

María Vigil  
1st place

When we examine our own lives, we must consider four very important questions: those that make up the four-way test, and, ultimately, make us better people. As a young person just beginning to make my way into the world, now is the time to begin to use these guidelines, because my values now will shape my future. We must realize, in daily life, that what we say and do does not affect only ourselves, but all those around us. This concept is important to keep in mind.

The first question the four-way test asks is, "Of the things we think, say or do: Is it the TRUTH?" I myself constantly ask this question, for, as a human being, to lie is a fundamental instinct. However, responsibility becomes a question: are we doing the best thing for others as well as for ourselves? What we say reflects who we are. We must remember that the consequences do not affect only us, but others around us, which leads to the next question:

Is it FAIR to all concerned? When we really stop to consider the things we hope to do, we must think about the people involved in our lives, and whether what we do is fair to them. All of us have at least one important person in our lives. These people stick with us through good times and through bad, but often we don't realize this. Therefore, when we make decisions, we often don't consider those people who have supported us so wholeheartedly. We must think about this now, so that, in the future, we are more aware of the choices we make and how they affect others.

The next question to consider is, "Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?" At some point in our lives, we must realize that we are not alone in the world, nor can we function if we are alone. Thus, we must consider the things we say and do to assure that they do not push others away from us; rather, that we bring them closer and forge friendships. As a young adult, friendship is crucial in my life, and when I consider what I say and do, the matter of keeping good people in my life is important, for these are the people who will support me in the future.

Finally, will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned? Those around us matter. Success depends on whether or not we can incorporate what is best for others into our actions. Every person has his or her own individual needs, and we must strive to remember this, for knowing this now will help us to realize in the future that what we do will affect others.

When we go about our daily lives, we must consider these four questions. Though they were originally created for a workplace setting, they are important to use in our personal lives. Incorporating them now will ultimately decide who we are, and who we will become.