

THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS

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Robert S. Hartman, who made it all possible.

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Preface

This essay will introduce a new approach to understanding the moral life. This paradigm, with all its exciting implications, is in contrast with a recent older view that what ethics is all about is being careful to avoid inflicting harm. This current approach emphasizes equally a positive aspect.

This positive aspect stems directly from a perspective which individuals may hold; and as we explain in Chapter 1, it is a perspective regarding the value of a conscious being with a special, unique personality. Its focus is on moral growth; and on how to deepen one's awareness.

It is true that a science of ethics will be concerned with data collection, evolving theory construction, experimentation, testing propositions for their validity, etc., yet this essay is mainly reporting on the latest state of a new paradigm, a new way of looking at the field of Individual and Social Ethics. The science to which this essay refers includes the work being done by Amy Castro, by the Brain Neurologists, by the Moral Psychologists, the Behavioral Economists, and the Behavioral Ethicists.

Here is the first of many questions which this science is going to address:

In the Science of Ethics what does the term “axiom” mean?

An axiom, as we use the term here, is a fertile, prolific concept capable of logically generating a multitude of relevant ideas. The axiom for this science is: An ethical individual wants, and approves of efforts, to *make things morally better*. This is a tacit assumption which underlies the theory. The motivation of the research in this field is: if something is fallacious, or bad, or is a value-confusion, a disvalue, how can we make it better? And if something is already good, how make it even better? What concrete measures would enable us to live in a better world?

Since the science is about *optimizing moral value*, let us now explain what value is, and in the rest of the treatise elucidate what moral value is all about. We shall also discuss the issue as to why anyone would care to increase that sort of value.

What is value? What do we consider to be valuable?

What we focus on, concentrate on, give ourselves to, and get involved with, is what we value. {As Robert S. Hartman taught, If there is a complete correspondence between some specific ideal (we may have in mind for something) and the *actual properties of the thing that we perceive with our senses*, we will tend to describe the thing (or the person, situation, or event) as “good.”}

In other words, something, or someone, or some situation, is **good** if it’s ‘all there.’ It’s called **valuable**, or ‘a

value', if it has *some* of the features, and said to be **good** if it has everything that we suppose things of that sort to have. For example, **good conduct** would be behavior that point-for-point matches the ideal we have for what conduct is supposed to be. As to what that is, this paper will be spelling that out.

A central concept of the new science is that good character traits lead to good actions which express ethical conduct. This concept will be re-emphasized again throughout all the four chapters since it connects the various parts into a coherent whole. To achieve that end, to connect the dots, is one of the aims for constructing this theory.

The Science of Ethics, as you know, has two major aspects, a negative one, and one that is positive.* The negative aspect will inform as to what to avoid, how not to inflict needless suffering on others. The positive side of the science will inform as to what to encourage and work toward in order to be ethical. The positive side thus is concerned with moral growth and development.

Those two aspects, the positive and the negative, will generate for the reader's consideration a series of relative, suggested, tentative principles, personal codes, or standards. {The scientists suggest that you may want to select one of those standards and test it for its practicality; for that's the scientific way to live. That is how we learn that gravity works in the natural world and that harmony works in human affairs.}

[As this monograph proceeds we will fill out the picture by offering more details that describe both personal **traits** and **principles**. It will also discuss the qualities of both good people and of bad actors.

Familiar ideas will quite soon be accompanied in this essay by new concepts or novel ideas, so watch for them!]

*) The technical term for the negative aspect is Value Transposition; the technical term for the positive aspect is Value Composition. These terms, as well as the latest improved interpretation of the concept of “Intrinsic Valuation” are due to the genius R. S. Hartman. He defined the concepts “value” and “good” with more precision than anyone had before. He also gets the credit for the idea that one becomes ethical when one Intrinsically-values another individual or group.

At first the focus of this essay is on intentions, motives and character. Action, activity, consequences and outcomes of course will follow, but they are not the initial focus of the theory of Ethics offered here. The main idea to keep in mind is the prediction is that if one has a good character one will tend most of the time to ‘do the right thing.’ Empirical research is necessary to validate this claim.

In Chapter 1, the first question that may logically be addressed is this one: *What does it mean to be ethical?* The initial chapter will also take up the question as to whether there are *any benefits to being ethical*. And, in addition, in the first chapter we will respond to a further question: *Does this science serve a useful purpose?*

Note that the credit, for a precise answer, to the important question as to what it takes to be ethical, goes to Dr. Robert S. Hartman who wrote a profound work on the theme of values. Since Ethics is about moral **value**, his major contribution, a volume entitled THE STRUCTURE OF VALUE, is highly-relevant to a science of

ethics. That is because its analysis serves as what scholars speak of as a “meta-ethics.” A **meta-ethics** is a study above, beyond, and prior to a study of ethics.

