Entrepreneurial Ethics

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CHAPTER 1
MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

B usiness ethics—the study of the way in which morality is practiced in the everyday world of business activity—is shaped by theories, research, and reflection from the fields of both philosophy and psychology, as well as other academic disciplines. In this first chapter of *Entrepreneurial Ethics,* we will investigate the way in which ethics, understood as a reflective, rational practice aimed at your personal moral growth and development, emerged out of ancient Greek philosophical schools and influenced the development of western European culture and morality down to our present day.

Of course, it will be impossible to survey the entire field of ethics in this text, and such an aspiration would be inconsistent with our more limited and practical goal of engendering moral value enlightenment aimed at your personal moral growth and development. You don't need to become a Doctor of Philosophy to accomplish that. Therefore, instead of attempting to provide an exhaustive or comprehensive account of the history of philosophical ethics, we will take from this

ever-expanding field what we need in order to actively engage and open up the sub-field of business ethics from a phenomenological, practical, and personal growth-oriented perspective.

Since the applied practice of business ethics does belong to the larger field of philosophical ethics, however, and since ethics is traditionally one of the main divisions of philosophy, a brief reflection on the practice of philosophy from an ethical perspective should be a good place from which to begin our studies.

Philosophy: the birthplace of Ethics

Philosophy, as the well-known literal definition of the term suggests, is the love (*philo*) of wisdom (*sophia*). But how that practice of loving wisdom works in everyday practice, and what, exactly, is meant by "wisdom" as the goal of that practice, is not immediately clear from the literal definition of the term "philosophy." It does open the door to the phenomenon of moral philosophy, however, and certainly gets us going in the right direction. Philosophy is, indeed, the love of wisdom. But what is wisdom? We will have to take a roundabout course to get to an answer to that broad question.

From a more practical perspective, we could say that philosophy uses reason to understand reality and answer fundamental questions about knowledge, life, morality and human nature. That's a pretty good working definition and will get us started. Note the emphasis on the practice of using reason and logic in doing philosophical 'research'. It will be helpful to look more closely at what we mean by reason or reasoning, and, more generally, rationality. Are reason and rationality sufficient in the realm of morality for determining correct moral action? Social Psychology will show us that non-rational elements and unconscious, situational nudges of all kinds influence how we act and what we decide, even though we feel we are acting autonomously. So, we will need to look beyond the merely rational.

Sometimes it is said that philosophy seeks to know the essential nature of things. To seek the essence of a thing means being able to see what is happening with that particular thing as it is, free from bias and prejudice. It means allowing the phenomenon to appear as it is rather than as we want it to be. Easier said than done. Right now, for example, as we are trying to see what philosophy is, it would be easy to come up with an arbitrary, abstract definition of what philosophy is and then impose that definition on the phenomenon of philosophy and announce: Here is what philosophy "is" essentially. But, such a rationalistic and authoritarian approach to getting at the "essence" of philosophy (or anything else) might miss it altogether.

Rather, the phenomenological approach used in this text will look at phenomena such as "philosophy" from various perspectives, as we are doing right now, without conceding that any one perspective is the absolutely right or only correct perspective. We will have to see how this phenomenological, perspectival approach to Ethics avoids falling into moral relativism.

For me, personally, philosophy is a way of life that involves putting into existential practice the moral ideas, beliefs and values that result from conscious reflection and deliberation, and which are always oriented toward living the best possible life. What I like about this definition is the way that philosophical practice is understood to be an interwoven, creative part of my active, engaged, everyday life engagements and not merely some disconnected abstraction floating in the clouds somewhere. The study and practice of philosophy should produce something of real, practical value for you. Otherwise, why bother?

