

Learning Scenario

Happiness in relation to work and money

BASIC EDUCATION

6-10 PARTICIPANTS

60 MINUTES

BASIC EDUCATION LEARNERS

Language level at least **B1** recommended

FORMAL SETTING

in a chair circle

OBJECTIVES:

- To think and discuss about own perceptions of happiness
- To be aware of different ways to achieve happiness and to get the motivation to pursue an individual approach
- To engage in a structured, philosophical discussion while arguing a point of view

PURPOSE

Motivation &
Awareness



LOCATION

calm, but attentive
atmosphere, inside or
outside, but everyone needs
to be sitting in a circle

STORY

"To Work or Not to Work OR
The Lazy Fisherman"

MATERIAL

A soft, small ball to structure
the discussion

PREPARATION

- It helps if teacher and/or learners are familiar with the concept of "Philosophy for kids or young adults".
- The teacher should prepare some philosophical questions before.

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DESCRIPTION

1. The teacher tells the story after everybody is calm and sits comfortably
2. To engage the learners more in the story, gestures, different voices and sounds should be used
3. The story works as an introductory activity for the philosophical discussion which follows next
4. The teacher asks a question of the prepared ones and tosses the ball to a learner who wants to say something (after that contribution, the learner tosses the ball either directly to another learner who wants to reply or the ball comes back to the teacher after every learners' contribution, depends on the ability of the learners to reply to others and to structure and express their thoughts)
5. The teacher functions more as a moderator, sometimes paraphrases or summarizes aspects of the learners' arguments, and structures the discussion in a logical way

Possible philosophical questions are:

- What is happiness? How can one describe the feeling?
- Are there different ways of happiness? Which ones?
- What means happiness for you personally?
- What else are things that mean happiness to other people (possible answers: nature, money, work, family, friends, animals, hobbies...)
- Can one live without being happy?
- Can one be endlessly, forever happy? Is that possible? How?
- How does money influence happiness? Is money important for happiness? Why (not)?
- How important is work for happiness? Can one have a bad job and still be happy? How?
- How important is the wage of a job for you? Would you do any job for a lot of money? Why (not)?
- Would you accept worse working conditions if the wage was higher?

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TIPS & TRICKS FOR THE TEACHERS

The format « philosophy for kids or young adults » is a structured format which teachers can learn, in Austria for example at the Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children and Youth at the University of Graz. The most important thing is : there are no weird or wrong questions or answers by the learners, it is a open and confidential setting, nobody will be laughed at and everybody's opinions are respected. The teacher should make this clear in the beginning.

ALTERNATIVE IMPLEMENTATIONS / POSSIBLE ADAPTATIONS

Even if it was designed for young learners, there is no reason to not try it with older adults.

YOUR COMMENTS & ADDITIONS



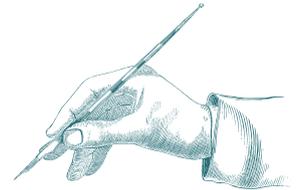
To Work or Not to Work OR

The Lazy Fisherman



Austria

Heinrich Böll



Purpose(s)

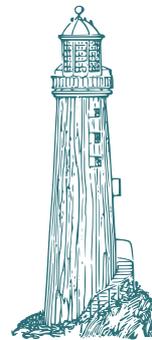


Multiple
Perspectives



Motivation &
Awareness

In a port on the western coast of Europe, a man, wearing shabby clothes, lies in his fishing boat and dozes. A smartly dressed tourist is just putting a new colour film into his camera to take a picture of the idyllic scene: blue sky, green sea with peaceful, snow-white crests of waves, black boat, the fisherman's red cap. Click. And again: click, and as all good things come in threes, and as it's better to be on the safe side, click, for the third time. The dry and almost hostile sound wakes the dozing fisherman, who sleepily sits up, sleepily reaches for his cigarette-packet; but before he finds what he is looking for, the eager tourist already holds out a packet right under his nose, putting the cigarette not exactly into his mouth but placing it into his hand, and a fourth click, that of the lighter, finishes off the zealous civility.



This hardly measurable, and never verifiable, excess of rash civility produces an irritably embarrassing situation which the tourist, who speaks the language of the country, tries to bridge by starting a conversation.

"You will make a good catch, today."

The fisherman shakes his head.

"But I was told the weather is favourable."

The fisherman nods.

"So you won't put the sea?"

