

The 4-Way Test  
by Ariana Mannino

The Rotary club has asked the seventh grade to write an essay on four effective questions. The questions are: "Is it true?", "Is it fair?", "Will it be beneficial to all concerned?", and "Will it build goodwill?" There were many times in my life when I've had to ask myself these four questions. If you are in a rough situation, ask yourself these questions and maybe it will stop you from doing something you will regret.

The first question is, "Is it true?" You should always be true and be yourself no matter who you're with. There were times in my life when I felt like I needed to change myself into someone else. I realize now that people should like me for who I am. I know that if I lied, I always felt guilty afterwards. If you are always honest and confront yourself in tough situations, you will build trust in other people. Being honest also makes you more mature.

Being fair is also something you should always do. If you treat people unfairly, you are taking advantage of them. A good example of people being unfair was a situation that happened last semester. An illustrator came to visit our school. The seventh grade was gathered in the cafeteria. We were to show appreciation, and respect. Instead, most of the kids were acting obnoxious and very disrespectful towards our visitor. It was a complete embarrassment to our principal and teachers. In the end, everyone had to pay the price by having advantages taken away at lunch. That was unfair to the kids who wanted to listen, but the other kids didn't think of everyone else's feelings.

It is important to ask yourself if your actions will be beneficial to all concerned. If you are in a fight with a friend, you should always think of the other person's feelings before saying anything hurtful. Or if you and someone else are planning something, don't always think of what you want; listen to the other person's ideas. Before you do anything permanent, think, "Will it be beneficial to everyone involved?" I try to ask myself this question when I am in one of these situations.

The last question is "Will it build goodwill?" During the assembly incident, the kids were not thinking if their behavior would have a good

outcome. They were selfish and it did not have a positive effect. There are many organizations that you can volunteer for to build goodwill. For example, you could help out at an animal shelter, give away food for a local food drive, or do something as easy as donating old clothes. This little effort could make a big difference in someone else's life.

The questions from the 4-way test are essential in life and should always be asked. They will make you a better person. Believe in yourself and always be true, and think of other people's feelings too. Help out in your community. These little acts can make a great change.