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0 ratings0% found this document useful (0 votes)123 viewsEthics deals with principles of moral behavior and examines how individuals interact with others and their environment. It focuses on examining what is right and wrong. Ethics considers both...Al-enhanced title and descriptionSaveSave Intro-to-Ethics-and-Moral-Experience For Later0%0% found this document useful, undefined Let's start with the notion of fairness. Recent research indicates that by the age of three years, children have developed a sense not just of fairness as such but also of merit and desert—the last two of which would potentially lead to unequal allocations without being considered unfair (Blake et al., 2014). Implicit in these findings is that young children are able to determine what is to be equally situated in relation to a particular potential allocation (e.g., to be equal as children for the purpose of distributing some chocolate) and also what it is to be unequal for the purpose of an allocation (i.e., to deserve different and therefore either better or worse treatment). The following vignette touches upon a child's felt sense of unfairness in the context of a changing family structure: My mother divorced my father when I was five years old and then remarried a few years later. I was the only child of her first marriage, and my mother and I were close until she and her second husband had their own children—three additional daughters. In the new family dynamic that developed, my mother did her best to attend to my interests and development, but when push came to shove, my stepfather's preferences and those of his own daughters (not me, his stepdaughter) would carry the day. And in time, even my stepsisters came to see this dynamic as somehow appropriate. Fortunately, my teachers recognized that I had some academic talent, and I was able, over time, to maintain a strong sense of self and even to win a scholarship for college. The contrast between the school and home environments was, for me, profound. Throughout my adult life, what remained with me was a determination to treat everyone fairly and not to show favorites. The remarkable thing to keep in mind here is that judgments of equality and inequality, fairness and unfairness, and merited and unmerited will be made literally thousands of times as children are maturing into adults. Family life, school, sports, and even music (e.g., competition for places and then "seats" in an orchestra) all have their comparative, competitive, and allocational elements. And these more or less daily exposures to matters of fairness and equality are punctuated at longer intervals by competitions that will, in effect, determine one's life prospects. Included in this context are determinations as to who is better or best in events ranging over the school, organization, region, state, or country, or who merits acceptance by particular colleges, universities, or professional schools. Questions of fairness are implicit in all these situations, which may themselves raise important questions of public policy. Witness the long-standing dispute in the United States concerning affirmative action, a policy—recently rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*—that is designed to give some extra preference to those who have been economically or socially disadvantaged. The question of fairness is central, with both sides of the controversy seeing themselves as treated unfairly. Note, too, that affirmative action is controversial not just at the college level but throughout the school years as towns and cities endeavor (or not) to make places in competitive programs or in selective schools available to disadvantaged students. What the matter of affirmative action makes clear is that overarching social and political frameworks can be characterized as fair or unfair. Questions of social justice and economic distribution, for example, are ultimately matters of fairness, falling along the continuum of fair treatment and fair distributions that all of us become familiar with, and begin to learn about, early in childhood. What we see here is that judgments of fairness and unfairness can be made from various perspectives. A person might judge one's own actions to be fair or unfair; the same person might judge the actions of another person, whether a family member, teacher, coach, or school or government official, to be fair or unfair; and social and political institutions can also be characterized as fair or unfair, though the terminology used might be that of justice and injustice. In the following vignette, we see how matters of fairness can be intertwined with the challenges and problems of everyday experience. During my first year in college, I tried out for the university orchestra. I had just turned down a scholarship (for playing flute) at a well-known school of music, so I was hopeful about the audition. I was invited to join the orchestra, but I was disappointed to learn that I would be only second chair. Under most circumstances, being offered the position of second chair would be considered an honor for a first-year student, but the situation was not that straightforward. I was confident that I was a significantly better musician than the person positioned as first chair, and the faculty member who led and conducted the orchestra recognized that I was, too. Instead of simply sending me a pro forma notice about the success of my audition, the conductor invited me to speak with him about the offer. He was very clear that I was definitely the better musician, but he said that the current first chair had had