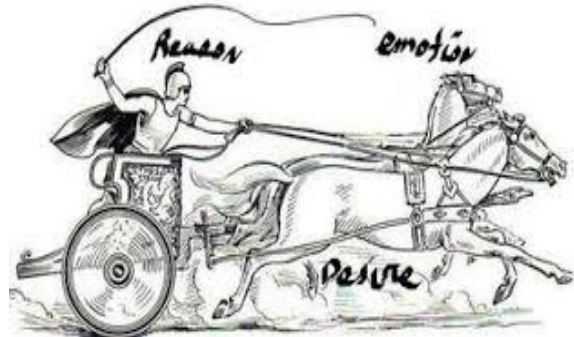# Why Business Students Should Study Philosophy

Anders Poulsen

So, we should consider this question right here at the outset of our studies: Is there any value to studying Philosophy, Psychology and Ethics for students of Business? Anders Poulsen, Editorial Director for GRASP magazine, thinks that, yes, there is value in such study. He explains his reasons for believing why future business leaders will surely benefit from the study of Philosophy in his short but insightful essay "Why Future Business Leaders Need Philosophy." Here is a brief excerpt:

> "This is the essence of the discipline of philosophy. It teaches you not what to think, but how to think. It examines the enduring fundamental questions concerning human life, society, ethics and knowledge, just to name a few. Whereas, the business discipline represents a definite ordering of the world through the fabrication of concepts, methods and models as a way to reduce complexity, philosophy explores its conceptual framework and developments…. By pondering the questions which are beyond the scope of business, *philosophy can broaden the reflectivity-horizon of future business leaders* [emphasis added] to help them manage complexity and make sound decisions, not only in the purview of good business, but also in accordance with the needs of society." [1]

Broadening the "reflectivity-horizon" of students was certainly the purpose of rational discourse for the early Greek philosophers. Reasoning was understood to be guided by the *Logos*, logic. The passions, emotions, and desires were thought to be a hindrance to reasoning. This pre-eminence of rationality for the Greeks is reflected in Plato's image of the human soul depicted as a chariot pulled by two cantankerous horses. The two horses represent the non-rational aspects of human beings, passion, emotion, desire, etc.   The charioteer represents Reason whose job is to tame and control the non-rational horses and make them amenable to control and direction.

Modern Social Psychology has repeatedly demonstrated that our moral value configuration and our determination of moral action are often greatly influenced by unconscious situational factors, a study we will take up in Chapter 2. This will lead us to an idea of *bounded rationality*, as opposed to strict or pure rationality, which is more consistent with the kind of moral deliberation in which we normally engage every day. The idea of bounded rationality is that our reasoning at any point and time is influenced or "bounded" by non-rational elements such as setting, situation,

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[1] Poulsen, Anders. "Why future business leaders need philosophy," GRASP magazine, 5.30.2013 www.graspmag.org. Accessed May 2016. Used by permission 2018.

emotion, social conditioning, previous knowledge, nudges, etc. This idea will be especially important when considering moral deliberation and moral judgments.

Ethics and Morality

Ethics

When approaching a complex phenomenon for the first time with an interest in gaining a useful understanding of it, a reasonable distinction may sometimes be helpful. With this principle in mind as we approach the subject of business ethics and social responsibility, let us consider the difference between two of the most basic terms that structure this area of personal and interpersonal action: *ethics* and *morality.*

Surely you have noticed that in the English language the terms "ethics" and "morality" are often conflated and used interchangeably, as if they were synonyms, which they are not, at least from a philosophical perspective. Yet, neither are they defined consistently by philosophers. They are frequently thrown about in conversations and philosophical argument vaguely and imprecisely to justify someone's assertion of a particular "should" or "should not," as in a friend's assertion recently. She said, *"The ethical thing the President should have done was…."* What my friend apparently means by "the ethical thing" in her assertion about the President is the thing that she considers to be the "right" or "good" or "proper" or "fair" or "decent" thing—something like that, the ethical thing, the moral thing, but it is not exactly and explicitly clear what that "thing" is that she believes justifies her assertion of the moral "should."

In order to avoid such confusion and vagueness in our own investigation of business ethics, let me suggest that we agree to a conventional distinction between the terms "ethics" and "morality" in order to facilitate our investigations. *Let us consider "ethics" to be a kind of cognitive, reflective, discursive practice aimed at achieving theoretical clarification and understanding of what we should do to achieve living the best possible life, while at the same time effectively actualizing our potential for self-construction and moral value configuration that will lead to that end in practice.* In short, ethics can be considered to be a pro-active, reflective engagement I undertake with my morality. We will need to look carefully at the nature, structure, and practice of ethical thinking, but, generally, ethics can be understood as a practice of reflective thinking about morality. What, then, is morality?

