

# The Power of One

*This activity is intended to provide a visual and kinesthetic analogy that demonstrates the potential behind using the 5 Second Rule as described by Mel Robbins.*

Goal: to describe the main idea behind the 5 Second Rule

Materials:

- ✓ String
- ✓ 8 large washers

Procedure:

Prepare a length of string about 15 inches long with 7 large metal washers tied in a loop at one end and another washer of the same size tied to the opposite end. Hold it up in front of the group and, in your own words, describe the string and washer contraption while explaining that you'd like to share an experiment that will help us think about the power of the 5 Second Rule.

Hold the single washer between your thumb and index finger of one hand and drape the 7 washers over the index finger of your other hand. Move the single washer left and right horizontally (parallel to the floor) to demonstrate that the end with the heavy set of washers moves up and down perpendicular to the travel of the single washer.

Pull the single washer farthest from your index finger so the 7 washers are dangling right below your finger. Keep the single washer horizontal and parallel to the floor. Now ask the participants to predict or make a hypothesis about what will happen when you let go of the single washer. Most will predict that the string of washers will fall to the floor. Don't respond to any answers; simply let the group share their ideas.

Warn participants to watch closely because things will happen quickly when you let go of the single washer. Ask the group to count down from five to one and release the washer at zero.

Instead of landing on the floor, the group of seven washers will drop several inches but then the single washer will wrap itself around your index finger and prevent the whole

## TRAINER'S NOTES

For More Information:

*The 5 Second Rule: Transform Your life, Work, and Confidence with Everyday Courage* by Mel Robbins, Savio Republic © 2017, ISBN: 978-1-68261-238-5



string from falling any further. Repeat the demonstration if necessary. Invite people to offer explanations for why the washers don't fall to the ground. After hearing a few explanations, you can share that, as the single washer begins to fall, it speeds up and gains enough momentum to wrap around your finger.

Tell people that this is similar to how the 5 Second Rule works. You may be hesitant or fearful about doing something, just like we didn't want the cluster of washers to fall to the floor. When we count down from five to one, we build our inner commitment to action. When we hit zero and take that action – releasing the single washer – our courage kicks in, helps us gain momentum, and propels us to a new, unexpected result.

If you wish, distribute strings and washers to everyone and let them replicate your experiment.

Discussion:

- ◆ What are the sort of simple every-day decisions that might be difficult for us to make?
- ◆ What are some reasons it might be difficult to make these decisions?
- ◆ When would it be most helpful to use the 5 Second Rule?
- ◆ What insights does this experiment give you about facing fears or taking action?
- ◆ What recommendations do you have for using the 5 Second Rule?

Here a more scientific explanation of why the single washer is able to suspend the seven:

*The single washer is acting like a pendulum. The shorter a pendulum is, the faster it swings. When the washer is released, the weight of the 7 washers pulls the single one so rapidly and its pendulum is shortened so quickly that it gains enough momentum to be propelled around the index finger.*

