

CSE TEAM



Lesson 3

DECISION MAKING – Grade 1-3

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
3A: What is faith	Major	Major	Minor
3B: Decision Making	Major	Minor	Major
3C: Self-control	Minor	Major	Minor
3D: Decisions related to purity	Minor	Minor	Minor
3E: Repentance corrects your way	Minor	Minor	Major

3A: What is faith?

Faith.... It is defined as "complete trust and confidence in something or someone".

When the Bible talks about faith in God it means that we have put all our trust, confidence and hope in Him.

When you sit in a chair for the first time you are showing faith that the chair will hold you. Until you are safely seated you do not know for sure if the chair is going to hold you.

We sit in chairs all the time. It does not seem to take that much faith for us to sit down in a chair. Yet, it technically is faith. Can someone think of another example?

The power of faith is that we obey even when we cannot see the end. Our faith allows us to believe that God will take care of us even though we cannot see what He is up to or where He is taking us. And because we have this faith in God, we should always follow His commandments and precepts.

- Has your dad or mom explained to you how to do addition? They explained how to use your fingers to count. Then when you are in school you can add numbers. So now you believe that you can do addition!
- Have you wondered why your parents tell you to pray? Or stand up in the liturgy? Because they know God and they believe that through prayers we connect with God and experience a relationship with Him and enjoy His love. They choose to trust and follow God's ways. I choose God because I trust Him.
- Trust in God. "Trust in the Lord forever, For in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength" (Isaiah 26:4)

"Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock" Isaiah 26:4 (NLT) Teacher to contemplate the word FOREVER "trust in the Lord FOREVER". The word forever means always, in every single decision we make in every day of our lives.

Growing in Faith

Did you know that when we live with lots of strong faith we are blessed?

When we trust God, we find out that He keeps His word. This makes our faith grows and helps us trust Him even more.

The Bible is full of stories of how people had faith in God, and how He blessed them! Can you think of examples from the Bible where people showed Faith? (For grade 1, teachers may choose the simple examples from the list below)

There are many people in the Bible who had strong faith in God. Perhaps you know some of them such as:

- Abraham: Abraham followed God and he did not know where he was going, or what would happen next.
- Noah, who built the ark and he, his family and the animals were saved from the big flood.
- Daniel when he was in the lion's den.
- There was a woman that had been very sick for a long time. She had faith and believed that if
 she could just touch Jesus' robe, she would be healed. So, she managed to touch the hem of His
 robe and she was instantly healed! When Jesus realized she had touched Him, He told her:
 "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over." (Mark 5:34)
- There was also a centurion, which means a commander in the army. He had a big rank in the Romans army. He had a servant who was really sick. He was worried about his servant and went to our Lord Jesus and asked him to heal him. Our Lord kindly said that he will go. But this commander did not think he was worthy for Jesus to enter his home. So, he asked Jesus to just speak the word and his servant will be healed. This commander had great faith. He knew that it was enough for Jesus to command, and it will be. Jesus said "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" (Matthew 8:5-10)

So, let's remember to always trust in the Lord and have lots of faith, because God loves us very much and wants only the best for us. Remember you are not alone; God is always with you.

N.B. for the servant to explain in this part that our faith does not depend on miracles performance. It depends on the person of Jesus Christ.

Objective \rightarrow To understand what faith is and how it is based on a real experience and not a blind hope.

3B: Decision Making.

What are choices, and how to decide?

Have you been in a situation, where you are asked to choose something over another? We have to make choices ALL the time!

Some choices are easier to make than others. Sometimes you must make a decision from the choices given to you. In the choices below, choose the best one for you.

What if the choice is not very clear?

What should we really think about when we have to choose between two things?

How to make good decisions:

(Note for the servant: pause and provide examples from activities below)

Traffic light: RED, YELLOW or GREEN!

RED LIGHT:

Red means Stop! Calm down and understand the situation.

Think about what will make you calm or your favorite Saint, favorite stuffy, do the sign of the cross, count to 10.

