



Teacher Guide to Choices® Explorer

Decision Making Guide


A fun course in the art of responsible decision making!

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Printing this PDF Document?

The Adobe Acrobat PDF format is ideal for downloading printer-friendly files from Web sites such as Choices® Explorer. To conserve paper, you do not need to print all the pages of this Decision Making Guide.

Only a few pages really need to be printed and filled in as part of this course. Each page to be printed is clearly marked with a "Print This" symbol below the page number, and is highlighted in the Table of Contents with this symbol: 





Teacher's Guide
Introduction

Many people today (young *and* older!) have no concept of what a responsible decision really is. Most of us just make snap decisions, or we make no choice at all – leaving future consequences to fate and wishful thinking. This unit, targeted for learners in 8th grade and up, teaches a five-step process for responsible decision-making. The steps are:

1. Identify your choices
2. What's best for you now?
3. Consider others – *Not only me*
4. Consider your future – *Not only now*
5. Make a choice and go for it

Many of our life choices miss steps three and four, above, hence the title of this unit! It is our contention that a **responsible** decision is one where you consider others and your future before you decide. You don't have to do what others want or what the future will require, you just have to *consider the implications* of possible actions. By thinking beyond yourself and beyond the moment, you are more likely to select choices that have positive social and future benefits. This would be good.

Teaching the Decision Making Guide to Individuals

The Decision Making Guide has been organized for individuals to complete at their own pace. The unit is broken down as follows:

InfoSheet: [The 'R' Word](#)

Introduces learners to the unit and outlines the five steps involved in a responsible decision.

Activity A: [Fortune Teller](#)

This activity examines the advantages and disadvantages of making no decisions about your future. Learners are given their future by visiting the Fortune Teller's room and then asked how they like it.

Activity B: [Paths of Life](#)

This activity relates making 50/50 life decisions to finding employment. It also introduces learners to snap decisions – choices made with little or no consideration of the implications.

Activity C: [Life's Little Scenarios](#)

Learners make snap decisions about various life scenarios and then examine the impact of their choices on others. The importance of considering others when making significant decisions is emphasized.

Activity D: [Paths of Life II – The Big Picture](#)

This activity demonstrates the importance of considering the future when making key life decisions.

Activity E: [Values](#)

This activity teaches the art of selecting different decision-making strategies for different situations. Learners are encouraged to take the *harder* – more responsible – path more often. Those paths often lead to rewards less immediate and more satisfying.

Activity F: [Druthers – Yer Little Town of Decisions](#)

Eight scenarios are provided from a variety of life circumstances. Learners apply the decision-making process to each one. Each person ends the unit by applying the responsible decision-making process to their own career and life plans.

[Checklist](#)

This resource summarizes all the products for evaluation that were developed as part of the unit. Students complete the checklist and use it as a cover page when submitting work to you.

The average student working independently should take six to eight hours to complete the unit.

Teaching the Decision Making Guide in the Classroom

One classroom strategy is simply to have a class of students use the Decision Making Guide on the computer and have them complete the unit individually. We believe this should be your second choice. It is our contention that these units are just tools. They are made most useful by teachers who use them skillfully. Suggested classroom lessons are included with this Teacher's Guide.

If you do not have access to a classroom of computers to teach this unit, the lesson plans also include links to worksheets to develop related classroom activities.

We encourage you to integrate or develop additional resources to make the decision-making unit even more interesting and enjoyable for young learners. The skill of responsible decision making is critical to their future success. We want to make the unit meaningful – using whatever resources we can! Please let us know of any novel ideas you have, and we'll pass them on to other users.

The major reason for the scarcity of responsible decisions in anyone's life is that a responsible decision usually has *delayed gratification*. We're all just a little too impatient sometimes for the arrival of the eventual reward – especially when there are no guarantees that we'll get one! Thinking "not only me, not only now" is hard to do. It also is imperative in quality career and life planning. If we all keep pushing this concept, and model the process ourselves in our own daily lives, we will see more of our students making a successful transition to a healthy, happy, self-reliant life.

Lesson Plans

<u>Lesson One</u>	Introduction to Decision-Making
<u>Lesson Two</u>	Fortune Teller
<u>Lesson Three</u>	Paths of Life
<u>Lesson Four</u>	Life's Little Scenarios
<u>Lesson Five</u>	Paths of Life II – The Big Picture
<u>Lesson Six</u>	Responsible Decision-Making – Getting Ready
<u>Lesson Seven</u>	Druthers – Yer Little Town of Decisions
<u>Lesson Eight</u>	My Most Amazing Life – Today's Edition

Lesson One – Introduction to Decision Making

Purpose

To introduce students to the three types of decision making: **no** decision, **snap** decisions, and **responsible** decisions.

Outcomes

1. Students will identify three types of decision making.
2. Students will relate responsible decision making with effective career and life planning.
3. Students will be able to outline the Decision Making Guide and evaluative structure.

Materials and Prep

- Get a guest speaker to outline at least five key decision points in their life. These should be decisions (or non-decisions!) that shaped their life. (10 minutes)
- Prepare a Unit Outline and an Evaluation Outline – your own unique way of presenting and evaluating the unit.

Introductory Activity

- Ask students to identify 50 decisions a person can make in their life – for example, what cereal to eat, what to do on the weekend, what career goals to pursue. Go around the room one at a time, placing answers on board.
- Define three types of decisions for students, and have them record them in their notes. They are:

No Decision – Letting others decide what you will do.

Snap Decision – A quick choice you make with no consideration of the result.

Responsible Decision – Considering others (*Not only me*) and your future (*Not only now*) when you make a decision.

- Ask students to individually place the 50 decisions on the board into one of those three categories. They do this by listing the three decision types on the top of their page, and listing the choices in the appropriate column.
- Have students compare their lists to the lists of two other students. Bet them that no one has the same list!
- Inform students that the next eight classes will focus on developing skills for responsible decision making. We'll begin with a look at No Decision as a decision-making strategy.

Lesson One – Introduction to Decision Making (cont.)

Development Activities

Guest Speaker

Introduce your guest speaker, who you have prepared to give a 10-minute presentation about key decision points in their life. (Plan B would be for *you* to do this about your own life!) The main objective of the presenter is to show the *implications* of life decisions – responsible or not. Students should conclude that **some** decisions in life should be well thought out.

Unit Overview

Hand out an overview (that you've developed) of your Decision Making Guide. Review it with students. Indicate which classes are in the computer lab and which are not.

Evaluation Overview

Clearly define **what** will be assessed and **how** it will be evaluated. Outline your evaluation structure and weighting. Review the content and criteria for each assignment briefly and outline the timeline for assignment completion.

Reflective Learning

Ask students to write a one-paragraph summary of their preferred method for making decisions. Ask them to explain at least three reasons why it is their preferred style.

NOTE: This is to be submitted as part of the Reflective Thinking assignment, which is turned in at the end of the unit.

Lesson Two – Fortune Teller

Purpose

To examine making "no decision" about your future.

Outcomes

1. Students will state an opinion about life with no choices – you *never* have to be responsible!
2. Students will define the four key aspects that must be managed in a person's career.
3. Students will identify the advantages and disadvantages of having decisions about your life made for you.

Materials and Prep

- Access to a computer lab, featuring Bridges' Decision Making Guide.
- A classroom set of the worksheet [Getting Whatever You Get](#).

Introductory Activity

Lecture: Tell students that the word 'career' doesn't mean what it used to. It used to mean 'work'; now it means anything you do in your life. Tell them there are four main aspects to a career. They are:

- Work
- Recreation
- Relationships
- Lifelong Learning – This is important! It is the source of vitality, energy, enthusiasm, personal growth Throughout life, you have to manage these four things, because you can't do *all* of them well. (You can probably do about two-and-a-half of them well!) Tell students that because we can't have everything we want in these four areas, we have to make decisions.

Wouldn't it be great if we *didn't* have to make decisions? If you never make any choices, you're not responsible for anything. Tell students that the next exercise is designed to see what it would be like if a Fortune Teller gave you your future – and you wouldn't have to decide a thing!

Development Activities

Fortune Teller

Take students through [Activity A – Fortune Teller](#). In a whole class discussion, ask students to identify good things about the lifestyle they've been given. Ask them to identify problems.

Getting Whatever You Get

Have students discuss the questions of this worksheet in class. Ask them how many are happy with the lifestyle that the Fortune Teller gave them. Once a group discussion is finished, have them complete their written answers on the worksheet.

Reflective Learning

Give students this assignment: In a one-paragraph summary, write what you would think if your future was decided by others or by fate. Supply at least three reasons why you answered as you did. *This is to be submitted as part of the Reflective Thinking assignment, which is turned in at the end of the unit.*

Lesson Plan Three – Paths of Life

Purpose

To examine the impact of Snap Decisions on a life.

Outcomes

1. Students will define several benefits of and problems with snap decisions.
2. Students will explain why snap decisions are more common than responsible decisions.
3. Students will relate personal needs, interests, and skills to the process of making decisions.

Materials and Prep

- Access to a computer lab with Bridges Initiatives' Decision Making Guide **or** use [paper cards](#) to create a classroom activity for the Paths of Life.
- Look over the process of the [Paths of Life](#) exercise. Some students will have questions about some of the choices the *SECOND* time they go through it. If you have resources to help them get an answer, bring those resources to class.
- A classroom set of the worksheet [Snap Decisions](#).

Introductory Activity

- Tell students that last day we looked at the decision-making style of No Decision – a style that is preferred by some people who either don't want responsibility or don't care what happens to their life. Today, we will examine a second decision-making style – Snap Decisions. Remind them of the definition.
- Ask students to identify snap decisions they made in the past 24 hours – for example, what shirt to wear, what TV show to watch, what person to phone. Inform them that many life situations are best dealt with by a snap decision. Today's activity will examine the benefits and problems of snap decision-making.

Development Activities

Paths of Life

Let students play with [Activity B](#) in the Decision Making Guide. Inform them there will be a class discussion today, after they have completed the Snap Decisions Worksheet.

Class Discussion

Ask each student which career they ended up with the *FIRST* time they went through the activity. Repeat the exercise with the *SECOND* career they ended up in – when they took a little time to think of their needs, interests and skills before they decided. Finally, ask who preferred their second to their first career. Ask why they preferred the one they did.

Focus on student opinions from question four of the Snap Decisions Worksheet. Hopefully, they will conclude that snap decisions only satisfy immediate wants and needs, and that a different decision-making style is required for effective future planning!

Reflective Learning

Ask students to write on a sheet of paper three things they have learned in the past three lessons. *This is to be submitted as part of the Reflective Thinking assignment, which is turned in at the end of the unit.*

Lesson Plan Three – Paths of Life

Paths of Life Cards

This exercise is suggested for teachers unable to use the Decision Making Guide in a computer lab environment.

Print the [30 Paths of Life cards](#) and cut them out. Each has information related to making choices. Place the cards on desks or chairs in your classroom. Each card offers two choices, or provides one possible result of choices made earlier in the activity.

Put students through the path one at a time, starting with the Path of Life card. At the end, each student stands at the card where they ended up.

Use this structure to follow the same training routine outlined in [Activity B](#) and [Activity D](#).

Paths of Life Cards

Path of Life

You have just graduated from high school.

You have two choices: to take a learning path that has a **total learning focus (no income)**, or a learning path that places an **equal focus on work and learning (some income)**. Which do you choose?

You have a choice. You can elect **full-time full-pay work** – getting your education from what you learn in day-to-day life – or you can choose to take an educational program where you **combine paid work with non-paid learning**.

Four-Year University Focus

You have a choice. You can elect to take a **Bachelor of Science degree** (for example, physics, chemistry, biology, math) or a **Bachelor of Arts degree** (for example, English, history, geography, political science, psychology).

