

How to make right in our decisions

Have you ever spent hours on end trying to make a decision? Emily Boyd, our Drake University intern, shares what she has learned about making decisions as a young adult.

When faced with decisions, how do you choose what is right versus wrong? Especially the big questions like where to go to college, where to live, and what friendships to keep. I'm no expert, but I have gained a lot of insight as I go through a journey many have taken once before.

My childhood consisted of asking my parents whether or not I could do something. Can I go to the movie? Can I get a car? Can you please not put mushrooms in this casserole? Yes or no and that was that. When senior year of high school finally rolled around, it was my turn to make the decision: college. After many college visits around Iowa, I made the decision to attend Drake University.

Many people would ask me if I was sure I was making the right decision. I would simply nod and say how excited I was, even though I had a deep fear of the unknown. Right before I took the big plunge into college, I spent a month overseas in Romania, volunteering my time with orphans and serving the city of Oradea. People from all over America came on this trip and as they shared their (non-Iowan) perspectives on life it finally just clicked.

Choosing to attend Drake didn't have to be a right or wrong decision. I needed to make *right* in the decision. And *making right* to me meant being positive, treating everyone kindly, staying active and healthy, volunteering in the community, and of course being a good student. Taking it one step further, I

wanted to be passionate about the things I was investing myself in, making it all count.

It's now senior year of college and I have a whole new world ahead of me come May 2012. But, what a relief to know that whatever decision I make, I get to choose the attitude I want to have and the person I want to be. One of my favorite song lyrics says, *draw a map, pick a path, take a breath, and run*. Make a decision and pursue it with passion, today.

The squeaky wheel gets the oil

It's easy to write someone off before we understand who they are and why they are that way. Has that happened to you before? Justin Brady from Test of Time Design is today's guest blogger – he challenges the way we view those “squeaky wheels” in our lives.

Eliminating poor character through character-based education

Where are children learning character? John Mickelson, our guest blogger, strongly believes that character needs to be addressed not only in families, but in schools as well.

When winning becomes the major focus, sportsmanship takes a backseat

Jim Hallihan, a board member and guest blogger, shares a story with us on the importance of communication between parents and coaches.

Setting character as your goal

When Brian Carico, our guest blogger, was introduced to Character Counts In Iowa, he quickly developed a passion for creating a school of character at Johnston Middle School.

Parenting: learning and growing

Being a constructive, positive and ethical role model are high priorities in Wendy Havemann's parenting strategies. What strategies do you use in your relationships? Hear more from our youth involvement director.

Standing on our convictions

Are you standing on the courage of your convictions? Our guest blogger, Gabe Haugland, shares his story about joining the Iowa National Guard, stemmed from an encounter with a powerful quote.

Character in thoughts, words, and deeds

Does character matter in all of our interactions? In today's guest blog, Deb Chiodo, principal at Moulton Elementary, shows us how to take simple steps toward excellence by focusing on our thoughts, words, and deeds.