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Ethical decision-making

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"All those in favour say 'Aye'."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

"Aye."

Ethics is ...

- Standards of behaviour that tell us how human beings ought to act in the many situations in which they find themselves - as friends, parents, children, citizens, business people, teachers, professionals, and so on.



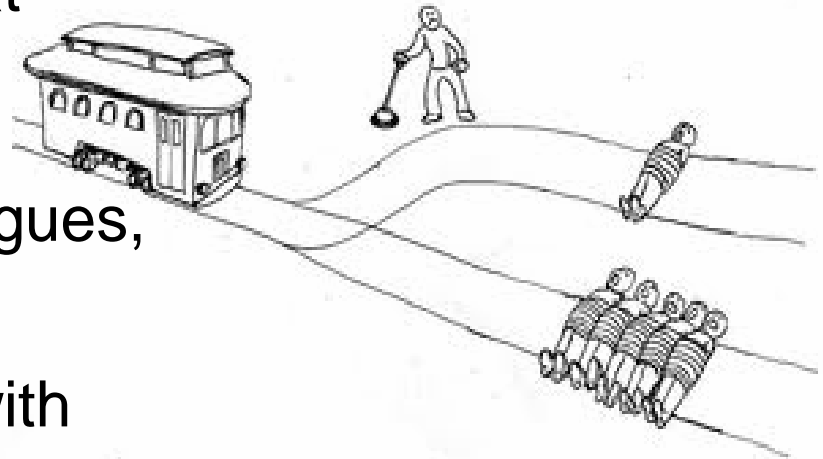
- Ethics has popularly been named “moral values” or “community standards”
- In a professional setting ethics is better understood as “standards set by the profession”
- Professional bodies have their own “Code of ethics”



Five Approaches of Ethical Standards

The Utilitarian Approach

- The ethical action is the one that produces the greatest good and does the least harm for all stakeholders e.g. clients, colleagues, the community.
- The utilitarian approach deals with consequences; it tries both to increase the good done and to reduce the harm done.



Calvin and Hobbes

by NEWMAN

HOW COME WE PLAY WAR AND NOT PEACE?

TOO FEW ROLE MODELS.

I'LL BE THE FEARLESS AMERICAN DEFENDER OF LIBERTY AND DEMOCRACY..

.. AND YOU CAN BE THE LOATHSOME GODLESS COMMUNIST OPPRESSOR.

WE'RE AT WAR, SO IF YOU GET HIT WITH A DART, YOU'RE DEAD AND THE OTHER SIDE WINS, OK?

GOTCHA.

GO!

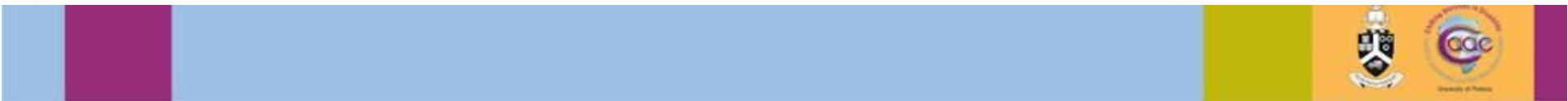
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KIND OF A STUPID GAME, ISN'T IT?

3-23



The Rights Approach

- The ethical action is the one that best protects and respects the moral rights of those affected.
- Humans have the ability to choose what they do with their lives.
- They have a right to be treated as ends and not merely puppets where the end justifies the means.
- Choices about e.g. what kind of life to lead, to be told the truth, not to be injured, to a degree of privacy.



Calvin and Hobbes

M. WATKINSON



GET WHAT YOU CAN WHILE THE GETTING'S GOOD - THAT'S WHAT I SAY! MIGHT MAKES RIGHT! THE WINNERS WRITE THE HISTORY BOOKS!



The Fairness or Justice Approach

- Ethical actions should treat all human beings equally, or if unequally, then fairly based on some standard that is defensible.
- E.g. people are paid more based on their greater contribution to the organization, and we say that is fair.

