

## How Can I Apply The Four Way Test To My Life?

466 words

Kindness is choosing love over hate, joy over despair, and light over darkness. I wish it wasn't this way, but I don't always get along with my older brother. Sometimes I do or say things to him without thinking about the consequences. That can cause issues for both my brother and I. But the "Four Way Test" can help me better control what I do and say so that I can add more kindness into the world and choose love, joy and light.

The first question asks us if it's the truth. Sometimes when I'm arguing with my brother, I am so angry that I want to say something unkind and hurtful. But this first question can help me rise above that. If I'm about to say something, I can ask myself if it's true or not. And I have to keep in mind that no matter how angry I am, anger doesn't make something true. If it's not true, I shouldn't say it. Period. My relationship with my brother won't heal if we can't be honest with each other.

New York Times best-selling author Wendy Mass once said, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about." This reminds me of the second question: Is it fair to all concerned? Sometimes my brother and I argue about who's turn it is to clean up after our dog. Even though I don't want to take turns and wish my brother would take charge, it wouldn't be fair. Plus, choosing fairness adds more kindness into a home and creates more teamwork—something every home needs.

The third question is will it build goodwill and better friendships? There have been times that I say things to my brother that partially ruins our relationship (for a couple days at least). This question helps me realize that most of the time I can bite my tongue and not say anything

unkind because unkind words don't add love, hope or light into the world. This realization helps me have a better relationship with my whole family—but if I choose to keep it in mind, it could transform my relationship with my brother. The world would be a better place because of it.

The final question is will it be beneficial to all concerned? Beneficial means it would result in goodness. Choosing goodness in every interaction with my brother won't always be easy. But it will not only change mine and my brother's relationship, but also the entire world.

Kindness is choosing love over hate, joy over despair, and light over darkness. In a world full of unkindness, hatred, despair and darkness, we need to rise above it by using the four way test.



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"If it's not right, don't do it. If it's not true, don't say it. Simple"-unknown. When I read this quote, it seemed simple, just like it says. But when I think about it, it's not as simple as when I first saw it. So when I heard about the Four Way Test, I thought "Imagine a world where everyone lived by that. How much better my school, or relationships would be if everybody lived by that." I think this test is the solution to making it simple. I feel that if we're going to change the world for the better anytime soon we need to use this test.

The first part of the test is, *is it truthful?* At first this may seem simple, just don't lie, right? Well, this isn't as easy as it sounds. I for one, am not perfect, and therefore lie. While I don't lie to be sneaky or deceitful, I do. I think the reason most people lie isn't to be dishonest, but mainly to protect others. Which brings me to the fact that while being honest is good, we cannot always be honest without hurting feelings. So while this is a good division of the test, we still need other divisions to make sure what we say is both honest and productive.

The second part of our test asks, *is it fair to all involved?* I'll be honest, it took me some time to think to really grasp what this is saying. While I knew it wasn't referring to, say, games, I didn't know what this had to do with the rest of the test. But, after some time to really think about it, I think it's about not putting someone in an impossible situation, or setting someone up to fail. I think this is about being morally fair, not equal.

The third part of the test is, *will it build goodwill and better friendships?* I think this is important in upper grades, because kids tend to get mean and bullies emerge. So I think that if students thought about this before they said things, kids might be kinder and not regret as much. If students thought a little more about the impact of their words, school would be a happier place for some students.



The final section of the test is, *will it be beneficial to all?* I think this is the umbrella rule for the test. When we think about what to say before we speak, we should think of this. If everything we said was beneficial to all, I believe the world would be in a better situation.

I want the takeaway of this to be to think. Overall our words have a huge impact that we don't think about when we talk. Think about these rules before you speak and maybe we can make a change in the way people think and talk. This test is the change we're all looking for to make the world a little better.