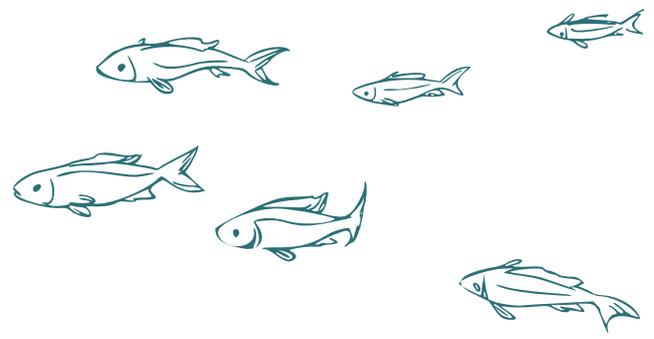
The fisherman shakes his head, the tourist gets increasingly nervous. To be sure, he is deeply concerned about the welfare of the man in shabby clothes, and sadly frets over the missed opportunity.

"Oh, you don't feel well?"

Eventually, the fisherman switches from sign language to actually spoken words. "I fell splendid," he says. "I never felt better." He stands up, has a good stretch, as if he wanted to show off the athletic shape of his body. "I feel great."

The facial expression of the tourist grows more and more unhappy; no longer can he suppress the question which, as it were, threatens to burst his heart: "But why, then, do you not put the sea?"

The answer comes promptly and briefly: "Because I already put to the sea this morning."



“Did you made a good catch?”

“My catch was so good that I need not put to sea for a second time. I had four lobsters in my basket, caught nearly two dozen mackerel ...”

The fisherman, finally awake, is now thawing, and slaps the tourist soothingly on the shoulder. The worried countenance of the latter seems to him an expression of inappropriate, yet touching, anxiety.

“I have enough even for tomorrow and the day after tomorrow,” he says to relieve the stranger’s soul. “Do you want a cigarette?”

“Yes, please.”

Cigarettes are being put into mouths, a fifth click; the stranger, shaking his head, sits down on the rim of the boat, and puts down the camera, for now he needs both hand to give his speech emphasis.

“I do not want to meddle in your personal affairs,” he says, “but just imagine, you put to sea today for a second, a third, or perhaps even a fourth time, and you catch three, four, five, maybe even ten dozen mackerel. Just imagine that!”

The fisherman nods.

“You put to sea,” continues the tourist, “not only today but tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, indeed, on every favourable day two, three, or perhaps four times - do you know what would happen?”

The fisherman shakes his head.

“In one year at the later you would be able to buy a motor, in two years a second boat, in three or four years you may, perhaps, have a small trawler; with two boats or the trawler you would, of course, catch a lot more - one day, you would have two trawlers, you would ...,” for a few moments his enthusiasm leaves him speechless, “you would build a small cold store, perhaps a smoke-house, soon afterwards a marinating factory, fly around with your own helicopter, making out the sholas of fish and giving orders to your trawlers by radio. You could buy fish rights for salmon, open a fish restaurant, export lobster directly to Paris without a middleman - and then ...,” once again his enthusiasm leaves the stranger speechless. Shaking his head, saddened in the depth of his heart, and almost bereft of his holiday delights, he looks on the waters rolling peacefully into the harbor, where the uncaught fish jump merely.

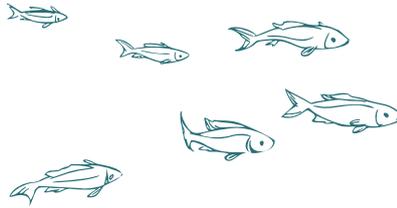
“And then”, says he, but again his excitement leaves him speechless. The fisherman slams him on the back, as one would slap a child choking over his food. “What then?” he asks in a low voice.

“Then,” says the stranger with quiet enthusiasm, “then you may relax here in the harbor with your mind set at ease, doze in the sunshine - and look out on the magnificent sea.”



“But that is what I am doing just now,” says the fisherman, “I relax here in the harbor with my mind set at ease, and doze; only the clicking noise of your camera disturbed me.”

In fact, the tourist, thus put right, became thoughtful and went away, for he used to think he worked in order that, one day, he need not work any more; and there remained in him not a trace of pity for the fisherman in shabby clothes, only a little envy.



Source/Link:

Böll, Heinrich. Kölner Ausgabe. Bd. 12. 1959-1963. Hrsg. von Robert C. Conrad, 2008/2011, Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch GmbH & Co. Köln

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