Note also that the parts of this framework fit together well with the result that this theory of ethics meets the requirements for a science. Those requirements are to account for, to order, and to explain the data of ethics. For example, data which records and enables analysis of acts of benevolence, heroism, or extraordinary kindness. Or, in contrast, compulsive lying, or hostage taking, or torture, or monstrous acts of fiendish cruelty. A good scientific theory enables people to find answers to problems, to dilemmas, and to many significant questions.

Having provided some background, we are now ready in Chapter 1 to see how the new science offers some tentative answers to the original questions cited above. Let's now turn to this new chapter.

Chapter 1

“Every choice we make changes the world. In what kind of world do we want to live?”

---Anonymous

It is not controversial to affirm, as we implied earlier, that *ethics is about good conduct*. Such ethical behavior springs from the good intentions of individuals of good will. They are **devoted to goodness** and thus by creating positive values they can gain a fulfilling life and contribute to society.

Ethical decisions often may be made by considering what a good person would do in a given situation. {This consideration is more-likely to occur if and when this current theory is widely understood, thanks to readers and influencers, and its concepts become rather commonplace. They become the ‘conventional wisdom.’}

What does “being ethical” mean?

Ethics is concerned with the quality of our decisions and choices, and with our values, standards, and principles. Whereas Individual Ethics is about self-respect, Social Ethics is about showing others consideration and respect by our creating value in our interactions or encounters with others. To be ethical is to regard individuals as very

highly-valuable. It is a perspective one has. It means seeing others as having infinitely-high value. And this applies to oneself as well as to others. (Ethics, as the reader will soon see, would have us develop **humility** as an antidote to Narcissism.)

What follows from this definition of 'being ethical'? What are its implications?

Some immediate implications are that rape, murder, slavery, assault, slander, fraud, and stealing are wrong, and are to be prevented.

The ethical perspective is that one is to view individuals as having a unique personality. They are thus precious, and so to hurt or injure them, to harm them in any way would be self-defeating and counterproductive. Too much value would be lost.

This emphasis on avoiding harm is what in this system we speak of as the negative side of the new science, and we shall give this aspect much attention in later chapters. The concise and precise standard, the guiding moral **principle** deduced here, is: Do no harm!

The principles and traits, that will little-by-little be offered throughout this paper, are not mere external behaviors but rather internal dispositions. And it is these habits when they are put into practice that shape one's ethical conduct. A person who lives ethically would have some standards to live by. (They are however NOT absolutes; there are always a few exceptions, such as for example, surgery and other medical procedures which temporarily injure the body; they may hurt, but are intended to aid and to heal.)

It is worth carefully noting that these guides, or useful suggestions, are known in the Science of Ethics as 'moral principles,' and that they are neither rules nor absolutes. They are tentative, flexible, *subject to revision* should something better come along. This is true of science in general: any findings or conclusions are subject to updating, or subject to becoming a special case of a wider picture. To respond to confusion and to enhance moral clarity we offer below a few specific examples of good moral principles upon which to reflect; and will later follow up with a tentative list of bad or evil qualities to avoid.

The fundamental positive moral principle that the Science derives is this: Set a good example! This concept in turn implies that an ethical individual would likely:

Be a role model.

Be kind.

Be civil.

Do good. Be considerate of others.

Have humility.

Be congenial and value harmony.

Be courteous and polite.

Be truthful and value honesty.

Be trustworthy.

Be authentic.

Be generous.

Be willing to mentor.

Trust others until evidence suggests otherwise.

Be helpful.

Be consistent; don't have one standard for yourself but a different one for others. [This is the Consistency Principle.]

Be inclusive. Extend your ethical radius so that it sweeps in more people. [This is the Inclusivity Principle.]

Help the less-fortunate among us to rise a step up on the ladder of opportunity, *et cetera*.

The scientists derived this set of positive moral principles or imperatives that this basic logic generates by employing both deduction and induction. Here are some further examples: Offer a helping hand. Be ready to be of service. Give others respect if you possibly can. Give sincere compliments when merited. Readers may wish to add to this list of moral principles and they are quite welcome to do so. Here are a few more examples of good principles:

Boost a person up; spread happiness. For example, make someone smile, or laugh.

Be not only efficient but also effective in pursuit of a goal. [With regard to that last principle, in the next chapter further explanatory details will be offered. We will not only explain this meaning but also delve into its deeper implications.]

Readers will discover additional suggested moral principles in Chapter Three, where we report on moral development and take a deeper dive into what is involved in order to understand the topic of morality. A truly ethical individual would want to have most all the qualities (the traits) of a good character, and so details about what this means will be explained later when we present a specific cluster of attributes that describe the decent person.

As we are now discussing the positive aspect of the new science it is appropriate here to give credit to Dr. Tetsuro, and to describe his contribution:

Watuji Tetsuro was a Japanese wise teacher who was interested in ethics, and wrote about ethics and morality 100 years ago. His findings may be summed up this way: Our sense of how to be live ethically is a natural growth of our nature as human beings. We need a certain amount of trust in others so we will not suffer from being too paranoid.

