

Nora's Reflection

(1)

The reflection of the Coach

DNA stands for Debate, not Argue, which is our goal – We want to create an environment in which we can exchange opinions, and experiences, through discussion, not fight over who is right or wrong. In this project young people from different countries in Europe, including Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and Serbia worked together to research a broad variety of topics. Despite being from different countries all of our authors encountered issues related to biases in their personal life. In this interactive game you will confront the issue of gender bias. This topic is very important to us, and we wish you a lot of fun in learning about this social problem, and how to deal with it.

- Let's do it! ==> 2

(2)

A friend in need

You have been waiting for this competition for what seems like forever. Dreaming about it, getting ready, then finally qualifying. However, now that it's so close, your team has hit a rough spot. Your good friend and loyal teammate has decided to step out, and you can't seem to figure out why. Now, it is up to you to be the hero of the day and get everyone back together in time. Be careful how you do this, though, things on your path are not always what they seem! Good luck!

- ==> 3

(3)

Nora the team coach

After you arrive at Nora's house, she welcomes you in and you start to have a chat. Nora seems sad and distressed. You think it might be because of what happened during training. You ask about it, but Nora does not seem interested in talking about that. You think about what would be the best way to approach it. Pushing the issue, trying to be gentle and understanding, or, maybe, some "motivation" would help?

- C'mon, come back and coach you chicken! ==> 4
- Hey, I understand and I don't want to push you. I Just want to know what is bothering you, that's all. ==> 5
- Here's 20 bucks. Come and coach. ==> 6

(4)

Nora the chicken

You can see Nora withdraw into herself, and she asks you to leave. She will catch up with you later, but she does not want to talk about sports now. You leave the house with the feeling of failure keeping you company. She will not go back to coach the team..

- Damn... ==> 7

(5)

A touch of understanding

Reluctantly, Nora nods. "Okay. Thank you. If you put it like that, let's try talking about it." Understanding worked. You can ask and prod about what is bothering your friend.

- May I ask a few questions? ==> 9

(6)

Bribing the coach

With a disbelieving expression, Nora looks at you. "Are you ... really trying to bribe me? Listen. I really don't feel good about that. I hope you understand that. I don't want to play."

- I should probably try again. ==> 7

(7)

Game over

Sometimes, the choice you make leads to an abrupt ending. But not here! Whatever you did, you are free to start over and try again, looking at the topic from a different point of view. Good luck next time!

- Back to intro ==> 1

(9)Questions

"Yeah, sure. Ask away." Nora says with a faint smile. She seems more relaxed now, and ready to discuss what is bothering her..

- "So, what happened? Why did you leave the team?" ==> 10
- "How are you feeling?" ==> 11

(10)First step

"It is hard to talk about. I don't want to let you down, any of you. I just have a feeling I will not be able to coach properly. I am sure someone else can do it better than I can"

- "What's up? Who told you that you can't do it? You are the best coach we have!" ==> 12
- "So we have no idea who should be coaching instead.." ==> 13
- "I think I know enough. Let's go." ==> 14

(11)How are you feeling?

"Pretty poorly, not gonna lie. Handball meant a lot to me. Coaching...after I took it over after our last coach left, I hated it, but lately I started to like it. I am really sorry to leave like this, I..just couldn't continue."

- "So, what happened? Why have you left the team?" ==> 10

(12)Confession

For a second, a faint smile plays on Nora's face before it disappears and Nora becomes dead-serious. "Okay, you will probably think I am crazy. Well, you will definitely think I am crazy. I have a mirror in my room. The mirror speaks to me. Well, my reflection."

- "Sorry. Can we start over? Why have you left the team?" ==> 10
- "So we have no idea who should be coaching instead.." ==> 13
- I think I know enough. ==> 14
- "A mirror? Seriously? Okay I will humor you. What does it say to you?" ==> 15

(13)Someone will take over

"Hey, someone will take over." Says Nora with a smile. "I am sorry to leave you hanging like this but I really can't stand the thought. What will people think?"

