**ETHICS:**

The term is derived from the Greek word *ethos* which can mean custom, habit, character or disposition. Ethics is a system of moral principles. They affect how people make decisions and lead their lives. Ethics is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and is also described as moral philosophy.

**Definitions:**

***“Pettifor & Jean (1996****) defined as rightness and wrongness of human behavior”.*

*“****Bart (2011)*** *also defined ethics as moral principles and rules of conduct to judge human behavior”.*

They serve as a compass to [direct](https://www.boundless.com/definition/direct/) how people should behave toward each other, understand and fulfill their obligations to society, and live their lives.   
Ethics covers the following dilemmas:

* how to live a good life
* our rights and responsibilities
* the language of right and wrong
* moral decisions - what is good and bad?

**Why is Ethics important?**

Ethics is a requirement for human life. It is our means of deciding a course of action. Without it, our actions would be random and aimless. There would be no way to work towards a goal because there would be no way to pick between a limitless number of goals. Even with an ethical standard, we may be unable to pursue our goals with the possibility of success. To the degree which a rational ethical standard is taken, we are able to correctly organize our goals and actions to accomplish our most important values. Any flaw in our ethics will reduce our ability to be successful in our endeavors.

### ***Importance of ethics***

Ethics is important to every society as it plays a critical role in shaping the individuals behaviors within a society. Since the dawn of human civilization, men have sought to keep human conduct in check to preserve the peace of society.

As with everything in life, nothing is perfect. Ethics and human conduct are no exception to this rule. Ethics of the old days has been polluted due to changes in the environment and cultural norms. Ethical norms are ever changing because it is contextual and affected by culture, technology, religion and politics. What is ethical in one country may not be ethical in another. This just makes the evaluation of what is ethical and what is not, an even more difficult question to answer. In other words, ethics in today’s society has eroded. The erosion of ethics has spilled over to every aspect of society, such as athletes cheating or taking drugs, and the previously unheard of bribing of Olympics organizing selection committee. There are very serious impacts to the society if the erosion of ethics is not kept in check. The public, whether it is business, friendship or any kind of interaction, functions because humans rely on a varying level of trust, respect for others, and cooperation. If erosion of ethics continues to worsen, nobody will have any trust in others, at all. In the end, society will cease to function like it presently does and everyone will either lock themselves at home, or walk around heavily armed.

Moreover, breaking rules or irregularities invariably is one of the negative consequences of erosion of ethics. Breaking rules can lead to penalties such as fines and imprisonment. Often, some of the unethical behaviour can be hidden by others. However, after a period of time, society could be adversely affected (Janette, 2011). Erosion of ethics is like the spreading of virus; if it is not stopped it will spread and become more and more severe. Families may be torn apart after they find out one of their members are involved in criminal acts. The involved individuals may not only tarnish their own reputation and image, but of their family’s as well.

**Why do we need Ethics?**

♣**Ethics guides us like a map**

•Most moral issues get us pretty worked up because these are such emotional issues we often let our hearts do the arguing while our brains just go with the flow. But there's another way of tackling these issues, and that's where philosophers can come in - they offer us ethical rules and principles that enable us to take a cooler view of moral problems.

♣**Ethics is about feeling for others**

• At the heart of ethics is a concern about something or someone other than us and our own desires and self-interest. • Ethics is concerned with other people's interests, with the interests of society. • So when a person 'thinks ethically' they are giving at least some thought to something beyond themselves.

♣**Ethical values creates integrity**

• High sense of ethics and values makes a man trustworthy and representable. • If a professional individual follows every legal and moral codes, abides by the rules and regulations of the company and tries to create the maximum profit for the client and for the company then the said individual catalyses the increment of integrity of the company as well as himself/herself.

**Where does ethics come from?**

Philosophers have several answers to this question:

* God and religion
* Human conscience and intuition
* a rational moral cost-benefit analysis of actions and their effects
* the example of good human beings
* a desire for the best for people in each unique situation
* political power