## What is the Bystander Effect?

* **Concept Definition:** The Bystander Effect describes that individuals are less likely to offer help to a victim when there are other people present. The theory was prompted by the murder of [Kitty Genovese](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_of_Kitty_Genovese).
* **Concept Founder:**The effect was first demonstrated by social psychologists [John M. Darley](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_M._Darley) and [Bibb Latané](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bibb_Latan%C3%A9) in 1968. It later became one of the most discussed psychological effects of all time.
* **Concept Benefit:**Be able to recognize a Bystander Effect situation and break the silence barrier. When becoming a victim in any environment, pointing out one particular person for help will increase the chance of receiving it.

## How to demonstrate it?

* In a typical experiment, the person to be tested is either alone or among a group of other participants or confederates.
* A critical situation is [staged](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deception_(in_psychological_research)) in front of the participant and researchers [measure](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dependent_variable) how long it takes him to intervene if he intervenes.
* For example, another person within the room fakes an injury, social bullying, or shoplifting.
* **70%** of the people engaged and helped if they were alone.
* Only **40%** of the people offered help if they were paired with another stranger.
* These experiments have found the presence of the Bystander Effect, often by a large margin.
* So the number of bystanders can determine how much support is provided.
* In other studies, when the victim actively **designates** one person in a group to help, it will increase the chance to get support. Actively pointing out one specific person is better than broadcasting help to everyone.

## Where can it be found?

* **Workspace Engagement:** In a big workspace with a lot of employees, each employee could be less motivated to contribute to the whole project. This correlates to the idea proposed by Jeff Bezos that good team size is small enough to [share 2 pizzas](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/blog.seeburger.com/the-two-pizza-rule/) comfortably.
* **Voting Engagement:** People often do not vote because of the impression that [their vote does not have any impact](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/medill-npr-nonvoters-2020) on the outcome. The more people are involved in voting, the less active is each individual person.
* **Internet Engagement:** In small forums or discussions, o[nly around 0.1-1% of the content consumer](https://web.archive.org/web/20221118115544/https:/www.quora.com/Whats-the-average-rate-of-people-who-comment-in-a-YouTube-video) really comment on the Internet content. Most people are passive readers who never stand in the light of any discussions.

## Why does it exist?

* **Diffusion of Responsibility:** If a single person is asked to do a task, the sense of responsibility will be strong and the owner is clear. On the other hand, if a group is assigned to perform a task together, each individual in the group will have a weak sense of responsibility because the task division within the group is not clear.
* **Social Behavior:** Another explanation would be social behavior copying. Humans are social animals and copy the actions of others. When nobody is breaking the silence, then all people chose to stay passive. More people could interpret that such a passive action is the correct way of social behavior for that moment. This effect reinforces itself as the group size increases. The more people present, the more it can be interpreted as an acceptable social activity.
* **Engagement Require Energy:** The group would need to invest more energy to intervene in a misfortune event. This is correlated to Newton’s third law of mechanics, which states that a force will continue to persist until challenged by an external force.

## How do I benefit from it?

* **Do:** If you are building a team for the business, a class for teaching, or any form of human organization, remember to choose a good team size so that each person within the team feels their efforts have a significant result on the outcome. If you are a person looking for help, try to find a specific person for help instead of asking for help from a crowd of people.
* **Don‘t:** If you are witnessing an emergency situation, do not watch away. You might be the first one to break the silence barrier. More people will join you after they have seen a person providing help. Do not automatically assume that others will help, be the one to help first.