YELLOW LIGHT:

Yellow means slow down or move slowly. Move forward with caution. Feel. Communicate. Think. Pray.

Think about a variety of options.

Which one is right, and which one is wrong?

Would God be happy with my choice?

What would Jesus do in this situation WWJD?

Remember what we discussed last time about Christian identity. We are made in the image of God, and we need to act in a way that reflects the image of Christ who lives in us.

If you do not know what to do, you can ask your parents or a trustworthy adult like your father of confession. **Do not rely on your emotions in making any decision.**

Talking to someone who is trustworthy will help us to organize our thoughts. We can talk with the priest or our parents. We know about God from the Bible, the Church & fathers' teachings. When we know God, we know what is right and what is wrong.

Would my decision hurt myself or anyone else? A part of understanding a situation is to know what would happen next or a consequence or effect of our decision. For example, if we choose to take a cookie before dinner without telling our parents, is that being honest? Pray to God and definitely He will guide you.

For example:

Ask yourself, what would happen if....

- You decide to hide your brother's toys without telling him.
- You decide not to wear warm clothes.
- You decide not to pray before you sleep
 - (Note to teacher: emphasize the importance of having a relationship with God that is why we pray; to talk to God).
 - o How do you think God will feel when you say goodnight to Him?
 - You decide not to have breakfast before going to school.

GREEN LIGHT

Green means go! Try out your best plan.

Remember that our main goal is to have a good relationship with God.

How will you feel if your parents are mad at your choice or your behavior?

Imagine if God is unhappy with our actions?

How will we feel if we are far away from our parents?

Similarly, as God's children, imagine if we are far away from God. As God's children, we are eager to follow His commandments and rejoice His heart with our good deeds.

We thank God when we make the right decision.

Objective \rightarrow To understand the basics of decision making and how to have God first and think about the consequences.

3C: Self-control

Sometimes we hang out with friends who do things differently or show inappropriate behavior from what we are used to with our families. We should ask our parents first before doing anything. Like acting a certain way, eating certain foods, or playing daring games.

Sometimes we feel like we are driven to do things and our parents will not be happy if we did it, this is called temptation. We should learn how to say NO to ourselves and others and remind ourselves that we choose God's way.

When we feel angry or afraid, we should explain how we feel.

(Servants to print the feelings check-in and provide to children to take home. Children should be encouraged to use it at home to express their feelings)

Objective → To learn in a simple way how to express their feelings which helps in control emotions (Check-in strategy – Check Appendix A)

3D: Decisions related to purity.

As the children of God, we should keep ALL our senses pure. In any place we go like a swimming pool, the school, or even the church. We should say no to anyone who encourages us wrongly to look at any inappropriate scenes, videos, or pictures. We should not participate with anyone saying bad or dirty jokes or trying to breach the privacy of others.

Even if a teacher in school/camp/club says something that might not help me keep my senses pure, we should say NO.

When we go swimming, get ready for the pool in the change room?

What will you do?

And why?

Christ our Lord teaches us to honor our bodies and not let our eyes see any nakedness. We should always be changing privately.

In the swimming pool change room, we might find people completely undressed. I should not look at them but rather ask my Lord Jesus Christ to be with me.

N.B. The servant should guide the kids that they can and should ask for a private place to change.

"just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise". Luke 6:31

What if someone dares to touch our private parts?

People should know their limits and our limits and we should set our boundaries with others.

The whole body is holy including private parts. No one, whosoever, should see or touch your private parts.

Sometimes your parents may do that for the purpose of cleaning during a shower. In case of sickness, or for a medical purpose, the physician can also examine your private members while you are accompanied by your parents.

N.B to the servant must explain to children that this is the time they need to be firm and loud. Also explain who to go to if this happened.

When this happens to you, MAKE A SCENE. Scream, yell and tell them NO. If they persist, flee the scene as best as you can and seek a parent or trustworthy adult (an adult you can trust).

