

Bystander Effect- What would you do?

The clip:

The clip shows how people walk past a person collapsed in the street. Psychologists explain the concept of bystander apathy and why people choose to help or ignore.

One of the main issues is cost reward- will helping hurt me?

This clip will spark a discussion about how much we care about others verses ourselves.

When the cost or danger is low- do we take initiative to help? If not – why not?

Connection to Tisha Baav:

Story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza

There was a man – never identified in the story – who threw a party and intended to invite his good friend Kamtza. His servant, however, erred and mistakenly invited his enemy, Bar Kamtza. When the host realized the mistake he immediately and very publicly demanded that Bar Kamtza leave the party. Obviously embarrassed, Bar Kamtza made a series of offers – even, ultimately, offering to pay for the entire party – hoping to persuade the host to allow him to remain. Unmoved, the host callously throws him out of the party. The Gemara recounts that Bar Kamtza was so offended, not only by the host, but also by the silence of the guests – some of whom were great rabbis – that he slandered the Jewish people to the Caesar. One thing leads to another and the result of this sad story is, ultimately, the destruction of the *Beit Ha-Mikdash* (Gittin 55b-56a).

The Talmud actually introduces the account by declaring that, “Yerushalayim was destroyed due to [the incident involving] Kamtza and Bar Kamtza.” In light of the actual unfolding of events, the inclusion of Kamtza in this incriminating statement is somewhat surprising. After all, Kamtza was not even at the party; he is no more than a “shadow figure” in this tragedy. What role did he play in this ignominious incident to deserve such apparent criticism?

Read more: <http://www.cross-currents.com/archives/2007/07/17/kamtza-and-bar-kamtza-a-fresh-look-at-a-familiar-story/#ixzz2Un4ohY2f>

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ How did the bystander effect contribute to the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza?
- ❖ Who is the guiltiest of bystander apathy?
- ❖ Have you ever been in a situation when you wanted to say something? What happened?
- ❖ What are good ways to get involved in other people’s situations?