



OBJECTIVE:

Taking a risk to achieve a goal requires courage to face the fear of uncertainty. No matter the outcome, we grow through the process and become more resilient and confident. Better yet, building those skills helps us in taking more risks and improves the chances of achieving future goals.

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 minutes

GROUP SIZE: Any size group

MATERIALS:

- Quarter
- Cup shaking quarter (*optional*)
- Prizes for winner-or 2 prizes if a tie (*optional*)

LESSON

Talk to your students about taking a risk. Discuss that taking a risk to achieve a goal requires courage to face the fear of uncertainty. No matter the outcome, either way, we grow through the process and become more resilient and confident. Better yet, building those skills helps in taking more risks and improves the chances of achieving future goals.

1. Discuss with the students that you are going to play a game about taking a risk. Making a decision to do something that may result in loss or winning the game.
2. Next, tell the students that you have a quarter and you will flip the coin, but before each flip of the coin, they must participate by either selecting “heads” or “tails” by putting their hands on their heads or on their tails!
3. Now flip the coin or use the cup to shake and turn over the cup to reveal the heads or tails on the quarter. Those participants whose choice matches the coin flip get to stay standing – everyone else sits down.
4. Continue asking the students to select “head” or “tails,” then flipping the coin, eliminating more players until only a handful are left.

5. Ask the few finalists to come to the front of the room for the last few coin tosses, until only one player is left standing. This is your winner! *(You may end up with 2 players if they both have the same choice several times, resulting in a tie).*

Tell the students that sometimes it's good to take a risk when it pushes you outside of your comfort zone and helps you achieve a healthy goal. At other times, taking risks can have serious negative consequences on our health, relationships with friends or family, or our education.

Just like the game we played, as you grow older, you'll be faced with some challenging decisions. Some don't have a clear right or wrong answer – like should you play soccer or field hockey? Other decisions involve serious moral questions, like whether to cut class, try cigarettes, or lie to your parents. Making decisions on your own is hard enough, but when other people get involved and try to pressure you one way or another, it can be even harder.

Sometimes we give in to peer pressure because we want to be liked, to fit in, or because we worry that other kids might make fun of us if we don't go along with the group. Others go along because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that "everyone's doing it" can influence some kids to leave their better judgment, or their common sense, behind.

It is tough to be the only one who says "no" to peer pressure, but you can do it. Paying attention to your own feelings and beliefs about what is right and wrong can help you know the right thing to do. Courage and self-confidence can help you stand firm, walk away, and resist doing something when you know better.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What kind of risks are important to take?
- Is risk taking good or bad?
- What kinds of things should influence us to take a risk?
- What are the consequences to taking risks?
- If a friend of yours was trying to persuade you to do something that felt uncomfortable to you, what reasons could you give that illustrate setting limits for yourself?
- Have your friends ever said to you, "But everyone's doing it!" or "C'mon, don't you want to be like us?" Has that kind of talk ever persuaded you? Who can name a few examples of the negative consequences of taking risks? Why do we think "it will never happen to me?"
- What is character? (Answer: It is moral and ethical strength; also integrity. It is also what helps individuals gain self-respect).
- Who can give us an example of a person with strong character who took personal risks to make this country or our world a better place for all people to live?
- Is good character important for us to have? Why?

IT TAKES COURAGE TO HAVE CHARACTER!

