



ACTIVITY: 'THAT CHANGED MY LIFE'

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Groups of three to five
SPACE: Room to form small working circles
RESOURCES: Inspiring Stories (p.79 or SenseAbility), or relevant news/magazine clippings

The aim is to consider the stories of real people who have overcome adversity due to their strong Sense of Purpose.

The result should be an increased awareness that a strong Sense of Purpose is important for setting and achieving goals, for weathering unforeseen events, and for finding meaning even in unlikely circumstances.

1. Break the class into groups of three to five.
2. Distribute to each group either news/magazine clippings or printouts of the Inspiring Stories resource sheet.
3. Members of each group read the article they've been given and consider:
 - How would you describe this person's Sense of Purpose?
 - What things contributed to the person's Sense of Purpose prior to the event in question?
 - What happened that changed or threatened their Sense of Purpose?
 - How did the person change, regain, or rely on their Sense of Purpose?
 - What might the person have been thinking and feeling: before the event; during the event; after the event? What actions did he/she take as a result of those thoughts and feelings?
 - How did the person challenge unhelpful thoughts?
 - If your group had a friend facing a similar situation to this person's, what might you say to them? Who would you suggest they seek help from?
4. Each group selects a spokesperson/s to summarise to the wider class:
 - The inspirational story they were given.
 - How the person's Sense of Purpose was threatened.
 - How their Sense of Purpose was changed (including strengthened).
 - How helpful and realistic thinking allowed the person to refocus on goals after the life-changing event.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS



- What elements were common to these stories about Sense of Purpose?
- How can your Sense of Purpose change over time? Is it okay for your goals to change?
- What thinking skills can you use to bolster your Sense of Purpose?
- What is the difference between being single-minded (or obsessive) and having a strong Sense of Purpose? Discuss specific examples (e.g. Nelson Mandela, early Antarctic explorers) Were they single-minded, or did they simply possess a strong Sense of Purpose?