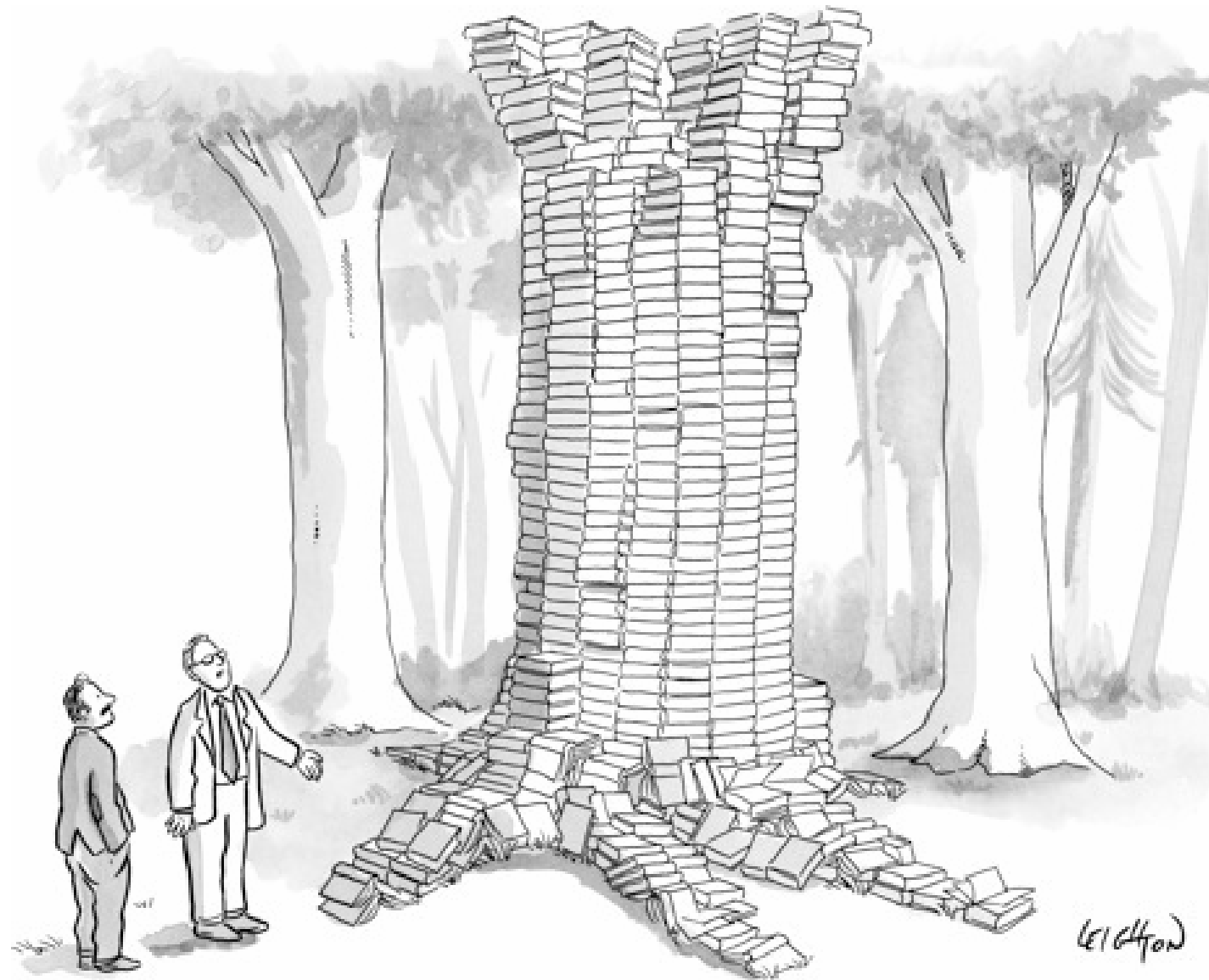




The Common Good Approach

- This approach suggests that the interactions with your community are the basis of ethical reasoning.
- Respect and compassion for all others, especially the vulnerable, are requirements of such reasoning.
- This approach draws attention to marginalized groups such as PwD.





"We used your unsold copies to build a tree, but it's not the same."

The Virtue Approach

- Virtues are dispositions and habits that enable us to act according to the highest potential of our character.
- Honesty, courage, compassion, generosity, tolerance, love, fidelity, integrity, fairness, self-control, and prudence are all examples of virtues.
- Virtue ethics asks of any action, "What kind of person will I become if I do this?" or "Is this action consistent with my acting at my best?"





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5 Approaches of Ethical Standards

The utilitarian approach	Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm?
The rights approach	Which option best respects the rights of all stakeholders?
The fairness or justice approach	Which option treats people equally or proportionately?
The common good approach	Which option best serves the community as a whole, not just some members?
The virtue approach	Which option leads me to act as the sort of person I want to be?



