

Critical Incidents Exercise

1) Jack, a rather boisterous but well-liked American student, shared a room in an international dormitory with a Thai student Pitchit. They seemed to get along fairly well and Jack remarked to one of his American friends how easy Pitchit was to live with compared with some of his previous roommates, who had similar routines and interests as Jack. However, halfway through the semester, Pitchit suddenly announced he had asked for a room transfer and would be moving out next week. Jack was quite upset and puzzled and asked Pitchit why. At first Pitchit was quite reticent and said everything was fine. Jack persistently questioned him. At last Pitchit said apologetically that he did not like Jack's loud music, his friends visiting him at all hours, and his untidiness. Jack was very surprised and asked Pitchit why he had not told him this before he had not realized he was disturbing Pitchit in any way. Pitchit said nothing and moved out.

Rate your response on the scale below by circling the appropriate number about Pitchit's behavior

1 2 3 4 5
Completely Agree - Completely Disagree

In your group, discuss the following question:

Why do you agree or disagree with what was said or done by Pitchit?

What solution would you offer to resolve the conflict between Pitchit and Jack?

2) My father was an important chief in our province during the British colonial days. So I used to accompany him to important functions. One of these was our Sultan's coronation. When the Sultan entered the great hall, everyone stood up, but the British officials quickly sat down. I was shocked. It made me understand that the roles of our nobility are mainly for show, while the British, even their lowest ranked soldier or official, has all the power.

I am a mature civil servant now and I have been able to send my three oldest children to England to study.

Rate your response on the scale below by circling the appropriate number about father's behavior

1 2 3 4 5
Completely Agree - Completely Disagree

In your group, discuss the following question:

Why do you agree or disagree with what was said or done by the father?

What solution would you offer to the father?

Gargi Roysircar Sodowsky 2

3) Mindo was a new teacher in this Southeast Asian village. The school yard needed improvement, and Mindo knew that the students could fix things up if they were organized to do it. Ordinarily, manual labor was not done by educated people, but the school could not afford to hire laborers. Mindo found, though, that the students almost enjoyed the work if they could do it in large groups. Eventually, the job was nearly done, and, Mindo, who liked to encourage independence, assigned particular individuals to separate areas of the school. One of them, assigned to dig a trench near the edge of the school yard, refused to work and asked to go home. Mindo was very angry and perplexed.

Rate your response on the scale below by circling the appropriate number about Mindo's behavior

1 2 3 4 5
Completely Agree - Completely Disagree

In your group, discuss the following question:

Why do you agree or disagree with what was said or done by Mindo?

What solution would you offer to Mindo?

4) John, a teacher from Belize, traveled to the United States as a part of a teacher exchange program. He was to stay in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dalton, also teachers, in Eugene, Oregon. During the course of the visit, John was to experience American culture first-hand by living with this family. He had the responsibility of teaching about Belizean culture to small groups of teachers in the local community and was considered very successful in this task by his American colleagues.

During the first few days things seemed to be fairly comfortable for John and the Daltons. The excitement of being in such a new and different place kept John open-eyed and involved wherever he went. The Daltons, too, were thrilled to be hosting their first overseas guest.

However, things soon turned sour, especially for Mrs. Dalton. She was often complaining to her husband about feeling like a servant. There was more food to prepare, extra laundry to do, day and evening outings to attend, and an extra person in an already small house to accommodate.

Her breaking point occurred midway through a breakfast she had prepared. John shoved an empty glass in front of Mrs. Dalton and in a "taking for granted" brusque tone stated, "More." With this Mrs. Dalton refused to prepare any more meals, and vowed never to host a foreign guest again.

Rate your response on the scale below by circling the appropriate number about John's behavior

1 2 3 4 5
Completely Agree - Completely Disagree

Gargi Roysircar Sodowsky 3

In your group, discuss the following question:

Why do you agree or disagree with what was said or done by John? What solution would you offer to John and Mrs. Dalton?

5) The frail, old, almost totally blind lady appeared at every clinic session and sat on the dirty floor enjoying the activity. She was dirty and disheveled, and obviously had very little, even by Malaysian "Kampong" or local village standards.

One day the visiting nurse found her in her kampon~ The old woman lived by herself in a rundown shack. When questioned how she obtained food, she said she was often hungry as she only received food when she worked for others--pounding rice, looking after the children, and washing clothes.

The nurse tried hard to obtain help for the woman. It was finally resolved that she would receive a small pension from the Department of Welfare, and this money would be ample for her needs.

At each weekly clinic, the woman continued to appear. She had become the center of attention. She laughed, joked freely, and obviously enjoyed her increased prestige. No change was noted in her physical appearance and condition. She continued to wear the same black dirty dress and looked no better fed.

The nurse asked one of the rural health nurses to find out if the woman wanted help in getting to a shop to buy the goods she seemed to need so badly.

In sitting near the woman, the rural health nurse noted a wad of bills in the woman's basket. "Wah," she said, "It's all here. You have spent nothing. Why is it?"

The woman laughed triumphantly and explained, "I'm saving it all for my funeral."

Rate your response on the scale below by circling the appropriate number about the behavior of the old Malaysian woman.

1 2 3 4 5
Completely Agree - Completely Disagree

In your group, discuss the following question:

Why do you agree or disagree with what was said or done by the old Malaysian woman?

What solution would you offer to the Malaysian woman and the nurse?