

Theory of Knowledge Essay

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How can you know, if at all, that our behaviour is ethical?

Ethics is very subjective and relative. It is considered relative because there are different behaviours that may want to exemplify the same value and also, the same behaviour may want to exemplify different values in different cultures. This can be demonstrated as Oriental culture do not kiss other people in the cheek to say hello. They take that as an offence, while European individuals always kiss when saying hello. **Ethics** can be described as what the society accepts or rejects. Ethics can be subjective because it differs from each one's point of view. Something that may be not ethical to me, such as a secretary having an affair with the boss, may be totally accepted by someone else. It can also be very relative, as ethics are society codes, that change based on time and circumstance. Nowadays it is not ethical to marry with a member from our own family while centuries ago, parents gave their total support for their children to marry with brothers or sisters.

There are some people that have a different view of ethics. They believe that the same codes are applied to everyone, regardless of status, time or situation. To survive in a society, we have to know how to live in it and for it to happen, we have to know **morality** and **ethical behaviour**. Society is considered like a game, either you obey the rules and learn how to behave in any given situation and be successful, or if you try to play by your own rules, you are out.

All human beings have a different perspective of the world, of themselves, and are responsible for their choices and actions. We are faced with everyday decisions and we have to make choices between what is right or wrong, although my point of view is that we are not able to conclude what is right or wrong, because as I have said, what may be right, or ethical to me, may not be correct to someone else. These are evaluative judgements. I believe that right or wrong can also be relative to the society where we are upon. Absolute right and absolute wrong do not exist and right and wrong are relative.

But on the other hand, **absolutism** believes that what is right or wrong is based on a truth or a faith that does not alter, independently of any situation it will remain unaltered. It is less about what we believe and more about the in which we believe in it. Absolutists believe in one single truth.

This is usually found in religious faith, believing that the truth of what is right or wrong comes from God and the Ten commandments. They believe as the scientists do, that there is a truth out there somewhere, and once found and explained, conclusions will be drawn up. For example, when people believe that life begins at conception, abortion is the taking away of a human life and therefore it is considered anti-ethical behaviour. Absolutism gets some things right, such as the fact that sometimes we need to make judgements and also some things are intolerable. But it gets some things wrong, absolutists are not able to learn from others. They believe that their truth is THE truth.

All decisions and actions are motivated by a purpose. Morality refers to the code of values that each one of us have to decide on the choices and actions we make. These values decide our goals and purposes, in another words, our future. Ethics is a kind of discipline that englobes these values.

I have defined values, or the correct behaviour, as codes that are to gain or keep, and that are pleased by society.

Morality is not only objective, it is a necessity for man's survival, the values that we need for our own life and that are required for survival. Man needs to discover things by their own mind and

produce them by their own effort. Morality can also be considered what is required to have a life like a man.

I understand by the term knowledge, something that is acquired and gained through either experience or testing. Knowledge can also be gained through listening to other people, but how can we know that what they are stating is correct?

Our knowledge is always growing on a daily basis. This is because in our everyday life, we are expected to solve problems and find the easier solution to them. Knowledge is something that is based upon experiences or perceptions and then made a connection with things experienced. I must be certain and real, or else it is not possible to prove it correct if doubts about a statement are brought up.

There are different kinds of knowledge, what we think is correct, knowledge that a sound is not a colour, Knowledge that of moral principles, such as believing in a religion, although we have never seen a God but indeed we still believe in a supreme power above us all that created and controls the earth, knowledge of sciences.

Behaviour

Therefore I conclude that in order to find out whether or not our behaviour is ethical, we need to have knowledge. This is because knowledge is the basic step to learn how to live. We acquire information everyday and then we can distinguish from our behaviour, or the values that we learnt that are supposedly to be the correct behaviour, if we are ethical human beings.