



Discussion Guide

For Goodness Sake

**A comedy revue on
why it's good to be good!**



Provincial
Health Ethics
Network





Introduction

This is a discussion guide to accompany the video For Goodness Sake. This video takes a lighthearted look at a serious subject: Goodness.

Designed to be interactive and easy to use, this guide is intended to facilitate meaningful discussions among your fellow students, colleagues, ethics committee members and friends. It can also be used as a workbook for self-reflection, examining the role that goodness plays in your everyday choices.

The guide is divided into the following five modules:

Module 1: Making Goodness a Value in Your Life

Module 2: Obstacles to Goodness

Module 3: The Perils of Cheating

Module 4: Goodness in Action

Module 5: Why It's So Good to Be Good

Each module contains thought provoking questions and stimulating activities. Choose material that you feel will be most relevant to your group. Adapt it if necessary to fit the age, experience and specific needs of your participants.

We wish you all the best with your discussions. It is our hope that after you watch the video and work through the exercises, you will be all the more motivated to continue to make goodness a high priority in your daily life!

Module 1

Making Goodness a Value in Your Life

Purpose

To recognize goodness as a virtue and rank it along with other important goals in our lives

Review of the Concepts

- Other people can cause us personal pain
- Goodness is not an obvious high priority in most of our daily lives
- Goodness is rarely even thought about- to many people it is simply irrelevant

Questions for Group Discussion

- Discuss the meanings of the terms *justice*, *moral*, *value* and *goodness*. Try to develop a definition of each that everyone agrees upon.
- Have the group generate a list of their short-term and long-term goals, both personal and professional. Does goodness rank as a goal? Why? Why not?
- Do you think a TV show *Lifestyles of the Good and Just* might be popular? Do you think anyone would ever produce it? Do you think people would watch it? Why or why not?
- Think of someone you know who values and promotes goodness in his or her life. Explain why you picked this person.
- Write a eulogy for yourself if you were to die today. What would people say about the way you have lived your life? Now write your eulogy for 20 years from now. What do you hope people will say about you then?

Work to Do on Your Own

Discuss with your colleagues or family the list of life goals that the group came up with. Make your own list and rank them in order of their importance to you and your colleagues or family.

Module 2

Obstacles to Goodness

Purpose

To discuss and understand obstacles to being good

Review of the Concepts

- Why aren't people good?
 - It is easier to be bad
 - People worry about being seen as a "goody goody"
 - People think good guys finish last
 - People find it easy to rationalize bad behavior
 - Bad can feel good at the moment
- Most people think they are good already, however, to be a good person you have to act like one
- To be good, you have to do something positive, not just avoid something negative. This takes thought, character, self-discipline and moral strength
- The more good people there are in the world, the better the world will be

Questions for Group Discussion

- Discuss the meanings of the terms *moral strength*, *rationalize*, *self-discipline*, *strength of character*. Try to develop a definition of each that everyone agrees upon.
- Give examples of when bad can feel good in the moment. How long does that good feeling last? How do you know when it is starting to not feel so good anymore?
- Describe an experience in which you or someone you know has rationalized not being good.

Work to Do on Your Own

Ask your colleagues or family if they have ever felt like a "goody goody". What was the situation? How did they act? Did they regret it or were they proud of their behavior?

Module 3

The Perils of Cheating

Purpose

To increase awareness of the consequences of cheating

Review of the Concepts

- Many of us feel that everyone cheats, so why shouldn't we?
- Once we get used to cheating, it may be hard to stop
- Cheating can lead to being unqualified for a job, and can even be dangerous to others

Questions for Group Discussion

- Discuss the meanings of the terms *cheating*, *consequences*, *selfishness*. Try to develop a definition of each that everyone agrees upon.
- It takes time to devise ways to cheat. Generate a list of constructive ways to study material, instead of spending time on cheating. For example, improve study skills, techniques to help memorize material, form study groups etc.
- A "friend" has stolen a copy of your upcoming exam and offers it to you for \$20.00. What is your reaction? What would your reaction be if he offered it to you for free?
- Research a figure in history who cheated. What was the crime? What were the consequences?
- You have studied hard for a test that you are writing and look over to see a classmate cheating. Act out what you would really like to say and do.

Work to Do on Your Own

If you could cheat and get your dream job, or not cheat and obtain a less preferable position, what would you do? Why?

Module 4

Goodness in Action

Purpose

To realize that sometimes we have to overcome our tendency to do nothing in order to take action to do good

Review of the Concepts

- Why is it so hard to do good?
 - Some of us are not self-aware
 - Some of us are lazy
 - Goodness requires strength of character
 - People don't think they can make a difference
- Everyone has bad thoughts- we should just try to not act on them!
- ACTIONS COUNT!
- It's hard to do the right thing if you only worry about what other people think about your actions
- Goodness takes effort- it's easier to do nothing
- Dreaming up world-saving ideas is fine. But while you're doing it, don't forget about real people

Questions for Group Discussion

- Make a list of seemingly small, everyday things you can do to be a good person
- Think of a time when you thought about doing something good for someone, but you didn't do it. Why did this happen? What, if anything, would you change about the situation?
- Write a letter of thanks to someone who has done something good for you. Now mail it!
- A group of you really want to help make the world a better place and have specific ideas in mind for a particular initiative. Your friend or colleague is reluctant to join in on the plan. Let us eavesdrop as you convince him or her!

Work to Do on Your Own

Ask your colleagues or family how they have changed throughout their life experiences. Are they more or less thoughtful and good than they were when they were younger?

Module 5

Why It's So Good to Be Good

Purpose

To explore the good feelings that result from doing good

Review of the Concepts

- It feels good to do good
- People who do good are treated well by others
- Goodness, like anything in life, will become a habit if you practice it enough

Questions for Group Discussion

- Discuss the meaning of the term *kindness*. How does this differ from *goodness*? Try to develop a definition of each that everyone agrees upon.
- Have the group generate a list of things we do over and over again in our work or school day that become habits
- Discuss the quote used in the video by Anne Frank, “How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a moment to improve the world.” What does this statement mean?
- Have participants generate a list of possible random acts of kindness they could do. Discuss how feasible each act would be to do and then do as many of them as you can!
- You are in a group of three friends who decide you are going to practice random acts of kindness on your classmates or colleagues. Let us listen in on a planning session.

Work to Do on Your Own

Perform an act of kindness to your family or colleagues. Report back on how the person reacted to your act and how you felt doing it.



Provincial
Health Ethics
Network

Suite 507, 10240 - 124 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 3W6 Canada
Phone: (780) 447-1180
<http://www.phen.ab.ca>