You have a choice. You can elect to take a **four-year university program** leading to a degree, or you can choose a **two-year technical school program** leading to a diploma.

Two-Year Technical School Program

You have a choice. You can elect to take a **Computer Tech diploma program** or a **Health Tech diploma program**.

Full-Time Full-Paid Work

You have a choice. You can **take employment working for someone else (also known as a job!)** or you can **open your own business**, working for yourself.

Combined Paid Work and Non-Paid Learning Program

You have a choice. You can enrol in an **Apprenticeship Program** (trades and technical focus) or you can enrol in a **Cooperative Education Program** (academic or technical school education with built-in related summer employment) at a college or university.



<p>Bachelor of Science Degree</p> <p>You have a choice. You can pursue your science degree in physics or in biology. Which do you prefer?</p>	<p>Bachelor of Arts Degree</p> <p>You have a choice. You can get your Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology or in English. Which do you prefer?</p>	<p>Computer Tech Program</p> <p>You have a choice. You can get your diploma in computer systems management or computer-assisted drafting. Which do you prefer?</p>	<p>Health Tech Program</p> <p>You have a choice. You can get your diploma in radiology or you can become qualified in medical laboratory technology. Which do you prefer?</p>
<p>Work For Someone Else</p> <p>You have a choice. Two job opportunities have been presented to you – one in travel and tourism and the other in banking. Which do you prefer?</p>		<p>Work For Yourself</p> <p>You have a choice. You can put your efforts into developing a new business, or you can invent something new and try to sell it. Which do you prefer?</p>	
<p>Apprenticeship Program</p> <p>You have a choice. You can go after employment in the world of builders or in the world of technology. Which type of apprenticeship program would you prefer?</p>	<p>Cooperative Education Program</p> <p>You have a choice. You can take your co-op training in business administration or in environmental studies. Which do you prefer?</p>		
<p>English</p> <p>Congratulations – you're working as a news reporter for a local radio station! You check out events in your community (get some good dirt!), and then write and report the story on the radio. You have to check out information to ensure it is correct, especially if the story will influence other people's lives! You interview people, do a lot of research, and write stories that are short and interesting for your radio listeners. The people you work with thought your story about Hunter's Pantyhose was a little off-the-wall, especially when you ended it with the jingle "When the terrain gets rough, this hose hangs tough!"</p>	<p>Biology</p> <p>Congratulations – you are a geneticist! You are working on the leading edge of gene splicing and cloning and other stuff dealing with inherited traits in humans. You perform experiments with plant or animal materials and figure out how to create new things from genetic matter. You're kind of like Dr. Frankenstein, only with a cleaner lab coat and a less evil laugh! Through your extensive research, financed by a government grant, you concluded that (and we quote) "If your parents didn't have any children, it is highly unlikely that you will have any either." <i>Brilliant!</i></p>		
<p>Physics</p> <p>Congratulations on becoming a geophysicist! You analyse and assess the movements of the earth to determine where earthquakes are likely to happen. You look into gravity, the atmosphere, volcanic stuff, disaster prevention – you've really got a <i>neat</i> job! You are the gravity guru who first concluded that the earth sucks.</p>	<p>Psychology</p> <p>Congratulations! Your choices have led you to a career as a child psychologist! You use tests, interview techniques, and good observation to help children who are having difficulties in their lives. Sometimes you do some work with the family to figure out or solve the problem. You are considering opening a Cowboy Crisis Line, for lonesome cowpokes who feel guilty about having punched cows for so long. Don't wait up.</p>		



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Medical Laboratory Technology

Congratulations! You're a **lab technician** working in medical research, looking into the causes of deadly diseases like cancer and AIDS. Before getting this job you worked in a regular lab, assessing blood and other body fluids for the presence of health problems and illness. You did blood counts and even developed vaccines for use by doctors. Now you do more work in research with human tissues and body cells. You wear a lab coat, and dream of being the first person to discover the gene for human shyness, which you know will be hiding behind another gene.

Radiology

Congratulations on becoming an **x-ray technician**! Yours is the only job in the world that starts with the letter X – and even this group now calls itself 'radiologic technicians'! Your job is to use x-ray technology to help figure out what's wrong with people suffering from disease or injury. You also get involved in radiation therapy, using the technology for medical treatment. Like Superman, you've never used your x-ray talents for personal gain, although you did once notice that a patient had a heart of gold!

Business Administration

Congratulations! You've used your co-op training to become a **tax accountant** with a local accounting firm. You help people and businesses with their income tax returns, making friends all the way as you help them to understand the rules of taxation! You also provide advice to businesses on how to get the best tax benefits for their companies. You've developed a new and more effective tax form for the government – it's just two lines. First line: How much money did you make last year? Second line: Send it in.

Environmental Studies

Congratulations on becoming a **water quality technologist**! You use technical equipment to assess the quality of drinking water in city and country areas. You research the source of any pollutants in the water and report your findings. You used your co-op placement to get a job with the government. Your next task is to evaluate the impact of a local industry's pollutants on wildlife and water quality. The only thing you don't like about your job is that your neighbor won't stop saying, "Hey, water you doin'?"

Lesson Plan Four – Life's Little Scenarios

Purpose

To learn the process for considering others when you make a decision.

Outcomes

1. Students will be able to discuss how decisions can impact other people.
2. Students will be able to make decisions that take into consideration other people's points-of-view.
3. Students will use a personal example to demonstrate an understanding of the responsible decision-making process.

Materials and Prep

- Access to a computer lab featuring [Activity C](#) of the Decision Making Guide or
 - Copies of these six Life's Little Scenarios to pose to the class:
 - [Tom's Dad](#)
 - [The Red Truck](#)
 - [Skip City](#)
 - [Cindy and Rick](#)
 - [The Socials Test](#)
 - [Mechanics or Biology](#)
- Classroom copies of the worksheet [My Own Little Scenario](#).

Introductory Activity

- Review the four aspects of life – work, recreation, relationships, learning – with your class. Remind them there are three ways we make decisions about these things in life: No Decision, Snap Decisions, and Responsible Decisions. In the past two lessons, we have examined no decision and snap decisions. In the next four lessons, we will examine responsible decision-making, the most difficult and most rewarding form of making choices.
- Outline the five steps of responsible decision-making:
 1. **Identify your choices**
There are always more solutions than the obvious ones. Start by building yourself a good list of choices.
 2. **What's best for you now?**
If you only thought of yourself and 'right now', which of the choices is your favorite?
 3. **Consider others**
What point-of-view will other people have about your various decisions?
 4. **Consider your future**
What is the best choice for your future, or which one has the best possible future benefits?
 5. **Make a choice and go for it**
Once you have identified some choices, and considered the future and social implications of each choice, pick one and just do it. If you learn along the way that another choice would be better, it's okay to change your mind.
- Review each step briefly with your students, as outlined above.

Lesson Plan Four – Life's Little Scenarios (Cont.)

Development Activities

Life's Little Scenarios – Part A

Ask students to complete the first three scenarios, each time identifying the choice they would make and then looking at what really happened. You may choose to do these as a whole class activity, asking their opinions one scenario at a time.

Life's Little Scenarios – Part B

Ask students to use the first three steps of the responsible decision-making process to come up with solutions to the last three scenarios. You may choose to do these scenarios one at a time, working in small groups to develop choices, state personal points-of-view, and predict the perspectives of others.

Reflective Learning

My Own Little Scenario

Each student individually uses a personal example to demonstrate an understanding of the responsible decision-making process. Their assignment should be titled My Own Little Scenario. It should include a brief outline of a personal decision-making dilemma, at least five different solutions to the problem, a paragraph outlining a personal preference, a paragraph outlining the perspective of other important people in their life, and a final paragraph summarizing which decision they will – or did – choose, and why.

Lesson Plan Five – Paths of Life II: The Big Picture

Purpose

To learn the process of considering your future when making decisions.

Outcomes

1. Students will explain how future goals can make decisions easier.
2. Students will identify several ways to predict the future implications of important decisions.
3. Students will identify decisions they will make to achieve at least two future career goals.

Materials and Prep

- You'll need access to the Paths of Life (either [paper](#) or [computer](#)) activity you used in Lesson Three.
- Each student will require a copy of the [Paths of Life Map](#).
- Each student will need a Paths of Life II – [The Big Picture](#) worksheet.

Introductory Activity

- Ask students to explain the phrase "I'm here for a good time, not a long time." Ask what the benefits and problems are to living your life like that. You may also want to use "Eat, drink, and be merry – for tomorrow we die."
- Tell an "It seemed like a good idea at the time" story, one from your own life where you made a decision – or non-decision – that turned out to be not-so-good down the road. Ask students if they have one to tell. Perhaps you'd like to recall the story of Pandora's Box.
- Explain that a responsible decision maker thinks about the future implications of decisions before making them. Today's lesson deals with how to do that!

Development Activities

Paths of Life II – The Map

Inform students that we will be repeating the Paths of Life activity from a couple of lessons ago. The difference is, this time they'll have a map to help guide them. (Hand out map). Do an overview of the 16 careers in the activity. Encourage them to make decisions – this time with a map to guide them. Inform them they will be asked to comment on the differences they notice between decision making with a map and decision making with no direction at all.

Paths of Life II – The Big Picture

Let students take part in the Paths of Life activity again. Encourage them to explore around the different pathways they can see on the map.

Paths of Life II – The Worksheet

Distribute the worksheet and ask students to complete only questions one and two for now. After 15 minutes, review student responses to the questions. Be sure to emphasize that decisions are more likely to have long-term gains if they are made with a future and a present perspective in mind.

Reflective Learning

Ask students to complete the activity outlined in question three of the worksheet. Inform students that this activity should be completed on a separate sheet of paper. *This is to be submitted as part of the Reflective Thinking assignment, which is turned in at the end of the unit.*

Lesson Plan Six – Responsible Decision Making: Getting Ready

Purpose

To develop the ability to choose when to use skills for responsible decision making.

Outcomes

1. Students will sort life decisions into three sections: No Decision, Snap Decision and Responsible Decision.
2. Students will identify situations – in work, recreation, relationships, and learning – when good responsible decision-making skills will be an asset.

Materials and Prep

- A copy of the worksheet [Decisions, Decisions](#) for every student.

Introductory Activity

- Review the five steps of responsible decision making with the students, and ensure they each understand the process. Inform them that you can't *always* be making RESPONSIBLE decisions – there's no time! Lots of decisions are small and just part of the day. No decision or snap decisions are perfect for many situations – either you don't care (go for a no decision) or you care but there's no real concerns about the future or others (use a snap decision).
- Today's lesson looks at being selective when you decide to make a big deal out of deciding.

Development Activities

Decisions Decisions

Distribute a copy of Decisions Decisions to each student. Ask them to sort the 36 decision points into one of three categories: a No Decision, a Snap Decision or a Responsible Decision.

When students complete the sorting individually, groups of four or five should complete the second half identifying life activities that they all agree should fit into a category. After 15 minutes of group work, ask students to summarize what they agreed to.

Reflective Learning

On a separate sheet of paper, students write the four career categories across the top – work, recreation, relationships and learning. Each student must identify 20 situations (five for each section) where responsible decision making will be an asset – for example, Work: selecting the types of work I will go after.

Lesson Plan Seven – Druthers: Yer Little Town of Decisions

Purpose

To practice using the responsible decision-making process in a variety of life scenarios.

Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate responsible decision-making skills in at least four scenarios.
2. Students will assess the decision-making process followed by others in written scenarios.
3. Students will identify their strengths and weaknesses in the responsible decision-making process.

Materials and Prep

- A copy of one [Making Decisions](#) situation, provided to each member of the class (from the Druthers exercise).
- Access to the [Making Decisions](#) articles that are part of the Druthers exercise, either in a computer lab or in text form.
- Two copies of the [Decision Assessment](#) for each student.

