



**HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY?
(Children's Story/Parable)**

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NOTE: This children's activity is best suited for Primary/Junior-aged children

PROPS:

- Two equal amounts of money – one amount as notes and the other amount as coins
- Two identical glasses each half filled with water
- Two different sized glasses each with the same amount of water so one looks full and one half full
- If you want to show a picture of Alexandra Scott, you can get one from www.alexlemonade.org

FEATURE: Welcome children to this special feature just for them.

First, I want you to look at these two piles of money. They look pretty nice. Which pile of money would you like? The coins or the notes? Tell me why you wanted that pile and not the other.

If pocket money is not part of your culture don't ask the following questions:

- *Who gets pocket money?*
- *What do you have to do to get pocket money at your place? Keep your room tidy, wash the dishes, set the table, or look after a younger brother or sister?*
- *Who gets this much money? Who gets more? Who gets less?*

Now I want you to look at these two glasses of water. I want you to look very carefully. As you are studying them closely, I want you to tell me which one is half empty and which one is half full. Is the one on the left half full and the one on the right half empty, or is it the other way around? What did you discover?

Now I want you to look at these two glasses; one full and one partially emptied. Which one would you prefer? The full one or the partly emptied one? (Give the children time to decide.) Why did you choose that one?

What would you say if I were to tell you that there is the same amount of water in each glass and the same amount of money in each pile?

Perspective is a fairly large word, but some of you will know what it means. Who can give me a definition? (Give the children time to think and answer).

Another way to think about perspective is point of view. Some people's point of view is that the glass is half empty. Other people's point of view is that the glass is half full. The reality is that the amount of water in each glass is identical.

Some people look negatively and see what is missing (the glass is half empty), while other people look positively and see what is there (the glass is half full). What type of a person are you? A half-empty or a half-full-sort-of person? How about mum and dad? Half-full or half-empty-sort-of people? Why do you think it is that some people see things negatively while other people see them positively?

Maya Rigler is a half-full-sort-of person and her story is told in *Guideposts* (www.guideposts.org). Maya Rigler is a fighter.

The ten-year-old from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the United States has been a cancer survivor since the age of two, when she was first diagnosed with kidney cancer. Then at age ten, Maya's family received a terrible blow. Maya's cancer was back and it was in her pancreas. The pre-teen was now facing another long, grueling fight, filled with hospital visits and chemotherapy treatments.

Was Maya seeing her life half full or half empty at this time?

Before I answer that question, I need to tell you about another person who had cancer. Her name was Alexandra Scott, and she lost her own fight with cancer at age eight. But before she died, Alex created a foundation (I guess with her family) which raises funds for child cancer research and support. It is called "Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation." How did it get its name? It all started with one front yard lemonade stand. When Alex was just four years old, she held her first childhood cancer fundraiser in her front yard and raised over \$2,000. By the time of her death in 2004, Alex had raise \$1 million and inspired a legacy of hope and cures for childhood cancers.

Now back to Maya, this glass-half-full-sort-of girl. When she was told her cancer had returned, she did not think about herself but was most concerned about her lemonade stand.

You see, each year in June (North American summer), Maya and her family operate a lemonade stand in support of the "Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation."

Because of her cancer treatment, Maya needed help. Luckily for her, family and friends were generous with their donations, love, and support, but Maya was still more interested in giving back than in feeling sorry for herself.

"I felt happy but I didn't need people buying me a million presents. I started to feel bad because I don't need all this," she said.

Instead, Maya asked that anyone wanting to give gifts or money to donate it to the virtual Alex's Lemonade Stand her family had set up after it became clear Maya wouldn't be able to

man her own stand during her treatments. After just six days, the virtual stand has raised more than \$34,000.

“It’s overwhelming,” said Maya. “But it feels so nice to know we’re helping other kids.” She’s not done yet. Maya has upped her goal to \$50,000.

So there is Maya a glass-half-full-sort-of person—thinking about what she has and helping others, rather than regretting what she does not have.

So what point of view are you going to follow? Will you look at what you have and forget about what is missing? That’s what Jesus wants us to do, and since He is always with us, He will help us to be half-full-sort-of people, regardless of what might be missing in our lives.