(My) Morality

The reason I like to sometimes include the parenthesized term "(My)" when talking about morality is to keep in mind that morality, from an existential perspective, is an intrinsic, built-in 'dimension' or 'aspect' of the whole person and not some kind of free-floating, depersonalized, abstract object of thought floating around inner space somewhere. Morality is always embodied human responsiveness occurring in a particular place, at a particular time, about a particular *something,* for a particular person.

Provisionally, let's say that my morality is all of my ideas, beliefs, values, feelings, emotions, norms, principles, conventions … all of my experiences and conditioned responses from early childhood until now, my whole personal history, accepted rules and paradigms configured in a dynamic structuring by which I deliberate and make particular moral evaluations and judgments every day as I strive to live the best possible life. In short, my morality is the way in which I make moral judgments and take moral action. My moral value orientation, although generally stable

across situations, is thoroughly fluid, dynamic and constantly being reconfigured by new ideas, situations, experiences, life challenges, etc.

Morality is influenced at every moment by non-rational experiences of the existential person involving moral sensitivity, moral awareness, moral courage or fear, moral will or conviction, moral strength, moral confidence, moral flexibility, moral firmness or rigidity, moral openness to new ideas, moral daring, moral limits, and other such attitudinal, unconscious, and affective characteristics of human subjectivity, especially pronounced in entrepreneurial consciousness.

In short, my morality is essentially the whole of who I am. I am moral through and through and not only a moral being occasionally.

Like me, myself, morality cannot be reduced entirely to conditioned behavior. Neither is morality an instrument or tool that a value-neutral "I" merely uses. Morality itself is not a coat that can be put on or taken off. From this dynamic perspective, the non-rational characteristics of morality would be action-oriented predilections or dispositions connected to your historical embodiment in the world and which apply to you as a whole person. Let's take a closer look at some of the more important 'components' of your morality.

Moral Ideas include things like equality, freedom, morality, ethics, character, justice, fairness, caring, right, wrong, good, bad, excellent, etc.

Moral beliefs include commitments to orientations that will be used to guide how you act. "All people are morally equal," is a moral belief. So are "All people are not morally equal;" "The

world was created by God / or not created by God;" "There is a reason for everything that happens;" "Life is absurd and meaningless;" "People are basically selfish / or basically loving." These are all moral beliefs. Where you stand regarding such beliefs will make a difference as to how you act in different situations.

M*oral values* can be understood to be ideas, beliefs, feeling states, or commitment orientations that are integrated into your real-life judgments of preference for what is emotionally, intellectually, and materially desirable or not desirable to you for living the best possible life. In short, your moral values determine how you will act in particular situations. Moral values can be "big" such as valuing education and personal growth and development, and they can be "small" such as valuing etiquette and good manners when visiting in-laws. My moral values are my commitments to certain preferences about what I think is good and how I (and others) should act.

Your morality, as a whole, is unique and *constantly adapting* to new experiences within an interpersonal, social framework, while also staying somewhat stable across situations. Your moral values guide your practical moral judgments in action. Your value commitments or value configuration collectively makes you who you are as a person—dynamic and changing, and yet, ambiguously, somehow staying the same person. From this perspective, it makes sense to say that 'I am my morality'. Yet, my moral values are often in conflict with one another.

Moral judgments are decisions about what you should or should not do, believe, consider acceptable, etc. We often make moral judgments unconsciously because the moral values, beliefs, ideas, and principles upon which those judgments are based are often employed unconsciously, as was mentioned above. They are unconscious because they were inculcated, reinforced and learned when you were a child, so that now they are an invisible part of the tacit moral knowledge you engage, embody, and enact intuitively and immediately within the interpersonal, existential practices you participate in every day, including right now.

Immediate lived experience

We all form our basic judgments about ourselves and the world from the 'stuff' of *immediate lived experience*. Immediate lived experience consists of intuited 'sense impressions' prior to consciousness and reflection, before they have become "this" or "that;" that is, before linguistic/conceptual representation.