Introductory Activity

- Review the three types of decisions. Review the five steps of a responsible decision.
- As a classroom activity, hand out a sample Making Decisions situation. Read out the situation to the class. Take the class through the responsible decision-making process to come up with a class solution to the scenario.

Development Activities

Druthers

Tell students there are millions of decisions made every day. Inform them that most require no great thought – that simple No Decision or Snap Decisions will do. Others deserve more thought. The Druthers exercise will provide them with a variety of responsible decision-making scenarios. Tell them their job is to resolve each problem responsibly.

Ask each student to read four Making Decisions scenarios from the Druthers exercise. In each case, they imagine what they would do, following the responsible decision-making process.

Decision Assessment

Each student selects two situations and evaluates them, according to the Decision Assessment worksheet. In the top corner, students identify the most responsible decision of the two they assessed.

Reflective Learning

Ask each student to identify personal strengths and weaknesses in the five-step responsible decision-making process. In each case, inform them you expect one or two sentences of explanation. *This is to be submitted as part of the Reflective Thinking assignment, which is turned in at the end of the unit.*

Lesson Plan Eight – My Most Amazing Life: Today's Edition

Purpose

To use a responsible decision-making model to determine personal career and life plans.

Outcomes

1. Students will define their dream lifestyle, including work, recreation, relationships, and lifelong learning.
2. Students will identify steps to follow to achieve at least one career and life goal.
3. Students will predict the things that may cause them to change their present career and life plans.

Materials and Prep

- You will need a hula hoop and some sheets of scrap paper.
- A set of [Steps to One Big Goal](#) worksheets – one for each person in your class.

Introductory Activity

- Tell students that it is important to think responsibly when planning their future. "If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else." Today's exercise offers an opportunity to think "Not only me not only now" when creating a life for themselves.
- Ask students to imagine they went to bed in today's world, and were visited in their dreams by the Fortune Teller from Lesson Two. The Fortune Teller says, "When you wake up, you will be in your 'most amazing life' – a life that makes you happy, healthy, and provides the lifestyle you prefer." Ask them to define their 'most amazing life' by writing answers on a sheet of paper as you read out the following questions:

In your perfect world:

1. What is your work? Where do you work?
 2. Identify at least two recreation activities you take part in regularly.
 3. Who do you live with? What type of home do you live in? What part of the world do you live in?
 4. What educational credentials do you have? What do you do to keep lifelong learning?
 5. What percentage of time do you spend at work, recreation, relationships, and lifelong learning? (It must total 100 percent).
- Have students compare their 'most amazing life' to the one they were given by the Fortune Teller in Lesson Two. They will probably prefer the one they chose themselves. Make the point that career and life planning is required in order to achieve a desired lifestyle. Otherwise you'll just have to take what you get!
 - Ask students to think of an adult they know. What would they think of the life he or she has planned? Ask them to think of a friend. What would their friend think? (This is 'not only me' thinking!)
 - Tell students that by thinking ahead, they are thinking 'not only now'! When they are making some decisions for today, they are wise to consider their future goals.

Lesson Plan Eight – My Most Amazing Life: Today's Edition (Cont.)

Development Activities

Moving Towards One Big Goal

- Identify a type of work you (the teacher) would like to do in your lifetime. Place a hoop or chair 10 to 15 yards away from you and say, "There is one of my big goals – it's too far to get there from here." ("Here" is where you are standing). Ask students to identify things you must do to get there. Each time they suggest something, place down a piece of paper and step on it – moving closer to your "big goal." After seven or eight "little goals," you should reach your "big goal." Make the point that achieving big goals is done by setting and completing a bunch of little goals.
- Ask students to select a "big goal," identifying a type of work they would most like to get involved in. Working with one other student, they identify at least eight steps to achieve the "big goal" and record them on a scrap piece of paper.
- Ask students to put their "little goals" in order and sequence them on the Steps to One Big Goal worksheet.

Getting There

- Explain to students that thinking responsibly is a key thing to do if they want to achieve their 'most amazing life'. There will be many choices they will have that could prevent them from achieving their dream life. Responsible thinking at the right times will help each student to more likely get what they want.
- Have students individually identify at least 10 things that could prevent them from achieving their dream lifestyle if they made a snap decision or no decision rather than a responsible one. After each student identifies 10, put them in groups of three to identify 25. Review the lists with the whole class.
- Make the point that thinking 'not only me, not only now' at the right times in their life will make the life they desire much more achievable.
- Explain that this lesson is called My Most Amazing Life – Today's Edition because people's career goals change throughout life. Setting goals gets you moving towards something you want. Encourage students to keep their eyes open along the way. They won't *believe* what they will find when they are out there!

Reflective Learning

Ask students to identify one real or imagined life situation where they successfully made a responsible decision. Ask them to also identify a real or imagined situation where they did not think responsibly, and it cost them. *Both of these paragraphs should be included as the last installment of the Reflective Thinking assignment.*



Worksheet: Steps to One Big Goal

Set the scene: **What is your One Big Goal?**

.....

Eight Steps to Achieve Your One Big Goal

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Unit Outcomes

By the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

1. Name three types of decisions: **no** decision; **snap** decisions; and **responsible** decisions.
2. Identify the five steps of the responsible decision-making process.
3. Identify at least two choices for any decision.
4. Outline personal preferences for decisions that satisfy immediate personal needs.
5. Consider others and the future when making a responsible decision.
6. Demonstrate responsible decision-making skills in a variety of scenarios.
7. Apply responsible decision-making skills to personal career and life planning.

Evaluation

Students can be evaluated by assessing the following products from the Decision Making Guide:

- a. [Getting What You Get](#) Worksheet
- b. [Snap Decisions](#) Worksheet
- c. [My Own Little Scenario](#) Assignment
- d. Paths of Life II – [The Big Picture](#) Worksheet
- e. [Decisions, Decisions](#) Worksheet
- f. Two [Decision Assessment](#) Worksheets
- g. [Steps to One Big Goal](#) Worksheet
- h. Reflective Thinking Assignments (see the [Lesson Plans](#)).

We believe that skill development units differ significantly from traditional information distribution units of instruction. If the goal is to develop student skills, then **what** will be evaluated and **how** the skills will be assessed must be very clear to the learners. For this reason, we recommend assessment by clear criteria, with a simple 'acceptable' or 'unfinished' evaluation. We suggest grades be assigned based on percentage of completed work (to the acceptable standard) within a targeted timeframe.

For example, imagine Sarah completed (to standards) eight of 10 assignments requested within the established timeframe. Her percentage would therefore be 80 percent, her letter grade would be a B. We also believe her attitude and effort should be reported as well. This would probably be a separate 'work ethic' grade.

END OF TEACHER'S GUIDE

(Note about page numbers: For easy reference, all pages beyond this page have the same page numbers as their equivalent pages in the Student version.)



Student Decision Making Guide

What is This?

The Decision Making Guide is a fun and informative course for students in 8th grade and up. It teaches the art of responsible decision making, no matter how old you are.

Learn to think about the future and how decisions affect others. To complete the guide, work through each of the activities – specific activities to help you get the most from this course.

After completing the Decision Making Guide, you will be able to:

- Describe the steps for making a responsible decision
- Consider your future when you make important decisions
- Gossip with your pets about other animal species. *Just kidding!* Ignore this line
- Think about significant other people in your life when you decide things
- Select useful times to apply the responsible decision-making process
- Demonstrate to yourself the ability to use the responsible decision-making process in a variety of circumstances
- Be more comfortable with the 'R' word! (yes, it's Responsible)



The "R" Word

The 'R' word – it's everywhere in this guide! Just when you thought it was safe to go out in the world, somebody starts talking about "responsible decision making."

Maybe it would be easier to take if we just said it differently, perhaps like this: Re-spawn-Sybil... Re-spawn-Sybil. Think of it as a lovely story about a salmon named Sybil who is being permitted to spawn again. There, is it easier to hear now?

Well, no. Fact is, we hear the 'R' word – Responsible – more than we want to. That's the word our parents always threw in (along with "trust" and "respect") during those really long "When I was your age" speeches designed to make us better human beings.

Most of us doze off whenever anyone says the 'R' word. Where's a good set of earplugs when you need 'em?

But wait! Being responsible means taking charge, being a person you can count on, and being considerate. Most of us want to be those things, especially if it helps us to get what we want out of life.

Maybe this responsible thing isn't all that bad. Maybe we can actually benefit from it. Wonder why we're so sensitive when it comes to the 'R' word? Let's blame our parents.

This guide helps you to develop responsible decision-making skills. It'll teach you the following five-step process:

1. Identify your choices
2. What's best for you now
3. Consider others
4. Consider your future
5. Make a choice and go for it

Big warning! Once you finish this guide and know how to make a decision in a responsible way, don't go crazy and start doing it all of the time. Most decisions in life don't need a lot of thinking. Responsible decision-making skills are only for the big decisions – the ones that shape your future and affect people who are important to you.

Once you have the skills to make a responsible decision, you can choose to use them whenever you want to. This is good!



Activity A: The Fortune Teller

Purpose

To examine the benefits and problems of leaving life decisions to chance.

Background Information

Think about these sayings:

- "Whatever happens, happens."
- "Don't worry, it'll work itself out."
- "Cast your fate to the wind."
- "Que sera sera – whatever will be, will be."

A lot of sayings in our world tell us to just let life happen – not to try to shape our lives with the choices we make. Luckily, there are other sayings, like:

- "If you build it, they will come."
- "The best way to predict the future is to invent it."
- "You can't be anything if you want to be everything."
- "People who aim at nothing hit it with remarkable success."

Other people believe life is what you make it, and what you make it is determined by your decisions. Somebody smart once said, "When all is said and done, more is said than done." People talk about stuff more often than they actually do anything about it. That's because it's easier; we let fate decide what will happen rather than making the choice ourselves.

There are some real advantages to NOT deciding. There are also some unfortunate disadvantages. This activity examines both the benefits and the problems associated with leaving your future to chance.

Step By Step

- a. Print a copy of [Getting Whatever You Get](#), the worksheet where you figure out the advantages and disadvantages of making no decisions in your life.
- b. [Visit the Fortune Teller](#) to find out what the future holds. Record your fortune on your worksheet.
- c. List three advantages and three disadvantages to letting life select your future. If you can, review your answers with one other person.

Product

Getting Whatever You Get worksheet is completed.



Activity A: The Fortune Teller Worksheet: Getting Whatever You Get

1. Your life was decided for you in the Fortune Teller's room. Your life features are:

.....
.....
.....

2. Identify at least three **advantages** to letting chance decide your life for you.

.....
.....
.....

3. Identify at least three **disadvantages** to letting chance decide your life for you.

.....
.....
.....

4. The first step in responsible decision-making is "identify your choices."

The Fortune Teller did not let you consider options – your choices were made for you. Would you rather make your own choices or have someone do it for you? Explain your answer.

.....
.....
.....

Activity A: The Fortune Teller Fortune Teller's Room

You have entered the fortune teller's room. People's lives are determined here – their life fortunes are fixed.

You are here to play the game and have your life selected for you. Don't worry, the only choices you have to make are what mysterious letter to choose, and when you want to leave!

The letters are scattered on the table in front of the fortune teller.

The fortune teller grins at you and says, "Any of these letters will reveal your life fortune. Leave your life to chance and click away!"

Click here to [leave the Fortune Teller's Room.](#)

E

B

G

D

A

F

C



Activity B: Paths of Life

Purpose

To look at the impact of snap decisions on a life.

Background Information

This activity asks you to have a look at snap decisions. A snap decision is defined as "a quick choice you make with no consideration of the result." Most snap decisions are great, because they don't take up much time. But sometimes making a snap decision results in things you didn't want to happen – just like Pandora when she opened the box. The real skill is learning when to put more than 'snap' into the decision.

