

When Someone Else is Wrong

the goal



When we make a mistake we want to minimize the impact it has on our life. However, when someone else makes a mistake we often have no problem either letting everyone know about the mistake, or else taking the mistake personally and holding it against that person. The students need to learn the skills of perspective, forgiveness, and intention. They need to understand that mistakes happen. How they react to those mistakes by other people will help determine how other people will react to their mistakes.

the objective



This exercise will help the students develop perspective and discern intention when someone else makes a mistake.

exercise

- 1 Ask the students if they have ever witnessed someone make a mistake that ended up with everyone laughing at the person. For example, someone getting up to make a speech and tripping on the way to the lectern.
- 2 After the students have shared an example of witnessing someone making a mistake, share an example from your memory of witnessing something similar. Give your reaction as well as the reaction of the people around you.
- 3 Now ask the students how the person on the receiving end of the laughter handled it. Were they gracious, laughing along with the crowd, did they become upset, angry or embarrassed?
- 4 Explain to the students that these are simple examples of someone making a simple mistake. The mistake was likely just an accident and there was no ill intention meant, so no one was really affected.

- 5 Explain that other mistakes occur that affect other people, but there is no ill intention meant. Share the following:

Sue and John are on a date eating at a nice restaurant. John orders coffee to go with his dessert. When the waiter approaches the table he slips, spilling the hot coffee onto Sue's shoulder.
- 6 Ask the students what their reaction would be if they were John. Would they be angry? What would they say? What would they do?
- 7 Talk with the students about the coffee spill and ask for honest reactions. Validate those reactions by agreeing that they would have the right to be angry.
- 8 After the students have given their reactions ask the students if they think the spilled coffee was an intentional act. Do they think the waiter intentionally spilled the coffee on their date?
- 9 Explain to the students that this was a mistake by the waiter - it was an accident. There was no ill intention even though there was harm that came from his actions.
- 10 Explain to the students that the people affected will react to this type of mistake, but it is important to keep the mistake in perspective.
- 11 Ask the students how they would feel if they were the waiter in the story. (When you make a mistake that affects someone else, you usually feel bad and wish it had not happened.)
- 12 Explain to the students that there is a tremendous difference between someone making an honest mistake (whether it affects the students or not) and someone doing something intentionally harmful.
- 13 Talk with the students about the intent of the waiter and the difference in reactions if the coffee spill had been unintentional and then discuss if the spilling had been intentional.



14 Talk with the students about the need to keep someone else's mistake in perspective. It is important to realize that mistakes happen and they need to be prepared to react in a way that they would want to be reacted to if they had been the perpetrator of the mistake.

15 Share other examples of mistakes both committed and witnessed, assign intent and rationalize the proper reaction.

summary

Everyone makes mistakes. The students need to learn how to maintain perspective when witnessing someone else's mistakes and to learn the skill of discernment when determining the person's intention. The students need to learn that unintentional mistakes should be reacted to as such and not treated as willful acts against them. They also need to learn that the manner in which they react to another person's mistakes will be the same as other people's reaction to their mistakes.



and hints

outcomes



Personalize the exercise by sharing a time when a mistake of yours impacted someone else. Help the students realize that the mistake of another is likely unintentional for that person as well as embarrassing.

Ask the students to share times when they made a mistake that affected someone else. How did that person react? How did that person's reaction make them feel?

Each time intent is discussed put the students in both the role of the individual on the receiving end of the mistake, as well as on the end of the person affected by the mistake.

talking

points

- Discuss mistakes that have occurred that have been witnessed by many people. Talk about how the person reacted to their mistake and the impact this had on the people affected.
- Reassure the students that everyone makes mistakes. Explain that their ability to maintain perspective, whether making the mistake or on the receiving end of a mistake, will determine how other people will react to them.



probing

questions



- Have you ever messed up and it affected someone else? How did they react? How did this make you feel?
- Have you ever seen someone make a mistake that had everyone else laughing at that person? How did this make you feel? What would it feel like if you were the person everyone was laughing at?
- What is the difference between a mistake and an intentional act of meanness? Should you react differently to these?



Skills Lesson Recap



the goal

When we make a mistake we want to minimize the impact it has on our life. However, when someone else makes a mistake we often have no problem either letting everyone know about the mistake, or else taking the mistake personally and holding it against that person. Today you learned the skills of perspective, forgiveness, and intention. You also learned that mistakes happen and how you react to those mistakes will help determine how other people react to your mistakes.

exercise key points

- You shared an experience where you witnessed someone else make an embarrassing mistake and then described how that person handled himself/herself after the mistake.
- You were given a scenario where you were on a date and witnessed a waiter committing an embarrassing accident that negatively affected the person you were with. You were then asked how you would react to the mistake made by the waiter and if you believed the act to be intentional in nature.
- You were then asked how you would feel if you were the waiter in the story and you had committed the mistake. You learned that there is a significant difference between an honest mistake and someone doing something to intentionally harm someone else.

consequence of not

Inappropriately reacting to another person's mistake is often a result of you losing perspective of that person's true intentions. This conveys a lack of respect for that person and will likely lead to you being treated the same way when you make a mistake.

using this skill



benefits

of using this skill

We all make mistakes and often times they are embarrassing. By keeping mistakes made by others in perspective and being aware of the person's intentions you will likely be treated with the same respect when you are the one that has committed the mistake.



When Someone Else is Wrong

Describe below an incident when you saw someone make a mistake

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| incident/mistake | |
| your reaction | |
| others' reaction | |
| reaction of person making the mistake | |

Spilled coffee scenario:

Sue and John are on a date eating at a nice restaurant. John orders coffee to go with his dessert. When the waiter approaches the table he slips, spilling the hot coffee onto Sue's shoulder.

If you were John, what would your reaction be?

What would you say?

What would you do?

Do you think this incident was an accident or intentional?

If you were the waiter, how would you feel?

If the spilling of the coffee had been intentional, how might reactions be different?

Student: _____ Facilitator: _____ Date: _____