

CHOICES

Scenario 17

The Elevator

You have been visiting your Dad in his office downtown.

Your Mom has rung to say that she's arrived, and is waiting in the lobby.

"Have a nice lunch," says your Dad. "You know the way?"

"Sure."

You head out to the corridor near the elevators. You wait.

The doors open. You step in. There's no one else inside.

You press the button for the ground floor.

The doors close. Immediately you feel that sensation as it drops down. The building is 50 floors. It drops fast.

Suddenly, it stops.

"What?"

But the doors don't open. You press the open button. Nothing happens.

Then the lights go out.

Suddenly it's pitch dark.

"HELP!"

You're trapped in a steel box high up in a tall building. And there's no one to rescue you.

This is like a horror movie.

What should you do?

A You give way to the panic.

What next?

You start screaming, "Let me out! LET ME OUT!"

You bang on the doors of the elevator.

"PLEASSSSEEEEE!"

You slide down onto the floor, trembling.

You feel tears filling up your eyes.

Your heart is about to burst out of your chest.

You are about to black out.

Thirty seconds later, the lights come on.

The elevator starts. It drops down again.

The doors open.

There is your Mom.

"What's the matter?"

You burst into tears and crumple up.

"I nearly died."

Think about it

Fear is a powerful thing. Everyone gets frightened.

But panic is not helpful. It freezes you up. You can't think straight.

What seemed like a life and death situation turned out to be a 30 second interruption. The error corrected itself and all returned to normal.

Franklin Roosevelt, the famous US President, said: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

What he meant was that letting fear take over means that things can get out of control. We need to stop, think, find solutions.

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

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 17)

B You say to yourself, “I can cope. There’s got to be a way out of this. Think.”

What next?

You take your cell phone out of your pocket.

You turn on its light. The elevator is still totally dark, but you can see writing beside the buttons on the wall.

“In an emergency, press this button.”

You press the button.

A voice comes on the line immediately.

“Central Control. How can I help you?”

You explain the situation.

“How old are you?” says the voice.

You tell the man.

“You’re doing great. There’s been a power outage. It will take them a couple of minutes to fix it. Just hang in there. It may be scary - but you’re perfectly safe.”

You relax.

Minutes later, the lights come on. The elevator starts up again and takes you down to the ground floor.

“Hi there,” says your Mom. “What happened?”

“A little glitch. I was fine.”

Think about it

In a crisis, things look like they are out of control.

But a little thought, a little courage and things are likely to turn out fine in the end.

We are not as helpless as we might think. Things are rarely as bad as they seem.

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear but triumph over it. The brave person is not one who does not feel afraid, but one who conquers that fear.” (Nelson Mandela)

Do you want to look at another scenario involving courage? (Go to 1)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 17)