Immediate lived experience is not yet at the level of reflection or rational judgment since it is pre-rational and pre-conceptual (like tacit knowledge, hunches, gut-feelings, intuition, passion, and, for the most part, emotion), but there could be no judgment possible if we had not experienced *something* prior to our judgment about what that something *is*.

Intuited sense impressions become experience only after we have judged them to be "this particular thing" or "that particular thing," which we do mostly unconsciously as part of our linguistically structured experience of the world. We are doing this all the time.

Human beings are judging beings *par excellence*. Our entire experience of ourselves and our world results from judgments we have made and are making. Making judgments both requires rationality and is at the very heart of what it means to be a rational human being. Yet, you can also make judgments non-rationally. Doing what you feel like doing is an obvious example. This can be risky, although inevitable, morally speaking. One simple test: You know your judgment is rational when you can give meaningful reasons to support it that would make sense to a reasonable person, and you know it's non-rational when you can't.

Criticisms of a strictly rational approach to ethics

Moral Absolutism

Moral Absolutism is the belief that there is an absolute moral standard against which moral questions can be judged with complete certitude. From this perspective, actions can be judged to be right or wrong regardless of the context, consequences, or situation. From an absolutist perspective, actions are inherently moral or immoral regardless of the beliefs and goals of the individual, society, historical period, or culture that engages in the actions. If something is wrong, it is always wrong, at all times and in all places.

Thus, an absolutist might hold, for example, that morals are inherent in the laws of the universe because they have been put there by an absolute creative energy, force or deity. These absolute laws, then, are also thought to be reflected in the nature of human beings since humans are also a part of the natural order. To act morally from this natural law perspective, then, is to conform your human will to the absolute will of the laws of the cosmos, understood usually as reflecting the will of God or some other fundamental source of absolute certitude, such as "Nature."

Moral Relativism

Moral relativism asserts that there are no absolute standards. Rather, moral judgments are true or false relative to some particular standpoint, such as a culture or a historical period, as in *cultural relativism*; or that of a particular person, as in *subjective relativism* or *subjectivism*. Also, from a relativist perspective no standpoint is uniquely privileged over any others since there is no absolute standard by which to judge such privilege.

One common interpretation of subjective relativism asserts that you must determine what is right for yourself, and whatever you determine will be right for you. The same action that is morally correct for you may not be morally correct for another person. Or, an occurrence in one situation may be morally distinguishable and more or less reprehensible from a similar occurrence in another situation. Moral judgment would be relative to each situation. From this relativist perspective, there would be no way to determine which judgment is correct in some absolute, rational, objective, situation-independent way.

It is difficult to deny that relativism does, to a certain degree, accurately represent the existential situation of the moral person, despite absolutist attempts to show otherwise. But not the relativism of an isolated, sovereign and autonomous human subjectivity, detached from situational influences and making moral decisions in a vacuum of separateness from others and the human world in which we all co-exist. Rather, the relativist moral subject is always situated in a human context and immersed in a rich web of moral influences, contexts, interactions, practices, happenings and relationships which have a more or less conscious impact on moral sensitivity and awareness, moral responsiveness, moral courage, and willingness to act, and my whole sense of who I am from a moral perspective.

The moral subject is always situated in a human context and immersed in a rich web of moral influences, contexts, interactions, practices, happenings and relationships...

Where I disagree with the subjectivists and the relativists is in the assertion that the lack of an *absolute* foundation means that we are condemned to an abject relativism where anything goes. That seems clearly not to be the case. There is an alternative to a pure subjective relativism that presents itself out of our everyday natural immersion in a rich web of situated, unique, interpersonal, recursive moral relationships and practices with others, a contextual, social framework apart from which morality could not exist.

Intersubjective relativism

A relativist moral position can have an existential, intersubjective moral foundation. This would be a kind of "relational relativity" or relational ethics grounded in the thoroughgoing human-ness of the social world in which we live and from which we have our being. I am irretrievably linked to the necessity of others for my sense of self and world, and thus for my moral value orientation.