that position for the two previous years. Against that background, the conductor said that demoting the current first chair would be a horrible blow to him but that he (the conductor) also couldn't ask me to play (or, really, to tolerate playing) second chair. He therefore said that he would understand my not wanting to join the orchestra during my first year but that he would surely be in a position to offer me first chair the following year. I was struck by the generosity and good sense—and fundamental fairness—of this offer. And against that background I decided that the conductor had fully acknowledged my talent and tried to reach a fair, humanly responsive accommodation all around. I realized as much, so I did join the orchestra that year and play second chair. What's clear in this example (drawn from the college career of a future doctor), and what we need to keep in mind as we consider teaching and learning in health care ethics, is that the notion of fairness/equality/justice, as well as the other moral concepts discussed in this chapter, is one that is deeply embedded in our life experience and in how we encounter and evaluate our encounters with individuals and institutions. In the example above, the competition for positions in the orchestra obviously raised, in the first instance, matters of fairness and relative merit. But these issues were, in turn, tied in with the expectations of the existing first chair, with the conductor's efforts to nurture the members of orchestra and protect them from harm, and with the conductor's recognition that, on the human level, he had placed the new flautist in a difficult, even painful position. Of special note is that the "solution" to the situation was not via any form of ethical reasoning as such but through the conductor's creative problem-solving and the new flautist's assessment of whether he had been decently treated and with due respect, and whether he could accommodate himself emotionally to playing second chair when he obviously deserved to be first chair. Also, as is typical of many ethical situations in clinical health care, there was no right or wrong answer. The solution reflects the capacities of the persons involved to navigate through the situation and to reach a mutually acceptable accommodation. **Autonomy and Related Concepts**The concept of autonomy has a very specific, well-known role regarding patients' decisions in health care, and it also has a distinguished history within philosophy dating back to the moral writings of Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Kant, 2011, 2015). Those particular, technical interpretations of autonomy, however, are not our concerns here. We are concerned, instead, with a broader notion of autonomy that is closely intertwined with other concepts such as freedom and liberty, and even more broadly with privacy, confidentiality, and secrets. The phenomena relating to this broader notion of autonomy permeate our lives and our interactions with others, day in and day out. The demand and respect for individual independence is a powerful influence on behavior. Efforts to achieve and maintain autonomy color our actions lifelong, beginning in infancy and reaching even into and through senescence. The growth of autonomy in the life of any particular person is interconnected with other elements of the self and is not necessarily straightforward. When I was a senior in high school and already accepted to study the next year at a prestigious university, my English teacher told me to stop being so nice. He said that I needed to stand up for my own ideas; if I didn't, I'd be crushed by the competition the next year and thereafter. What I realized then is that my efforts to accommodate to others and to avoid conflict were actually compromising my own intellectual and emotional independence and growth, both short and long term. Whereas the autonomy of medical decision-making and the autonomy of Kant's moral theory are specifically oriented toward individual decisions and reasoning, respectively, what we see in this vignette is that the broader sense of autonomy is inherently social in character. It concerns the degree and manner in which we see ourselves in relation to others. It also concerns the manner in which other persons or institutions limit, support, or protect our range of action and, by the same token, leave us open, or not, to act in pursuit of our own goals and preferences. Understood in this broader sense, autonomy—concerns about individual freedom and potential reasons, good or bad, for limiting or interfering with it—plays a central role in many relationships, such as those involving families (e.g., between siblings, spouses, and parent and child), schools (e.g., between teacher and student), and careers (e.g., between supervisor and employee). We see this dynamic at work in the following vignette. During my elementary school years (through sixth grade), I spent my summers at an overnight camp where we did a lot of camping and canoeing. A few years later, after my first year in high school, a friend (with similar camping experience) and I decided that we would like to take a wilderness camping trip on our own, which would, at the outset, require taking a 16-hour trip on public transportation. Of greater concern to our parents, the trip would involve a full week of camping and canoeing, including some long portages, with no supervision and no way of contacting anyone in case we needed help. Our fathers both refused permission, but they also said that they might decide differently in a couple of years. So, during the summer before our last year in high school, we