Step By Step

- a. In life we each follow different paths, based on various choices we make. Every path has a series of 'decision points' – places where you have to make a choice.

Go into the [Paths of Life](#) exercise. Each time you have a choice to make, decide in less than five seconds – make a snap decision. (Don't worry if you don't understand the choices – just guess!) You will end up with one of 16 different jobs, based on your decisions.

- b. Print the [Snap Decisions](#) worksheet. On the worksheet, record the career you ended up with beside the words "Snap Path."
- c. Go into the [Paths of Life](#) exercise again (remember to come back to Activity **D**). This time, think about your choice a little longer. Consider which choice best meets your needs, your interests, your talents. If you need to learn more about each choice in order to decide, try to get the information.
- d. On the Snap Decisions worksheet, record the career you ended up with beside the words "Self Path."
- e. Don't place a lot of faith in this as a career decision-making tool. Its purpose is to examine different ways in which we make decisions. Answer the questions on the Snap Decisions worksheet.

Product

The Snap Decisions worksheet is completed.



Activity B: Paths of Life Worksheet: Snap Decisions

Snap Path:

Self Path:

1. What is good about making snap decisions?

.....
.....
.....

2. What is good about taking time to make decisions that satisfy your needs, interests, and skills?

.....
.....
.....

3. The second step in responsible decision making is to think about **what's best for you now**. However, most people find snap decisions easier than taking time to think about what's best for them. Do you think it's better to plan your future with snap decisions? Explain your answer.

.....
.....
.....



Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios

Purpose

To examine the process of considering others before making life decisions.

Background Information

Every time a decision is made, somebody else has an opinion. Maybe that's why we're sometimes scared to *make a stand* – because somebody will have something new to complain about. So we sit quietly when we really want to shout.

Bill Cosby once said, "I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everyone." Good line, Bill! We all have to make decisions for ourselves, because it is impossible to make everybody happy.

However, there are some people who we want to be happy with us. These are the people we should consider when we make important choices. Thinking of quitting? Thinking of joining? Thinking of changing, staying the same, gossiping, being quiet, winning, losing, giving, taking? Thinking of stealing, fooling, putting down, lying, buying, trying, making fun of? Who (other than you) will it matter to?

In the long run, thinking about other people who are important to us can really pay off. If we don't think of others, we end up by ourselves – lonely in a nice neighborhood.

This activity looks at the process of considering others before you make some life decisions.

For the Step By Step section of this activity, go to the next page.

Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios

Step By Step

- a. Make a snap decision in each of the following Life's Little Scenarios. After making your choice, follow the links to see the impact of each choice.
 - [Tom's Dad](#)
 - [The Red Truck](#)
 - [Skip City](#)

- b. Think about the opinions of others before you make a decision in each of the following Life's Little Scenarios. Remember – nobody said it was *easier* to think about others. It just may be better for you (and others) in the long run! Remember, too, that you don't have to *do* what others would like you to do, unless you think it is the best overall choice.
 - [Cindy and Rick](#)
 - [The Socials Test](#)
 - [Mechanics or Biology?](#)

- c. Think of an example of a personal decision you are facing now or have faced recently. Identify your choices. Which choice is best for you now? How would each of those choices impact the people who are important to you? Is the best choice *for you* also the best choice for others? Considering all these things, what would (or will) you do in that circumstance?

- d. Using your personal decision-making example from c), complete the assignment called [My Own Little Scenario](#). This assignment shows you that you can use the responsible decision-making model to make decisions. It asks you to complete the following:
 - a brief outline of the decision-making dilemma
 - at least five different solutions to the decision-making problem
 - a paragraph outlining your personal preference
 - a paragraph outlining the perspective of others who are important to you
 - a final paragraph summarizing which decision you will (or did) choose and why

Product

My Own Little Scenario assignment completed.



Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios Worksheet: My Own Little Scenario

My Personal Decision (Briefly outline a decision-making dilemma)

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.....

Five Different Solutions to the Personal Decision
(Write down solutions to the decision-making problem)

1.
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2.
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3.
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.....
4.
.....
.....
5.
.....
.....

My Preferred Solution (Write a paragraph outlining your personal preference)

.....
.....

The Perspective of Others (Outline the perspective of others who are important to you)

.....
.....
.....

What I Will Do (or What I Did) and Why

.....
.....
.....



Activity D: Paths of Life II – The Big Picture

Purpose

To learn how to consider the future when making decisions.

Background Info

It seemed like a good idea at the time. Sometimes we make decisions for today that aren't good for tomorrow. Today is immediate – it *demand*s attention. Tomorrow often gets forgotten, until it shows up as today! Responsible decision makers think about the future ("not only now") when they make choices.

Remember the Pandora story? After she opened the box and all the bad things got out, she felt bad. Then she noticed there was one thing left in the box – something that can always be with us. It was *hope*. We all need hope. Some of us have lost hope; we have it only when we purchase a lottery ticket – and it fades away as we throw our ticket in the garbage. Others are full of hope, knowing that the choices and decisions we make can lead us to the life we hope for. You have to think about your future in order to get the future you want. *If you don't care where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else!* This activity is about the future, but we're doing it today.

Step By Step

- a. Remember the Paths of Life exercise you did in Activity B? Each time you made decisions, you had to pick a direction with very little knowledge of where you were going. We think you would make better choices if you knew *where* each decision would take you. It would be great to have some kind of decision map.
- b. Have a look at the [Paths of Life Map](#) before you go on to the next section. We suggest that you print a copy for your use. It shows you all of the pathways you can follow, ending in any of 16 different places. Use it to help you make choices in the Paths of Life exercise.
- c. Repeat the [Paths of Life](#) exercise. Use the map to help you decide.
- d. Complete the [Paths of Life II – The Big Picture](#) worksheet. We hope you have noticed how much easier it is to make decisions when you have some idea of where you want to go!
- e. It isn't as hard as it seems to consider what may happen in the future. If you are thinking about becoming a smoker, there are statistics around that tell you about the health risks – research is good! If you think you might like to work with animals, check it out! There are lots of people doing that now; interview someone, read some career descriptions. Sometimes, considering the future means taking a good guess – following your intuition. You can use any of these techniques when you are considering the future implications of important life decisions. You need to build a map for your own life. It will help you to make real decisions. We encourage you to take time to get some clear life goals – for work, recreation, relationships and learning. You won't believe how useful it is to know where you are going!

Product

Paths of Life II – The Big Picture Worksheet is complete.



Activity D: Paths of Life II – The Big Picture Worksheet: The Big Picture

- Most people find it easier to make decisions when it is clear what the future results of the choices are. This is when some kind of *life map* is useful. Why does a future goal help people to make decisions?
- Make a snap decision on each of the following choices. Then add a future goal that would cause you to change your mind. For example, should you study for a science test **or** watch TV? You choose to watch TV. A goal of becoming a veterinarian would change your decision.
 - Enter an apprenticeship program **or** university?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Travel to Europe after graduation **or** stay in town with your boyfriend or girlfriend?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Take a full-time summer job at a fast-food restaurant **or** work 20 hours per week in the summer working at the hospital?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Do work you love, living away from the ocean **or** do work you hate, living near the ocean?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Make \$40 an hour living in Japan **or** \$8 an hour living in your own country?
What future goal would change your decision?
- Name two of your future goals – in work, recreation, relationships or learning. List 10 decisions you will have to make to achieve those goals – five for each one.

Goal 1:

Decision 1:

Decision 2:

Decision 3:

Decision 4:

Decision 5:

Goal 2:

Decision 1:

Decision 2:

Decision 3:

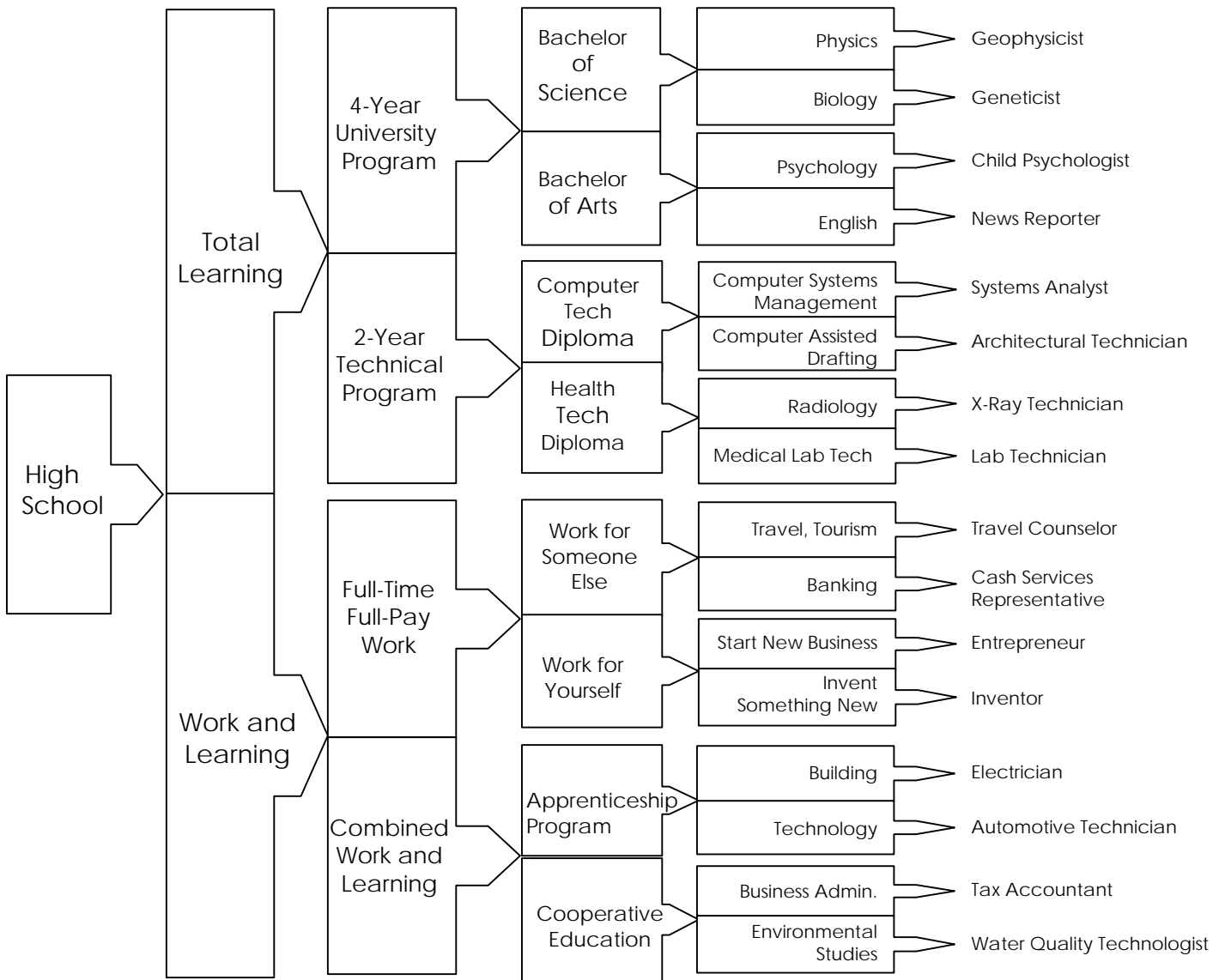
Decision 4:

Decision 5:



Activity D: Paths of Life II – The Big Picture

Paths of Life Map



Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II – The Big Picture](#).



