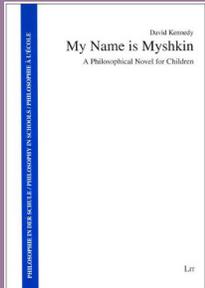


My Name is Myshkin



This tool is adapted with permission from David Kennedy's My Name Is Myshkin: A Philosophical Novel for Children, LIT Verlag, 2012. Some questions and exercises are adapted with permission by David Kennedy from Matthew Lipman's Getting Our Thoughts Together, Montclair, New Jersey: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, 2003.

(Click on the cover to purchase online.)

DURATION: 45-90 minutes

AGES: Participants aged nine and up

OBJECTIVES: To improve understanding of philosophical concepts through a story and associated thinking exercises.

STEPS:

1. Invite participants to read part or all of the story excerpt from the philosophical novel *My Name Is Myshkin*, either aloud or on their own.
2. Following the reading, select from the diverse discussion plan options on the following pages. Use the questions and thinking prompts to help start a dialogue about the key concepts in the story excerpt.
3. Proceed through the discussion plan questions and exercises, asking participants to share their ideas, reasons, examples, etc. Spend as much or as little time on each question as the momentum and enthusiasm dictate!
4. Before finishing the discussion, ask participants to evaluate their progress as a group and what they feel they accomplished during their exchange.

STORY EXCERPT:

"I don't know how you figure out what you believe," said Beth. "I guess you just have to take somebody's word for it. Somebody you trust."

"Could somebody you trust be wrong?" my father said.

"That's the trouble," she said. "If you thought they could be wrong, how could you trust them in the first place?"

"But it's true, isn't it," Nixie's mom said, "that the world feels like one big battle between good and evil?"

"Yes, but the problem," my mother said, "is that sometimes what seems to be good turns out to be evil, and what seems to be evil turns out to be good. That's what's confusing." Beth nodded.

"But there are some basic things that are good," Nixie said. "Very basic things. Like you don't kill people, and you don't steal from them, and you feed them if they're hungry, and take care of them if they're in danger. Stuff like that."

There was a little silence, like everyone was thinking. Then Tracey said, "What if, let's say, Hitler had escaped and run away somewhere when World War II ended, and he ended up on your doorstep, cold and sick and hungry and weak, and you knew very well who he was—the man who was responsible for the deaths of millions of innocent people. Would you take him in?"

"I would have to," Nixie said.

"Wouldn't it be better to kill him?" Tracey said. "Let's say you could do it really easily, and never get in trouble for it."

"Yeah," I said. "And what if you knew that the police, who are supposed to be good, were actually evil—that they beat up and tortured people even if they were innocent, and that they took bribes, and that they followed orders from politicians who took money from people who sold guns and drugs and slaves."

“Slaves?” Nixie said. She looked at her hands.

“Yes,” my mother said. “Women. Sex slavery. They take the women from poor countries and sell them. At least half a million a year.”

“Death penalty!” Tracey said. “You’ve got to have the death penalty. Some people are just too bad.”

“Death penalty for what?” said Nixie’s mom. “Did you know that in some countries you can get the death penalty for being gay? Or for changing your religion?” I had never seen her upset before.

“Good and evil,” my father said. “The battle between good and evil. Like Beth said, how do you know which is which?” Beth had not said that, but I guess that’s what she meant.

“It’s simple!” Nixie said. I could see that she was getting in that mood, like the mood she was in in the woods that time when she read all those numbers about world hunger from her hands. “You do no harm, that’s all! Do no harm!”

“But it’s not that simple,” Tracey said. “Because harm is everywhere. It’s like saying ‘Don’t get wet’ when you’re walking in the water.”

“Prayer,” Beth said. “My mom says it’s about prayer. You’ve got to pray.”

“I think that’s right,” my father said. “You’ve got to find some way to pray.”

