Primavera, a small island in the Pacific Ocean “ring of fire” (the circular area on the
globe that contains most of the world’s volcanoes and active earthquake activity), has
been devastated by the unexpected eruption of an undersea volcano, which arose just
off its west shore. Twelve survivors on the island have just received warning, by
shortwave radio, of a tsunami, an oceanic tidal wave created by the unusual
earthquakes and volcanic activity in this area of the Pacific. The tsunami is expected to
reach Primavera in one hour. Its force and height will completely engulf and submerge
the small, flat island. One helicopter has been dispatched to Primavera to rescue the
survivors. Because of the distance between Primavera and other land masses, this is
the only helicopter that will be able to reach it before the tsunami hits. There are no
ships in the immediate area. The Sikorsky F77 helicopter can carry six passengers.
Overloaded, it will probably be able to carry an absolute maximum of eight. Thus there
will be room for seven passengers at the most, plus the pilot.

DIRECTIONS:

Your group has only one hour to decide which seven of the twelve survivors on
Primavera will escape the certain death the tsunami will bring. You must reach a
decision before the tsunami reaches Primavera, or all will be lost. The twelve people
are:

1. Samamtha Spencer, nineteen, a former Miss Teenage America, enrolled in the
drama department of a southern California University.

2. Dr. Henry Spencer, forty-three, a marine biologist conducting a research study on
Primavera, Nobel Prize recipient.

3. Mrs. Renee Spencer, forty-one, housewife and mother.

4. Bobby Spencer, thirteen, the youngest Spencer child, mentally retarded.

5. Rhonda MacDougall, thirty-three, the owner and director of a multi-million-dollar
company, which she built from a $4,000 investment seven years ago.
6. Captain Vasily Piotrovich, fifty-nine, the captain of a Russian trawler thought to contain sophisticated spying equipment.

7. Wanda Zapotochny, forty-one, first mate and medical officer on the Russian trawler.

8. Luis Jimenez, twenty-three, assistant chef at the only hotel on Primavera, the homosexual lover of Karl Srensen.

9. Karl Sorensen, thirty four, Danish-born maitre d’ at the hotel restaurant, Luis Jimenez’s roommate and lover.

10. Rabbi Sholom Klein, fifty, rabbi of the largest temple in the Northern Hemisphere.


DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

After each of you has identified your choices for the seven survivors, engage in a discussion that considers the following questions:

1. Whom did you select to survive?

2. What were your reasons for the choices?

3. How much agreement and disagreement did you find among your choices?

4. What values do the choices reflect?

5. How do you feel about yourselves in relation to this exercise?

6. Did you use rationalizations to avoid making the decisions in this learning activity (the tsunami is only expected to reach Primavera, since Jean-Baptiste weight only a few pounds the helicopter can carry him and seven survivors)? What purpose(s) did your rationalizations serve?