- We may not agree on the **content** of some of these specific approaches.
- We may not agree to the same set of human and civil **rights**.
- We may not agree on what constitutes the **common good**.
- We may not agree on what is a good and what is a harmful **action**



- **Therefore it is more important to focus on how to make the right decisions, given a specific situation.**
- **Having a method for ethical decision making is essential.**



A Framework for Ethical Decision Making



Scenario 1

‘Margi, at the age of three, has been going to nursery school for four months. The nursery school employs a multi-professional team, including OT, SLP & PT. The teacher has observed that Margi is either unresponsive or slow to react. As the result of a few months of observation, the teacher suspects that Margi may have a hearing loss and suggests to the family that they seek professional input. But the mother responded that she couldn’t relay this information to the father because of his own chronic health problems.

What would you do if you were the teacher?’



Is there a choice between “good” and “bad”?

Are there effectiveness, efficiency or legal implications?

Could the decision be damaging for any of the stakeholders?

Recognize an Ethical Issue

Get the Facts

What subjective and objective information is available?

Do I know enough to make a decision?

Who are the stakeholders?

Were all stakeholder consulted?

What are the options for action?

Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm?

Which option best respects the rights of all stakeholders?

Which option treats people equally or proportionately?

Which option best serves the community as a whole, not just some members?

Which option leads me to act as the sort of person I want to be?

Evaluate Alternative Actions

Make a Decision and Act

Which option do you feel addresses the situation best?

Which options agrees best with previous decisions made?

If I told someone I respect, or told a television audience, which option I have chosen, what would they say?

How can my decision be implemented with great care and attention to the concerns of all stakeholders?

How did my decision turn out?

What have I learned from this specific situation?

Reflect on the Outcome

Ethical Decision Making Report Form

Facts Objective information :	Options		Ethical considerations				Therapeutic considerations		
	List:		Good	Rights	Equality	Community	Personal	Effective	Efficient
Subjective information :									
Stakeholders	Consulted	Not Consulted	Implementation steps:						
Reflection on outcome:									



Facts

Objective information :

- Multi-professional team
- Margi's age 3 (Free medical care)
- Pre-school
- Teacher is concerned
- Teacher has spoken to mother

Subjective information

- Hearing loss??
- Report on behavioural issues
- Mother says she could not talk to father
- Mother says father has health issues



Stakeholders	Consulted	Not Consulted
Teacher	yes	
Margi		No
Mother		No
Father		No
Multi-professional team		No

Options	Ethical considerations					Therapeutic considerations	
	Good	Right	Equality	Community	Personal	Effective	Efficient
1. Re-confront the mother and get her consent					?		
2. Get the team and the parent together and negotiate	x	x	x		?		
3. Organise with the local clinic/hospital to screen the whole school for hearing problems				x	?		
4. If there is financial problems at home, you can convince the parents to take her to the local clinic/hospital for a hearing test, seeing that she still has free medical available					?		

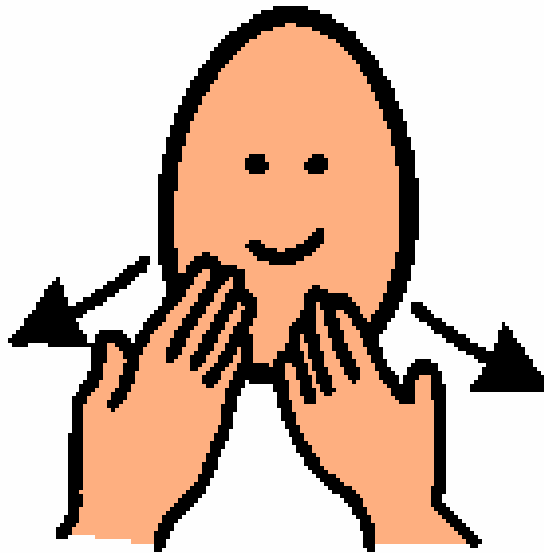


Options	Ethical considerations					Therapeutic considerations	
	Good	Right	Equality	Community	Personal	Effective	Efficient
List							
1. Reconfront the mother and get her consent					?		
2. Get the team and the parent together and negotiate	X	X	X		?		
3. Organise with the local clinic/hospital to screen the whole school for hearing problems				X	?		
4. If there is financial problems at home, you can convince the parents to take her to the local clinic/hospital for a hearing test, seeing that she still has free medical available					?		

Implementation steps:

Reflection on outcome





Thank you

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