

# CHOICES

## Scenario 7

### Dark Secret

Your girlfriend Annie tells you a secret in the strictest confidence. It's something that she did that she feels bad about. She was looking after her kid brother while her Mom was at the doctor – and he accidentally fell down the stairs. Later, he had to go to hospital to be checked. His arm was put in a splint, and he had a massive bruise on his forehead for a week.

"I felt awful. Swear you won't tell anyone."

You swear.

The following week you are at a school camp. Annie is not in the same bunkhouse as you.

After lights out, all the girls are 'sharing'.

"Know any secrets?"

One by one, they all tell something about other girls. There is much giggling.

Soon, only you are left.

"Well. What secrets do you know?"

What about Annie's secret?

What should you do?

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**A You say, "Now if I tell you this, you'll have to swear not to tell anyone else." And you tell them Annie's secret.**

**What next?**

The camp ends. School resumes.

You still sit and talk with Annie. She is still your best friend. But something is different.

You know what you did.

One day, one of the other girls gets really angry with Annie. In a rage, she blurts out,

“We all know what you did to your little brother! Don’t be so high and mighty with me.”

Annie looks at you.

You blush.

The secret is out. You have betrayed Annie.

Annie bursts into tears and runs off.

### **Think about it**

Friendship is incredibly important. We make friends – mainly people with whom we share common interests and personality. This builds over time into ‘trust’, a very precious thing.

Trust allows us to relax and feel safe. We are then able to really enjoy the closeness of a good friend. We feel protected by a circle of trust.

Trust is special. To hurt a friend breaks that trust.

In this situation, if Annie decided that she could never trust you again, would you blame her? For the short term pleasure of giving in to the other girls, you might have lost a real friend – for good.

*Do you want to look at another scenario involving friends? (Go to 12)*

*Do you want to try this scenario again? (Go to 7)*

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**B You decide you can’t tell the girls about Annie’s special secret. You say “Sorry – I don’t know any.”**

### **What next?**

The girls go to sleep.

The next day you meet up with Annie.

She is so pleased to see you. You link arms and go off to the next camp activity. You feel fantastic.

"You know you're my best, best friend," she says. "I trust you completely."

Isn't it good to have a best friend?

### **Think about it**

A best friend is a wonderful thing. According to one American medical authority, it will boost your health and improve your life: "[It can] Increase your sense of belonging and purpose; boost your happiness and reduce your stress; improve your self confidence and self worth; help you deal with traumas ..." (Mayo Clinic).

Friendship however is fragile. Any break in trust can crack it. Like many things in life it requires effort. Like a small child it needs to be shielded from trauma. To throw it away carelessly can have serious long term consequences.

*Do you want to look at another scenario in which friends try to push you around? (Go to 16)*

*Do you want to try this scenario again? (Go to 7)*