

TEEN PAGE

Teen Page editor Pete Walton kit@stanboroughchurch.org

SUMMER KIT 2016

TO TRUST OR NOT TO TRUST?



YOUR CHOICE

THE CHOICES WE MAKE ARE THE STORY WE TELL

the story of our lives

The Nearest Thing To Flying

Imagine you are in an aeroplane. It has a back-door large enough to drive a 4x4 through. Maybe the Kia Sorrento. it's a bit like a flying van. In fact it is a flying van - the Skyvan. There are no seats inside and you stand there lined-up with your friends, waiting. Waiting in a line that stretches out into blue, blue sky.



Short SC-7 Skyvan

That was the situation I was in. 'You go first Pete' says my former best friend.

It felt strange standing on the edge staring down onto the fields thousands of feet below. We circle, they throw out a test flair to check the wind speed and direction to make sure we will miss the power lines and the lake.

In the distance I hear Cordelia say 'go!' - not go! go! go! just 'go'. So I jumped, just because Cordelia said 'go'.



not me but it's what I felt like

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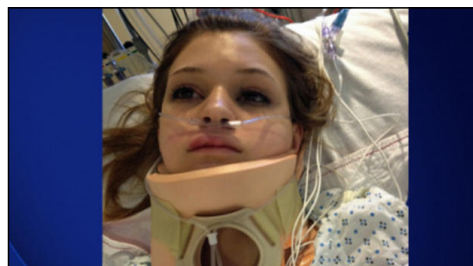
When you are on the edge of infinity one 'go' is enough. I wondered if I would have jumped if it had not been Cordelia.

I plummeted down through the air for three seconds. I count loudly ... 'ONE THOUSAND, TWO THOUSAND, THREE THOUSAND' then 'CHECK CANOPY'. I looked up at the 'chute to check that it had opened properly, ready to release the reserve 'chute if it had not. But there it was, a lovely large parachute canopy above my head and I was floating slowly down towards the ground in an eerie silence. It was an amazing sensation, like being accidentally let go by mum or dad while suspended over a cliff. The incredible thing was that it felt like I was not getting any closer to the ground and it was so fantastic to be floating through the sky I wanted to remain up there indefinitely and join the company of the birds.

Suddenly there the ground was - racing up towards me like an express train. The thought of Cordelia came to the rescue and I put my training to good effect with knees bent into a controlled roll. A fantastic experience that you should not pass up if you get the chance.



could this be you?



Makenzie Wethington, 16, fell more than 3,000 feet to the ground when her parachute malfunctioned during a skydiving jump. She recovered ok.

I am sorry to say that parachute jumps do not always turn out so well. Please do not do a parachute jump to raise money for charity unless you are an expert. A report showed that for every £100 raised for charity it cost hospitals £1,300 to treat the injuries of jumpers who had accidents!

Cordelia did tell me that there had been no parachute deaths at Sibson Airfield recently but I did find out that one person a week dies in a parachute accident, mainly in America.

It all makes me wonder why I trusted Cordelia so easily with my life. Or maybe it wasn't so easily.

You probably guessed by now that Cordelia was my parachuting trainer. There were about twenty of us in our youth club and two trainers came from Sibson Airfield (<http://skydivesibson.co.uk/>) to train us at Stanborough Park. The training was tough and fun. So why did I trust Cordelia enough to jump out into space from the back of an aeroplane? Because I had *good reasons* to trust her.

These were my reasons for choosing to trust Cordelia a) there were two instructors who trusted each other, b) she gave very skilful and thorough training that she demonstrated herself, c) she had made nearly 1,000 skydive jumps herself c) she was qualified to instruct d) she talked sense (*very important!*). They would make a good check list for you too.

WHO CAN YOU TRUST?

I told my story about my parachute jump to try and show it makes a difference who you trust. It's not a very good example, I know, because hardly anyone dies from a parachute jump - however mad it seems. But if someone says to you it's ok to drink alcoholic drinks - trust me. Before you do, you should know that alcohol is responsible for *a lot* of deaths every year. In one year it was the cause of 8,416 deaths and it cost the NHS £2,700,000,000 (-billion) to save you counting the 0s) to deal with it. That is not trustworthy advice. Oh, did they say it's ok if you drink sensibly? That's what those 8,416 people thought before they died.

I suppose the worst thing about trust at school is when you cannot trust a friend. And the main reasons for breaking a trust are telling secrets and telling lies. It's a kind of obvious thing really: don't tell secrets and don't tell lies! Personally I don't see the problem with that but then that's just me. Maybe you think it's ok to tell lies? If you do then please don't expect anyone to trust you.



People ask me why it's so hard to trust people, and i ask them why is it so hard to keep a promise.

The fact is you cannot start to change things for the better in other peoples lives or in your own life until you make sure you are building your own character. You may not hear this at school but it is your character that really makes you the person you are and you get to choose by the hard choices you make. If you want people trust you and to be friends with you, to give you worthy tasks and for you to 'make a

difference' these are some things you should aim to have in your character: honesty, loyalty, respectfulness, responsibility, humility, compassion, fairness, forgiveness, courageousness, generosity, perseverance, politeness, kindness, lovingness, conscientiousness, self-discipline and so on. These things will help you to become the person you could be and to have true self esteem. You may find that teachers have forgotten about these things or even parents at home.

It's a massive task to find out about building a character, your personal character, so I am suggesting a short cut that has been proved to be a trustworthy guide and a reliable source of information that has helped built some of the finest characters in history. It's the greatest story ever told. The life of Jesus. For a quick start just read the abbreviated version written by his follower Mark. You will find it in the Holy Bible, look in the second part, second chapter.

If you don't like yourself you can even become a completely new person, one you *will* like. (see bible text 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17). ■