asked again, and were met with positive, even supportive responses from our fathers. The trip was memorable, but both my friend and I realized that we had gained a certain maturity in the intervening two years, and that that had actually helped us through a couple of tight spots during the trip itself (including in dealing with each other). We both also came to understand how much our readiness to take the trip had made it such a success and enabled us to grow from the experience. In this vignette and in all the settings discussed in the preceding paragraph, one of the central questions concerning autonomy concerns the degree of freedom or responsibility another person can "handle." Virtually any demand for our own greater autonomy, as well as virtually any decision about whether to extend greater autonomy to another, raises questions about the capacity, broadly construed, of the person involved to act effectively within particular constraints or to have a reasonable chance of succeeding at any particular task. And because we are, in our personal and professional relationships, regularly assessing and often pushing against the limits of what we or others can do or should be able to do, assessments of capacity (our own and that of others) are important and recurrent aspects of our lives—individual, social, and institutional/organizational. Another important aspect of an individual's freedom of action and personal or protected space is the protection of information that is considered confidential, secret, or private. Confidentiality and secrecy are relatively straightforward in that the information is protected by established conventions or institutions (as with confidential information between a lawyer and client or between a health care professional and patient) or by explicit understandings (as when we tell a friend something "in confidence" or "as a secret"). Privacy is more complicated because there are generally no explicit decisions to keep information private (unless, of course, one person specifically directs another to keep the information private). Privacy is, as it were, a moving target. We may tell our spouses or relatives of close friends something that we otherwise take to be private and expect not to be communicated to others. In other cases, information may be more widely known but would generally still not be communicated to one's boss, one's parents, or a large group of coworkers, or to an employer, such as a bank, school, or government agency. In such cases, "private" information is sometimes better described as "personal" information, but the underlying issue is the same: whether information is considered private or personal, it's just not their business to know. Notably, we make such judgments all the time, but usually just by making ongoing decisions, as we talk, to provide certain information and not other information. In effect, we self-regulate, because we generally sense what to disclose, and what not to disclose, to particular persons about ourselves and about others. Also worth noting is that each of us tends to develop a habitual level of comfort with disclosure about ourselves. Some of us are more private, and therefore less forthcoming, than others. As with fairness, one's preprofessional experience with autonomy and related concepts is extensive and varied. Likewise, this experience, including the innumerable associated judgments, is ongoing within ourselves as individuals and in relation to other persons and institutions/organizations. Notably, our impression is that the emergence and explosive growth of the internet and of social media have destabilized what was previously a slowly evolving notion of privacy in Western democracies. **Truthfulness/Truthfulness**, when it is once learned as a norm—which is early in life—has an unusual subsequent history. Once we've learned how important it is to tell the truth, we start learning when, for one reason or another, we will not tell the truth, not all of it (or any of it), or shade the truth. One type of situation has already been touched upon above. In dealing with private or personal information, we make decisions all the time about what to tell or not tell others. And sometimes the conflicts between truth telling and other moral values or rules can be pretty stark. In philosophy, a conflict frequently discussed in the academic literature concerns what you should do (hypothetically, of course) if, during World War II, a Nazi knocks at your door and demands to know if you are hiding a Jew (which, in fact, you are) (Carson, 2010). Less dramatic but just as conflictual are cases in which you promised someone never to divulge some fact x, and then someone asks you directly whether you know anything about x. Also of note are situations in which you don't want someone else to know the truth or the whole truth, and in which you therefore try to deflect someone's attention or even to mislead while nevertheless stating nothing but the truth. Over time, each of us develops skills in dealing with the truth and in determining how much information and how much detail, and at what level of complexity, is needed in order to provide a truthful and, in the context, complete or acceptable answer. We determine what we know; we take account of the setting (family, friends, acquaintances, strangers, schoolwork); we judge what information we want to convey; and we communicate accordingly. The potential complexities and variations are as complex as the diversity of human social interactions. And it would be naive to ignore the phenomena of lies and white lies, which can themselves vary from the very well-intended (as