I pressed my index finger against the red button, the ticket punched out. I checked my shoulders to see if anyone was watching, a thousand thoughts seemed to rush through my head. I could feel the rapid pulsing of my heart, my breathing was heavy, but I had to do this. As the gate opened, I softly pressed my foot on the accelerator and my car continued through the parking garage. I turned into the aisle my friend was waiting in. I gave him a nod when I pulled up near his car, he started the ignition and followed me. As we approached pay station, I inserted my recently acquired parking ticket and before the gate fell, we both made it out. Yes, I did help my friend evade the fare for parking. It was moral and ethical dilemma I faced. A friend that I had met in the 7th grade, I understood the financial struggle his single mother faced. He had received a full scholarship from the University. Working while pursuing an Electrical Engineering degree was too difficult especially with the scholarship’s GPA requirement. Usually the extra money was enough but with books and an emerging car problem, paying for a parking pass this semester seemed like a luxury.

I choose to help my friend because I had witnessed first- hand the sacrifices his mother made for his education, she worked tirelessly, and this was an opportunity to escape years of poverty. So, when he asked me to help him out the parking garage, I had three options: refuse to help, report him to UHPD, or indeed help him. It was very hard for me to refuse to help a friend I had known for so many years during such circumstances. What he wanted to do was a violation of UH parking policy, but to report him was an option I did not want to consider. It could risk the scholarship that was essential and would put him under more financial strain if there a were ticket or penalty. I did not want to be the reason somebody could not pursue an education. I also know that it is important for the University to collect these fees. Our parking garages, lots, and campus construction are dependent on such high fees due to the lack funding we receive from the state of Texas. To become the University that we all want UH to become, this money is vital to continue and accelerate this growth. The consequences and aftermath of reporting my friend would potentially be life-altering. Finally, to help would come as a cost to the University but to temporarily help out a friend at a vulnerable period seemed to be the right decision. This was a first-time occurrence and we promised ourselves that we would not commit such an act again. This was a very hard decision for me to make personally, there were moral and ethical decisions that I had to take into consideration. I had to not only look at the short-term but evaluate future prospects similar to the lives of the babies that were medically under-risked. I choose these actions because while in the short-term it was not right but after looking at it long-term, it was clear to me that this was the decision I wanted to make.