We all stared at him—my mom and I anyway. We just couldn’t imagine him saying anything like that. I mean, we didn’t ever go to church, and he had never talked about it before. Was he just trying to be nice to Beth? He looked completely serious.

“I mean it,” he said, when he saw how we were looking at him. “There are lots of ways to pray. You know I don’t mean just getting on your knees and folding your hands together. I mean something more like really paying attention. That’s what I mean.”

“Paying attention . . .” Nixie’s mom said. She smiled, then put her chin on her hand, thinking. “Paying attention to what?”

“I’m not sure,” my father said. “Just paying attention. Because when you really pay attention, you realize that you’re paying attention to something. Something bigger than you.”

The fountain makes my body happy. When I watch it and listen to it, it’s like the water is shooting and bubbling up inside me the way it is in the statues. Sometimes I think my body is who I am. Nothing else. That’s enough. Because if my body is happy, I’m happy. And if I’m happy, my body is happy. But when I said this to Nixie and Beth one other time at the fountain, Nixie said, “But your body happiness doesn’t matter in the end. It’s what you do. What you do and say to people. Because your body will die, but what you do or say to people won’t. It will go on and on.”

“But it’s the body that feels good or not,” I said. “It’s the body that’s sad or happy, or free or in prison, like a dog who can go wherever he wants or a dog who’s on a chain all the time, and gets desperate and crazy.”

“I have no idea what you’re talking about,” said Beth.

Beth never understands me. Is it because she’s smarter than me, or not as smart? Sometimes I think we’re from different planets. How can people be so different? But I do like her. Maybe if Nixie wasn’t my best friend, Beth and I would be better friends. But why can’t I be friends in the same way with both of them?

I like Tracey too—I like him a lot—but I don’t want to be like him, the way I want to be like Nixie sometimes. I think it’s because Nixie understands me. She likes everything about me. Well, there are some things she doesn’t like, but they don’t change the way she feels about me. I think she likes me better than I like myself. That might mean that she knows me better than I know myself. But how could that be? How could anyone know me better than I know myself? That just seems impossible to me. But I could be wrong. In fact, maybe it’s just the opposite: maybe pretty much anyone can know me better than I know myself.

“Anyway, your mind and body are in each other,” Nixie said.

“Which one is in which?”

“They’re both in each other. They’re not the same thing, but you can’t separate them. They fill each other up. Or, I don’t know. Except maybe when you’re dreaming. Then your mind can really go away somewhere.”

“But there are different kinds of bodies,” I said. “Like Dolphins for example, or an octopus, or a bee. Or a tree, or a rock. Or a star.”

“A rock?” Beth said. “A rock is just a rock. A tree too. They’re just things. They’re not bodies, so they don’t have minds.”

“A tree is made out of the same stuff as you and me,” I said. “It grows, just like you and me. It lives and dies. It needs water and food.”

“But I think animal bodies are more complicated than plant bodies, or rock bodies,” Nixie said. “That’s how they’re different.”

“Yeah, but everything is made of the same stuff. So something that’s in the more complicated one has to be in the less complicated one too. It’s not something else altogether, it goes step by step from simple to complicated.”

“So?”

“So if there’s some kind of feeling or thinking in an animal, there’s some kind of thinking or feeling in a rock. Just less.”

“Are you saying that rocks are like persons?” Beth said.

That was the end of that conversation.

“Everybody is happy in the same way,” said Beth.

“And what way is that?” Nixie said.

“Feeling safe,” Beth said. “Feeling safe and feeling you’re doing the right thing. Feeling good about yourself and your friends.”

“I think there could be a lot of people who feel safe and think they are doing the right thing who aren’t happy,” Nixie said.

“OK, then what do you think happy is?” Beth said.

“I don’t think we can be happy,” Nixie said. “We have too many problems.”

“You mean no one can be happy unless everyone else is?” I said.

“Well kind of, but that doesn’t sound exactly right. I mean, I can feel peaceful when other people don’t, I guess, but happy is more than that. What do you think it is Myshka?”

