

Friends, family, or selfishness?

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Stop. Wait. Think.

Look around you, you are surrounded by friends and family. The people around you care about you. So they would never want to hurt you, emotionally or physically... but what if everything was different? What if your family and friends turned on you, and hurt you just to save themselves.

Imagine, how YOU would be different if this was a reality. Can you imagine why, this would happen? Probably not. There doesn't seem like any good reason. Could it be tradition, beliefs, or just entertainment?? No, no, no, it can't be. Or maybe it's the fact, that no one wants to be different and stick up for what they think. Maybe it's the fact, that everyone just follows the crowd and lets other people tell them what to think.

Maybe, it's the fact that everyone only thinks about themselves. What if all these maybes were true? Stop, wait and think. Luckily, in present times, people can count on others and do not have to ponder on all the maybes in the world. But, what would it be like if your friends and family turned on each other? Hopefully we never find out. In the meantime, we can seek the answer in Shirley Jackson's short story, *The Lottery*.

This story begins in a village. The whole village is meeting in the town square for a big event, one that happens only once a year... none other than the lottery. As the parents of the families talk anxiously while waiting for the lottery to begin, the kids run around and gather rocks of all sizes and collect them in one big pile. Finally, the lottery is about to begin. Everyone watches nervously as the black box that has been used for decades is brought out to the crowd.

<https://assignbuster.com/friends-family-or-selfishness/>

Then, we find out how the lottery works. The head member of each family (usually the dad/husband) steps forward to draw a slip of paper from the box. After everyone draws, its time to open up the slip of paper. Everyone reveals what's on the inside. The slips of paper all appear blank, except the Hutchinsons, one of many families that lives in the village. Their paper reveals a black dot.

The Hutchinson family steps forward, reluctantly but not too nervous. Five slips of paper are placed back in the black box, and the process repeats again, but only within the family. As the family reveals their papers, they come to find that the black dot belongs to Tessie, the mom/wife. Everyone gasps, but soon get over it and head to the rock pile... including her family and friends. The group of villagers soon close in on Tessie, and start to pelt her with rocks, and her closest family and friends follow with no hesitation at all. Tessie is soon to be the next villager who “ won” the lottery.

This scene is a clear warning that humans should have to think of others and step into their shoes, before deciding what is right and wrong or one could lose sight of what's important. Characters that display that people should have to step into the shoes of others before making decisions is everyone in the Hutchinson family. Tessie's family attends the lottery every year, mostly because they have too. Unlike Tessie, they are worried going into the lottery, but don't make a big deal of it. Even when they discover that they have the black dot and someone in their family will soon be stoned, they act as though it is no big deal.

When Tessie gets defensive, everyone, even her own husband tries to stop her, “ Shut up, Tessie”(4). No one in the Hutchinson family seems to care deeply about each other. The only thing they care about is themselves. When it's time to draw again, everyone in the family is overjoyed with happiness to find that their paper is blank, with no black dot. “ Nancy and Bill Jr.

both beamed and laughed turning around to the crowd and holding up their slips of paper above their head”(5). But how can they feel this way when someone in their family is soon going to be hurt? Obviously they don't think of how each other are feeling. No one in the family cares enough to step into each other's shoes, and show empathy for what is soon going to happen to someone that they supposedly love and care about. Throughout the story, we learn that Tessie is just as much of a hypocrite as her family. She values the lottery, until she is the one affected.

On the day of the lottery, Tessie runs in late, laughing, because the lottery happens every year and it's no big deal...right? Tessie makes jokes about how she almost missed the lottery, but it doesn't seem funny to anyone else because everyone else is too nervous to laugh. As the lottery begins, Tessie continues to talk to her friends with no doubt, because there is nothing to worry about. Tessie believes that this lottery has been going on for such a long time, and there are so many people in the village, the chances of her family getting picked are minimal.

She believes that the lottery is a good tradition because she never knew anyone that got picked personally. She was perfectly fine until it was time to open the white little sheets of paper, holding the results inside. When the

paper is opened and she sees that her family has the black dot, she goes bananas. ? Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers.

‘ You didn’t give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn’t fair’? (4). This shows that Tessie had no reason to dislike the lottery, until she got picked. After all the years of watching this horrific event take place, she had never thought about the person that was actually being hurt.

She had never stepped into the chosen one’s shoes, therefore never thinking about the consequences that came with this terrible tradition that was brought back year after year. Lastly, in addition to Tessie and Tessie’s family, Tessie’s friends also demonstrate that one can lose sight of what’s important, if they don’t keep others in mind. In the beginning of the story, Tessie’s friends are going about their ordinary day, and are talking to Tessie, like nothing is wrong. They are acting like they aren’t going to turn on her in less than an hour, as though they aren’t going to hurt their friend. Later in the story we learn that Tessie and her friends, along with everyone else in the village, have no bond at all.

Everyone is willing to hurt other people in order to save himself. It doesn’t matter if they are strangers, family, or even best friends. No one in the village wants to be different and try to change something they know is wrong. As soon as Tessie gets picked, her friends have no problem,“ Be a good sport, Tessie.’ Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs.

Graves said, ‘ All of us took the same chance’”(4). Despite being Tessie’s fiends, these other ladies in the village made comments that shows that they do not care about Tessie. All Tessie needed was for some people to stand up
<https://assignbuster.com/friends-family-or-selfishness/>

for her and finally say that the lottery should not be continued any longer. No one however, will take a stand because no one in the village has a bond with anyone... only themselves. Luckily, in modern day, we don't have to worry about this. We have learned how to care for each other and stand up for each other even if we make a decision different from most others.

As the story concludes, we learn that before deciding what is right or wrong, it is critical to step into others shoes, or one could lose sight of what's important. Overall, everyone in the village shows their true colors when they choose themselves over friends and even family. Everyone in the village is selfish, although they may not even know it. Although they sure do show it when they turn on someone they had a "close" relationship with. Luckily in present day, we can rely on and trust our friends, and family, and don't have to worry what would happen if the world changed. We don't have to worry about what would happen if everyone was selfish, and only made decisions that impacted them in the long run.