Activity D: Paths of Life II – The Big Picture Worksheet: The Big Picture

- Most people find it easier to make decisions when it is clear what the future results of the choices are. This is when some kind of *life map* is useful. Why does a future goal help people to make decisions?
- Make a snap decision on each of the following choices. Then add a future goal that would cause you to change your mind. For example, should you study for a science test **or** watch TV? You choose to watch TV. A goal of becoming a veterinarian would change your decision.
 - Enter an apprenticeship program **or** university?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Travel to Europe after graduation **or** stay in town with your boyfriend or girlfriend?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Take a full-time summer job at a fast-food restaurant **or** work 20 hours per week in the summer working at the hospital?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Do work you love, living away from the ocean **or** do work you hate, living near the ocean?
What future goal would change your decision?
 - Make \$40 an hour living in Japan **or** \$8 an hour living in your own country?
What future goal would change your decision?
- Name two of your future goals – in work, recreation, relationships or learning. List 10 decisions you will have to make to achieve those goals – five for each one.

Goal 1:.....

Decision 1:

Decision 2:

Decision 3:

Decision 4:

Decision 5:

Goal 2:.....

Decision 1:

Decision 2:

Decision 3:

Decision 4:

Decision 5:



Activity E: Values Worksheet: Decisions, Decisions

A) Decision Points

Who you will marry
What time to wake up
Buy a house or rent
Oranges or apples
Go on a blind date
Quit school or stay
Which movie to see
What courses you take
Who you will vote for
Learn computer skills
Route you take to school
When to brush your teeth

What to do on the weekend
Whether to get a dog
What bank to keep your \$\$\$ in
How many TVs in the house
What type of work you will do
Buy house or live in apartment
When/where to do homework
What time to get home at night
How many kids you will have
Lie to get out of trouble
Spelling practice or watch TV
Type of post-secondary training

What shoes to wear
What city to live in
How to cut your hair
Start smoking with friends
Get a tattoo
When to do laundry
Which shampoo to use
Take a second language
Go on a diet
Where and when you travel

B) Individual Choices

No Decision	Snap Decision	Responsible Decision
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Activity F: Druthers – Yer Little Town of Decisions

Purpose

To practice responsible decision making.

Background Info

People make lots of decisions every day. Most of them are pretty little, but every now and then some of your choices influence the path of your life. It's never too late to get good at recognizing an important decision when you see one. That's the time to pull out your responsible decision-making bag of tricks!

OK, let's review what you know. There are five steps to a responsible decision:

1. Identify your choices
2. What's best for you now?
3. Consider others
4. Consider your future
5. Make a choice and go for it!

You practiced steps 1, 2, and 3 in Activity C and step 4 in Activity D. This activity asks you to practice making a choice, the first part of step 5. The second part – the 'go for it' part – well, that's up to you.

Remember, a responsible decision means you consider others and consider the future before you make your choice. This may mean you have to do a little research, like asking people what they think or looking for information about future possibilities. *As long as you have considered the impact of your decision on others and your future*, you are now free to choose whatever you wish – you've thought responsibly first!

Step By Step

- a. You're about to visit the town of [Druthers – yer little town of decisions](#). When you go there, you'll find eight different situations where you have to make choices. Your job is to read at least four of these situations and decide what you would do – thinking responsibly, that is.
- b. Print two copies of the [Decision Assessment](#) worksheet.
- c. Select one of the situations that you read in the town of Druthers. Evaluate the choice by completing the questions on the worksheet.
- d. Select a second situation and evaluate the decision made by completing a second Decision Assessment worksheet.
- e. Identify on the top of the worksheet which decision you believe was the most responsible.

Products

Two completed Decision Assessment worksheets, one of them identified as the most responsible decision.

Activity F: Druthers – Yer Little Town of Decisions

Welcome to Druthers – a place where you can spy on others as they make tough life decisions. Here, you will read a few of the situations described and then use the responsible decision-making process to determine what you would do.

After you make a choice, read what really happened. You may also find it interesting to read what the decision-maker thinks of her or his choice now.

Here are eight images from today in the town of Druthers:

1. A woman is watching her child play on the beach with two children she doesn't know.
[Not a Day at the Beach](#)
2. A young man is delivering a load of wood to a person's house.
[Fuel for the Fire](#)
3. A mom is showing up to help her babysitting daughter with a crying infant.
[Nobody's Baby](#)
4. A daughter comes home from the hairdresser with a unique hairstyle.
[The Color Purple](#)
5. A single father is unsure of what to do with his rock and roll son.
[Dane's World](#)
6. A rookie TV and radio reporter has to choose her future employment.
[The Big Break](#)
7. An insurance salesman is being asked a tough question by his boss.
[Lloyd the Liar](#)

Click on any of these to see the decisions these people are going to have to make!



Activity F: Druthers – Yer Little Town of Decisions
Worksheet: Decision Assessment

Set the scene.... Describe the choice that has to be made.

1. Identify at least three choices the person can make in forming their decision.

.....
.....
.....

2. In your opinion, what is the best immediately satisfying choice for the person?

.....
.....
.....

3. How will the choices impact other important people in the situation?

.....
.....
.....

4. How will the choices impact the person's future?

.....
.....
.....

5. In your opinion, did the person make a responsible decision in the story that you read?

.....

If yes, why? If no, what was the most responsible decision that could have been made?

.....
.....

Checklist

- Can identify the three major types of decisions, and the five steps of a responsible decision.

Completed the following exercises:

- [Fortune Teller](#)
- [Paths of Life](#)
- [Life's Little Scenarios](#)
- [Paths of Life II](#)
- [Druthers](#)

Completed the following worksheets:

- Getting Whatever You Get
- Snap Decisions
- My Own Little Scenario
- Paths of Life II – The Big Picture
- Decisions Decisions
- Two Decision Assessments
- Completed this checklist!
- Committed to using the responsible decision-making process in life situations that I believe are important to my life.

End of the Main Section

The pages after this page are used by the decision-making exercises. To view them as they were designed to be viewed, simply go to the start of the Decision Making Guide and [try the activities](#).

The following pages are intended for viewing using an Acrobat PDF viewer, not for printing on paper. You do not have to print them to use the Decision Making Guide.

You have just graduated from high school. You have two choices: to take a learning path that has a [total learning focus \(no income\)](#), or a learning path that places an [equal focus on work and learning \(some income\)](#). Which do you choose?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

You have a choice. You can elect to take a [four-year university program](#) leading to a degree, or you can choose a [two-year technical school program](#) leading to a diploma.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

You have a choice. You can elect [full-time full-pay work](#) – getting your education from what you learn in day-to-day life – or you can choose to take an educational program where you [combine paid work with non-paid learning](#).

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Four-Year University Focus

You have a choice. You can elect to take a [bachelor of science degree](#) (for example, physics, chemistry, biology, math) or a [bachelor of arts degree](#) (for example, English, history, geography, political science, psychology).

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Two-Year Technical School Program

You have a choice. You can elect to take a [computer tech diploma program](#) or a [health tech diploma program](#).

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Full-Time Full-Paid Work

You have a choice. You can [take employment working for someone else \(also known as a job!\)](#) or you can [open your own business](#), working for yourself.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Combined Paid Work and Non-Paid Learning Program

You have a choice. You can enroll in an [apprenticeship program](#) (trades and technical focus) or you can enroll in a [cooperative education program](#) (academic or technical school education with built-in related summer employment) at a college or university.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Bachelor of Science Degree

You have a choice. You can pursue your science degree in [physics](#) or in [biology](#). Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Bachelor of Arts Degree

You have a choice. You can get your Bachelor of Arts degree in [psychology](#) or in [English](#). Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Computer Tech Program

You have a choice. You can get your diploma in [computer systems management](#) or [computer-assisted drafting](#). Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

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Health Tech Program

You have a choice. You can get your diploma in [radiology](#) or you can become qualified in [medical laboratory technology](#). Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

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Work For Someone Else

You have a choice. Two job opportunities have been presented to you – one in [travel and tourism](#) and the other in [banking](#). Which do you prefer?

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Work For Yourself

You have a choice. You can put your efforts into [developing a new business](#), or you can [invent something new](#) and try to sell it. Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Apprenticeship Program

You have a choice. You can go after employment in the world of [builders](#) or in the world of [technology](#). Which type of apprenticeship program would you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Cooperative Education Program

You have a choice. You can take your co-op training in [business administration](#) or in [environmental studies](#). Which do you prefer?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Physics

Congratulations on becoming a **geophysicist**! You analyze and assess the movements of the earth to determine where earthquakes are likely to happen. You look into gravity, the atmosphere, volcanic stuff, disaster prevention – you've really got a *neat* job! You are the gravity guru who first concluded that the earth sucks.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Biology

Congratulations – you are a **geneticist!** You are working on the leading edge of gene splicing and cloning and other stuff dealing with inherited traits in humans. You perform experiments with plant or animal materials and figure out how to create new things from genetic matter. You're kind of like Dr. Frankenstein, only with a cleaner lab coat and a less evil laugh! Through your extensive research, financed by a government grant, you concluded that (and we quote) "If your parents didn't have any children, it is highly unlikely that you will have any either." *Brilliant!*

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

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Psychology

Congratulations! Your choices have led you to a career as a **child psychologist!** You use tests, interview techniques, and good observation to help children who are having difficulties in their lives. Sometimes you do some work with the family to figure out or solve the problem. You are considering opening a Cowboy Crisis Line, for lonesome cowpokes who feel guilty about having punched cows for so long. Don't wait up.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

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English

Congratulations – you're working as a **news reporter** for a local radio station! You check out events in your community (get some good dirt!), and then write and report the story on the radio. You have to check out information to ensure it is correct, especially if the story will influence other people's lives! You interview people, do a lot of research, and write stories that are short and interesting for your radio listeners. The people you work with thought your story about Hunter's Pantyhose was a little off-the-wall, especially when you ended it with the jingle "When the terrain gets rough, this hose hangs tough!"

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Computer Systems Management

Congratulations! You are a **systems analyst**! You help business people figure out more effective ways to run their organizations. The answers you come up with involve the use of computers and other technology to solve problems. Sometimes you teach people who work in a company how to use the technology you suggest. (People can make *way* more money in their business, thanks to you!) You love computers and type with two fingers. Few know that, secretly, you are the writer of that famous country tune, How Can I Miss You When You Won't Go Away?

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Computer-Assisted Drafting

Congratulations on becoming an **architectural technician!** You help architects and engineers as they develop structures – boring old ones *and* exciting new ones! You know a lot of theory, but you use it to design useful things. You draw precision drawings according to directions and ideas provided by others. You've just begun to learn about the drafting of virtual homes, where people can walk around inside your drawings! You've wondered if there's such a thing as 'fake virtual reality, but you haven't let it bother you.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Radiology

Congratulations on becoming an **x-ray technician!** Yours is the only job in the world that starts with the letter X – and even this group now calls itself 'radiologic technicians'! Your job is to use x-ray technology to help figure out what's wrong with people suffering from disease or injury. You also get involved in radiation therapy, using the technology for medical treatment. Like Superman, you've never used your x-ray talents for personal gain, although you did once notice that a patient had a heart of gold!

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Medical Laboratory Technology

Congratulations! You're a **lab technician** working in medical research, looking into the causes of deadly diseases like cancer and AIDS. Before getting this job you worked in a regular lab, assessing blood and other body fluids for the presence of health problems and illness. You did blood counts and even developed vaccines for use by doctors. Now you do more work in research with human tissues and body cells. You wear a lab coat, and dream of being the first person to discover the gene for human shyness, which you know will be hiding behind another gene.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Travel and Tourism Job

Congratulations on becoming a **travel counselor!** You plan people's dream vacations, providing them with guidance about reasonable travel, good places to stay, and fun things to do. You make sure they are well prepared to visit wherever they are traveling. Your goal is to learn the business and then open your own store in five years. You advise travelers of good places to travel in the world. You and the phone become good friends. The last people you helped couldn't decide where to go, because one thought she was a pup tent and the other thought he was a teepee. You told them you couldn't help them right now because they were 'two tents.'

