



# Difficult Decisions

**\*LESSON\***

## LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

Participants will explore examples of difficult decisions and practice writing about them in a letter to a newspaper columnist.

## MATERIALS

Worksheet, writing utensils

## AGE ADJUSTMENTS

Younger audiences may not be able to write a letter in the same way older participants are. Instead, have them verbally share their difficult decisions they have had to make.

## Lesson Plan

### Introducing the Lesson

- Lead brief discussion on making tough decisions. Explain that making difficult decisions is a part of everyone's lives and therefore it is important to be able to talk about it.

### Experiencing the Lesson

- Hand out a blank piece of paper and writing utensils to each participant. Print out or project the worksheet attached to this lesson. It is an example of how to write a letter. Participants should copy this format.
- Tell participants that they are going to think about a tough decision they must make, have already made, or one that someone they know must make.
- Explain that they will write an anonymous letter asking for advice to a fictitious newspaper columnist. Students should sign their letters, but not with their real names.

### Closing the Lesson

- Debrief the experience of writing about their tough decisions.
- What was it like to write it down on paper? Did it help? Not help? Why?
- How did it feel vocalizing the decision to a "stranger?" How did you explain your dilemmas?
- Did it bring any clarity to you? Do you know what decision you would make now?
- Would you do this again the next time you face a difficult situation?



Participants are struggling to come up with ideas.

"Lead a quick group brainstorm to see what ideas can come from that. Otherwise, check out the attached worksheet! There are a few examples listed there to help participants get started."



## Further Exploration



- Collect all of the letters and redistribute them so that participants do not get their own letters. Tell participants to read the letters and respond back as if they are the newspaper columnist. Encourage them to give reasons for their advice!
- Have participants read their response back to the group knowing that the person who asked for this help is listening.

## Get Creative

- Redistribute the original letters once again.
- Challenge the participants to read the letter and come up with the **MOST** creative solution they can! Absolutely no boundaries on creativity for solving this dilemma.
- Have participants once again share their creative solutions out loud to the group.
- Have participants find their original letters and the creative response so that they can keep it just in case it sparks any thoughts or actions!

## Online

- Provide an electronic copy of the worksheet to each individual.
- For group, work use breakout rooms.
- Continue as directed.





# Letter Format & Example

HEADING (make up your street address) -->

Your street address  
your City, State, Zip Code  
Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ <-- GREETING

Here are some examples of decisions you could write about in your letter:

- You have a crush on your best friend's boyfriend/girlfriend. <-- BODY
- The grades you have earned in science are low, but you really want to be a doctor.
- You can to join a certain sports team or after-school activity, but none of your friends are on the team and everyone hangs out together at the same time that practice is held.
- Your friends, whom you want to impress, are planning a new job. It could mean that your family would have to move to a different state. <-- BODY

CLOSING -->

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE --> \_\_\_\_\_



Visit each group while they are working on their Navigating Ambiguity worksheets. Coming up with strategies and solutions can be challenging - even when working with a thought partner. Be prepared to help participants brainstorm and come up with ideas for how to navigate the challenges they come up with.