Robin
together we learn better.

Good or Bad?

LIFE CHALLENGE: Interpreting Reality

SKILL: Nuanced thinking, Growth Mindset

1. Have a discussion about the importance of our interpretation.

Share.

Everyday, we experience things that are unexpected and we naturally label them as good or bad immediately. When we do this it can be very easy to allow our emotions to determine our decisions. When we make decisions based on how we are feeling, we tend to say things we either don't mean or we can't follow through with. It is important to learn how to make decisions when your emotions are neither too high nor too low. That's when we can make wise decisions.

2. Instruct students to complete this activity.

Act.

Share the story of the Chinese farmer:

"Once upon a time, there was an old Chinese farmer. He worked the fields for long hours with his one horse but one day the horse ran away. That evening the neighbor came over. "So terrible," said the neighbor. But the old farmer just said "perhaps." The next day the horse returned and bought two more wild horses with it. "How wonderful," said the neighbors. But the old farmer just said "perhaps." The next day, the farmer's son tried to train one of the wild horses, but he fell off and broke his leg. When the neighbor heard, he came over to say "What bad luck" but the farmer just replied

"perhaps." The next day, the Chinese army came marching through the town recruiting young men for the army to go off and fight in the war. The Army general saw the young man and decided that he could not fight in the war with a broken leg so they moved on. The neighbor again came over and said, "What great luck" and the farmer replied "perhaps."

Ask the class to think like the Chinese farmer as they do the next activity.

1. Split into 4 groups (A, B, C and D).
2. Take 2 minutes for each group to come up with a time that something might seem bad at first but could actually be good in the long run.
3. Have each group tell another group what happened that was "bad" (Group A will present to group B, Group C to Group D). Then groups B & D will guess how it might be "good". (2 min per group)
4. Then switch so that groups B & D will then tell groups A & C their "bad" scenario and Groups A & C will guess how they could be "good" (2 minutes)
5. See how many different "good" scenarios the kids come up with and if they can guess the same one that the group came up with.

Many things in life we don't understand why they happen in the moment and by labeling something as good or bad, it immediately helps our mind make meaning of things that happen. Your mind is a meaning-making machine, but when you learn to delay labeling things as good or bad, it helps you keep an open mind.

3. Write this reminder on your whiteboard.

Remember.

It is neither good or bad. It just is.

As an extension, students could write a journal reflection on what they learned.