We must come to our own subjective moral decisions, yes, but we always do so within the horizon of our blazingly fast intuited perception of the patterns of permitted or proscribed actions within any given social theater or practice of possible interpersonal action, such as a business organization. We do this mostly in an unconscious way, adapting our responsiveness to our

perception of expectations communicated, interpreted and acted upon tacitly within the various theaters of practical activity structuring our daily life.

Thus, holding a relativist moral position does not necessarily foreclose on the need for continual formation, re-formation and articulation of our fundamental moral value orientation in connection to the fundamental value terms of the many complex practices in which we interact with others every day.

This interpretation attempts to go further than the pragmatic assertion that a socialization process creates our moral value formation. This idea seems to presume without question that humans first come into being as a-moral beings and then have morality added-on, in order to become a moral person. This seems counter to current research that will be investigated in Chapter 2. Social norms reinforce behavior, but society does not make us moral.

Rather, the argument will be presented throughout this text that human persons are grounded morally in the otherness of the Other. This grounding in the Other is a pre-conscious 'relation' of responsiveness to Others that is essential to our fluid moral self-formation. This is the relational or interpersonal source and foundation of our everyday moral functioning, as will be investigated in more detail in later chapters.

What moral values do you think are absolute and universal? Any?

Moral Pluralism: a perspectival approach to morality

"Moral pluralism" is a general framework and practical strategy for arriving at sound moral judgments. The moral pluralist argues that because moral issues, problems and dilemmas can be highly complex, we likewise need a complex set of tools with which to manage complicated moral choices. The pluralist urges that, when confronted with the need for a reasoned moral decision, you should consider and apply as many ethical concepts, principles, perspectives and theories as are appropriate to see, evaluate and resolve the moral issue. A failure to engage in such a plurality of considerations and applications may result in an inadequate and incomplete moral analysis and outcome.

Because of its emphasis on multiple moral perspectives, the pluralist approach entails a more muscular moral engagement than conventionally structured morality. It requires too much effort for those who prefer their moral value judgments ready-made for them so that they don't have to think about them too much. The call from unenlightened practitioners and professionals is that they would like to see an instant formula for ethical decision-making, a kind of heuristic device that will provide a reliable answer straightaway to the various moral quandaries of the workplace.

There is an app that helps you make a moral decision that can be downloaded to your smartphone. It was rolled out by the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University in conjunction with Apple a while back. The app is a move in this pragmatic direction—for better or worse. But the app can't make a moral decision for you. In fact, it encourages a pluralist approach by guiding users to evaluate moral decisions from different perspectives.

Generally, the moral pluralist resists quick fixes to moral questions. This is the case because the pluralist understands that the realities of work (and of life itself) are such that no single formula can embrace all of the many unique and complex moral issues, problems and dilemmas you and I will be faced with. So, the pluralist in moral matters holds that a more comprehensive application of the concepts, principles and theories that comprise the history of ethics is a necessary ingredient in solid moral decision-making.

Moral Pluralism and Traditional Ethics

The pluralist approach to moral deliberation and reasoning seems to run counter to the usual Western philosophical tradition in which the design of a single ethical theory – "ethical monism" -- characterizes the thinking of the predominant traditional philosophers and ethicists. But the moral pluralist would be familiar with Virtue Ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, human rights, natural law and numerous other moral theories and perspectives that we will investigate in upcoming chapters. Here is a brief preview.

Virtue Ethics emphasizes the role of character and how one's character might or might not dispose one to act well. Aristotle thought that one's moral education shapes how one acts and those who develop habits toward behaving well would act virtuously, while those who developed poor habits of vice would not.

Duty ethics holds that a "categorical imperative" should guide actions so that we should ask whether our action could be universalized or not (Would I want everyone to act this way?). This perspective also admonishes us to engage in respecting others and never use them as a mere means to an end, but only as ends in themselves. Duty ethics is absolutist in that it claims that things are right or wrong regardless of outcomes or situations.

The utilitarian approach – an ethical theory upon which capitalism and the workings of business organizations are often thought to be founded – holds that actions should be measured and judged according to how well they promote the greatest good for the greatest number, even if this means that an innocent party will be directly harmed.

