Thinking About Decisions

Welcome to the team and Task 1-2. As you heard, you will be making many decisions as a team during your research about mosquitoes. Before you begin your research, the team must think about how each team member makes decisions. You will also need to use your identity map from Task 1-1 to see if any parts of your identity are affecting the decisions you make.

Objective

In this task, the team will learn how to work and talk together about decision-making and how it may be influenced by the identity map you made in Task 1-1. This will be especially important when we all do not agree.

1. Go over these team norms together:
   - Recognize the benefit of listening to different ideas from people on your team.
   - Be open to new ideas and perspectives that challenge your own.

2. Go to the Task 1-2 folder and get the Thinking About Decisions activity and discussion questions.

3. Choose the Mosquito A or Mosquito B activity from the task folder. You can also do both versions of the task if you want. Or half of the team can do Mosquito A and half can do Mosquito B. You decide!

4. Do the activity according to the instructions in the folder and discuss the questions.

Remember, when engaging in meaningful discussion as a team, we must respect our team. For example, use these sentence starters:

   - I agree with ____________ because ...
   - I disagree with ____________ because ...
   - I'd like to go back to what ______________ said about ...
   - I'd like to add ______________

Hooray! You completed Task 1-2. Check it off the task list. Go to Task 1-3!
Task 1-2 Thinking About Decisions — Mosquito A

Materials: Paper and pens or pencils, Task 1-1 identity maps

Description: Ask each team member to write on a piece of paper all of the decisions that they can remember making so far today. (Examples: what to wear, what to eat, how to spend free time, etc.) Include all types of decisions on your list.

Allow about three minutes for team members to write. Now, ask each team member to go back through their list and rate their decisions on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 meaning an automatic decision you made without much thought, and 10 meaning a decision that required careful studying and much thought before you made the decision.

Task 1-2 Thinking About Decisions Discussion Questions

1. As a group, share different types of decisions you rated as 1 that are automatic and do not require much thought. Which decisions did you rate at 10 that require much thought before making the decision?
2. Did any of your decisions affect another person? If so, how?
3. Look at the identity map you created in Task 1-1. Were your decisions influenced by any things on your identity map, such as your values? Attitudes? Biases?
4. Which aspects of your identity map do you think are most influential when making decisions?
5. What is the worst decision you ever made? (Team members can write or discuss these.)
6. Do you consider it the worst because of the decision, or was it a reasonable decision with a bad outcome?
7. Does a good decision guarantee a good outcome?
8. Do you have control over the decision, the outcome, neither, or both?
9. What does this exercise tell you about how you make most of your decisions?

Task 1-2 Thinking About Decisions — Mosquito B

**Materials:** Writing Materials (Such as poster board, paper, chalkboard with the Patient Waiting List (from below) written on it, Task 1-1 identity maps

Form groups of five to seven people.

In your group, you will be making a decision about an imaginary situation.

The situation is:

You are doctors at a large hospital. Your committee must make a very important decision. Seven patients are sick with a disease they got from a mosquito bite. They all need medicine to help them survive. There is only enough medicine to help one of the patients at this time. All of the patients would be saved by the medicine. The patients who do not receive the medicine will not automatically die. Some (not all) will, hopefully, survive until more medicine arrives at the hospital. Which patient would you choose to receive the medicine? Why? Your committee must agree on the choice.

**Patient Waiting List**

(Select one of the following patients to receive the medicine.)

- 31-year-old male; Black, brain surgeon; no children
- 12-year-old female; Asian; accomplished violinist; blind
- 40-year-old male; Hispanic, teacher, two children
- 15-year-old female; White, unmarried, six months pregnant
- 35-year-old male; Hispanic; Roman Catholic priest
- 17-year-old female; White; waitress; high school dropout; supports and cares for a brother who is severely disabled
- 38-year-old female; Black; AIDS researcher; no children

Allow at least 10 minutes for each group to make their decision about who should receive the medicine (20 minutes is recommended).

Then meet up as the whole team.
Have each group share its decision and decision-making process.

1. What was your decision?
2. How did you arrive at your decision?
3. What are the potential effects or consequences of your decision?

**Task 1-2 Thinking About Decisions Discussion Questions**

- How did your group come to a decision? Did you use a specific technique (consensus, voting, etc.)?
- How were disagreements and conflicts handled? What strategies could you use in future situations to better handle these?
- Look at your identity map you created in Task 1-1. Which aspects of your identity map most influenced your decision? How was your decision influenced by the things on your identity map, such as your values? Attitudes? Biases?
- Was there anyone who felt their voice was not heard? How could we ensure their voice is heard equally in the future?
- Did anyone change their mind after hearing another group’s explanation?

Modified from:

“More About Decisions” from Helping Teens Reach Their Dreams by Schilling & Palomares, 1993