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Diversity and Inclusion in Engineering

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Most people would like to think that they would always make ethical choices if they were presented with a moral dilemma. The problem is that it is impossible to know until you are in the situation, and the lines become easily blurred. This is because one can say they are ethical as much as they want, but when it comes down to the fact that they might lose their job, lose their house, or face some other terrible outcome, it becomes much easier to justify immoral actions. This is why we need a Code of Ethics. When the rules are clearly defined and written down, they serve as a great reminder of how one should act.

When I am personally faced with an ethical situation, I believe I have a fairly reliable judgment that will make it much easier to make the ethical decision. My strategy is to first always think about how I would feel if the consequences of my actions were to happen to me. This is a helpful way to reframe the outcome and make it feel more personal. This is because sometimes it can be easy to get caught up in work and not view the customers or others who might be affected as real people. If the first part of my strategy fails, it may be because I am sometimes able to convince myself that I will be able to deal with it or that it would not be that big of a deal. I would then employ the second part of my strategy, which is to picture and think about the outcomes of my actions affecting my close family and friends. This helps me to stop and truly consider whether or not I can be proud of the way I am treating others.

In the discussions, many issues were discussed, but the most common theme was personal safety and privacy. One example I found particularly disgusting was the Ford Pinto. In

this situation, engineers who knew about a fuel tank that was in a dangerous situation ignored it and did not make a change. This caused many undeserving people to suffer the terrible fate of being burned alive if they were involved in a simple rear-end collision. This issue clearly violated the section of the Code of Ethics that involves the welfare of the public. I believe that if the engineers involved in this issue had utilized my issue and imagined a family member, for example, a parent, being burned alive in a car crash because of their neglect, they would reconsider their decisions. One issue that is not as clear-cut is one that involves data related to an Amazon Echo device. This situation involved a suspicious death that took place at someone's home. The police wanted the data to see the data from the Amazon Echo, but the homeowner did not want their privacy violated by turning over the data. In this situation, it is harder to know what the right thing to do is. This is why, as technology evolves, we also need to consider how the Code of Ethics should evolve alongside. I believe that the most sensible thing to do is to require a search warrant in situations like these because then it must first be presented to a judge to decide if there is enough evidence. That will ensure guilty people will still be caught, and hopefully, invading innocent people's privacy will be reduced.

I would say that my opinions on both of the aforementioned situations seemed to be shared by my classmates in the discussion. We all seemed to agree that those responsible for each situation had done wrong and that we would never do anything like that in our lives. But as I previously mentioned, it is easy to say that as someone looking in who has no idea what external pressures might have caused a person to act like this. For this reason, I believe that it is very important to know, understand, and believe in the Code of Ethics so that it may also be upheld even under these immense external circumstances.

The three most relevant virtues to the ethics situations I have discussed and to all moral dilemmas are integrity, honesty, and responsibility. First, I would like to mention that I believe that all 6 of the virtues are truly important and that many of these virtues are related to each other, but these are the three that stand out the most to me. I think that integrity is almost an all-encompassing virtue that contains little pieces of all the other virtues. To me personally, integrity means being honest, faithful, responsible, helpful, and acting with restraint. This is why I believe integrity is the most important virtue. The second most important virtue to me is honesty. This is because if you are honest with yourself and with those around you, it is very hard to make an immoral decision. By telling those around you the truth, you will receive input on whether or not they think it is a good decision. But being honest with yourself is just as important because, most of the time, deep down, you will know whether or not you are making an ethical decision. The third most important virtue to me is responsibility. As I have previously mentioned, a large portion of many of these virtues is covered in integrity, but I believe responsibility is another important one to emphasize. This is because being dependable and trustworthy is important not only in your professional life but also in your personal life. Having these qualities makes you a better friend, family member, worker, and any other role you might have in your life.

I still believe that fidelity, charity, and self-discipline are very important but however, but I value them slightly less for specific ethical situations being discussed. First, I think that fidelity is too similar to virtues like integrity, responsibility, and honesty. Although I recognize the difference, I think that it is trumped by the other in a situation like the Ford Pinto, where lives are at stake. I think charity applies poorly to both the Ford Pinto and the Amazon Echo privacy issue because neither is really about kindness, but instead is like accountability. Lastly, I think

self-discipline is very important, especially in my own personal life; however, I think it doesn't apply in either the crash or privacy situation.

It is not always going to be easy to make the right decision, and everyone makes mistakes. One key part of making a mistake is admitting to it and doing your best to learn from it and change things so that the mistake does not happen again. If the mistakes start to happen eventually, it will become a choice and then a habit, and it will become very difficult to stop. In order to prevent this from happening, it is truly important to strive to practice the ethics and virtues outlined by the Code of Ethics.