I thought a few seconds—well, I wasn’t really thinking, really I was just facing the question in myself, “What is happiness?” Then I said, “Well it’s not just fun, hah hah. When my mom says, ‘the simple joy of existence’, maybe that’s it: happy. I think it has something to do with being simple and free.”

“Oh no!” Tracey said. “Another big word. Free!”

“Yes,” Beth said. “Not worrying.”

“Like—like being a river,” I said. “Just being a river. It can’t do anything else than what it does, and it doesn’t want to do anything else than what it does. And whatever happens next happens next. There’s nothing that’s supposed to happen. It’s not comparing itself to anything. It’s not saying to itself, I wish I could be bigger, or smaller, or faster, or slower, or I wish I could be a mountain instead of a river. It’s free. It just, like, rivers. It just rivers along.”

“But a river doesn’t know it’s happy. Don’t you have to know you’re happy to be happy?” Nixie said.

“No, the opposite,” I said. “When people say they’re happy I don’t know whether to believe them or not. It’s like they’re trying to persuade themselves of something.”

“Somebody could invent a machine to check them,” Tracey said. “Like a lie detector test. You put a silver dollar in the machine, then put your hand on the piece of glass, and you get a color—black to orange. Or no, maybe purple.” He grinned.

Nobody said anything for a little while.

“But the way you are saying ‘happy’ and ‘free,’” Nixie said, “in that case criminals could be happy, and murderers, and all kinds of people who hurt other people.”

“Could they?” I said.

“Yeah, cause it has nothing to do with being good.”

“Isn’t a river good? Isn’t everything good when it just is what it is?” Beth said.

“No. We’re not rivers,” Nixie said. “We have to try and try to be good. What’s good about us is not that we are good, but that we try to be good.”

“And what’s good?” Tracey said.

We laughed. We were getting tired.

DISCUSSION PLANS:

LEADING IDEA: BELIEVING AND KNOWING

–Just believe!

- » What reason do you have for believing that you are now wearing shoes?
- » What reason do you have for believing that you are not dreaming?
- » What reason do you have for believing that the person next to you really exists?
- » What reason do you have for believing that, during the night, the sun is on the other side of the earth?
- » Do you have any reason for not believing in giants?
- » Do you have any reason for not believing in angels?
- » Is make-believe true, false, or neither true nor false?
- » Can we control what we do/don't, can/cannot, want to/don't want to, ought/ought not to believe?
- » How do you know that you're believing in the right thing?
- » Can you follow multiple beliefs?
- » Is there a right thing to believe?
- » Can you create your own beliefs?
- » Can you believe something without knowing that you do?
- » Can someone tell you what to believe?
- » Can someone believe for you?
- » Why do we follow people who tell us what to believe?
- » Do we need people to tell us what to believe?

–How do you or I know anything?

- » Is knowing the same as believing, or something different?
- » How do we know what we know?
- » Can you know something without knowing you know it?
- » How do you know if something is real or not?
- » How do you know that a spiritual way is true?
- » How do we know that a historical figure was real?
- » Can you know something without believing it?
- » Are there different ways of knowing?
- » Is there such a thing as objective knowledge?

–How do you know, believe, both or neither?

Fill in the blank with any of the following: know, doubt, believe, believe it's false, don't know, am not sure

- » I _____ that the sun will rise tomorrow.
- » I _____ that water is wet.
- » I _____ that I am not dreaming.
- » I _____ that today is Monday.
- » I _____ that plants are alive but mountains are not.
- » I _____ that poodles are dogs.
- » I _____ we are not alone in the universe.
- » I _____ that the sky is blue.
- » I _____ that animals have rights.

—Knowing and believing

Make two lists—know, believe. We volunteer items for each list—things we know and things we believe, then, as a group, compare the lists. The following questions might help guide the discussion.