in the case, discussed above, of lying to a Nazi about the presence of a Jew) to the despicable (as in testifying to the police that you saw someone you despise, but who is completely innocent, commit a murder). When I was working as a "summer associate" for a well-known law firm, I was given a research/writing assignment by a midlevel attorney. As background, memorandums are written for internal consumption, to be used in determining the strengths and weakness of a client's legal presentation. Briefs, by contrast, are intended for external consumption, with the aim of presenting the very strongest legal position in support of one's client. In describing my assignment, the midlevel attorney described two issues that arose in the firm's defense of a particular client. She noted that one of the issues should be analyzed in a memorandum and one as a brief. This struck me as odd, so I immediately asked for confirmation that she intended one of the assignments to be presented as a brief, not in a memorandum (like the other). She reiterated the assignment and said I was correct: one memorandum, one brief. Some weeks later, I was called into the office of the senior attorney in charge of the case and asked why I hadn't highlighted that there was a potentially weak point in our client's position; the attorney had been surprised when the opposing attorneys presented an argument, with legal support, that wasn't included in my written analysis. I told him that I had been asked to write a brief, not a memorandum, and that that's exactly what I had done. I thought the matter was closed until my exit interview at the end of the summer. The midlevel attorney was present, as was the hiring attorney and also a midlevel attorney who very much wanted me to receive an offer and return the next year. The hiring attorney asked me whether it was possible that I had misunderstood what the midlevel attorney had asked me to do and that I was simply mistaken about being asked to write a brief. The problem was, of course, that I would have had to deny my own very clear experience that I had specifically been asked to write a brief rather than a memorandum (a request that had surprised me) and that the midlevel attorney had reiterated that she wanted a brief (which surprised me again). Although the attorney present who wanted me to return the next year said outright that I should just say "yes, it was possible," I knew that it wasn't. I answered no, and despite the quality of my work throughout the summer, I received no offer (as I expected, given my response). My own take-away from this experience is that the midlevel attorney in question had made a mistake and decided that, for one reason or another, she would attribute the mistake to me. That is, for self-interested reasons, she refused to own the mistake. What we see in this vignette is the complexity of factors potentially at work in determining whether to tell the truth. The summer associate told the truth because he knew it was the truth and also knew that he would, by doing that, likely preclude his receiving an offer to begin working the following year as a full-time, first-year associate (and at a leading law firm). The midlevel associate either lied or had convinced herself that she was right, likely because she would herself be called to account for her mistake (which did actually cause some embarrassment to the senior lawyer in charge of the case). The midlevel lawyer who wanted the summer associate to receive an offer obviously felt that a white lie was justified in the circumstances. And the hiring partner ended up siding with the midlevel lawyer who had issued the mistaken request—possibly because, to him, the insistence on telling the truth represented an act of defiance, which is not a valued character trait in large, hierarchical law firms. Telling the truth is not always as easy or as straightforward as it looks. **Trust/Reliance/Respect/Reciprocity/Truthfulness** (as discussed above) is tied in, *de facto* if not conceptually as such, with the interrelated concepts of trust, reliability, respect, and reciprocity. Truthful communication is the foundation for all four of these phenomena. If a person isn't recognized as a truth teller, then trust, reliance or reliability, (mutual) respect, and reciprocity are all potentially compromised. Note, however, that a person can pick and choose which persons or institutions/organizations to be truthful to and therefore, in turn, which persons or institutions/organizations are ones to which he or she relates with trust, reliance, respect, and reciprocity. For example, an invertebrate liar might nevertheless be regularly and reliably truthful to certain family members, friends, institutions, or organizations and consequently be seen as reliable, as worthy of trust and respect, and as capable of reciprocating, in that particular context. Trust, reliance, respect, and reciprocity are at the very center of our social relationships, including those with family, friends, and colleagues (including, of course, professional colleagues in health care). Social relationships collapse without these features, as do institutions and organizations of all types. More broadly (and as the current, worldwide political situation makes all too clear), democratic or other forms of participatory political institutions equally fail if these qualities are lost. The following vignette illustrates how a clinician—in this case a family therapist—learned from failures in his own childhood regarding reliance, reciprocity, and autonomy. My parents were immigrants. Their culture of origin was very hierarchical and oriented