

Why Do Good People Do Bad Things?

Patience
Wisdom

Self-discipline



Deciding Well



"Making good decisions is a crucial skill at every level."

Peter Drucker



"Sometimes it's the smallest decisions that can change your life forever."

Keri Russell

Activity 1

Activity 1 was inspired by the NCSL Student Leadership Project.



Aim(s)

- To introduce the concept of small decisions.



Resources

- A ball (or rolled up piece of paper or socks).
- A bucket or pot big enough to throw the ball in. If you don't have this, create a target by drawing a cross on a piece of paper.
- A chair (if you don't have a chair, the young person can stand up).



Delivery Guide



If you are working in a small group, the young people can do this activity in pairs. If you are working 1-2-1, this can be done with the young person working with the facilitator.

Ask the participants to work in pairs and give themselves numbers: 1 and 2. Set up the room like this:



The young person who is Number 1 should sit on the chair, while the bucket or target is set about 3 feet behind them by the person who is Number 2. Number 1 should not be able to see the bucket, while Number 2 should stand near to the bucket and be able to see both of them.

The aim of the game is that Number 1 must throw the ball over their shoulder to get it in to the bucket. The job of Number 2 is to provide feedback on where the throw landed. For instance:



They can then return the ball to Number 1. It's important that Number 2 just provides feedback and not direction – so they tell Number 1 that their throw landed to the right of the bucket, but not 'you need to throw it to the left'. From this feedback, Number 1 should be able to eventually get the ball in the bucket.

Once this is done – or once time has run out – the young people should swap places and run the activity again.

After the activity is finished, bring the young people together and ask them to reflect on who managed to get the ball into the bucket, and how they did it. How many throws did it take to get the ball in the bucket? Was it easy? Was it difficult?

What did they need to do to reach the goal? Did they just decide to throw the ball in the bucket and it happened?

Hopefully they will respond that they had to listen to feedback and adjust how they threw the ball; they had to make many different decisions – maybe to throw it harder, or more to the right, or more to the left.

Points to highlight

- Decisions we make about doing good and bad – or reaching a goal - are not always 'big' decisions. They can be the result of a 100 little decisions we make in order to get to a goal.

Activity 2

Aim(s)

- To explore the concept of wisdom and deciding well.
- To identify the practical strategies and character strengths that can help good people to avoid doing bad things.

Resources

- Internet connection to watch videos.
- **OPTIONAL**
▪ *Deciding Well* Power Point.

Delivery Guide

Part I

Watch the video of Barack Obama and read his quote:

"We never know how our actions are going to ripple over time ... but each of us can take some responsibility for making sure that we are pushing a little bit in the direction of justice, in the direction of equality... When we do that, we may surprise ourselves with the amount of influence in fact we have by just standing up and speaking out."

www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaXaeWrlikU
(available 8/16)

Barack Obama talks of 'Everyday Heroism' – those little every day steps we take "in the direction of justice and equality", and says that we can surprise ourselves by how much effect we have on others and how much power we have.

He used the example of Rosa Parks, whose small decision to refuse to give up her bus seat to a white passenger turned out to require a lot of sacrifice by her, and became an important and inspiring part of the fight for civil rights in America. (Her story is on the Power Point, along with a video.)

There are also other stories of people who have made decisions to act which have had benefits for themselves and others, as well as those who decided not to act:

Wesley Autry's story: www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y_G5tulqPQ (available 8/16)

This little girl who called 999 for her mum: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-35167933 (available 8/16). Not only did the little girl make the good decision to call, her mum made a good decision to teach her daughter how to do this.

Kitty Genovese was attacked in New York and even though 12 people heard her, only one person called the police. (This story is on the Power Point.)

Ask the young people to think about what character strengths motivated these people to decide to act.


Possible answers may include:

Justice Compassion Determination Love

Why might the people who heard Kitty Genovese being attacked have decided not to call the police?

Answers may include:

Not wanting to get involved Thinking someone else would do it Not knowing what to do They didn't care

 Ask the young people to think of a time when they've made a decision that has been a 'good' decision. It doesn't have to be a big decision! For instance:

- Finishing a task instead of giving up.
- Helping someone out instead of rushing past.
- Exercising instead of staying at home on the sofa.

If they can't think of one, maybe the facilitator can. Why was it a good decision? What virtues or character strengths did they demonstrate in making that decision?



Facilitators can take part in this and share their own examples.

Activity 3



Aim(s)

- To highlight good decisions made every day.



Resources

- Materials to make certificates or prizes. **OPTIONAL**
- *Deciding Well* Power Point. **OPTIONAL**



Delivery Guide

There are a number of awards programme that recognise people for doing something good, for making a difference to the world, or helping someone:

- Points of Light: www.pointsoflight.gov.uk
- St John's Ambulance Everyday Heroes: www.sja.org.uk/everydayheroes
- Pride of Britain Awards: www.prideofbritain.com
- Jubilee Youth Awards: www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/youthawards
(all available 8/16)

Set the young people the task of creating an award scheme for people in their group or organisation who make good decisions. They will need to decide what it takes to win and who is eligible, and create a certificate or a way of recognising and rewarding them. They will also need to choose a way to announce it and share it with the rest of the group.

It might be good to expand it to people in the community. Whose good decisions make life better for you or for others?

Your organisation may already have a scheme like this, in which case, spend some time encouraging young people to think of people they can nominate.

Points to highlight

- People make good decisions every day and they're worthy of recognition!

