

COMPLETION MARKER --JOURNAL 8 on Duty Ethics

Cibele Toledo

April 11, 2021

Phil 2306: Introduction to Philosophy

Houston Community College

## **Journal Writing 8**

### **1. What is the Deontological Ethical theory?**

When analyzing an ethical issue, this theory implies that individuals should stick to their commitments and responsibilities. It comes from the Greek word “deon”, which means “duty”. This theory, also known as Deontology, is an ethical stance that evaluates the action's morality on the basis of the law or rules the govern that action. On top of that, since laws connect you to your duty, it's also known as duty or responsibility or rule-based ethics. Implications are irrelevant and it supports the idea that the end justifies the means. The purpose (goodwill) is important only if I'm behaving for the right reasons and acting in a certain manner (Alexander & Moore, 2020).

### **2. Explain the ethical foundation of the theory-based: DIGNITY OF HUMAN PERSON AND AUTONOMY OF REASON?**

Immanuel Kant believed that as human persons, we have infinite worth. Furthermore, he thought our reasoning was the most important aspect of our being. It was the foundation of our independence and integrity. Respecting the integrity and worth of oneself and others is a spiritual obligation. He advises against using another individual as a means to an end (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2021). Kant's belief in the dignity of the human person and the autonomy of reason is based on the ethical foundation of the moral law. Besides that, humans have the ability to think, which confers integrity on them. As a result, moral laws must take into account a person's abilities. Kant bestows the legitimacy of moral law representatives on fellow humans; morality springs from within us, not from faith, our ancestors, or human nature. Moral rules are derived from universality and requirement, and they refer to behavior (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020).

- 3. By watching the video on Categorical Imperative - Crash-course, you can now explain what Categorical Imperative is all about and Its 3 maxims like Universality Maxim, Man as end Maxim, and Autonomy Maxim? Choose 1 and explain thoroughly such maxim.**

I choose Kant's second Maxim: Man as end in itself. Kant's Maxim says, “act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end” (Johnson & Cureton, 2016). This maxim instructs people to treat other humans, whether in their own person or that of any other, in every case at the same time as an end, never as a means only. In other words, we should never treat people as objects for an end. This may be understood by Martin Buber as an I-IT relationship. Moreover, it is self-contradictory for you to behave in a way that diminishes human worth when attempting to do something for the greater good of humanity. Treating others as a means deprives them of their right to be the fair and independent judges of their own conduct. It is to elevate and distinguish oneself in some way. We must treat all equally in order to be effective.

- 4. In Kant's Duty Ethics, explain OBLIGATION rather than INCLINATION in the practice of duty? Distinguish the two from each other by example.**

To begin with, Kant's Duty Ethics claims that only acts are done out of a sense of obligation have intrinsic value. He even seems to imply that the greater one's aversion to doing one's obligation, the greater the moral value of the behavior (Shakil, 2021). He gives examples of a seller. “It is the duty of the seller not to overcharge an inexperienced buyer” (Shakil, 2021). Whether it be out of love for the buyer in which the seller wants everyone to have the same chance to purchase the product, or whether it be the law for the seller to charge everyone the

same price for the product. If one acts by inclination alone, then Kant indicates that the action has no moral worth because acting by inclination is for the enjoyment of doing the right thing. Subsequently, every object of inclinations has only a dependent worth since their object would be worthless if the inclinations and desires based on them didn't even exist.

Moving on, Kant refers to the word “inclination” as a generality of our appetites, wishes, sentiments, and self-interest - things that are not within our control. This “inclination” can serve as a motivation for pursuing a morally worthwhile judgment; nevertheless, Kant claims that this motivation lacks real moral value irrespective of whether the action is morally right. Due to his example of the spiritual misanthrope and the calculating shopkeeper, Kant claims that the morality of behavior cannot be determined by the motive of inclination (Shakil, 2021). Apart from that, when faced with a moral issue, the motive of inclination will drive someone to make the correct choice, but this does not ensure that the correct decision will always be made. The correct thing to do should be done solely as you know what the correct thing to do is and you do it for the sake of it being moral, not because you like being nice or for some other underlying purpose.

**5. Reflection Question: In choosing right or wrong, will you consider first your inclination or will you think of your obligation (duty)? Explain by example.**

In an ethical dilemma where I have to choose between right and wrong actions, I tend to consider first my inclinations. It is in our human nature to look out for ourselves first. Self-preservation is primary in terms of the natural law. It comes by instinct. However, when we start to rationalize and think of the situation, we come to think of our obligations in choosing the right or wrong actions. As an example, I am often invited by my friends to hang out and go to a party under the new normal conditions because of the pandemic. My initial reaction to the invitation

would be to say "yes". My inclination tells me to say "yes" because I am bored at home and there is not much to do. However, I would have second thoughts because of my obligations and duty to follow the health protocols for my sake and the safety of the people around me. There is a risk of going out to a party for the Covid 19 virus is still out there and I have not been vaccinated yet. If I will analyze the decision, there is still inclination present in there since I am still thinking of my safety and the safety of my family. Duty and Obligation according to Kant are to follow the rules because it's our duty or obligation. We should not go out to party because it's our duty not to go out and socialize because of the pandemic.

### Works Cited

- Alexander, L., & Moore, M. (2020, October 30). *Deontological Ethics*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-deontological/>.
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (2020). *Autonomy: Normative*. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://iep.utm.edu/aut-norm/>.
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (2021). *Human Dignity*. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://iep.utm.edu/hum-dign/>.
- Johnson, R., & Cureton, A. (2016, July 7). *Kant's Moral Philosophy*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-moral/>.
- Shakil, A. (2021). *Kantian Duty Based (Deontological) Ethics*. Seven Pillars Institute. <https://sevenpillarsinstitute.org/ethics-101/kantian-duty-based-deontological-ethics/>.