toward authority. Respect for, and obedience to, elders was highly valued. Carving out one's own voice and independent sense of self was difficult in this context. At one point in time, when my parents were particularly frustrated by my apparent lack of obedience, they sent me to talk with (and be lectured by) the minister of our church. The minister did not ask me for my point of view or for any explanation as to what may have been the problem. And even if he had, I would not have had the capacity—the emotional resilience—to be able to answer his questions. He simply told me to obey my parents. He quoted Ephesians 6:1–3 (King James Bible, 2017): Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right, Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Sometime later, during a service, I heard this verse quoted yet again. This time the reading included the final line of the verse, Ephesians 6:4: And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I remember reflecting at the time that the minister had set out only one part of the truth and that he had failed to implement what would have been, in effect, a family intervention, with the reciprocal responsibilities of all parties being brought to light. I carried this experience into my life as a family therapist. It informs my clinical practice to this day. In my daily practice, I work hard to ensure that during family sessions, children and adolescents, as well as their parents, have the opportunity to voice their positions and points of view. I try to make sure that the conversations that ensue include the voice of each family member. Doing Good/Avoiding Harm/Avoiding harm—initially experienced as pain or discomfort—is one of the most primitive motivations. From our very earliest days, we recoil from anything that harms us. It's part not just of the human condition but of the sentient condition. Also, while we are still very young, we come to understand the notion of harm to others. We are urged not to hit or punch others, not to hurt our pets, and not to hurt or play too rough with our siblings or friends. These are basic lessons in growing up, and we continue—lifelong—to be aware of our potential for harming others. And except for those who have had especially unfortunate childhoods and who obtain some psychological benefit from acting out and hurting other people, we generally try to avoid doing harm to others. Doing good is more complicated. For some, blessed with kindly spirits, doing good and being generous to others comes naturally, even from a young age. For others, such habits and attitudes develop with maturity. For yet others, these develop incompletely; the importance or moral salience of doing good is recognized only in certain circumstances or in relation to particular persons, organizations, or tasks. And for yet others, doing good and being generous simply fail to connect with the self. These habits and attitudes with regard to doing good and being generous become further entrenched, though with the possibility for change, in social encounters throughout our lives. These habits and attitudes define our stance toward others and toward the world, and, over time, they become character traits. Also, as with the dimensions of moral experience discussed above, both other individuals and organizations/institutions can be assessed in terms of avoiding harm and doing good. Later in the book we discuss the implications for health care training and health care clinicians. For now, two points are worth making. First, it is reasonable to assume that, through their choice of a profession, health care trainees are predominantly persons who are strongly motivated to do good and help others, though it wouldn't necessarily follow that they are therefore generous, too. The two traits are separate. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that, insofar as trainees' or clinicians' professional responsibilities are concerned, the desire to do good (that is, to take care of patients) will define their characteristic approach to their professional work. Within such bounds, generosity or a lack of it are possible attitudes, and no health care professional is necessarily either better or worse because they are not, as a matter of character, generous. Second, being subject to an obligation to do good or to help others is not the same as acting on any such obligation. Immoral actions of one kind or another are common, of course, but even when people nominally accept or embrace an obligation or moral dictate, they may nevertheless violate it. Organized religions typically include obligations to do good and help others (e.g., consider the Parable of the Good Samaritan within Christianity), but research is at best inconclusive whether religious persons are more likely to do good or to act selflessly or with generosity than agnostics or atheists—who, by definition, do not see themselves as subject to the demands of organized religion. And some recent research suggests that agnostics and atheists, without any formal religious obligation, are likely to act just as well as (or perhaps even better than) theists (Saslow et al., 2013). In any event, feeling subject to a formal obligation, religious or otherwise, is no guarantee that a person will act as the obligation directs. Arguably, what matters most is a person's character and determination to do good and help others. **Solidarity**In the United States, solidarity is most often thought of, and invoked, in the context of labor organizations and their role in protecting and advancing the interests of workers, but it also plays a similar role when no specific labor organization