- » Are there items that appear on both lists? If so, what makes one person say se/she knows it, and what makes another person say he/she believes it?
- » How do you know when to believe something?
- » What's it like to know something?
- » Are there some sorts of things that you can only believe?
- » Are there some sorts of things that you just know?

LEADING IDEA: THE GOOD

—What is the good?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What works for me » What works for us » What feels good » The law » Given by a higher power » Different in every situation » What's right » Whatever we call good | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What satisfies the greatest number of people most of the time » Whatever doesn't cause evil » The beautiful » Whatever you think it is » What a good person does » An idea » Defeating evil |
|--|---|

—What makes a good...

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Hammer? » Idea? » Vacation? » Movie? » Book? » Test? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Dream? » Friend? » Day? » Child? » Teacher? » Law? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Person? » War? » Argument? » Feeling? » Disease? » Life? |
|---|---|---|

—Is there anything that is good for everyone and bad for no one?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Medicine » School » Hospitals » Police » Growing up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Teachers » Moms and dads » TV » Telephones » Cars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Superhighways » Video games » Dishwashers » Your own dreams » If you're happy |
|---|---|---|
- » Is there anything that is good for everyone and bad for no one?
 - » Is there anything that is bad for everyone and good for no one?
 - » Could something be good for one person and bad for another?
 - » Can you tell ahead of time what will be good or bad for other people?
 - » Can you tell ahead of time what will be good for you?
 - » Could you think that something is bad but really it's good?
 - » Could you think that something is good but really it's bad?
 - » Could someone think something is good for you but it's really bad for you?
 - » Could someone think that something is bad for you but it's really good for you?

LEADING IDEA: DOING NO HARM

–Harm

- » What does it mean to do harm?
- » Is it possible to never do harm?
- » Can doing good to one person mean doing harm to another?
- » Is it alright to do harm to one person in order to do good for many?
- » Can you think you're doing good but actually doing harm?
- » Can you think you're doing harm but are actually doing good?
- » If someone lies to you, have you been harmed?
- » Is harming yourself the same as harming others?
- » Can a system (social, economic, political) do harm?
- » If so, is everyone in that system doing harm, or some people, or no one?

–Are you doing harm when...

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| » You kill a mosquito | » Someone gets hurt defending you from an attacker | » You tell a lie |
| » You step on an ant | » You have bad thoughts about a person | » You tell a white lie |
| » You kill and eat meat | » You talk behind someone's back | » You let someone down |
| » You kill and eat plants | » You get angry and show it | » You turn away from someone in need |
| » You walk on the grass | | » You waste water, or petrol, or food |
| » You kill or hurt someone who attacks you | | |

LEADING IDEA: PAYING ATTENTION

–Pay attention!

- » What does it mean to pay attention?
- » Can you pay attention to more than one thing at once?
- » What, if anything, causes us to pay attention?
- » Can you pay attention all the time?
- » Are you ever not paying attention to something?
- » Can you choose not to pay attention?
- » Are you paying attention when you are asleep?
- » Can you pay attention to yourself?
- » Why do we say “pay” attention?
- » Can we pay attention to the wrong things?
- » Does paying attention to one thing mean not paying attention to another?
- » When is it difficult to pay attention? When is it easy?
- » What is the opposite of paying attention?
- » Do infants pay attention?
- » Do ants and bees pay attention?
- » Do lions pay attention?
- » Can you pay attention without knowing it?
- » Are prayer and meditation forms of attention?

LEADING IDEA: HAPPY

–What is happiness?

