

one of the kids to whom I presented this offer traded in two Kisses for the bigger candy bars.

Zoe was the next kid to walk down the street. She was dressed as a princess, in a long white dress, with a magic wand in one hand and an orange Halloween pumpkin bucket in the other. Her younger sister was resting comfortably in their father's arms, looking cute and cuddly in her bunny outfit. As they approached, Zoe called out, in a high, cute voice, "Trick or treat!" In the past I admit that I have sometimes devilishly replied, "Trick!" Most kids stand there, baffled, having never thought through their question to see that it allowed an alternative answer.

In this case I gave Zoe her treat—three Hershey's Kisses. But I did have a trick up my sleeve. I offered little Zoe a deal: a choice between getting a large Snickers bar in exchange for one of her Hershey's Kisses, or getting the small Snickers bar for FREE! without giving up any Hershey's Kisses.

Now, a bit of rational calculation (which in Joey's case was amply demonstrated) would show that the best deal is to forgo the free small Snickers bar, pay the cost of one additional Hershey's Kiss, and go for the large Snickers bar. On an ounce-for-ounce comparison, it was far better to give up one additional Hershey's Kiss and get the larger Snickers bar (two ounces) instead of a smaller Snickers bar (one ounce). This logic was perfectly clear to Joe and the kids who encountered the condition in which both Snickers bars had a cost. But what would Zoe do? Would her clever kid's mind make that rational choice—or would the fact that the small Snickers bar was FREE! blind her to the rationally correct answer?

As you might have guessed by now, Zoe, and the other kids to whom I offered the same deal, was completely blinded