is involved. The employees in any particular organization, including health care organizations, might feel and promote a sense of solidarity. The notion of solidarity is often invoked on an *ad hoc* basis for particular causes, as in solidarity with Black Americans, women, teachers, or some other group in the wake of some crisis or crime (e.g., the death of George Floyd [Burch et al., 2021]). And athletic teams, for example, are well-known for promoting and building upon "team spirit," which can be understood as a form of solidarity. But in Europe, solidarity is a broader, more inclusive notion—a general ethical notion not specifically tied to any specific context (such as one's employment as a particular type of worker, vs. trade-unioned unions in the United States). Solidarity is one of the rights included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (European Union, 2000), which defines the rights guaranteed to all persons in EU member states. The Charter's chapter on solidarity includes all the following: Workers' right to information and consultation within the undertaking Right of access to placement services Protection in the event of unjustified dismissal Fair and just working conditions Prohibition of child labour and protection of young people at work Family and professional life Social security and social assistance Health care The intended scope of solidarity is evident in the last three items, which mandate efforts to achieve broad social aims—and throughout the entire European Union, with no limitations regarding applicability. The course is organized according to the three (3) main elements of the moral experience: (a) agent, including context – cultural, communal, and environmental; (b) the act; and (c) reason or framework (for the act). Which moral ideal is almost synonymous with self mastery This is the ideal of exercising control over one's desires? Socrates considered temperance o be almost synonymous with self-mastery. The temperate person is the one who exercises control over his or her desires and thereby escapes domination by them. What makes experience a moral experience? We define moral experience as "Encompassing a person's sense that values that he or she deem important are being realized or thwarted in everyday life. This includes a person's interpretations of a lived encounter, or a set of lived encounters, that fall on spectrums of right-wrong, good-bad or just-unjust". What is an example of moral experience? While morals tend to be driven by personal beliefs and values, there are certainly some common morals that most people agree on, such as: Always tell the truth. Do not destroy property. Have courage. What is the relationship between individual moral choices and moral character? So far, we have seen that one's actions reflect one's character, and they also form one's character. Consequently, the morality of one's actions also reflects and forms one's character. Good moral actions come from a good character and form a good character. Bad moral actions come from and form a bad character. What is practical wisdom in ethics? Practical wisdom has an ethical virtue known as *Eudaimonia*, which is 'the capacity to act based on reasoning with regard to things that are good or bad for humanity' (Thompson, 2017, p. 212). One might know what is the practically reasonably way to act, but choose not to (Ellett, 2012, p. What is Metaethical moral relativism? Metaethical Moral Relativism (MMR). The truth or falsity of moral judgments, or their justification, is not absolute or universal, but is relative to the traditions, convictions, or practices of a group of persons. What is anti moral realism? In the philosophy of ethics, moral anti-realism (or moral irrealism) is a meta-ethical doctrine that there are no objective moral values or normative facts. It is usually defined in opposition to moral realism, which holds that there are objective moral values, such that a moral claim may be either true or false. What is utilitarian reasoning? Utilitarianism is an ethical theory that determines right from wrong by focusing on outcomes. Utilitarianism holds that the most ethical choice is the one that will produce the greatest good for the greatest number. It is the only moral framework that can be used to justify military force or war. What gives us a sense of control over our body? Our deep subconscious mind thus gives us strong biochemical prods when we face some kind of danger (such as the fight-or-flight reaction). Other needs that lead to a sense of control include: A sense of certainty. Completion of outstanding things, so we don't have to worry about them.. Understanding of how things work. What does it mean to have a lot of self-control? People with a lot of self-control have the motivation and ability to override their unwanted impulses and desires. So, you wake up one day and realize just how little control you exercise over yourself. How can you get a sense of control over others? You can get a sense of control by taking control and acting, which is effectively about power. You can also get a sense of control by ceding it to others, which requires trust. Trust and control support one another. Not only does trust cede control, but the need for a sense of control drives us to seek trust... What is the examination of moral psychology? The examination of moral psychology involves the study of moral philosophy. However, moral psychology is more concerned with how a person makes a right or wrong decision, rather than what sort of decisions should be made. Character, reasoning, responsibility, altruism, among other areas, also come into play....