- » What does a person need to be happy?
- » Is happiness the same as pleasure?
- » What is the difference between being happy and being satisfied?
- » Can you have fun and still not be happy?
- » Is happiness the same as “inner peace”?
- » Can a person be happy all the time?
- » Can a person never be happy?
- » Can a person be too happy?
- » Why are some people happier than others?
- » If we believed that happiness level is genetically determined, how could we prove it?
- » Can we be happy in an unhappy world?
- » Can we be more or less happy?
- » Is there a “key” to happiness?
- » Could an unhappy person make themselves happy?
- » If there was a daily pill that made you happy all the time, would you take it?
- » Can a person be happy or unhappy for no reason?
- » Can we earn happiness?
- » Can we buy happiness?
- » Can we deserve happiness?
- » Could a person have bad luck and still be happy?
- » Could a person have good luck and still be unhappy?
- » Can a person who does bad things to other people be happy?
- » Can a person make someone else happy?
- » Could you be happy alone on a desert island?
- » Can you be sick and happy at the same time?

–Can these be happy?

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| » Worms | » Robots | » A homeless person |
| » Fish | » People who are ill | » Criminals |
| » Birds | » Very poor people | » People who meditate five hours a day |
| » Domesticated animals | » Religious people | » People who help others |
| » Wild animals | » Educated people | » People with a job they like |
| » Plants | » People in prison | » People who always “do the right thing” |
| » Rivers | » People with drug addictions | » People who live in war zones |
| » Mountains | » Bipolar people | |
| » Machines | » Famous people | |

–Being unhappy

- » Can a person be unhappy one minute and happy the next?
- » Can a person be both happy and unhappy at the same time?

- » Can a person be unhappy even though everyone else is happy?
- » Can a person be happy even though everyone else is unhappy?
- » Can you be happy without feeling happy?
- » When you get along well with people around you, does that make you happy?
- » When you're happy, does that help you get along well with others around you?
- » Are there people who like to be unhappy? Are there people who don't like to be happy?
- » What makes people unhappy? What makes people happy?

LEADING IDEA: MIND AND BODY

–Mind and brain

- » Could you have a mind without a brain?
- » Could you have a brain without a mind?
- » Can you hurt your brain and not hurt your mind?
- » Can you hurt your mind and not hurt your brain?
- » Is the mind in the brain?
- » Is the mind real?
- » Are your thoughts in your brain? If so, how?
- » When you're dreaming, where are you?
- » If you switched brains with your friend, would you be him/her?
- » If your brain was bigger, would you be smarter?
- » Where do thoughts come from?
- » What does it mean to "lose your mind"?

–Body and mind

- » Are you your body?
- » Are you your mind?
- » Are you both your mind and your body?
- » Are you neither your mind nor your body?
- » Is mind inside body, or body inside mind?
- » Are mind and body two different words for the same thing?
- » Does mind have any weight?
- » Does mind have any extension?
- » Does mind have location?
- » Is mind in time?
- » Does body think?
- » Does mind feel?
- » Are feelings and emotions in mind or body?
- » Can mind know itself?
- » Can mind know things body can't, and visa versa?
- » Can mind do things that body can't, and visa versa?
- » Can body know itself? If so, how? If not, why not?
- » Does mind construct what it sees, or reflect what it sees, or both, or neither?
- » Is the universe minded?

–The world and the mind

Where are the following? Just in the mind – Just in the world – In both mind & world – In neither mind nor world

- | | | | |
|------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| » pictures | » sounds | » love | » air |
| » words | » odours | » mice | » hate |
| » thoughts | » tastes | » Mickey Mouse | » lights |

–Finding reasons for the way we talk about the mind

Can you give a reason someone might have had for saying the following?

- | | |
|---|---|
| » My mind is like a circus, because... | » My mind is like a secret, because... |
| » My mind is like a zoo, because... | » My mind is like an explosion, because... |
| » My mind is like a TV program, because... | » My mind is like a bank, because... |
| » My mind is like a computer, because... | » My mind is like a bee hive because... |
| » My mind is like a river, because... | » My mind is like a subway system because... |
| » My mind is like Thanksgiving dinner, because... | » My mind is like a command center because... |
| » My mind is like a thunderstorm, because... | » My mind is like a musical group because... |

–Positions

Which of these statements do you agree with, if any?

