

The Power of One

Thesis: During the Holocaust, Raoul Wallenberg was not a passive bystander like the rest of the apathetic, onlooking world, but was a heroic activist who chose to make a difference by rescuing Hungarian Jews from their inevitable extermination.

I. Introduction and Accepted Beliefs/Behavior

A. The Majority concept of accepted behavior

1. People think they do not make a difference.
2. This thought leads to a lack of action.

B. Misconceptions about apathy and non-action

1. Most people believe in being self-centered, therefore, not acting.
2. The use of not taking action is considered acceptable.

C. The Power of One

1. In actuality, one person can make a difference.
2. Everyone is able to make a difference.

D. Case Study- Wallenberg

1. He is a prime example of how people can make a difference.
2. He saved thousands of Jews during the Holocaust.
3. His decision to make a difference had a tremendous effect
4. Thesis

II. Background

A. World War II background

1. The situation in Hungary during WWII was desparate.
 - a. Deportations had begun.
 - b. Include statistics from Hungary
2. Very few individuals made a difference.

B. General overview of the Holocaust

1. Early stages and situations- deportations
2. Later stages, including mass killings and concentration camps

C. World reaction and response

1. Many countries and leaders were in fear of taking a stand and getting involved.
2. The majority of the world is considered bystanders, those of non-action.

III. Wallenberg

A. Early Life and upbringing

1. Family standing in society
 - a. They were extremely influential and wealthy
 - b. Wallenberg had a secure future.
 - c. Wallenberg did not need to make a difference, but he did.
3. Family influence
 - a. He was raised by his mother and grandmother.
 - b. His education was guided by his grandfather.
4. Education
 - a. He was interested in architecture.
 - b. He went to college in the United States.
5. Early jobs and travels
 - a. He traveled around the globe.
 - b. His experience gave him the personality traits of a hero.

B. Events leading to involvement during World War II

1. He had a desire to accomplish important goals in life.
2. He received a nomination to become a diplomat.

C. Wallenberg became a Swedish Diplomat assigned to Budapest, Hungary

1. He was selected for the job.
2. He requested more diplomatic power.

- a. He had nine requests, which were all granted.
- b. This became essential to his ability to make a difference.

D. Early Rescue Actions

1. He arrived in Budapest
2. Wallenberg set up the department of Legation.
3. He had early connections to influential people.
4. He designed, issued, and distributed "Wallenberg passports"
5. He helped in the area of hospitals and food.
6. Through these actions, Wallenberg proves the power of one.

E. Later War efforts

1. Wallenberg almost went home.
2. The Arrow Cross government took over.
3. Wallenberg felt that he must take even greater, faster action.
 - a. He set up safe houses.
 - b. He began chasing after trains.

F. Effects of his efforts and compelling others to act

1. Up to 100,000 Jews were saved by his actions alone.
2. Other diplomats followed his initiative and set up safe houses.
3. Again, he proves the power of one.

G. Captured at War's End

1. He was captured by the Soviets while asking about Jewish protection.
2. Shortly after, the Red Army took over Hungary.

H. Continuing Mystery of his location

1. Russia reported that he died.
 - a. There is a controversy over his location in Russia.
 - b. There are contradicting Soviet reports and eyewitness stories.

2. There were rescue missions and organizations who attempted to save him.
3. He can save others but not himself, no one could save him.

I. He was honored for his work

1. He has a special place in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
2. There is a tree planted for him at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

IV. Wallenberg made a difference (broader theme)

A. Wallenberg made a difference

1. He saved a number of Jews.
2. He has influenced others to take a stand and make a difference.

B. Everyone can make a difference.

1. The efforts of one person can have a tremendous effect.
2. Everyone can be this one person.

C. The Power of One

1. This was depicted by Wallenberg.
2. One person is all it takes.

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