Methods of Good Problem Solvers………………..

As The World Burns

It has finally happened!! A few frightened people with their fingers on red buttons, then the blinding flashes and within a few hours the world is silent except for the crackling of flames as civilization burns. Worldwide nuclear holocaust is now a reality. It was over so quickly that only a few people managed to reach a fallout shelter in time.

A few species of plants and animals survived the holocaust. You know of only one small group of people who are alive. These people must remain in their fallout shelter for at least three months. Anyone who left sooner would receive a fatal dose of radiation and perish. There are twelve adults and two children in the shelter. Unfortunately, there are only enough supplies for seven adults, or six adults and two children to survive for three months. Some lives must be sacrificed immediately in order for anyone to live.

Your task is to choose those people who are to live. You must decide quickly. The following handout is provided to assist you in keeping a record of the people that you can choose from. Be able to justify your reasoning and explain your choices.

Remember that the individuals that you choose to live may be the only people left to carry on the human race!

Directions: *This exercise does not measure your intelligence or your fluency with words. It will, however, give you some gauge of your mental flexibility and creativity in problem solving using a systematic approach.*

1. Take 2o minutes to decide amongst your group members on the people who will remain alive in the fallout shelter.
2. Take 10 minutes to do the following: On one side of your paper list the name of the people you chose to stay in the shelter and list a reason (for each one) why you picked them.
3. Take 10 minutes to do the following: On the back of your paper, draw the fallout shelter and the people who will stay. Label the people and be prepared to discuss your choices and drawing with the rest of the class.
4. Mother – female age 38 – with a son 2 years only and a daughter 7 years old. The mother has a heart condition.
5. Musician, singer – male age 22 – seems to have a calming influence on the group. He is blind.
6. Brother – male age 16 – mentally challenged
7. Sister – female age 25 – an excellent registered nurse. However, she refuses to stay unless her brother is allowed to stay also.
8. Athlete – male age 22 – a world class track star. He is a racist and feels women are only fit for menial tasks.
9. Student – male age 20 – a very bright 3rd year college student in mechanical engineering. He is confined to a wheelchair due to an early childhood accident.
10. Prostitute – female age 30 – retired for one year. She is four months pregnant and is in pleasant disposition
11. Doctor – female age 60 – she is an internist and has been practicing medicine for 30 years.
12. Farmer – male age 46 – he is very physically fit for his age. He is also homosexual
13. Sheriff – male age 50 – an organizer. However, he tends to be dictatorial and bossy.
14. Wildlife expert – male age 62 – he has written a number of books on animal behavior
15. Nutritionist – female age 40 – very practical – she already examined the food supply. She is also very nervous and appears pessimistic toward their chances for survival.