- » The mind is simply the brain
- » The mind is invisible stuff
- » The mind is a dimension in which thoughts occur, just as space and time are dimensions in which events occur.
- » The mind is the class of a person’s mental acts, such as believing, denying, etc.
- » The mind is the class of a person’s ideas
- » There is no such thing as mind
- » None of the above

–Thought experiments

- » How would you feel if you woke up one morning and found that you had the body of a bear? What sorts of things could you do that you hadn’t done before? What sorts of things couldn’t you do? Do you think you would do things differently from other bears?
- » How would you feel if you woke up one morning and couldn’t remember anything about yourself? What things could you do? What couldn’t you do?

LEADING IDEA: ROCKS, PLANTS, ANIMALS, PERSONS & THINGS

–Being different things

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| » Be a chair | » Be an eel |
| » Be a grownup | » Be a giraffe |
| » Be a duck | » Be an ironing board |
| » Be a skateboard | » Be a paintbrush |
| » Be a traffic light | » Be a marching band |

–What has a brain and how do you know?

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| » Rocks | » Wasps | » Elephants | » Computers |
| » Grass | » An ant colony | » Everyone in the world | » Robots |
| » Trees | » A hive of bees | » Refrigerators | » Androids |
| » Ladybugs | » Worms | » Cars that talk | » A ghost |

–What feels what?

- » A flower when you pick it
- » A butterfly when you pin it
- » A worm on a hook
- » A fish on a hook
- » A tree when you cut it
- » An insect when you squash it
- » Grass when you walk on it
- » A river as it flows along
- » A bacteria when you kill it
- » An animal when it is slaughtered
- » A rock when it is crushed
- » A forest in a hurricane
- » A mountain in sunshine
- » Water in a fountain
- » A baby crying
- » A robot when you hit it
- » A person when you ignore them
- » A person when you hug them

–What goes to sleep?

- » Flowers
- » Trees
- » Grass
- » Machines
- » Houses
- » Bears
- » Ideas
- » Sun
- » Light
- » Moonlight
- » River
- » Rain

–Is it alive?

- » Seaweed
- » Bacteria
- » A leaf
- » A worm
- » A hurricane
- » A river
- » A tsunami
- » Lightning
- » Blood
- » Fingernails
- » The sun
- » Thoughts
- » Feelings
- » Memories
- » Ghosts
- » A telephone

–What's it like to be an animal?

Can you tell what it would be like to be the following? How can you tell, or how could you find out?

- » A cat
- » A firefly
- » A mole
- » A bat
- » A whale
- » A monkey
- » A gorilla
- » A dolphin
- » An elephant
- » A dog
- » A butterfly
- » A bee

–What can you know about being another species?

- » Can you know what a dog waiting for his owner to come home from work or school is experiencing /feels like?
- » Can you know what a bird in a cage is experiencing/feels?
- » Can you know what a mouse spinning in a wheel is experiencing?
- » Can you know what a fish on a hook is experiencing as it's being pulled from the water?
- » Can you know what your pet dog is experiencing when you rub him on the tummy?
- » Can you know what a monkey grooming another monkey is experiencing?
- » Can you know what a gorilla calling to its young is experiencing /feeling?
- » Can you imagine what the world is like to another species?
- » How would:
 - » A cat perceive a person?
 - » A whale perceive a dog?
 - » A mouse perceive an elephant?
 - » A turtle perceive an antelope?
 - » A coyote perceive a big city?
 - » A worm perceive a snake?
 - » A dog perceive a wolf?
 - » A fish perceive the ocean?

