

## Module 8.6

### COURAGE for Students



**TAKE IT DEEPER:** (for Adolescents and Adults)

## Courage for Ethical Decision-Making: Checkpoints

Young people are still learning about their values, morality, and ethical behaviors. So much of this is influenced at home, by their culture, and the larger society we live in. However, we can introduce some strategies at school— to encourage students to slow down and consider how to weigh competing values when facing moral or ethical dilemmas.

Rushworth Kidder's (2005) book on moral courage features Checkpoints for ethical decision-making. Below is an adapted list we can share with students. Consider inviting students to think of an ethical dilemma they have faced in the past or are currently addressing— as they reflect on the checkpoints below.

Imagine you were faced with this situation or think of a moral dilemma from your own life, and reflect on the following questions.

- **What is your gut reaction to this situation:** What are you feeling? Thinking? How stressful is this situation? Is stress or other emotions impacting your ability to think clearly?
- **Key Values:** What values are most important right now? Being kind? Respectful? Compassionate? Fair? How might this influence your decision-making and actions?
- **Possible Risks & Consequences:** What are the risks or consequences involved if you act versus if you don't?
- **Persevere through Difficulty:** Will I be able to persevere through the challenge or consequences of my actions? Or is this a bit over my head? Should I reach out for support instead?
- **Barriers to Courage:** What is getting in the way of my courage? Fear? Anxiety? Ability? What help might I need to pursue my goal?
- **Is this a Noble Goal?** Is what I'm trying to do helpful or harmful to other people? Is it just in my self-interest, or will it benefit others?

After considering these questions and weighing competing values in this context, what may be the best course of action? Why or why not?

### Discussion Questions:

- What makes it difficult to navigate ethical or moral dilemmas?
- Is there always a clear or best choice? How do you decide what the "right" course of action is?

