

What would you do?

The story of Essan

Essan's story is on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-IzCdNQdmM> and this exercise uses the first part of his story (as included below) as a starting point for a role play.

Essan lives in Kabul in Afghanistan with his wife and children and his parents. He has a full-time job which pays well so he and his family are secure financially. He is a program director, second in charge of a group of over 600 people, so it is an important job. He is working for a human rights organisation, and The Taliban, who of course are very aggressive towards anyone who chooses a way different from them, are very much against the Essan's program.

One day five of Essan's co-workers are killed by the Taliban just near Kabul.

The exercise

In groups of four, people take the roles of Essan himself, Afia his wife, Geeta a woman who works with him on his program, and Kamal who is the person in charge.

Instructions

- Essan knows that he and his family have to decide their future – to stay or to go – he is undecided.
- Afia knows the dangers, is frightened of the future, possibly without her husband, and her children being in danger. She wants to leave.

- Geeta is very aware of the dangers and feels sympathy for Essan's worrying about his family, but she also sees the importance of the work they are doing.
- Kamal is focused on the importance of the work they are doing for their people and their nation. He definitely does not want Essan to leave.

Have a conversation initiated by Essan looking to the others for their counsel.

Follow up

At the end of the role play, ask each person (as themselves) to say what it was like to play that part. Make sure they have time to say their piece and have it respected without comment from others in the group except thanks at the end.

In the whole group pose questions such as:

- What are some of the implications for Australia in the face of thousands of stories like that of Essan?
- What moral obligations does it place on us as a nation?
- What moral obligations does it place on us as communities, businesses or individuals?