What would you do if there is a kissing/inappropriate scene in a show that you are watching? We should close our eyes and look away. We should also discuss it with our parents.

Objective
To understand the whole body is pure and holy.

3E: Repentance corrects your way.

What happens if we choose to disobey God and make the wrong decision? We need to repent, confess to the priest, and ask God for forgiveness. We need to ask for God's help to make the right decision the next time.

O What does repentance mean?

- $\circ\quad$ Repentance is when we feel sorry for our sins.
- We have to be brave and admit our sins or mistakes.
- We should take responsibility and correct our mistakes with our parents' and under the priest's guidance.
- We should say sorry if we hurt someone's feelings.
- o If we committed a sin or a mistake, we need to be honest and tell our parents and the priest and try very hard with the help of God not to do it again.

<u>Objective</u> → To understand the true meaning of repentance.



DECISION MAKING – Grade 4-6

	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
3A: What is faith	Minor	Major	Minor
3B: Decision Making	Major	Minor	Major
3C: Self-control	Minor	Minor	Major
3D: Decisions related to purity	Major	Major	Minor
3E: Repentance corrects your way	Major	Major	Minor

3A: What is faith?

- * Having complete trust in God * We are children of God * We choose God's way.
- All the miracles that Jesus performed were witnessed by the disciples and the apostles who lived with Him. They recorded the miracles and personal experiences in the Holy Bible and that is how we learn and believe generation after generation.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life" (1 John 1:1).

- As children we base our faith on trusting people who experienced God. As we grow up, we build our own experiences, strengthen our faith in God and our relationship with Him. "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5)
- When I have a personal connection with God, I would not want to follow anyone other than God.
- God is always watching over us and longing to be with us.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." (Revelation 3:20).

Our faith is our Armor (Elaborate and expand/explain: Ephesians 6:11)

Objective To understand Christian faith is based on the recorded witnesses of the disciples and apostles of a true-life experience.

3B: Decision Making.

What does "Freedom of choice" mean?

God created people not robots, He created us in His own image.

"Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis.1:26)

God has given us freedom to think, to choose and to make our own decisions.

God has given us commandments and precepts that show us His path through Christ. I will know how to live as a true Christian, and how to take decisions, guided by the word of God.

What does "decision making" mean? G 4/5:

- + It is having choices that we pick from, based on our values and what we believe.
- + If God gave us "freedom of choice", that means that we have to make decisions and choose our own path throughout our lives.

G 6:

It is the process of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the VALUES, preferences and beliefs of the decision-maker.

Why is it important to learn how to make the right decision?

+ Every decision we make has outcomes:

Good decision ----> Solves the problem & Bad decision ----> Puts us in more trouble.

+ Every decision we make affects our:

Happiness, health, future, and the people around us.

Our relationship with God shapes our lives and our salvation. It makes us who we are

What are some aspects that may affect our decisions? (Negative/Positive)

Peer pressure

Temptation

Emotions

Intuition

Past experiences

How do we make a good decision?

STOP: Before any action we take, we STOP and Breathe!

Usually when we are angry or emotional, we make wrong decisions that we regret after.

THINK: Does my action go along with my values? Do I glorify God with this? Is it safe for me and others?

ACT: When you are calm and feel you have Self-Control, then you can act according to your Christian Values.

+ Pray to God with all our hearts (How close are we to God? Are we friends with Him? Do we hear Him? Remember every time we need to make any decision...Fully Rely On God! (FROG).

If God is actually offering the help, why not take it. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

- + Remember our Faith, our Christian Identity, our Christian values: Self Respect Self Control, all church and fathers' teachings.
- + The Bible is our Reference: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2Timothy 3:16) Always remember the Bible teachings.
- + List your choices, pros and cons of each option.
- + Consider all the consequences (positives/negatives).
- + Seek wise counsel: Someone experienced, less emotional, that loves you unconditionally and wishes the best for you.

Who? Parents, father of confession, Sunday school servant...etc.

Do we ask a friend? Why?

