Thomas Limbu

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Virtue Ethics

After thorough consideration, I believe virtue ethics would be the best ethical theory to guide me in making ethical judgements in my everyday life because I got through a very dark phase in life by practicing moral behavior. Although all four ethical theories offer great philosophies, virtue ethics is the best ethical theory for me because I believe the philosophy can help people more than other ethical theories. I have made numerous ethical decisions throughout my life, but the one that really stands out the most is when I decided to stop lying to myself into doing things that were harming me physically and mentally. I chose virtue ethics because people use its philosophies more often in their daily lives than the other three theories.

Virtue ethics is a process to become a virtuous person that emphasizes moral virtue. It provides us with a guide for living life without prescribing specific rules for resolving ethical dilemmas. A virtue is a character attribute or disposition; for example, honesty, self-control, and compassion are some of the examples of a virtue. Ethics Is a branch of philosophy that governs moral principles of a human being. According to Aristotle, people would most likely make the right judgements when presented with ethical challenges in life if they practice virtuous habits. In sports, professional athletes go through years of training, learning, and honing their skills before they can achieve professional status. Virtue ethics is similar to that, an individual must practice virtue ethics for some time before acquiring it. After virtues are cultivated, they become characteristics of a person. Consequentialism is an ethical philosophy that evaluates human actions in light of their effects. Unlike virtue ethics, consequentialism theory asserts that only the consequence, or outcome of the action determine whether it’s morally good or morally bad. Consequentialism is ultimately about achieving happiness through deeds, whereas virtue ethics is an exercise of one’s characteristic that they need to develop and live with. A commonality between these two ideologies is that they both strive to do the right thing and avoid causing harm to others. Sentimentalism is different from virtue ethics because it bases morality on emotions rather than rationality. Sentimentalism framework begins with emotion, rationality, action, and consequences, whereas the framework of virtue ethics begins with rationality, emotion, action, then consequences. For sentimentalism, factors that distinguish morally good from morally bad actions are based on all four criteria and for virtue ethics, only the first three of its factors determine morally good from morally bad actions. The origin of moral truth for sentimentalism is emotion/feelings, which determines good from evil. Deontology is an ethical system based on adhering to rules, an example would be the constitution of the United States. Deontology differs from virtue ethics because it requires rationality as part of the moral principles. Another factor that differs deontology with virtue ethics is that deontology is based on external rules while virtue ethics focuses on a person’s intrinsic nature.

I vividly remember the day I decided to stop being dishonest to myself and started doing things to improve myself. My entire life I was dedicated to soccer and dreamed of playing it professionally, I fell into a dark place after having to quit the sport due to a major injury I sustained during high school. After that incident, I started feeling emptiness, hopelessness and lost interest in things that I relished before the injury. I stopped taking care of my body and began eating very unhealthily, gaining almost twenty pounds in a month or two because I was no longer motivated to continue being fit. I learned to smoke through some of the people that I was associating with at the time. I kept promising myself that the following day I would do positive things, and the day after I would do the same. My negative behavior pattern became a never-ending cycle in my life. My grandmother was a pivotal figure in my life; she helped me tremendously throughout that phase of my life. After she passed away, I was impacted the same way the injury affected me. On august 10, 2019, a day after my grandmother passed away, I was in my bed, overweight and depressed, then something clicked in my head me as if my grandmother was trying to tell me something. My grandma often told me that to conquer anything in life, we must face it directly without hesitation. I told myself “This is not who I am.” and immediately threw out all of the junk food and smoking accessories. Next, I drove to the nearest gym without thinking twice and purchased two months’ membership for ninety dollars, the amount I would normally spend on junk food and smoking accessories. After working out and leaving the gym, I wanted to never look back to the past ever. Virtue ethics was implemented in this situation because of the transition I made from lying to myself into doing things that harmed me to developing a good habit. I developed good characteristics because I knew my grandmother wouldn’t want to see me in such a state. The love I had for my grandmother triggered something in my head that made me change myself.

I grasped on a couple of lessons through writing this paper. I didn’t realize that I had applied virtue ethics to get through the dark phase in my life until I had to think about it to write this paper. Virtue ethics is the best ethical theory to guide people throughout their everyday lives because it encourages them to improve their lifestyle. Although all three of the ethics theories (sentimentalism, deontology, and consequentialism) philosophies are great, I believe virtue ethics is the best since people implement virtue ethics more frequently in their daily lives. If virtue ethics was promoted more than violence and materialism, this world would become a better place to live for us human beings. The world would thrive at an increasing pace.