violent.

See what you can find out about the work of a resistance movement.



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RESISTANCE, FREEDOM FIGHTERS OR TERRORISTS?



What did your resistance movement start out opposing?

How did it go about opposing?
(Peaceful, subversive, violent?)

Did anyone get hurt or killed as a direct result
of the actions of this movement? Can this be justified?

How can you tell if what your movement did was
right or just?

What did other people say about the movement at the
time (especially the press and the government)?

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SO WHAT?



**First they came for the Socialists,
and I did not speak out--
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade
Unionists, and I did not speak out--
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I
did not speak out--
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me--and there
was no one left to speak for me.
~ Pastor Martin Niemöller**

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TYRANNY



A **tyranny** is a corrupt or brutal state where freedoms are restricted or removed altogether.

Tyrannies often identify 'out-groups': groups of people who are depicted as the enemies of the state (e.g. the Jews in Nazi Germany or the Tsutsi in Rwanda).

The leaders of the tyranny will go to great lengths to **dehumanise** the out group: they will use **propaganda** to persuade the population that the out group is less than human and deserving of cruel treatment, or maybe extermination.

People who oppose the tyranny are often imprisoned or executed (for example the White Rose movement in Nazi Germany).

Tyrannies often lead to **genocide**, which is where an entire group of people is murdered. In the 1940s, 6 million Jews were murdered in Europe. In 1994, 800,000 Tsutsi were murdered by the ruling Hutus in Rwanda.

Genocides are happening right now. Go to **www.genocidewatch.net** to find out where.

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SESSION 5

REFLECTION

What have I learned?
How will I be different?

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REFLECTION TASKS



KNOWLEDGE: think back to the utopia lesson. What do you know and understand now that you didn't know and understand then?

PERFORMANCE: through thinking about why good people do bad things, what new strategies have you acquired to enable you to make better choices in difficult situations?

CHARACTER: what virtues would you like to develop to help you do good things in difficult situations? How will you develop them?

QUESTIONS: what questions remain unanswered for you about why good people do bad things.

REFLECTION CONVERSATIONS



1. Talk to four other people in the room. Compare your answers.
2. What answers do you share?
3. What answers are different?
4. What can you learn from each other?
5. How can you help each other to think about ways of developing character?
6. Agree on one thing you will do differently after today.