- + Think WWJD: What Would Jesus Do? Will that decision take me away from God's path?
- + Decide ahead of time: that way when you are exposed to a challenge or temptation, you know where you stand and act accordingly.

So, we are not taken off guard.

Do our decisions reflect our true Love for God? We then know choosing God's path is the right decision.

Types of Decisions: What are the different types of decisions that we face every day?

- Minor decisions (Less consequences)
- Major decisions (High consequences)
- Righteous decisions (Eternal Salvation)

Choosing the right friend that respects who you are and your Identity with God.

ABC: Avoid Bad Company.

Treating others with care and Respect. Examples?

The way we dress in church and outside church. Examples?

Does the way we dress reflect our Lord inside and outside church?

Online usage: Examples? Chat groups YouTube Pictures Types of Games And many more throughout our lives: Education, life partner, house...etc.

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Corinthians 6:12)

Decisions that affect our health negatively:

Not dressing warm on a cold day...What can happen? Can get sick.

Drinking Alcohol ... What can happen? Can destroy the liver.

Smoking or vaping...What can happen? Can destroy the lungs.

Not washing our hands often ... What can happen? Can get a virus.

Decisions that get us closer to God: Ideas?

Praying with all our hearts.

Going to church and practicing true ecclesiastical (church) life.

Following God's Commandments.

Read the Bible and live accordingly.

Did we make the right decision?

- + The closer we are to God, the easier we will hear His voice.
 - We hear Him through our prayers, through reading the Bible or even humming a nice gospel song that we like.
- + Do not forget to Thank God.

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!" (Psalm 107)

Objective \rightarrow To understand freewill and the process of decision making.

3C: Self-control

- The ability to manage our actions, feelings and emotions.
- ❖ The will-power to fight trials with the grace of God. It cannot be done without Christ.
 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil.4:13)
- ❖ The ability to control our thoughts with Christ.
- Knowing when to say: "No" or "Yes".
- Self- Control with Christ gives us the strength to fight against sinful thoughts and emotions.

For the servant "Self-control with Christ is a spiritual concept that should be embedded in the mind of children"

"If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15) "Abstain from every form of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:22-23)

Remember: STOP, THINK and ACT

Control your senses: Eyes • Tongue • Ears. Protect your thoughts. (Will be discussed more in the Purity lesson).

"Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls." Proverbs (25:28)

Objective \rightarrow To review what is self-control.

3D: Decisions related to purity.

- o If a friend encourages you to look online for pictures of people with few or no clothes.
- o If a friend shows you a game that has inappropriate popups and bad language.
- o If you have certain feelings (crush) towards a boy/girl in your class.
- o If a friend decides to show you how smoking, vaping and drinking alcohol is cool.

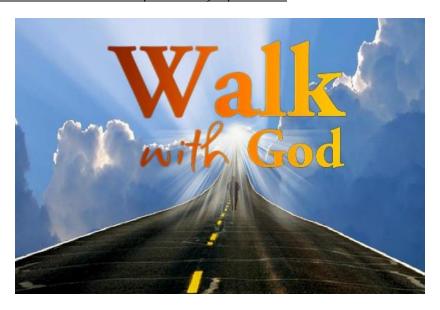
Objective \rightarrow To practice having a decision in advance with practical life situations.

3E: Repentance corrects your way.

- o Pray for forgiveness. (God is so merciful and forgiving).
- o Repent & Confess to the priests.
- We learn from our mistakes, so we do not repeat the same mistakes again.
- Ask God to help us make our next decision in life.

"I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Luke:32)

Objective \rightarrow To stress on the importance of repentance.



DECISION MAKING – Grade 7-9

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
3A: What is faith	Major	Minor	Major
3B: Decision Making	Minor	Major	Minor
3C: Self-control	Minor	Major	Minor
3D: Decisions related to purity	Major	Minor	Major
3E: Repentance corrects your way	Major	Minor	Major

3A: What is faith?

I choose God because I believe.

