



## OBJECTIVE

This object lesson is about adversity. Facing problems or difficulties and the ability to show courage in the face of adversity.

**TIME NEEDED:** 20-30 minutes

**GROUP SIZE:** Any size group

## MATERIALS:

- Two balloons
- 2 liter plastic bottle (16 oz. will work)
- Sharpie marker

## LESSON:

Before you begin, draw a face on your balloon(s) with a Sharpie marker. Choose someone to help you with the demonstration – someone who claims they can blow up a balloon. Explain to the students that sometimes in life, we have to deal with adversity. Problems, difficulties or influence by negative peer pressure. Peers are the people around us...friends and family. And, pressure is when we feel forced to be and act a certain way. We feel like we have to please others and go against what we feel is right and wrong.

Let's say the balloon represents a person and the bottle represents problems or peer pressures from others. Give them a balloon and ask them to blow it up. The face will appear. The balloons are easily blown up because there is no pressure from others. We are free from any kind of pressures from others to act in a certain way. Free to choose what is right and be a good person.

Now, insert a balloon into the empty water bottle and pull the opening of the balloon over the mouth of the bottle. The balloon should be hanging inside the bottle. Remind the students that the bottle represents peer pressures from people around us. Give your volunteer the bottle and tell them to blow hard into the balloon so that it will inflate. No matter how hard they blow, the balloon will not inflate inside the bottle. Since the bottle represents problems or peer pressure from others, this gives us a picture of what it's like to be influenced by others, negative peer pressures and difficulties. We are forced to act a certain way and make decisions we might regret. It keeps us from doing what is the right thing to do.



Whether we realize it or not, everything in our lives impacts and shapes who we are. Friends we associate with can affect our behaviors. You will meet many difficulties in life. It's important to surround ourselves with a strong base of good friends who can offer support and help keep us on the right path. It's also important to make sure that we're setting strong values for ourselves and have the courage to face the negative pressures by making good decisions based on the good values we choose to live by.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What is adversity? Is that like peer pressure?
- Are there times where they felt influenced to make decisions that were not healthy or responsible? What happened? Was there anything they would do differently now?
- Do you think people are easily swayed by the influence of friends or classmates?
- What advice would you give a friend who is dealing with peer pressure?
- Are there any examples you can think of where peer pressure could have a positive effect?
- Why is it hard to stand up for what is right with our friends?
- How does adversity build character?

Overcoming adversity is character building. It shapes us into who we are and who we will become. It creates the confidence and courage to overcome and the learning mechanisms to deal with the things that don't go our way.

#### **COURAGE BUILDS CHARACTER!**

