

“It’s Just MY Part of the Boat”

(How Our Actions Impact Others!)

Three guys were on a row boat, paddling themselves across a much longer stretch of ocean than they had anticipated.

Bob and Steve and Phil had been happily working together for a while, until they had gotten tired and the initial enthusiasm of the trip had worn off.

Bob remained disciplined while the others became discouraged.

As Bob continued to row from the front, confident that he could make it to the shore if he maintained his perseverance and kept rowing, Steve’s energy began to diminish.

Steve, instead of resuming his work to assist his teammates, decided that he was not interested in giving full effort while rowing. Steve still held onto his oar, but he was clearly just going through the motions. Even though he kept his paddle in the water, he was unmotivated and refused to row very hard.

Phil was seated at the back of the boat, and his thoughts and behavior had become noticeably different and more disengaged.

Phil had angrily put down his oar, and instead of just going through the motions, he took out a screwdriver and started to carve into the thin wooden hull. Soon bored with that as well, he then started to jab at the wood with the screwdriver, poking holes in the boat.

Bob and Steve had ignored his refusal to row, but turned around to look when they heard the hard, sharp “whack” of each downward stab Phil made at the floor of the boat.

When he saw what was happening, Steve yelled back, “What are you DOING?”

Bob was just as intense when he realized what was happening, and yelled out, “STOP poking holes in the boat, man!”

Having been interrupted by their shouts, Phil distractedly looked up and replied...

“Don’t worry about what I’m doing, guys. I’m only messing with MY part of the boat.”