- "Why have you left, anyway?" ==> 10
- "Is there any deeper reason?" ==> 12
- "I think I know enough." ==> 14

(14)Facing the fear

Nora watches you for a few moments, then nods and says: "Well, I think it is important to face our fears, no?" Another faint, tired smile. "So, how do you think we should do this?"

- "We just go in, aggressively. No one will tell you what to feel." ==> 16
- "Don't worry about it, just stay here. I will take care of it." ==> 17
- "I think talking about it on even ground is important. I will be with you, but you should face it yourself in the first place." ==> 18

(15)A ghost in the mirror

"Yes, seriously. I swear. It is really weird to talk about this. It is my reflection..like..a ghost..It tells me all kinds of things. I am not capable enough. If a guy was coaching, he would do it better and he would be able to whip the team into shape better than I could. It asks me how many guys are coaches, how many girls. That must mean something, no?"

While Nora talks, you watch her. You can see that talking about this is really uncomfortable for her.

- "Sorry. Can we start over? Why have you left the team?" ==> 10
- "So we have no idea who should be coaching instead.." ==> 13
- "I think I know enough. Let's face the ghost." ==> 14

(16)Be aggressive

You follow Nora to her room. Your friend seems ready to fight. Both you and she go in, close the door and stand in front of the mirror. All you see is Nora's reflection, nervous and angry. You stand next to your friend for a bit, thinking that either this is a joke, or Nora has gone mad. But sure enough, the reflection starts to smile. Why is Nora smiling, you think to yourself. You look at your friend and chill runs down your spine when you realise, Nora has still the same, angry expression.

"Hello, Nora", you hear, the lips of your friend unmoving. "Finally quit, eh? You knew you could not do it. We both did." This is not your friend talking, this is the reflection in the mirror.

Nora starts screaming at what used to be her reflection: "You cannot tell me what to do! I am my own person!"

The smile of the thing in the mirror widens, then it starts speaking again.

"Oh, but I can, can't I? We are the same person, after all", the reflection says and you see the smile turn into a slight, amused smirk, before it lightly, slowly, shakes her head from side to side. Then the reflection continues: "You think screaming will help? You are afraid, unsure. That's why you are screaming, that is why you thought this was a good idea. Enjoy your free time". With that and a light wave of its hand, the reflection disappears. You stand in front of the mirror, before Nora looks at you, with tears in her eyes.

- This is the end.. ==> 7

(17)On behalf of a friend

Nora leaves you to go to her room. You climb the stairs, heart racing in anticipation. You enter the room, close the door and stand in front of the mirror. "Okay, Nora's ghost, show yourself", you say with a trembling voice. Time crawls slowly. You wait and keep waiting. Nothing happens at first, nothing happens after that. You wait until the anticipation fades away, then as long as your patience allows. With only silence to keep you company in this room, you are left to wonder if your friend is crazy, or whether this was simply a joke.

- Time to leave ==> 7

(18)Together against a ghost

Nora thinks for a little bit, then nods. "Even ground, I like it. I guess we need to make it understand? I think that would be best." With another nod, Nora stands up and breathes deeply. "It is now or never." Nora then beckons you to follow her into her room...

- Let's go then ==> 19

(19)Mirror mirror on the wall.

You follow Nora to her room. Both you and she go in, close the door and stand in front of the mirror. All you see is Nora's reflection, serene and calm. You stand next to your friend for a bit, thinking that either this is a joke, or Nora has gone mad. But, sure enough, the reflection starts to smile. Why is Nora smiling, you think to yourself. You look at your friend and a chill runs down your spine when you realise, Nora has still the same expression.

"Hello, Nora", you hear, the lips of your friend unmoving. "Finally quit, eh? You knew you could not do it. We both did. You brought your friend? How nice of you." This is not your friend talking, this is the reflection in the mirror.

"I did", Nora starts talking, "but I think I made a mistake. I should not have quit the position."

The reflection smiles. "Is that so? What changed your opinion? Your friend?" The reflection addresses you.