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Banking Job

Congratulations on your new job as a **cash services representative** in a bank! You receive and pay out money, assist clients with their banking and bill payments, and keep accurate records of whose money is going where. You took this job because you know you can work your way into other, higher-paying positions through company-financed training and commitment to your employer. You amaze your friends with your tricky money tips. For example, you suggest that whenever you are offered a free meal at a restaurant, it is customary to tip the waiter 15 percent.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Start a New Business

Congratulations – you are an **entrepreneur!** You made use of your computer skills by opening a business called Computer Care, providing (for a very reasonable price) computer upkeep and training – all in the comfort of your clients' own homes! You had to develop a business plan, check out the market, develop marketing materials, get some financing for a few overhead costs, and then provide the service to a growing number of clients. You're now just considering hiring someone to work with you, as your biz is *growing!* Your neighbor is also an entrepreneur, but his business has failed. Seems he started a chicken ranch, but the chickens got out, and it has taken him three months to re-coop his losses!

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Invent Something New

Congratulations – you're an **inventor**! You have developed the next great trivia game to hit the market – Extreme Trivia, targeted to sell well with 15- to 24-year-olds. The questions are interesting and funny, the game board is a work of art developed by your partner, and you are just on the verge of getting some financial support from an investor (*who, unfortunately, will take a percentage of the profit*). One of the trivia questions in the game? "Name the five parts of your head that are spelled with three letters." No need to tell you the answer – it's your game!

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Building Apprenticeship

Congratulations, you're an **electrician**! After earning money all the way through your apprenticeship, you achieved your journeyman certification and are now official. You've opened your own business and have already got a few contracts with local building contractors. Right now you plan and install electrical fixtures and stuff. You're also picking up some business in home repair. Your goal is to learn some skills with electronics, combine them with your electrical skills, and get access to some really interesting jobs! This sure beats your part-time job, where you were a bouncer in a bar... so what if it was a *salad* bar!

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Technology Apprenticeship

Congratulations on becoming an **automotive technician!** You repair and maintain cars, trucks, and other motorized vehicles. You regularly use a bunch of diagnostic equipment to evaluate car problems, and communicate with the 11 computer systems there are in today's average car! Every day, you read manuals for different types of vehicles, learning how their technology is organized. (*Sometimes you wish there was just one car company!*) In your spare time you repair elevator buttons, broken by people who think pushing the button several times quickly will make the elevator get there faster.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Business Administration

Congratulations! You've used your co-op training to become a **tax accountant** with a local accounting firm. You help people and businesses with their income tax returns, making friends all the way as you help them to understand the rules of taxation! You also provide advice to businesses on how to get the best tax benefits for their companies. You've developed a new and more effective tax form for the government – it's just two lines. First line: How much money did you make last year? Second line: Send it in.

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Environmental Studies

Congratulations on becoming a **water quality technologist**! You use technical equipment to assess the quality of drinking water in city and country areas. You research the source of any pollutants in the water and report your findings. You used your co-op placement to get a job with the government. Your next task is to evaluate the impact of a local industry's pollutants on wildlife and water quality. The only thing you don't like about your job is that your neighbor won't stop saying, "Hey, water you doin'?"

Back to [Activity B: Paths of Life](#).

Back to [Activity D: Paths of Life II](#)

Tom's Dad

You're Steve. You're in 11th grade. Whenever you go to a party, you tell your dad and leave the car at home; he stays awake to pick you up if there's a problem. You and he have a deal – honesty is the bottom line.

Tonight, however, you've got a problem. Your dad is sitting in the living room with Tom's dad, and they're talking about some music concert coming up. You've told your dad about tonight's party, and he's going to wait up for you.

The unfortunate part is, the guy who's picking you up in five minutes is Tom. He never tells his dad when he goes to parties. His dad would lose it if he knew his son was going to a party! So Tom just doesn't tell him.

You go into the living room and say to your dad, "So long, Dad, I'm heading out!" Before he can say goodbye, the three of you see Tom drive up and beep his horn. Tom's dad says, "Hey Steve, I see Tom's outside waiting for you. Where are you guys going tonight?"

Snap decision: What are you going to do, Steve – tell the truth or make up an answer? (You've got five seconds!)

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

Tom's Dad

Steve lied and it cost him. He said he and Tom were going to a movie. His dad knew differently and immediately said, "No, you're not. You guys are going to a party. What's the story, Steve?" The rest, as they say, is history. Tom's dad hit the roof, Steve's dad was really disappointed by the lie, and nobody went anywhere that night!

Steve says that if only he had thought for two seconds about the high value his dad placed on honesty, he would have handled it differently. He says he would have said something like, "My dad knows what's up" to Tom's dad and then headed out the door. Steve's dad is still disappointed, although he realizes it was a tough decision-making situation for his son.

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)

The Red Truck

You're Joanne. You're 16 and you have a boyfriend named Eric. He phones and tells you his best friend from his old hometown is visiting for the weekend. The friend's name is Tony and he drives an old red Datsun truck. Eric asks if you'd like to go "cruising" in the truck with Tony and him after lunch. You say sure. They pick you up at 1 p.m.

You spend the day having fun. Tony seems like an okay guy – sometimes he laughs a little too loud or talks too much – but basically he's okay. Eric likes him; they've been buddies since 3rd grade.

It's six at night and Tony and Eric are driving you home in the red truck. As you turn the corner, you notice a little boy walking in the same direction you're going. He's probably about nine-years-old. You figure he's heading home for supper.

Tony says, "Hey, let's give this kid a scare!" and drives up behind the boy. He slows down to the same pace the boy is walking, positions the car right behind him, and revs the engine while driving really slow. The boy turns around and looks really scared.

You don't like this – it seems like a mean thing to do. Eric and Tony are laughing; they seem to think it's pretty funny.

Snap decision: What are you going to do, Joanne – tell them to stop bothering the boy, or lighten up and enjoy the moment?

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

The Red Truck

Joanne didn't say anything, but she didn't feel great about it. She was reluctant to say something; she didn't really know this Tony guy. They followed the boy for about a minute until he started to cry and run. Then they sped away.

About a month later, Joanne was at school talking with a group of people from her neighborhood. Yvette told everybody about her brother, who was followed by some jerks in a red truck. Ever since it happened, he had been getting really scared at night. He had nightmares two or three times a week, and would wake up yelling and crying. Yvette said they'd taken her brother to the doctor, but the doctor said he just had to get over it.

Joanne felt awful, but she never told Yvette that *she* was one of the "jerks!" She really wishes she had trusted her instincts and said something to Tony. If she had known this type of thing happened to little kids, she would have said something for sure.

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)

Skip City

You're Lacey. You're in 9th grade and you live with your mom. She has been single for about eight years and works really hard at two jobs. She has to; ever since your Dad left, she's had to make enough money to allow the two of you to keep living in the same house in the same neighborhood. It's important to her and to you – you don't want to move!

Your best friend is Cara. You're both in Mr. Kendrick's science class. He's a pretty good teacher, but he gives lots of homework. He also is very strict about assignments: you lose half of your grade if an assignment is late.

You and Cara have worked together on a huge science project, worth 40 percent of this report card's mark. It's due this afternoon and you're not finished! Cara comes up with a solution. She says, "Let's skip out and go to your house, finish the assignment, and we'll hand it in tomorrow. Mr. Kendrick never takes attendance anyway. He'll just think we were sick and we won't lose any marks."

Snap decision: What are you going to do, Lacey? Skip out or lose half your grade?

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

Skip City

Lacey's mom came home. Lacey and Cara skipped out and went to Lacey's house. Her mom was never home because she worked so much – at least that's what Lacey thought. What Lacey didn't know was that her mom came home at lunchtime twice a week to clean the house and do some laundry. She walked in to find the two girls working on their project. She got really angry and then just started to cry.

Lacey's mom was really tired and really disappointed. She believed strongly that women need to be independent in today's world; they need to get jobs that will allow them to raise a family on their own if they have to. She never wanted her daughter to be in a position where she had to work at two low-paying jobs just to get by. When she found out that Lacey was skipping school, she feared her daughter might someday end up depending on someone else to survive. That's when she lost it.

If she had it to do over again, Lacey says she would not have skipped out. She knows her mother thinks it's really important for young women to be able to take care of themselves. The last thing Lacey ever wanted to do was disappoint her mom. She wishes she had thought of how her mom would react to her skipping class. If she had, she would have acted differently.

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)

Cindy and Rick

You're Owen. You're 16 years old and your two best friends are Cindy and Rick. The three of you have hung around for the past two years – all of you just friends. In the past six months, however, Cindy and Rick have become boyfriend and girlfriend. You're cool with that; it really hasn't changed your relationship with them.

One night at a party you see Rick making out with another girl, somebody you don't even know. You know Cindy would hate that; all three of you have always been pretty straight with each other. You don't say anything to Rick that night, but it's really bothering you the next day when you, Rick and Cindy are hanging out like you always do.

You decide to talk to Rick. He tells you to mind your own business. He'll date whomever he wants. He says friends support each other, they don't question them. He tells you that as long as Cindy doesn't know, it won't hurt her!

What are you going to do, Owen? Are you going to be quiet or say something to Cindy?

Not Only Me Thinking

Go through the first three steps of responsible decision-making:

- 8. Identify your choices
- 9. Decide what's best for you now
- 10. Consider others

Right now, it seems there are only two choices – tell or don't tell. Are there any others? Once you've thought about the choices, you have to think about what's best for *you* right now – what seems right, according to your beliefs. Lastly, you should think of others – in this case the others are Rick and Cindy. Try to look at the different choices through their eyes.

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

Cindy and Rick

Owen thought of the following choices:

1. Tell Cindy what Rick was doing at the party.
2. Don't tell Cindy – respect Rick's request to mind your own business.
3. Send a secret note to Cindy with all the details!
4. Get somebody else who was at the party to tell Cindy.
5. Go talk to Rick again and tell him your point of view.

When he thought about what was best for himself, Owen knew he had to do something. His beliefs are like Rick's – friends support each other. However, his friend Cindy was not being supported here, she was being lied to. His friend Rick also wanted support, but for reasons that seemed wrong to Owen.

When Owen thought of Cindy, he knew she would be upset if she knew what Rick had done. It would hurt their friendship and their relationship. He also didn't know if he was the best person to tell her about Rick – she might think he was spreading rumors because *he* wanted to be her boyfriend! So, Owen decided to go talk to Rick again. If anybody was going to tell her, it was going to be Rick.

As it turned out, Rick and Owen had a pretty good discussion. Rick admitted that he had put Owen in a tough spot, and he agreed that he should "get in or get out" – friends don't lie and cheat with each other.

Nobody ever told Cindy about what Rick did. Rick and Cindy aren't together anymore. They kind of drifted back to being "just friends."

As for Owen, he thinks he did the right thing. He stuck up for his friend Cindy, but didn't let his friend Rick down in the process. Did he do the right thing? That is up for debate. Each of us has our own set of beliefs and morals, which we bring to life situations. One key to responsible decision making is honoring your own beliefs as well as respecting those of the people around you. Nobody said this decision-making thing was going to be easy!

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)

The Socials Test

You're Marnie. You're in 11th grade and are failing your social studies class. You've got 44 percent, with one test left to go for this report card. If you bring home a failing grade, your parents are going to go nuts! They've told you you'll be grounded for the entire term if you *ever* bring home a failing grade. Your older brother always had pretty good marks, so you don't know if they'd *really* ground you, but you don't want to risk it!

The one remaining test is worth 30 percent of the term grade. You've been studying pretty hard with your friends (well, pretty hard compared to what you usually do!). The day before the test, you're leaving class and Milo tells you to quit worrying about Socials – he's got 'the big score.' He's not saying how he got it, but Milo's got a copy of tomorrow's final – the whole thing! He says to come over to his house tonight and read it over. Tomorrow, you and your friends will all ace the test!

