



Positive Belief & A Common Perspective Lead To Better Problem-Solving

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An old farmer left a will for his 3 sons. His will stated that the eldest son shall receive half of his 17 ducks, the second son a third of his 17 ducks, and the youngest son a ninth of his 17 ducks.

Since it is not possible to divide 17 by half, one-third or one-ninth, the sons started to disagree with one another on their share of the inheritance. In the end, they sought a wise man to act as their mediator.

The wise man listened to their disagreement. Then, he brought a duck of his own, and added it to the 17 ducks, bringing it to a total of 18 ducks before computing the respective shares of each son.

From the 18 ducks:
The eldest son received 9 ducks (half of 18).

The second son received 6 ducks (one-third of 18).

The youngest son received 2 ducks (one-ninth of 18).

As such, the wise man gave out $9 + 6 + 2 = 17$ ducks. This leaves the 1 duck that the wise man had brought out, which he now took back.

Learning from this fable, problem-solving is easier when we:

1. Adopt positive thinking, and believe that a win-win solution exists.

This mindset motivates us to continue our search for a better solution.

2. Find a common ground between the parties involved i.e. The 18th duck unites all in the problem-solving in this fable.

This common perspective encourages us to think for one another, and look for a solution favourable to the parties involved.