**Circumstances affecting liability:**

* Aggravating, justifying, mitigating, or exempting circumstances.
* Self-defense is justifying; mitigation occurs when provoked; exemption due to emotional rush.

**Factors influencing behaviour:**

* Personal background, education, upbringing, etc., contribute to behavioural preferences.
* Accountability can be modified based on circumstances.

**Modifiers of accountability:**

1. Ignorance: Vincible (rectifiable) and invincible (irremediable).
2. Concupiscence or passion: Can weaken willpower but varies in moral accountability.
3. Fear: Fear reactions are voluntary; fear for self-preservation may exempt liability.
4. Violence: Exerted physical force may diminish moral liability.
5. Habits: Frequent acts, good or bad, influence behaviour and accountability.

**Moral Norms:** Standards used to measure the moral goodness or badness of an action, including divine law, human laws, and human reason.

* Eternal divine law: Objectively governs morality.
* Human laws: Enacted by humans and may not always align with moral law.
* Human reason: Subjective conscience guides moral decisions.

**Conscience:** Internal moral compass guiding decision-making, with considerations for correct or erroneous judgment and the firmness of moral judgment.

* Correct or erroneous based on alignment with objective truth.
* Different types: invincibly erroneous, vincibly erroneous, perplexed, pharisaical.
* Firmness in judgment: Certain, doubtful, scrupulous, lax.

**Square of Moral Evaluation:** It distinguishes between intrinsically good or bad actions and how external factors can influence moral judgment.

* Evaluates human action from four angles: The Act Itself, Intention, Circumstances, The End.
* Actions can be intrinsically good or bad, influenced by intention and circumstance.
  + The Act Itself: This refers to the inherent nature of the action, whether it is intrinsically good or bad. Actions like giving to the poor are considered intrinsically good, while actions like murder are intrinsically bad.
  + The Intention: This pertains to the motivation or intention behind the action. It considers whether the action is done with a good or bad motive. For example, giving money to buy votes may seem like a good action, but if the intention is to manipulate voters, it becomes morally questionable.
  + Circumstances: This angle looks at the context surrounding the action. It considers factors like provocation, self-defense, or coercion, which may mitigate or aggravate the moral responsibility of the actor. For instance, killing in self-defense may be morally justifiable in certain circumstances.
  + The End or Consequence: This refers to the outcome or result of the action. Sometimes, even if the action itself is morally neutral or good, the consequences may turn it into a morally questionable act. For example, lying to protect someone may seem morally justifiable, but if it leads to harm or injustice, the consequence needs to be considered in moral evaluation.

**Understanding Moral Dilemmas**

* Personal Dilemma: Involves harm to oneself or others.
* Organizational Dilemma: Arises within a group or organization, potentially harming members or the organization itself.
* Structural Dilemma: Affects the entire social system, with high-level individuals facing conflicting moral situations.

**Importance of Ethics Study: Developing Moral**

* Compass: Helps individuals make sound judgments and navigate ethical dilemmas.
* Relevance in Professions: Ensures professionals adhere to agreed-upon ethical standards in their work.
* Importance of Rules: Rules guide human behavior, maintain order, and encourage stability in societies.

**Characteristics of Moral Standards**

* Behaviours Affecting Others: Moral standards deeply impact the well-being of individuals.
* Priority Over Self-Interest: Moral standards prioritize considerations beyond personal gain.
* Dependence on Reason: Moral judgments stem from personal perceptions of reasonableness.
* Universality: Moral standards are believed to be applicable universally.
* Objectivity: Moral standards are not influenced by individual or group interests.
* Associated with Emotions: Moral violations often evoke feelings of guilt, remorse, or shame.

**Moral Standards vs. Non-moral Standards**

* Moral Standards: Address right or wrong behaviour, irrespective of specific actions or beliefs.
* Non-moral Standards: Relative standards judged based on agreed guidelines within a group.

**Philosophical Insights on Freedom**

* Gift of Freedom: Marcel views freedom as the ability to make significant choices, given by a divine source.
* Complementarity with Reason: Aristotle sees freedom as essential for moral agency, complemented by practical rationality.
* Absolute Freedom: Sartre posits human freedom as absolute, with individuals responsible for their choices and their consequences.
* Freedom and Responsibility: Lao Tzu emphasizes the harmony between freedom and responsibility, advocating for choices aligned with societal harmony.