What are you going to do, Marnie? Are you going to cheat or risk the wrath of your parents if you fail the test?

Not Only Me Thinking

Go through the first three steps of responsible decision making:

- 1. Identify your choices
- 2. Decide what's best for you now
- 3. Consider others

Right now it seems there are only two choices – cheat or don't cheat. Are there any others? Once you've thought about the choices, you have to think about what's best for *you* right now – what seems right, according to your beliefs. Lastly, you should think of others. In this case, the others are your parents and Milo. Try to look at the different choices through their eyes.

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

The Socials Test

Marnie thought of the following choices:

- 1. Go to Milo's and get a great score on the test!
- 2. Don't go to Milo's, study hard tonight.
- 3. Talk to my parents and ask their advice.
- 4. Talk to my parents about the unfair pressure of their failing grade rule.
- 5. Talk to my teacher and see if I can write the test later.

Marnie reluctantly admitted to herself that the easiest choice for her was to go to Milo's and cheat. She didn't think she could pass the test without some help. Her immediate needs were to *not* get grounded, so the answer to the question "What's best for you now?" was "CHEAT!"

When Marnie thought of her parents, however, things were different. If failing would get her grounded for a term, cheating would get her grounded for a century! She also knew that her parents were pretty fair-minded; perhaps they would lighten up on the grounding rule in return for a little more regular study.

When she thought of it from Milo's point of view, Marnie knew he was going to cheat for sure. He was using the test to make people like him. Marnie figured another eight or 10 people were likely to show up at his place – most of them people who usually didn't do well on tests. There was a good chance the teacher would figure out something was wrong when the regular low-scorers all got good grades. There was no use getting caught up in that.

So Marnie decided to go with choices two and three. When she talked to her dad about the situation (with no names mentioned and a promise of secrecy!), he was pretty impressed that she talked to him about it. He was also impressed that she chose to stay home and study. He wasn't impressed that she was failing, however. They set up a regular study schedule that she had to stick to in order to avoid the "grounding thing".

As it turned out, the 100-percent grades Milo and friends got on the exam were a little too suspicious. When asked to answer the questions again later, none of them had any idea about anything! The test was tossed, the grades calculated on everything but the test – and Marnie ended up with a grade of 44 per cent. Her regular study schedule replaced the grounding, and Marnie survived to make tough choices for another day!

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)

Mechanics or Biology?

You're Warren. You're in 10th grade and you are an outstanding academic student. You are the top math student in your grade. You also love mechanics. You have no difficulty taking engines apart and repairing them. You absolutely love race cars and your goal in life is to eventually own your own high-performance auto shop.

Unfortunately, your Dad thinks your goal of being a mechanic is ridiculous. He says you are a gifted academic student and should not waste your time on stuff like mechanics. He is supported by the school counselor, who tells you that "someone of your intelligence will eventually become frustrated unless you are involved in high-level academic thinking." You realize that you enjoy both kinds of thinking – academic and mechanical reasoning. You have discovered it is best **not** to talk about your dreams of working with high performance cars with your dad and the counselor.

The issue comes up again when you are selecting your courses for 11th grade. Your parents and the school counselor are happy with all of your course selections – except one. You are registered for a mechanics course, choosing that over biology. You don't need biology; your other courses provide everything you need to get into university, if you should ever choose to go. Your dad says you need more academics to prepare for university, and that mechanics is a waste of time.

What are you going to do, Warren? Are you going to stand by your preference for mechanics or are you going to take biology to build on your academic talents?

Not Only Me Thinking

Go through the first three steps of responsible decision making:

- 1. Identify your choices
- 2. Decide what's best for you now
- 3. Consider others

Right now it seems there are only two choices – mechanics or biology. Are there any others? Once you've thought about the choices, you have to think about what's best for *you* right now – what seems right, according to your beliefs. Lastly, you should think of others. In this case, the others are your parents and the school counselor. Try to look at the different choices through their eyes.

[Want to know what really happened?](#)

Mechanics or Biology?

Warren thought of the following choices:

1. Take mechanics, because that's related to his present dreams. Forget biology.
2. Take biology, and develop his academic talents further. Forget mechanics.
3. Take biology, and do mechanics in his spare time after school and on weekends.
4. Take mechanics, and do biology through a correspondence course.
5. Do some further research at universities to see if biology is really necessary.
6. Take a spare block and use it to do either mechanics or academics.

Warren was clear about what was currently best for him – take mechanics. The mechanics teacher at the school was really good and knew a lot about high-performance vehicles. Warren had no interest in biology at all, and wouldn't need it to get into some of the university engineering programs he had considered.

When Warren considered his father's perspective, he appreciated the fact that his dad only wanted what he thought was best for his son. In the world he grew up in, university was the pathway to all the good jobs. Back then, mechanics was easy – there were no computer systems in cars, and most manufacturers used similar approaches to the mechanization. Warren realized his dad's point-of-view was well intentioned. The same could be said for the school counselor.

Warren decided to go with his own choice and take mechanics. He loved mechanics and had no such interest in biology. His dad would get what he wanted for his son, because all of Warren's other courses were academic. The mechanics course took nothing away from his dad's dreams for Warren.

Unfortunately, Warren's dad wasn't very understanding. He refused to sign Warren's course selection form, and he and Warren's mom ended up having a big fight over the issue. Eventually, Warren's mom signed the form. His dad is still angry!

A **responsible decision** is one where you consider what others might think, but it doesn't mean you'll always decide to do what they would prefer. It means taking the time to consider and understand differing points of view. In this case, Warren was very responsible in his decision-making process. It's unfortunate that his father doesn't share the same respect for decisions that are different from his.

Back to [Activity C: Life's Little Scenarios](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random!

The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Industrial Psychologist](#)
Your recreation is: [Butterfly Enthusiast](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random!

The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Biotechnology Business Developer](#)

Your recreation is: [Barbecue Expert](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random! The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Orchardist](#)
Your recreation is: [Origami Expert](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random! The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Computer Services and Repair Technician](#)

Your recreation is: [Air Courier Traveler](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up
a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random! The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Disk Jockey](#)
Your recreation is: [Ceramics](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random! The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Animal Breeder](#)
Your recreation is: [Conspiracy Theorist](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)



I have dreamed up a future for you!

In the fortune teller's world, the future is totally random! The fortune teller writes something on a slip of paper and hands it to you:

Your career is: [Underwater Welder](#)
Your recreation is: [Sushi Making](#)

Then the fortune teller says, "I'm sure you are happy with the choices I have made for you! If you're not – perhaps you should be the one who makes the choices about your future!"

You can return to the [fortune teller](#)

Not a Day at the Beach

Louise was watching her five-year-old daughter and her niece, also five, hard at play on the beach. It was a sunny July afternoon and the lake and surrounding picnic area had attracted families and kids by the dozens.

As the afternoon wore on, the little girls were joined by two little girls of similar ages. Louise watched, charmed by their untroubled play – the two new arrivals had joined in smoothly and all four were absorbed and happy with castle building and water play.

Louise grew a little uneasy when no parent appeared to check on the little strangers after half an hour had passed.

Presently, a man – looking out of place in his heavy work denims and no shirt – sauntered slowly out along the dock, passing the girls but not acknowledging them. He stood out on the dock, casually smoking a cigarette.

Suddenly he called, "Angela. Crystal. Come here."

The little newcomers looked up. On their faces, which moments before were happy and engaged, Louise could see fear.

"No, daddy. Please," said the oldest, drawing closer to her little sister.

"I said come here."

As Louise watched in dismay and disbelief, the little girls mounted the dock and walked slowly out to the father, who waited, sullen and unsmiling.

One after the other, as they continued to protest meekly, he picked each girl up and threw her in the lake. Barely able to swim, they struggled to the shore and then with faces downcast and shoulders slumped, they walked down the beach toward a group of men and women sitting on a picnic table.

Louise and the children watched in shock.

What would you do now?

- Comfort your daughter and niece, and go back to what you were doing.
- Confront the man about the way he treats his daughters.
- Something else.

Want to know what Louise did? [Click here](#)

Not a Day at the Beach

"My first reaction was really physical. I was just shaken, literally, by what he had done," remembers Louise. "For the first few moments I just sat there with this sick feeling in my stomach. Then I was all adrenalin."

Louise raced into the water and waded out until she was looking directly up at the father. "I shouted at him "Why did you do that to those little girls?""

"They're my kids, I can do what I want," was the sneering reply.

"We went back and forth like that for a while," says Louise. " I mean I really couldn't do anything to him. I couldn't attack him, physically. But he was a coward, obviously, and so he just kind of shuffled and kept saying he could do what he wanted."

Louise's parting shot as he strolled back down the dock was something she remembered from an article she'd recently read.

"They're not just your kids," she hollered after him. "They're everybody's."

After he had rejoined his group at the picnic table, Louise continued to glare.

"I just stared at him, until they left the park."

Want to know how Louise feels about what she did? [Click here](#)

Not a Day at the Beach

"I think in retrospect, I should have called the child abuse line or someone," says Louise. "I don't think I did enough.

"But it's interesting because I had recently read an article on how children who are abused in public – and no adult intervenes – get the feeling that what is happening must be all right. I just couldn't let this go. I wanted those little girls to know that what he did was not OK by other adults. It's a little thing. I mean I could not save them from the abuse... or maybe I could have.

"I try to let children who are being brutalized in a public place know that what is happening to them is wrong," says Louise.

"I hope my niece and my daughter remember that I stood up, in a small way, for those little girls.

"I wished then that I had been a larger, stronger person. I would have thrown that little bully in the lake."

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

Fuel for the fire

Eric is in high school, but he's also the president of his own company. Two years ago he started up *Woody Woodchoppers*, a business supplying firewood to private homes and neighborhood pubs. In the two years Eric has been in business his client base has gone from six to 48 customers. He now employs five other students from his high school.

Eric considers himself an honest and fair businessman. He never sells fresh-cut wood, he sells only wood which has been seasoned for a year, and the truckload is always heaping.

A cord of wood from *Woody Woodchoppers* costs \$90.

Eric's main source of advertising is word of mouth, but he also advertises in the local paper, especially around Christmas when people like to have a warm fire burning in their homes.

One morning Eric had a call from a lady who saw his ad in the paper. She lived quite far out of town but it was his policy to "never turn away a customer."

Eric took the load out personally. The place was pretty run down and a couple of mangy looking dogs harassed him when he climbed the stairs. Mrs. Klien peered out at the truckload and commented it looked pretty small – but she instructed him to stack it in the cellar.

It took Eric an hour and a half to unload and stack the wood and when he was finished Mrs. Klien came down to inspect her purchase.

"This load is not a cord," she said "you will have to take less money than we agreed upon or I don't want it."

"Actually you are right," Eric replied. "It is probably about a cord and a quarter, I loaded it myself." Mrs. Klien repeated her offer.

What would you do?

- Take less money than the wood was worth.
- Pack it back into the truck.
- Something else.

Do you want to know what Eric did? [Click here.](#)

Fuel for the fire

Eric decided to take his wood back.

He spent the next hour packing the wood back up 10 stairs and tossing it into the truck.

The total job had taken him close to five hours and when he arrived back home he had nothing to show for his efforts.

"It would have been easier just to take the money and walk, but I knew she was getting more than anyone else would have given her. I kind of felt she thought she could push me around because she saw me as just a kid."

"I was so mad but it was totally futile trying to bargain with her, the tension was so thick."

Want to know how Eric feels about his decision? [Click here.](#)

Fuel for the fire

"I talked to my Dad about it and we both decided I made the right decision, for both personal and business reasons."

"There is a difference between negotiating and compromising. I felt it would have compromised my honesty to let her have the wood for less than it was worth because that would be like saying, 'you're right, I was trying to rip you off.'"

"It would not have made good business sense either because I know my standards are high, I treat my customers the way I want to be treated.