- Christian faith/belief in God is based on historical facts and eyewitnesses of a true life. It
 is the life of Christ and His commands that changed the world; it is not based on invisible
 miracles or myths.
- o Miracles glorify the name of God and are not the indicators of faith.
- Faith is not just an ideology or philosophical concept, rather it is a true experience with God.
- A good analogy to tell here is that when a driving teacher, teaches you how to drive. You
 only KNOW the fact. Until you actually drive, its only information. You should PRACTICE
 your knowledge and apply the driving skills you learn. Learning is only the seed but
 practicing driving is the faith that you can drive.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which "we have looked upon, and our hands have handled,"

- concerning the Word of life— the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and *declare* to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was *manifested to us*" (1 John 1:1,2)
- O Why did Jesus ask his disciples to give food to the multitude when He knew that they do not have any?! To make them remember the experience of this moment and engrave the assurance that they had nothing but only five loaves and two fish! And for the same reason He asked them to collect the leftovers, He did not need them to travel carrying food but to make them remember after all people ate 12 baskets of food were filled up.
- This is not just a positive hope or wishful thought! These are facts. When God is here, I
 am filled with life, peace and joy, not only food! This is my faith, and my trust in Him.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11:2)

Servant should use an analogy to simply the idea, may be practice using a software many times would get us to deep understanding of how it works and the think behind.

God's fellowship.

- Faith is not just an intellectual ideology nor philosophical concept, rather it is a true experience with God. We should not have a superficial (surface-level) relationship with the Lord. For example, going to church for any reason other than encountering God.
- We should follow God and have experience and personal relationship with Him.

- Practice the faith received from the apostles, by deciding to find God and make a place for Him in your heart and continuously involve Him in every part of your life, this will help you feel His presence gradually.
- Unless we make this faith ours and examine it, we would not have a true faith.
- o "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6
- God is always watching over us. "He who touches you touches the apple of His eye."
 (Zechariah 2:8)

Objective \rightarrow To understand that faith grows stronger as we experience God in our life. The disciples and apostles recorded their experience with God in the Bible and conveyed this faith to us through the church Tradition.

3B: Decision Making.

O What are choices, and how to decide?

Small simple daily decisions e.g. What to eat, what to wear, etc.

Big decisions; more crucial decisions in our lives e.g. education, taking a job, etc.

In teens stage, you will possibly need to take decision in school, family, friends, addictions, dating and sex.

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19)

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (1 Corinthians 6:12)

Consequences

In all our decisions (minor and major), we must consider the consequences of every choice we decide.

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" Pr. 16:25 We may suffer from consequences of wrong decisions, earthly and spiritually. When we cross the road or walk on slippery ground, I walk carefully, and such in life we should diligently live caring for our eternity.

For example, people who use drugs or share needles, they may suffer lifelong diseases.

My Reference

 The Holy Bible is the written word and the breath of God. "Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105)

P. R. A.Y

- Pause and think before you decide.
- Read and collect information about the step you are about to make
- Ask for guidance! ask your parents, a trustworthy adult, father of confession.
- Yield to God's will.

Objective \rightarrow To understand that God should be the first in everything.

3C: Self-control

If I chose God, my actions will no longer be impulsive but rather controlled.

God has given us free will, however His will is our holiness.

From the beginning of time God created us in a perfect nature, after man's fall our nature has been corrupted. The corruption of sin fights the good in us.

God's salvation and the new nature in baptism restored to us the ability to fight the corrupted nature.

The fight between good and evil will never end until resurrection with God.

The ability to control oneself, one's actions and desires is the interpretation of our love to God and the proof of our faith.

If we really love God, we follow him and stand out and fight evil in us to purify our hearts with God's grace.

- o Temptation & Impulses (My part) "Strive to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24)
 - Examine our thoughts.
 - Purify our heart to have pure feelings.
 - Control our actions.
- God's part
 - God's grace through the work of the Holy Spirit, will give us strength in our spiritual battle.
 - Ask God to fill your cup and he promised to do! Not just for you but for anyone who truly seeks Him.
- Sexual desire is like any desire. The question is do you control your desire, or does your desire control you?
- Why should I control my desires?
 You are only allowed to have driver license when you are mature and ready. In this age this instinct is designed to be in mature age, it is very holy and important.

