

# MODULE NINE

In the content session, members discuss the importance of getting involved. In the action session, members evaluate and reflect on their completed action projects.

## CONTENT SESSION: GETTING INVOLVED

One of the greatest challenges of American democracy is getting people involved. In this session, members examine this challenge. First, members read about the Kitty Genovese case, a classic story about people not wanting to get involved. Then members discuss issues of citizenship involvement.

### Facilitator Checklist

- Pens and paper for members
- Copies of Handout 9A for members

### Learning Objectives

Members will be able to:

1. Analyze why people may not want to get involved in different situations.
2. Express a reasoned opinion on whether getting involved is an important part of citizenship.
3. Create ideas on how members can encourage others to get more involved in their community.

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### Notes

## Getting Involved

### Introduction

Have you ever heard someone say, "I just didn't want to get involved"? Sometimes there are good reasons not to get involved, but sometimes people don't get involved for the wrong reasons: apathy, unjustifiable fears, or a lack of concern for others.

The following is a true story. Although it happened many years ago, the story continues to shock. Over time it has become a classic example of Americans refusing to get involved. Read the story and decide why these people didn't get involved.

### I. Thirty-Eight Witnesses

Late in the night of March 14, 1964, 28-year-old Kitty Genovese returned from work. She lived in Kew Gardens, a middle-class neighborhood in New York City. Parking her car in a lot, she started to walk the short distance to her first-floor apartment. Before she could get to her door, a man attacked her with a knife. She screamed. Lights came on. Windows opened, and someone shouted, "Let that girl alone!" The attacker ran off. Windows closed, and lights went out. Wounded, Kitty struggled to get to her door. But the attacker returned. She screamed again. Lights went on again, and the attacker once again retreated. Once the lights were off, the attacker returned a third time and stabbed Kitty Genovese to death. In all, the attacks had continued for 35 minutes. Thirty-eight people had heard her screams, but no one had bothered to call the police. When they were called, police arrived in two minutes. But it was too late. When the witnesses were questioned about why they did not call, most gave the same answer: "I didn't want to get involved."

### II. For Discussion

1. What reasons might the 38 witnesses have had for not getting involved? Are any of them valid in this situation? Why or why not?
2. In what other kinds of situations might people not want to get involved?
3. Is getting involved an important part of citizenship? Why or why not?
4. How can AmeriCorps members encourage people to get involved?

## Conducting the Session

1. Distribute **Handout 9A**. Have members read the **Introduction** and ask: Can anyone relate an experience from your own life where someone did not get involved?
2. Explain that sometimes not getting involved can have serious consequences. Then have members read **Section I: Thirty-Eight Witnesses**.
3. Hold a discussion using the questions in **Section II: For Discussion**.

## Notes

## **ACTION SESSION: EVALUATION AND REFLECTION**

This session, held after the group has completed their projects, helps members reflect on their projects and what they have accomplished. First, they read suggestions about evaluating and reflecting on their project. Then they decide how they will evaluate and reflect and they do these tasks.

### **Facilitator Checklist**

- Chalkboard or chart paper
- Pens and paper for members
- Copies of Handout 9B for members
- Members bring a copy of the group's project plan.

### **Learning Objectives**

Members will be able to:

1. Evaluate their project using their evaluation plan.
2. Evaluate how well they worked as a team.
3. Determine what they learned from the project.

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## **Notes**

## Evaluation and Reflection

### Introduction

Congratulations! You've completed your project. The next step is to evaluate and reflect.

### I. Think It Over

When the project is over, don't forget to:

**Evaluate your project.** Since you made an evaluation plan, this should be easy to do. This will help you measure how successful your project was. Be sure to discuss:

- What have you accomplished? What remains to be accomplished?
- What impact did you have on the problem? Will the impact be long-term or short-term? What would need to be done to achieve long-term impact?
- If you were going to work on this problem again, what would you do?

**Evaluate how well you worked together.** Discuss:

- How effective was your planning?
- Did you work well as a team?
- What problems did you encounter? How did you solve them?

**Reflect on what you learned.** What have you learned about:

- working as a team?
- the causes and effects of the problem?
- the community?
- yourself?

**Thank people who helped you.** If you forgot to thank anyone during the project, take time now to thank them. A personal note is a nice touch.

**Congratulate each other.** You deserve it.

### II. Activity

As a group, evaluate your project and reflect on your experience using the suggestions in Think It Over.

### III. For Discussion

1. What did you learn from your project?
2. What would you do differently next time?
3. What do you think it means to be a good citizen?

## Conducting the Session

1. Congratulate the members on doing their project. Inform them that still have to do a few things regarding their project.
2. Distribute **Handout 9B**. Ask members to read and briefly discuss the **Introduction** and **Section I: Think It Over**.
3. Ask them: "Which suggestions in **Think It Over** do you need to do? Is there anything else you need to do?"
4. Have members meet in their project teams and decide what they need to do. Give them time to do it.
5. Hold a discussion on the projects using the questions in **Section III: For Discussion**.
6. Tell members that in the next (and last) action session, they will think of ways to inform others about their projects.

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The following is a true story. Although it happened many years ago, the story continues to shock. Over time it has become a classic example of Americans refusing to get involved. Read the story and decide why these people didn’t get involved.

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