According to the moral pluralist, then, since these are but singular approaches, they are inadequate as stand-alone remedies. However, if they are taken together and deployed as perspectival platform of moral value analysis, along with various other key concepts, principles and ethical theories, then they can form part of a more concerted effort to think and deliberate more effectively and thereby have a greater guarantee of moving successfully toward living the best possible life. That's the program.

There are no easy answers to many of the moral challenges that confront us in our everyday life, and moral complexity can lead to moral perplexity. This is especially likely to happen when one is locked into a single, rigid moral perspective within a mostly unconscious conventional framework driven solely by emotional intuition. No single approach to moral deliberation is right for all moral problems in all situations. Seeing things from different sides can expand your horizon of possibility and thereby lead to making better moral judgments. And that should improve your chances of achieving the best possible life.

A Brief Overview of Chapter 1

Two ideas from the Introduction to *Entrepreneurial Ethics - Perspectives* that you should be familiar with are **"the best possible life"** and **"personal moral power."**

All rational beings desire to live the best possible life since it would be irrational not to desire this, even when what we think is the best thing to do turns out not to be such a good thing after all. Robbing a bank might seem like it would be a good thing to do because you will get a lot of money, but when you get caught and sent to prison you might think otherwise. It is up to you to determine what the best possible life is for you (the best possible thing to do in any given situation). This is a project that is presented in the text as a *way of life* since it is never entirely finished. What do you think is the best possible life for you?

Personal moral power is your ability to achieve what you think is the best possible life. Personal moral power mostly involves making good judgments, but making good moral judgments also involves other things like moral sensitivity, moral assertiveness and moral courage.

From your reading of Chapter 1 you should be clear about the difference between **ethics** and **morality**. Ethics is a reflection on morality. Morality involves all of what goes into your making of moral judgments that are in harmony with your natural, rational desire to live the best possible life.

You should be able to explain the difference between ethics and morality, focusing mostly on morality. Morality is how we go about making moral judgments in the world every day. In the final analysis, I argue that morality involves the "whole person" since we do not make moral judgments with only a "part" of ourselves but with our whole self.

The section on the challenges to a strictly rational approach to ethics is important and will come up again repeatedly in the rest of the text. The text argues that the most complete approach to ethics must take into account both rational and non-rational dimensions of the person since both of these domains contribute to ethical decision making.

The section on absolutism and relativism is particularly important. Absolutism is the idea that there is a moral standard that can be used to always make correct moral judgments. From a more personal perspective, **moral absolutism** is reflected in the attitude of the person who thinks they always know what the absolutely correct moral decision is in any situation. I will argue that we rarely, if ever, know what is morally correct with absolute certitude. Thus, we seem to be left with **moral relativism**, which asserts that there is no absolute moral standard, so moral judgments are always relative to something else, like how we feel or what is required by circumstances or a culture.

In response, I argue that there is a relational, situation-specific, interpersonal moral standard, even though it is not an absolute standard in the traditional sense. There are **situational moral standards** in the practices of the everyday associations and relations with institutions, embedded norms and practices, and other people that we engage with every day. Our own moral value configuration is attuned to these situational factors. We make adjustments to our moral value orientation as we move in and out of these various domains. Thus, these situational factors along with our own personal moral value reflections, create a relative or situational standard for our moral evaluations and action. We 'pick up' the situational cues for these moral value orientations intuitively and, often, unconsciously.

Finally, the section on **Moral Pluralism** is important because Pluralism is the recommended approach to doing ethics that is promoted throughout the text. You should be familiar with the requirements of this approach to moral reflection and deliberation and the justification for it. You should also be able to engage this approach to doing ethics in practice. Try it out when you are working with the scenario exercises that are presented at the end of each chapter.

PRACTICE

TERMS TO KNOW

- Moral Philosophy
- Ethics
- Morality
- Business Ethics
- Virtue Ethics
- Deontological
- Teleological
- Utilitarianism
- Moral Absolutism
- Moral Relativism
- Moral Pluralism

TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERMS

Exercise hint: If you really want to test your understanding of these terms, try this with a friend: First, explain to your willing friend one or more of the terms from the list above. Then, ask your friend to repeat your explanation back to you. Finally, see how close your friend's restatement matches your own understanding. Discuss and bring your understandings into sync. Repeat the exercise. Anyway, you should be able to give brief explanations of these key terms.

