

Making Moral Decisions and Deliberations

When we make a mistake, it is important to apologize and make amends. When you do something wrong, it is not enough to say, “I am sorry, I will not do it again.”, but also ask for recompense.

- Acknowledging the full extent of harm caused and actively seeking recompense when we make a mistake is important. By taking responsibility and offering compensation, we uphold the moral obligation to mitigate the consequences of our mistakes and strive towards restoring fairness and balance to those affected.

We need courage because no one (not even the scholar) is free from danger (Rachels). We need courage (inner) even more to be moral!

- Difficulties can catch even the most intelligent and informed people off guard. Making ethical decisions can be challenging. Sometimes, we must go against what is normal or in our best interest. However, having inner strength and conviction is important to staying true to our moral principles and keeping our integrity intact. With courage, we can stand up to external pressures and fears and act ethically even when it is hard.

A CASE FOR DISCUSSION — “On Whistleblowing: Profit vs the Common Good”

- The toxic waste leakage at the Sacramento facility requires ethical decision-making. The company must balance financial concerns with public safety while considering stakeholders’ interests. Options include whistleblowing, negotiating with management, or taking legal action. Ensuring that the chosen course of action aligns with ethical principles and pursues the common good is important. Reporting the issue to regulatory bodies and seeking protection under whistleblower laws is recommended. Ethical decision-making requires moral deliberation, courage, and action grounded in principle.

Case Study (from Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy)

- The case of Harold and Matt is a complex moral dilemma. Harold's killing of Matt is morally wrong under deontological principles, but it could be seen as justifiable from a utilitarian perspective. The morality of Harold's act depends on one's ethical framework, and it is crucial to consider various ethical principles and perspectives with an open mind.

Roles to Play

- When dividing a pizza among John, Paul, Mary, and Annie, consider their needs, contributions, and situations. Allocate portions proportionate to each person's contribution, need, and circumstances, ensuring everyone's needs are reasonably met while acknowledging their respective roles and situations in the pizza-sharing scenario.

Runaway trolley barreling down the railway tracks.

- The classic trolley problem involves choosing between minimizing harm or maximizing utility. Pulling the lever to divert the trolley saves five lives at the expense of one. But moral calculus changes with each scenario. Personal bias towards a loved one does not change the principle of minimizing harm. Guilt or innocence cannot be determined in a crisis. Age and health may influence our response, but minimizing harm and maximizing utility should guide decision-making. Ethical principles must be considered to weigh competing values and interests in challenging situations.