
LESSON E

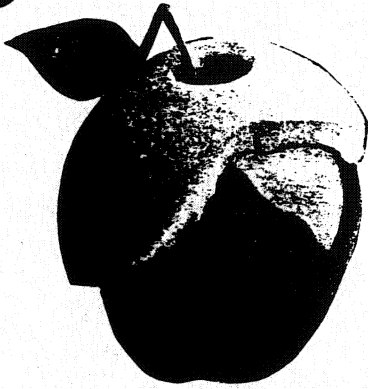
Phase 4: Evaluate

FOCUS: Evaluate action taken. Are actions congruent with personal goals?

ACTIVITIES:

1. Use the "orple" analogy to illustrate how actions and valued ends may or may not correspond. Show an "orple"—an apple wrapped in an orange skin.
2. Review the types of problems that are appropriate for practical reasoning. Use Student Handout, "Characteristics of Perennial, Practical Problems."

Evaluate the Action Taken



Taking time to evaluate the results of our decisions is probably the part of the reasoning process we use least of all. If it's an emotional decision, sometimes it can be too painful. And when we're so busy with life—job, school, friends, dates, movies . . . , who has time to sit and think about what worked and what didn't?

That's where the orple comes in. What's an orple, you ask? An orple is an apple dressed up in an orange peel. The inside and outside of the fruit are incongruent—they don't match. It's an apple that doesn't know it's an orange, or an orange that doesn't know it's an apple. When we take time to evaluate, we take time to discover what values and goals matched up with our decision, what we did that we liked, and what we would do differently about it. This kind of evaluation is not required when choosing ice cream flavors, but it makes the next time around easier when we're facing tough decisions.

1. *So—how is an "orple" like moving out? When you move out of your parents' home will your values be like/different from the values in your childhood? Will you behave in a way that truly reflects what you value?*

2. *What is a decision you've made that felt uncomfortable—it just didn't fit what you really wanted? Perhaps you made a choice in favor of what someone else wanted. For example, with respect to food, you may think you value being slender. In your childhood home this value was supported by mealtimes that were regular and consisted of low-fat foods. Now that you're on your own, friends like to get a late night "snack" ...you want to be part of the crowd. It's fun but your clothes are getting too tight. What will you do? Do you really value being slender or do you value being sociable more? What alternatives do you have?*

3. *List a possible alternative you could have chosen.*

4. *Should your behavior be congruent with your values? Why or why not? When a person first establishes independent living, "old" values may shift—take on new meaning, be discarded, modified, replaced. If the shift is a big one it will probably take more time and more discomfort to make the adjustment. The more similar your actions are to your values, the more peaceful and happy you can be.*

Watch out for "orples!" They are examples of NOT living what you value. They may taste OK, but they cause confusion for you and important others in your life after the novelty wears off.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERENNIAL, PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

1. They are common and recur from one generation to the next.

Practical problems are designated as “perennial” to indicate that they are not time specific. Every generation of families must deal with problems of this nature. While the manifestations of these problems are unique for individual families and there are countless particulars to consider, the substance of the concern remains relatively constant.

2. They present questions that must be answered.

They involve decision and action, even if the action is to do nothing.

3. The grounds on which decisions should be made are uncertain.

They cannot be solved with a set of rules that applies to every situation.

4. In solving such problems, an existing state of affairs must always be taken into account.

We must consider the family, social, and cultural contexts in which problems exist. Problems themselves may have a history. If decisions are to be rational, they must be based on a thorough understanding of the situation within its context.

5. Each solution is in some ways unique and belongs to a specific time and context.

The problem may recur but the solution of any given problem will vary according to the individual/s involved in that particular time and place.

6. Questions will require choices between competing goals and values.

Perennial practical problems are typically concerned with values. Selecting one solution or course of action instead of another represents a value judgment or statement of worth. Solving these problems may also require mediating among the competing values of involved parties.

7. The outcome of the solution chosen can never be precisely predicted.

There are many possible solutions and there is no way of knowing for certain what outcomes would have resulted from a different solution.

8. Grounds for answering the question lead us to suppose that if appropriate action is taken, a desirable state of affairs will result.

When selecting practical problems for study, ask yourself:

- Does this problem represent a complex issue of ongoing family concern?
- Does this problem allow students to examine how individuals, the family, and society will be affected, and vice versa?
- Does this problem allow for diversity of thinking?

TEST BANK

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

Select the one, best answer.

The practical reasoning process has 4 major phases. Which is NOT one?

- a. Identify the problem
- b. Reason
- c. Consider alternatives
- d. Act

Practical reasoning is different from decision making because reasoning

- a. requires problem identification as the first step
- b. lists all the possible alternatives.
- c. asks the decider to evaluate the decision.
- d. incorporates consideration of values and goals.

SHORT ANSWER:

List ___ characteristics of practical problems. Explain briefly what each characteristic means.

TEACHER KEY:

- 1. c
- 2. d
- 3. See "Characteristics of Perennial, Practical Problems," Lesson E, activity 2.