TRY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. Imagine you are explaining to an intelligent friend why it is beneficial to study philosophy as a preparation for a business career. What would you say?

2. What is ethics?

3. What is morality?

4. What is the importance of your ideas, beliefs, values, and principles for making successful moral judgments?

5. Think of a decision you made recently. What ideas, beliefs, values, and principles guided your decision-making?

6. What is the value of moral theories? Why do we need them?

7. Which type of moral theory (deontology or teleology) would be more likely to support the following statement? "It is totally wrong to intentionally harm an innocent human being

against their will, even if that harm would result in the cure for all cancer." Explain your answer.

8. What is moral absolutism?

9. What is moral relativism?

10. How can situations and other people provide a kind of non-absolute foundation for our moral value configuration and moral action?

11. What is moral pluralism?

REFLECTION EXERCISES

1) One way to find out about your own moral value orientation is to notice what you agree with and disagree with about what other people are doing or saying, especially about others' actions. For example, say you notice an adult talking very harshly to a child in a public place, a store, for instance. You think the adult is belittling the child and this is not right. Reflecting on this, you will see that your response suggests that you have certain values about how children should be treated in public. What are those values? Try to give them specific names, if you can. What are your moral principles that support those values? Try using what you approve of and disapprove of in others to learn more about yourself. How do you feel about what you find out?

2) Think of a situation in your life where you believe that you see the whole picture and have a good idea of what is going on. Now try to see that situation from the perspectives of other specific people who are involved. How would they be likely to see what is going on? How would they describe it? How might they feel about it?

3) Check out the ancient Indian parable called "The Blind Men and the Elephant" (numerous versions on YouTube). How does this ancient parable illustrate the central idea of Moral Pluralism?

4) Here is a phenomenology exercise. Okay, you read Chapter 1. Thus, you had an experience of reading Chapter 1. In 300 words, describe the features of your experience of reading Chapter 1. You might begin by writing something like "When I first started reading Chapter 1, I thought… (I felt…, I wondered…, I hoped…, I just knew…, I remembered…, I feared…, I imagined…, etc., or whatever verb you choose) but after I had finished reading it I thought, felt, wondered, etc. Don't think too much about it, just reflect on your experience and describe whatever comes into your mind about that experience. Let your description of your experience flow out without critical concern. You can always come back later and sort it all out, edit it, etc.

SCENARIO EXERCISE

General note on engaging the scenario exercises in this text: "The Terroist Bomber" scenario below is a moral thought experiment meant to highlight an actual, real-life moral dilemma in which you might or could possibly find yourself involved. Imagine yourself as the official in the scenario who has decide whether to use torture or not. For it to be most effective, you should engage the scenario from your total moral orientation, both how you think and how you feel. Try to imagine the scenario as being real, not pretend or merely made-up. Empathize with the official (and the terrorist) as best you can. What would you *really do? Of course, it is not merely an abstract, rational moral dilemma that the official is dealing with. There are also emotional, relational, and situational factors for him or her. Is it right to inflict harm on any person intentionally? What about the official's responsibility to the innocent people who might get hurt? What about the civil rights of the bomber? What does it feel like to be in such a bind? How do you think* you *would deal with it? Most importantly, how would you* justify *how you dealt with it?*

The Terrorist Bomber

A home-grown terrorist who has threatened to explode several bombs in crowded areas has been apprehended. Unfortunately, it is positively known that he has already planted the bombs and it is clearly established that they will go off in a short time. It is possible that hundreds, perhaps thousands of people may die and many more will be maimed and injured.

The authorities cannot make him divulge the location of the bombs by conventional methods. He refuses to say anything. He requests a lawyer to protect his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination since he is a U.S. citizen.

In exasperation, a high-level official suggests the use of torture. This would be illegal, of course (and it is illegal because it is thought to be immoral), but the official thinks that it is nevertheless the right thing to do in this desperate situation.

Do you agree or disagree? Why? If you agree, would you also agree that it would be morally justifiable to torture the terrorist's innocent wife if that is the *only* way to make him talk? If not, why not?