

## Problematic Situation

### Scenario:

Imagine that you have volunteered to undergo an experiment that makes you live forever. The scientists who performed the experiment are counting on you to learn as much as you can in your lifetime in order to help society. Their theory is that the reason we cannot cure cancer is that no one individual has lived long enough to learn enough to find a solution. You have a pill that you take every day that stops you from aging, and you are now immortal. For the sake of this scenario, you will never run out of the pills. After a few generations everyone you know has died. You have no friends or relationships because people are uncomfortable about the fact that you don't age. You are learning everything you can about cancer, but you haven't yet found a cure. What do you do?

### Directions

Read through the scenario and decide what you would do. Does your responsibility to society outweigh your own happiness? Do you have an obligation to continue the experiment that you agreed to be part of? Should you give the pills to someone else and let yourself start to age and die? Decide what you would do and write it down.

Next, you will meet with your group. You will have to compare your choices and come to a consensus about what the best decision is and why. Read the following rules about how to come to a consensus before completing this part of the assignment.

### Reflection

Under your decision, explain why you made the decision you made, how your decision differed from the opinions of the other students in your group and why your group made the final decision that they did. Did your group convince you to change your mind, or do you still think that your choice was better?

### Rules for Coming to a Consensus

Avoid arguing for your own rankings. Present your position as lucidly and logically as possible, but listen to the other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.

Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for a next-most-acceptable alternative for all parties.

Do not change your mind simply to avoid conflict. When agreement seems to come too quickly and easily, be suspicious. Explore the reasons and be sure everyone accepts the solution for basically similar or complementary reasons. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.

Avoid conflict reducing techniques such as majority vote, averages, coin flips, and bargaining. When a dissenting member finally agrees, don't feel that he or she must be rewarded by having his or her own way on some later point.

Differences of opinion are natural and expected. Seek them out and try to involve everyone in the decision process. Disagreements can help the group's decision because with a wide range of information and opinions, there is a greater chance that the group will hit upon more adequate solutions.

*(Rules are from Jay Hall. (1971). Decisions, Decisions, Decisions. Psychology Today. pp. 51+)*

Turn in ALL of your individual decisions along with your collective one. Include why you made your group decision.