

I DECIDED

MATERIALS |

paper and writing utensils

OPTIONAL: create a handout to accompany this activity

OBJECTIVES | The objective of this activity is for participants to think about how they can make decisions that best serve them.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS |

Introduce the concept of decisions

- Ask participants to brainstorm what it means to make a decision.
- Explain that every day there are moments when we are making decisions, sometimes consciously, sometimes not, about what we will say, how we will behave, what we will or will not do. A lot of times we do not think of ourselves as making decisions, but we are. For example, this morning you may have decided to wear one thing over another. You might decide you will or will not run in the hallway or play fight with a classmate. Sometimes things happen in our lives that are not our decision. For example, we may not have say in what kind of food is available in our house or whether or not someone is available to drive us to school. There may also be decisions we make that *feel* outside of our control because we have not learned to manage how we emote when we are excited, angry, or frustrated. We may need more support in this area.
- Today we are going to think about the decisions we *are* in control of and the consequences—positive, negative, or in between—of those decisions.

After facilitators model the following, Invite participants to think of a recent decision they made—it could be one that turned out well or one that did not. Ask them to individually complete the following sentences:

I made a decision to _____ because _____ (this is a good opportunity to emphasize thinking about why we do the things we do).

This decision made me feel _____.

As a result of my decision _____ happened.

Based on the options available to me, I could have decided to _____ or _____ instead.

If I had chosen one of the other two options _____ or _____ was likely to happen.

If I was faced with the same decision again I would _____ (note, this may be the same thing that they actually decided to do).

Students share with one partner the decision they made and what the consequences were.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS |

- How did it feel to do this activity?
- What kind of decisions are the hardest to make?
- What kinds of decisions are easy to make?
- What parts of our decision-making are in our control? What parts are not? How can we best navigate this?
- How can we support each other in making decisions that best serve us?



SUPPORTING MEDIA |

<https://www.michiganlearning.org/goals-and-aspirations/>

NOTES |

Consider how this activity could work for participants who cannot write.

Be cautious not to blame or shame individual participants for larger systemic problems that limit their choices. For many people it is not that they *made* good choices, but that they *had* good choices. It will be imperative to balance this reality as you facilitate this activity.