

Lawrence Kohlberg quoted an example for his Moral development theory. This example is popularly called the **Heinz's Dilemma**.

Story of Heinz

A story of a middle-aged ordinary middle-class man, called Heinz is considered as an example. **Heinz** is an ordinary man having a wife. His **wife** **suffers** from a **dreadful disease**. Doctors believe that a special drug which was invented recently and is available at the BIG pharma store, can only save his wife.

When Heinz went to buy the drug, the drug-seller costed it around \$2,000 dollars, while the actual manufacturing cost of the drug is \$20 dollars. Heinz borrowed the money from friends and lenders and could finally collect only \$1,000 dollars. Though Heinz pleaded a lot, the **greedy drug-seller** refused to sell the drug at low cost.

Now, Heinz had no other option but to **steal the drug** from the shop to **save the life** of his wife. Is this a better option to do? What is your judgment?



Now, to solve this Heinz's dilemma, a thinker has the following options.

Options for the Thinker

In this section, we will discuss the options for the Thinker.

- Heinz should not steal the drug because it is the disobedience of law.
- Heinz can steal the drug, but should be punished by the law.

Heinz can steal the drug and no law should punish him.

The answer which you choose indicates your moral development. Each answer has its consequences and explanation. Let us go through the answers.

Heinz should not steal the drug because it is the disobedience of law.

This decision makes it impossible for Heinz to save his wife. His wife dies and the rich drug-seller becomes richer. Though the law was obeyed, no moral justice was done. This is a pre-conventional level of moral thinking.

Heinz can steal the drug, but should be punished by the law.

This decision helps Heinz save his wife, but Heinz will be kept in prison. Though Heinz took a moral decision, he had to undergo the punishment. This is a Conventional level of moral thinking.

Heinz can steal the drug and no law should punish him.

This decision lets Heinz save his wife and both of them can live happily. This thinking is based on the thought that the rigidity in law should be rejected and justice should be done on moral grounds. This is a post-conventional level of moral thinking.