- "This is just completely mad. I am out of here. You two have fun. See ya!" ==> 20
- "You know, you don't have the right to say things like that." ==> 21
- "Why are you treating her like that? You seem to know a lot about her. Then you should know, as a coach, she is amazing." ==> 22

(20)This is insane!

You leave the room, and your friend in it.

This is insane. You just saw a ghost. These thoughts run through your head, burying the purpose of why you went there in the first place. How Nora manages the situation, you have no idea. About the result, you will learn soon enough. Maybe your contribution was enough? Maybe your cowardly escape broke your friend's resolve?

- Time to leave this place! ==> 7

(21)Shouldn't say this

The reflection seems to be amused. "Is that so?" It starts talking to you again. "I would say, I am pretty sure I know her better than you do. And what's more, I think I am right. She does not have what it takes. Guys coaching other teams can direct their teams better. She can't make you win!"

- "I disagree." ==> 22

(22)

Oh really?

"Oh really? Then, what is your response?"

- "This is just completely mad. I am out of here. You two have fun. See ya!" ==> 20
- "... " ==> 23

(23)

Finding your strength

"If I may.." Your friend starts talking, looking straight at the ghost. "I have been thinking about what you said to me, now and previously. I don't think it is true. Like, what you said previously. How many guys are coaching? How many girls? I don't think it really matters. If my team wants me as their coach, then I will do that. They, my friend here, really think I can do it and I trust them. They will not let me down, neither will I them. I am still afraid, but I don't think I have a reason to be. I will go and do my best as a coach."

The reflection says nothing for a moment, its face unreadable. Then it smiles. "Overcoming your gut feeling? If you put it like that.. If you think you can do it despite the feelings you have and what others might think, then I am with you."

"I believe in you", says Nora and the reflection simultaneously. Then, only Nora speaks "You can do it." The reflection shows Nora, your friend. This time, only her true reflection. The ghost you were talking to is gone now.

- "That's a relief. So, are you ready to coach again?" ==> 24

(24)

Tournament and onwards

You leave the house, saying goodbye to Nora. She appears at the next training, reinstated as the team coach.

A few weeks after, the tournament takes place. You do your best to score as many victories as you can, Nora leading you better than anyone else you could imagine. You see her plan and communicate with a surety you never saw before. Her demeanour is intense as befits a coach under pressure, but assured and calm at the same time. You never saw the ghost, the reflection, after that point, but you feel your friend has made peace with herself and you feel it will not bother her again.

What you take from this little adventure are memories of a strange encounter and a friend who, despite her worries, found her footing again.

- Onwards to the outro! ==> 25

(25)

Outro

We can make our biases disappear!

De-bias a bias!

Gender biases, the focus of this little project of ours, refer to the unfair differences in how people are treated based on their gender. Just like the term "bias" suggests, it means being unfairly and irrationally in favour of or against something, in this case, a gender. For example, if someone believes that boys are better at math than girls and then treats them differently because of this belief, that's a gender bias.

Biases are a natural product of our environment, because the world we live in is very complex, and most of our actions occur without our conscious thoughts. Essentially, biases determine the way we interact with our environment. They have power over us only if we refuse to acknowledge and engage them. We should work on understanding how we are biased and try to mitigate the impacts of the bias.

For sure, one should start from the identification of bias, then move to owning a bias, and then finally confronting the bias. The last phase of bias confrontation is something we always have to work on. We should strive to have hard conversations and step out of our comfort zone and delve into discussions, because that is the only way forward, and to make progress.

We can't escape biases, and they are part of our environment so the best we can do is to face them and try our best to understand them and where they stem from and that is how we make better decisions and eventually change.

If you wish to know more about biases and how to confront them, you can start here;

[Bias is natural: How you manage it defines your ability to be just](#)

[Implicit Bias Explained – Perception Institute](#)

[Confront Your Biases and Be More Inclusive With This 3-Step Process – BigSpeak Motivational Speakers Bureau: Keynote Speakers, Business Speakers and Celebrity Speakers](#)