LEADING IDEA: FRIENDSHIP

—On friendship

- » Can animals be friends with one another?
- » Can people have friendships with animals?
- » Do people have to be the same age in order to be friends?
- » Can very old people and very young people be friends?
- » Can two people like each other very much and still not be friends?
- » Can a large group of people be friends?
- » Can a person be a friend to oneself?
- » If two people who think they're friends, "tell on" one another, are they really friends?
- » Is it ever possible for friends to lie to one another?
- » Could friends ever hurt one another?
- » Are friends usually very much alike or can they be very different from one another?
- » How are your conversations with your friends different from the conversations you have with other people?
- » What sorts of things do friends talk about with one another that other people can't talk about?
- » What is the question you would most like to ask about friendship?

LEADING IDEA: KNOWING YOURSELF

—Knowing yourself

- » Do you always know what you're thinking?
- » Do you always know what you're saying?
- » Do you always know what you're feeling?
- » Do you always know what you're doing?

—What does it mean to know oneself?

- » If you met someone on the street who looked just like you, would you think it was you?
- » Is it possible that some of your friends might mistake that other person for you?
- » How is it you're so sure who you are?
- » Do you know yourself better than other people know you?
- » Do you know your teeth better than your dentist knows your teeth?
- » Do you know your eyes better than a doctor knows your eyes?
- » Do you know better than anyone else how your shoes feel on your feet?
- » Are you the only person in the world who knows your thoughts?
- » Can anyone else in the world express your thoughts better than you can?
- » When you do something, do you always know why you did it?
- » Are there times you wonder why you just did what you did?
- » Do you sometimes want things you wish you didn't want?

—What is it that makes you YOU?

Would you still be you if...

- » You had a different name?
- » You had a different face?
- » You had a different body?
- » You had a different mind?

- » You had different fingerprints?
- » You had different parents?
- » You had different grandparents?
- » You were born and raised in China?
- » Everyone in the world thought you were someone else?

—Johari’s window

What kinds of things do we find in the Blind Spot? What might we find in the Unknown Spot?

KNOWN TO SELF	UNKNOWN TO SELF
<p>OPEN SPOT Known to self and known to others</p>	<p>BLIND SPOT Unknown to self and known to others</p>
<p>HIDDEN SPOT Known to self and not known to others</p>	<p>UNKNOWN SPOT Not known to self and not known to others</p>

LEADING IDEA: (BEING) GOOD

—When should we call things “good”?

- » If you *like* something, does that make it good?
- » If a lot of people *like* something, does that make it good?
- » If you *prefer* apples to oranges, does that make apples better than oranges?
- » If you *want* something, must the thing you want therefore be good?
- » If you don’t *want* something, must that thing be bad? Or worthless?
- » Is it possible to dislike something that’s good?
- » Is it possible to know that something is bad and still like it?
- » If something is good, does that guarantee that people will like it?
- » If something is good, does that guarantee people will prefer it to something bad?
- » If people *know* that something is good, and know the reasons why it is good, is it possible they could still dislike it?
- » Do you think that, if you fully understood the reasons why one thing was better than another, you might still want the worse thing?
- » Could something be valuable even though no one valued it?
- » Could something be desirable even though no one desired it?
- » Could a person whom no one liked still be likable?

- » Which would you prefer, something worthless that everyone wanted, or something valuable that no one wanted?
- » Which things should we call “good,” those that are *desired* or those that are *desirable*?

–What makes a person good?

What is your opinion of each of the following statements? What reason can you give for holding that opinion?

- » Being good is doing what you are told to do.
- » Being good is doing what has to be done.
- » Being good is not annoying others.
- » Being good is doing the right thing at the right place and at the right time.
- » Being good is doing what you have to do but don't want to.
- » Being good is doing what you want to and hoping for the best.
- » Being good is doing what you've figured out needs to be done.
- » Being good is doing things in such a way that you'll never be sorry.
- » Being good is doing what makes everyone happy.
- » Being good is doing what you feel you can live with.
- » Being good is being an expert on being good.
- » You're good if you do what I like.
- » Being good is looking out for yourself.
- » Being good is doing what everyone ought to do.
- » Being good is none of the above, some of the above, or all of the above.