For the servants only →The sexual energy should be redirected in this age in building strong and holy relationships, serving others, metanoia, involving in sports. The servant should put good analogies to explain.

- Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, the closer I am to God, the more I get from this fruit.
- o It is a part of my peruse to a holy life I was created for, on God's holy image, consistent with my value that is the value of Jesus's blood and love on the cross
- Generally, people who have good self-control tend to be more successful at work, career, and life.
- It is our brakes, and keeps us in charge of our life, not sin & desires.
- o "I will not be mastered by anything" (1 Co 6:12)

The servant may tell about St. Vebronia when she asked to have the oil on her neck to save her chastity also St. George closed his eyes to protect his purity. The saints had experienced God and that is what led them to witness Him unto their physical death. The servant may also find books that shows God's grace in miracles with tamav Erini or pope Cyril

<u>Objective</u> → To understand why self-control is important. A great example to give is Daniel and not eating from king's food.

- 3D: Decisions related to purity.
 - Remember: sexual sins come with loads of feelings of bitterness, scars, and regrets.
 Know that you have helping hands that can help you up out of that pit.
 - God' plan for sexual relationship for husband and wife in marriage, any other sexual act would be a diversion away from God's plan, hence a sin.

"FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY" (1Co 6:18) is the shortest, safest, and best way to avoid bad temptation and sexual immorality.

 Need to decide ahead of time, so when a situation, you know your stand and act based on.

<u>Objective</u> → To understand God's plan and the cost of sexual sin.

3E: Repentance corrects your way.

- Repentance is a change of our way, not just feeling bad for a little and then doing the wrong thing again, but rather true efforts to change.
- o Not because we are told to do so but because we love God, we return to him.
- o No matter what, He is ALWAYS waiting with His arms wide open for you to start over!
- People may not treat you or look at you the same way, if you try to step away from sin, our God is to please God not people.
- The repentance will not remove the consequences of wrong decisions, this is the part you would live with, but God has promised a home and safe harbor for his seekers, just like the prodigal son.

Objective → To understand God's love is unlimited but we need to willingly change our ways.





References:

- 1. Fr. Antony Messeh "Blind" Faith Part 1 Water to Wine https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=r8J7eQx8Zlo&feature=emb_logo
- 2. What to do when you don't know what to do (Dr. David Jeremiah)
- 3. Traversing to Heaven: "The Christian Way" Rev. Father Tadros Y. Malaty,
- 4. تماف إيريني تصف مجد إنطلاق شهداء كنيسة مارجرجس هليوبوليس
 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RPRU4lPHZM&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=%D9%85%

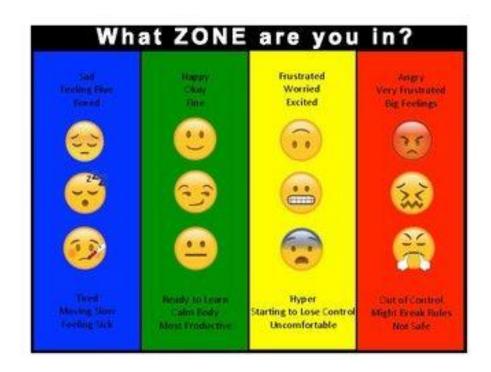
 D9%83%D8%B1%D9%85%D8%B2%D9%83%D9%89%D8%B4%D9%86%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%87

 MakramZakiShenouda

Appendix A

Section - 3C - Self-control

Feeling's check-in strategy



Stop-Think-Act







- STOP: Before any action you take, STOP and Breath! Usually when we are angry, we make wrong decisions.
- Think: Does my action go along with my Values? Do I glorify God with this? Is it Safe? WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?
- **ACT:** If you are calm and feel you have Self-Control, then, act