"It's hard to tell you what I learned from that experience, maybe stick to your principles, if you know in your own mind that what you are doing is right then you won't have any regrets later."

Even if you get burned sometimes.

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

Nobody's Baby

Trisha wasn't keen about her 16-year-old daughter, Lindsay, babysitting for someone she didn't know – but Lindsay convinced her it was only for a short while.

The young, single mom was a nice girl, Lindsay assured her, who had promised to be back by midnight. Trisha knew where the girl and her baby lived, so she grudgingly OK'd it.

"I didn't have a phone number, but I knew where the apartment was and Lindsay has a good head on her shoulders," says Trisha.

When Lindsay wasn't home at half-past midnight, she got in the car and drove to the apartment building.

The building manager let her in. She found Lindsay in a messy apartment with a crying baby. "It was just what I hadn't wanted," Trisha says. "I sent Lindsay home in a cab and settled in with the baby. There were no diapers and the place was a disaster."

She had no way of knowing where the young mother was or when she would be back.

Now what?

What would you do?

- Stay there with the baby, possibly for the rest of the night
- Take the baby home, leaving the mother a note
- Something else

To find out what Trisha did next, [click here](#)

Nobody's Baby

When the mother hadn't returned at 2 a.m., Trisha bundled up the baby and took him home with her.

"I left a note for the girl and gathered up some dirty pajamas and a bottle for the baby."

The mother showed up the following morning with lame excuses, no money and a hangover. As she handed over the thin, pale baby in a diaper fashioned from a tea towel, Trisha wondered what would happen to the child.

Should she just let this go? What was Lindsay learning from this? And what about Trisha's other children, who had played with the baby that morning?

"Lindsay and I talked about the baby, Kevin," Trisha says. "Lindsay had only met the mother through other friends and had seen her hanging around with the baby in his stroller. Lindsay knew he wasn't really well-cared for, but she felt sorry for the girl, who really is only a few years older than her."

She considered phoning the help line for children.

Trisha felt it would be mean to turn the young mother into the authorities, but she was also very worried about the baby. Lindsay and Trisha's other children didn't think she should make the call.

What would you do?

- Make the call
- Mind your own business
- Something else

Want to know what Trish did? [Click here](#)

Nobody's Baby

After the girl left, Trisha phoned the help line for children. At first she just asked for general information, without giving names or specifics. After talking with the aid worker, she decided the best thing for the baby was to tell the whole story.

"I told the worker the girl's name and the story of the evening. I told him about the state of the apartment and that the baby did not seem cared for," says Trish. "I felt sort of mean and my kids were unsure about what I was doing. So was I."

Later that day, the young mother's social worker called to thank Trish for the call and to say the situation was being looked at.

"Even then I wondered if I had done something good or something mean," says Trisha. "The mother didn't seem totally incompetent. Maybe just overwhelmed."

To find out how Trisha feels now about how she handled the situation – [click here](#)

Nobody's Baby

In the end, Kevin was removed from his mother, who had another child the following year. That baby, too, was removed.

"By that time I knew I had done the right thing," says Trisha. "The girl was troubled and just not capable of looking after a baby. She wasn't even capable of looking after herself, really. I only hope that Kevin and the other baby have ended up in good homes."

Trisha says she knows she could have just let the whole thing go and told Lindsay just to stay away from the girl.

Trisha says Lindsay eventually agreed that she had done the right thing.

"Lindsay and her sisters learned something, I think," says Trisha. "Sometimes you just have to do something. You have to decide what is the best choice in a bad or a sad situation."

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

The Color Purple

A sunny Vancouver afternoon and Barb, a prominent family lawyer, is visiting in a friend's back garden. She's waiting for her 15-year-old daughter to return from the hairdresser.

Donna, the 15-year-old, is a student at a private girl's school. She's gone to have her hair cut and styled for a mother-daughter function at school this evening.

Suddenly Donna's head pops out the back kitchen door. Her hair is not merely "done" – it's purple.

Barb is stunned.

Donna gives her a teenage look, and says, "Oh, mom, it's just a stage."

What would you do about the purple-haired daughter?

- Send her back to the hairdresser's and insist she have the purple removed
- Say nothing and hope this phase will pass
- Something else

Do you want to know what Barb did? [Click here](#)

Nobody's Baby

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Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

The Color Purple

Barb says she thinks Donna colored her hair purple on the spur of the moment. If Barb had reacted in a major way, she thinks it may have become an issue. Letting it go made Donna work it out on her own and deal with it on her own. Paying for it made Donna take responsibility.

"I don't think Donna intended the hair job as a shot at me. So I didn't let it become one," says Barb in retrospect. "If I had, that would have been a big mistake."

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

Dane's World

When Dane was 18 months old, his mother was killed in a car accident. His father raised him with the help of his own mother, who lived with them for short periods of time while Dane was small.

Robert, the dad, found himself not wanting to impose limits on Dane, not wanting to cause him added pain or unhappiness.

When Dane appeared to lose interest in school and developed an abiding interest in the guitar, Robert let it ride. He was happy that Dane had found something important to him and glad the teenager devoted time to music classes and practice. Unfortunately, homework and assignments, hockey and soccer were no longer interesting. Rock and roll and his garage band buddies were all that compelled Dane.

When he was 16 and doing 10th grade again, he came to his dad and said he wanted to drop out of school, a place he rarely went anyway. He promised to keep up his music lessons and to look for part-time work. He was really a pretty good musician who practiced and wrote his own songs.

What would you do with the rock and roll kid?

- Let him quit school and take up music full time?
- Put your foot down and insist he finish school?
- Something else

To find out what Robert did, [click here](#)

Dane's World

Robert let Dane quit school. Once again, he didn't want to cause him pain or unhappiness.

"I made him stick to the promise of music lessons. It worked for the next year or so. Unfortunately, all the band guys he hung around with were a couple of years older and Dane got into their lifestyle," says Robert.

Dane still plays guitar and in fact his band played bars one summer in the West on the "saloon circuit."

It's a sometime thing though, and Dane works irregular odd jobs as a laborer to support his rock and roll habit.

Now in his 20s, Dane has few prospects for his future.

Want to know what Robert thinks about his decision? [click here](#)

Dane's World

Now 20-something, Dane's future does not look bright. He still writes songs, but lacks the confidence to hit the recording studios in his city to promote his songs or to ask for any kind of work to get a foot in the door of the local music industry. Robert blames himself for that lack of confidence in his son, as he blames himself for many things about Dane's life to date.

"You can't second guess yourself about everything with your kids, but I would sure do it all differently if I could," says Robert.

He says he sees now that he ought to have stepped in earlier when Dane first started to lose interest in school.

"When I grew up you could still get a decent job with a 10th-grade education," says Robert.

"Also, I was wrong in not wanting to cause Dane unhappiness or pain," says Robert. "Dane is not what you would call happy now."

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

The Big Break

Kathryn was seven months into the job and hot. She was working flat-out, learning as she went and loving it.

The TV and radio station had given her a break, letting an untrained junior in on the ground floor and she was showing them that they hadn't been wrong.

She had even wrangled a brief interview with the prime minister as he made a whistle-stop swing through the smaller northern communities. That gutsy move had gotten her airplay across the region, as other stations picked up her story.

When a TV station in a nearby city aired the clip, their news director phoned Kathryn and asked her to come for an interview. This was a big market station, and they were shortlisting for an on-air reporter's slot and they were interested in her. This was pretty big stuff. Reporters had used this station as a stepping-stone to national TV careers.

She bounced the idea off more experienced colleagues and friends. While they agreed she had come a long way, the consensus seemed to be, "You're not ready."

"My mentors thought I might crash and burn," remembers Kathryn.

She had a short time to think it over. The news director was waiting to know if she would be there for the interview.

What would you do?

- Go for it, and see what happens?
- Give up the interview and wait until you feel a little more ready?
- Something else

To find out what Kathryn did, [click here](#)

The Big Break

She said no.

"I thought that opportunities grew on trees," says Kathryn. "The truth is, that was my one shot at the big time."

She says she turned down the invitation to interview for the job because of a fear of failure and because she went along with what her newsroom colleagues were telling her.

"I had made really good friends as well. And I had a boyfriend. My personal life was going very well for the first time in a long time," she remembers. "I was happy."

She stayed on at the station where she began her career, for another six years, eventually becoming news director and serving as the evening news anchor.

To find out how Kathryn feels about her decision, [click here](#)

The Big Break

"If I could go back and give myself advice, I'd say go for it," says Kathryn 15 years later.

"I realize now that if someone else, who's in a position to judge, thinks you're good enough to try . . . then you should give it a shot."

Kathryn says now that while she believed at the time that more opportunities like this one would come her way, they did not.

"The truth is that I became so overwhelmed with running the newsroom and other duties that I couldn't focus on specific reporting skills," she recalls.

"If I had gone . . . if I had been hired, I imagine I could have ended up with a national spot and a very focused career path," says Kathryn. "But there are tradeoffs. I think I might have become a more shallow person and I would not have the family values I have now."

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#)

Lloyd The Liar

Lloyd is a three-piece suit kind of guy.

Insurance has been his career for a long time and he has been a loyal, dedicated company man.

Until the squeeze.

In a downsizing move, the firm Lloyd worked for merged with another insurance giant. The bosses started looking for ways to cut costs. Since Lloyd's specialty is an area that tends to make huge profits when times are good, but the bottom falls out when the economy takes a hit, Lloyd was a likely target. This time he took the hit, and was fired.

Out of work for the first time since university, Lloyd started networking in the insurance industry. He met some fellows who wanted to start an independent division of a big international firm, doing specialty work that was Lloyd's first love.

While the idea seemed wonderful, things just didn't get off the ground. Meanwhile, Lloyd continued doing lunch and networking among the insurance companies in his city.

When he was offered a job with another of the big firms, he kissed the idea of independence goodbye and signed up for the familiar executive privileges.

Six months into his new job, the guys setting up their independent operation called him again, financing in hand. Lloyd could run his own show, be independent and work in the area he really enjoyed.

But he was taking his time to think it over. He hadn't yet decided whether to stay in the comfy corporate world or strike out on his own.

One day he was invited to his superior's office. The insurance business was a small world in his city and Lloyd's boss had been hearing things.

"Are you planning to leave us?" asked his boss.

Oops. Suddenly he was on the spot.

What would you do?

- Be honest with your boss and tell him you were considering other options
- Lie to your boss and tell him you have no intention of leaving
- Something else

Want to know what Lloyd did? [Click here](#)

Lloyd The Liar

He lied. Sort of.

"No, no. I spoke to those guys months ago, before I joined Really Big Insurance. I have no intention of leaving," he told his boss.

Then he went home and thought hard.

"I realized I didn't really want to stay with a corporate situation – that it was time in my life for me to make a serious change."

Then Lloyd went back to work. He hoped to stay on at Really Big Insurance until everything was in place with the independent operation.

But again, gossip was at work.

Really Big Insurance heard more rumors that just wouldn't die – and they fired Lloyd.

He and his new partners had to move faster than they had planned on to set up the independent operation.

Want to find out how Lloyd feels about how he handled this career decision? [Click here](#)

Lloyd The Liar

"I'm embarrassed that I didn't tell my boss at Really Big that I was going to leave. And I'm embarrassed I didn't make a choice until it was well past choosing time."

He's glad he moved on to the independent venture and says he should have done it much sooner.

"I was trying to have it both ways, I suppose. And I was trying to avoid making a decision about my life," says Lloyd.

"As a result, I compromised my integrity. I find I'm looking around now, wondering who knows about this. It bothers me that my peers in the industry do. But I'll get past it. I'm very happy doing what I'm doing."

Lloyd also says his first job loss – from the firm for which he had worked for so many years – should have been his indicator that it was time for a big personal change.

Go back to the town of [Druthers](#).