

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Advisor's Guide to personal growth and leadership development

Lesson Number: **RNH.2.5**

Ethics and Values

Purpose:

This activity is to encourage students to think about their lives and the values that guide them. A high level of trust should be established in the group before using this exercise. To have students develop a group value system, discuss their ethical system and discuss desirable ethical behavior of themselves and others and its impact on others as well as themselves.

Directions:

Students should be put in a mood of thoughtfulness and respect of others' values and views. The following two activities will allow students to think and ponder the future and where their values are.

Activity 1: Head of the Line – 30 minutes

1. Have students sit together in the corner of a darkened classroom. They should all be on the floor. Light the candle or turn on the flashlight and read the following scenario.
2. Scenario: On a class outing to explore some nearby caves, a terrible thundering sound was heard. A rockslide soon followed and our group became trapped hundreds of feet below the surface entrance. We quickly discovered an extremely narrow passageway, which we believe would lead us to the surface again. With night falling, we must make an effort to reach the surface immediately. There is also the possibility of another rockslide. Once outside the cave, we will have to travel more than 50 miles to reach civilization, so we need to move fast. The passageway is so narrow that only a single-file line will be able to work its way to the surface. The people nearest the front of the line will have the best chances for survival.
3. Guide the class discussion with the following questions and comments. Ask each student, one at a time, to give his/her reason for wanting to be at the head of the line. Pose these questions as students consider their reasons.

Quick Reference:

Time Required:

50 minutes

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Role play a real life scenario and explain decisions made to the group.
2. Given a scenario make a group decision on what is to be done ethically and defend reasoning of the group.

Materials:

- ✓ RNH.2.5.AS.A – one per facilitator
- ✓ Candle and match or a flashlight





- a. What do you want to live for, or what have you left to get out of life that is important to you?
 - b. What do you have to contribute to others in the world that would justify your being near the front of the line?
4. Both types of reasons will be considered equally— helping others is just as important as the things you want to live for. A student may choose to “pass” if they so desire.
5. After all students have given their reasons conclude this activity discussing these questions:
 - a. How do you view what you’re doing in life? Are you heading in the direction that you want?
 - b. What comments really made you think?
 - c. Who really surprised you through their comments?
 - d. Who do you feel you got to know better through this activity?

Activity 2 – 20 minutes

6. Break class into four groups. Give each group one of the four scenarios provided in RNH.2.5.AS.A. Explain to each group they have ten minutes to decide as a group what course of action they will take and why. Then each group will have two or three minutes to explain their group’s actions to the class.

Connection Questions:

1. How have the scenarios and activities that you have heard and worked through impacted your thinking of your values and ethical choices?
2. What kind of impact do your ethics and values have on other people?
3. Do any of your decisions make a difference who you are with? Why or why not?



LifeKnowledge Connections

Precept(s) Addressed:

Action

- A8. Evaluate and reflect on actions taken and make appropriate modifications.

Relationships

- B1. Practice human relations skills including compassion, empathy, unselfishness, trustworthiness, reliability, and listening.
- B2. Interact and work well with others.

Vision

- C4. Adapt to opportunities and obstacles.

Character

- D1. Live with integrity.
- D2. Accurately assess my values.
- D3. Accept responsibility for personal actions.

LK Lesson Suggestion:



HS.34 – The Consequences of Ethics

HS.35 – Professional Ethics and Personal Character



Ethical Dilemmas

1. John had searched high and low for the perfect show calf and at last he found it. He was a large-framed, Chianina-Angus cross, with a wonderful disposition and about two inches of hair. However, there was one problem. Check-in was only a week away and the calf was already 80 pounds over the 500-pound weight limit. The ranch owner assured him that the weight would not be a problem. The owner told him to leave the calf at the ranch until the Friday before check-in, and he would have the calf at the desirable weight. John knew there was only one possible method: starvation and illegal drugs to cause that calf to lose the weight. Should John buy the calf or keep searching? Why or why not?
2. Guy Barns was the only freshman to ever make the school's prestigious agricultural issues forum team. The team had traveled to the national competition for five years in a row and this year would be no different. The team was led by Alanna Russell. She ranked nationally the last three years and the entire county knew her on sight. One day by accident, Guy saw her take an envelope from one of the school's prominent drug sellers. When he confronted her, she exploded and told him to shut up. She warned him that if he told she would turn the story back on him. He knew in his mind that the entire county would believe her; he knew that the team would not win a single competition without her. Where do you think Guy's loyalty should lie? To the team? To the community? To Alanna? What would you do in this situation?
3. The company code of ethics clearly stated the employees were not to list on their travel vouchers "charges for food not eaten, transportation not used, etc." However, the company used the "government rate" for travel expenses, yet expected their employees to stay in nice hotels, eat in fine restaurants, and "make an impression" on the clients. None of the personnel were given expense accounts, and they were expected to provide receipts for every expense. Carrie Roberts, who had a growing family and a very hard time making ends meet, developed several clear ways of fudging her expense reports and generating phony receipts. She wasn't making a profit, but she would almost break even. How would you evaluate Carrie's behavior? What about the company's behavior? What would you do if you were in Carrie's position?
4. As a strip cotton farmer who has studied facts about water availability and conservation, you now believe that you have a social obligation to the local community to replace your present irrigation program with a new, more efficient drip system. This will be a very costly investment. And if you are the only farm to make the change, you will no longer be able to be competitive price-wise, because your competitors in the area have not installed a drip system. Your studies show that the water table is at an all-time low. Whose responsibility is it to conserve water? What will be your course of action?