

Bystander apathy



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Name: Course: Lecturer: Date: Bystander Apathy People always think of themselves as individuals. However, the truth is that they are influenced by group thinking where one's actions and thoughts are prompted by the group action. This could determine what action one takes in a situation. The thought of what others around are thinking highly influences our decisions. Therefore, the best time one can act as an individual without the effect of a group thought is when one is alone. This is proven in the Bystanders Apathy, where people respond to an emergency depending on reaction of the group.

It is surprising that in an emergency, when there are many bystanders, the probability of getting help is less by a big margin than when there is only one bystander. I have experienced bystander apathy in action to a great level in several situations. In some, it has been first hand bystander apathy where I have found myself contemplating whether to offer help or not. In most of these situations, I have offered little or no help. In some, I have offered some help after somebody realizes the situation is an emergency and asks for help in offering help to the victim. Situations that I have taken a full action are those that nobody else was close enough to the victim than I was. I have experienced bystander apathy in several occasions. One day in a subway station while going home, a young man got an epileptic attack and fell to the ground.

It was just minutes before the train would pull from the corner to the station. There were many people waiting for the train to arrive. Although I was some distance from him, there were several people standing near him. I expected they would offer help to the man. He rolled on the floor while people watched

some looking at each other as if afraid and confused. He almost fell on the tracks.

One could tell that those around him were worried but never did anything. One of the subway security attendants came to help him by dragging him away from near the rail. I wondered why they did not help the young man. When he came out of the epileptic attack, those around him seemed ashamed to look at him.

It was obvious they did not feel good about not helping. At that moment, it seemed that each of those close to him expected somebody would help. It never occurred to them as individuals to offer help. In another situation, I witnessed an elderly woman trying to fight off a mugger from taking her handbag. She was holding on to the bag with all her might, and nobody else was close enough to reach her before the mugger could get the bag away from her. The woman was screaming at the top of her voice.

At this moment, I decided to help the elderly woman from losing her bag to the mugger. I ran to toward where the struggle was taking place. Upon spotting me, the mugger tried one last time to shove the woman to the ground. He managed, but the woman still held on to the bag.

The mugger realized he could not take the bag and fled. When I compare the second situation to the previous one in the subway station, I realized that the thought of other bystanders being around makes one less likely to help in an emergency. The distance between the subway station victim and me was almost equal with the one in the second scenario, with the second scenario

distance being bigger. However, due to the presence of other bystanders at the substation, I thought that someone else would offer the help.

When I realized that nobody was acting in the subway scenario, the thought of taking any action did not cross my mind. On the contrary, in the second scenario of the woman and the mugger, I realized that nobody else would be there to help if I did not. I did not consider the distance between the struggling spot and me. Rather, I just acted. The lack of expecting that someone else would offer help caused me to offer the necessary help to save the woman's bag from the mugger.