

CHOICES

Scenario 15

The Waterhole

You are out in the forest with your family.

You have just had a great picnic lunch. The sun is shining. It's a beautiful summer day.

Your Mom says, "Why don't you go off and have a walk? Your Dad and I will have a rest."

"And be careful," says your Dad. "Don't do anything foolish."

You and your older brother Jake and your little sister Katy head off.

Not far away is the river. You walk to it. You look down into its sparkling waters.

There is a waterfall. The three of you walk carefully around to the top of the waterfall and look down.

"Look at the waterhole down there," says Jake. "It's really deep. And you can see the bottom. We could jump off and land in the middle of it. Wouldn't that be fun?"

"Dad said not to do anything foolish," says Katy. "At least we should ask them first."

"No need," says Jake. "It's totally safe."

He takes off his top and shoes.

"You two may be chickens, but I'll show you how it's done. Then you can do it too. It'll be great!"

What should you do?

A You say, "Jake. No. You might miss and land on the rocks." You grab him and pull him away from the cliff.

What next?

Jake struggles with you for a moment.

“Let go. I can do it!”

Katy is white faced.

“You don’t have to prove anything,” you say. “It’s far too dangerous.”

Katy throws her arms around Jake.

“You could get killed,” she says.

Jake stops struggling and sits down.

“Maybe you’re right.” He’s silent for a moment. Then: “But what about going down to the waterhole and swimming in it?”

“Great,” you say.

“Jake – you’re a star,” says Katy.

All three of you make your way down to the waterhole.

It’s just as wonderful as it looks – cool and clear.

Your parents appear.

“Wow. We’ll come in too.”

Think about it

Some risks are inevitable. If you ride a bike you might fall off. If you perform in a play you might forget your lines.

But when it comes to actions that put you in serious physical danger, you have to be very careful. The chances of falling off a bike and being seriously hurt are quite low. The chances of jumping off a waterfall and being seriously hurt are high.

Sometimes people have an urge to ‘give it a go’ or say ‘hang the consequences’.

That is a very foolish way of thinking.

Imagine if you could see into the future and saw that an action would lead to injury or death – would you still do it?

A wise man said, “No matter what the situation, remind yourself, I have a choice.”
(Deepak Chopra)

That choice may lead to fun, or death.

Choices are very very important.

Do you want to look at another scenario involving danger? (Go to 22)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 15)

B You say, “Good luck!” Jake jumps off the cliff.

What next?

For a moment all is well.

Jake sails through the air – down towards the water below.

He disappears into it with a huge splash.

There is a moment of silence.

What’s happened to Jake?

Then he surfaces nearby.

Something is wrong.

You expect him to wave his arms in triumph. But as he climbs out onto the rock, it’s obvious something is wrong with his arm. It’s hanging at a funny angle.

“What happened?”

“I don’t know,” he calls. “But you better call Mom and Dad.”

Katy bursts into tears.

Think about it

It has been said that people don’t fully understand consequences until they are 25.

Boys in particular like to ‘prove themselves’ by doing dangerous things. Extreme sports, and showing off on skateboards are examples.

But all people have a duty to first survive. Life has a lot of things that it can throw at you – disease, accidents, unhappiness. To actually increase the risk of such things, by not thinking through the consequences – is worse than stupid – it can be tragic.

Do you want to look at another scenario involving an emergency? (Go to 10)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 15)