Dr. Tetsuro would encourage students to be aware of the qualities we all share, our commonalities, and how we collaborate. It would be wise to recognize the inter-connections we all have as human beings and to be acutely aware of how we have common concerns, and that if we don't trust one another, we will live in chaos.

Traditionally, "being ethical" denoted living in a way that is consistent with moral principles and values, such as honesty, caring, fairness, respect for others, and many of the other qualities, some of which were listed earlier, and others we shall offer when appropriate, as we continue to describe the positive aspect of the theory.

To the cluster of good qualities and traits that were just mentioned we shall now add another one. It is empathy. By the term empathy we allude to being willing to "walk in the other individual's shoes." That fine capacity we now understand, thanks to progress in Brain Neurology, to

be an attribute which is due to the existence of “mirror neurons” in the normal brain.

Earlier we called attention to certain specific traits such as civility, and readiness to be of service. Further good traits are these: taking on responsibility, and willingness to be held accountable for one’s performance. These good qualities are possessed by individuals who in this essay we speak of as ‘people of good character.’ As the reader may be aware, this emphasis on character can be traced to the Moral Philosophers of ancient Athens, especially to the lectures of Aristotle who lived in 334 BCE.

Behaving this way over a period of time, being consistent in the expression of one’s positive values, is how the term integrity is defined in this system, in this new science. [To introduce a time factor is a common practice in science.]

We have been exploring the implications of what it means to be ethical, yet there is more to the story as you now will see. Toward that end we shall focus here on another historic facet of ethics, namely the question of “What is the Good Life and how best to live it?”

Historically, ethics, in addition with caring to acquire insight as to what is the right thing to do, has also been concerned with inquiries as to how to live the good life. We shall now present a few alternatives.

Is that life, as Epicurus of ancient Greece concluded, just sitting in a garden and having pleasant conversations with friends? Or is the Good Life a more-meaningful one, say a life in which people campaign for a good cause; a life aiming to make the world a better place? Those who have this as their goal want to do this not only for others as well as for themselves, but also for future generations.

Or is the good life one that consists of giving back to the community in some way, such as for example by improving one’s local environment, or in some other way contributing to society How does one actually Live the Good Life?

In the history of ideas, ethics is supposed to be about good conduct. The scientists of Ethics work to figure out what that means in theory and in practice. The Science of Ethics predicts that by creating positive values, individuals can lead morally-fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society. In other words, one will then actually be living that Good Life.

Ethics, we explained earlier, means creating value in our interactions with others. It also means making choices and decisions that reflect these values listed above, and if one cares to do so making them one's personal moral standards. Hence, according to the Science of Ethics we are to find ways to express these concerns in action, in our daily life. The science will prove helpful by suggesting some ways to do this.

Those who work to construct this theory have concluded that ethics is not – as some people argue that it is - merely avoiding selfishness, corruption, cheating, deceiving, rudeness and other bad conduct. It can furthermore be decent, positive, and uplifting conduct. The science makes clear that beyond merely avoiding the bad and/or evil outcomes, ethics can be about character and integrity.

So far in our description of the Science of Ethics we were analyzing and clarifying the positive constructive aspect of Ethics. We will continue in future chapters to probe into the question as to what properties does 'a good character' possess? And how best can we describe 'a bad character'?

As you know, individuals having a unique personality are highly-valuable; even more, they are uncountably-valuable. They are to be intrinsically valued. Therefore, to harm them would of course be a fallacy of reasoning as well as a practical mistake.

Hence, we can report that the moral standard "Do no harm!" enables scientists in the field of Ethics, by employing the logic of deduction, to derive, on the negative side, other *guidelines or principles*, such as:

Don't be a bigot.

Don't deliberately hurt the feelings of others.

Do not dehumanize people.

Be careful not to disparage other individuals.

Living ethically creates moral value. In fact, as enlightened readers know by now, social ethics is about creating value in human interactions. The scientists of Ethics research for ways as *to how best people can do this*.

Recent findings in the science include research from Brain Neurology, from Moral Psychology, from Behavioral Economics, and from Behavioral Ethics.

Furthermore, the new science provides a framework for understanding **morality** as an inherent aspect of an individual's character. To have morality is to care about the cultivation of good traits to guide ethical decision-making and lead a morally-good life. Chapter 3 will define the term "morality" with precision, and will provide more details on this important topic.

Are there benefits to being ethical? Are there any advantages?

The scientists of Ethics indeed have something to say in response: Yes, behaving morally has its advantages. For example, there are at least nine good reasons we shall now enumerate that explain why being ethical and moral has benefits for anyone and everyone.

1. An ethical life is a more trouble-free life. If one lives ethically, life often may go smoother.

2. A major benefit is that one lives life with a clear conscience. One thereby avoids the pain of guilt, shame, and deep regret. And that indeed is an advantage.

3. Next, being ethical makes it more likely that one will gain the benefits that come from cooperation. There are many advantages to gaining the

cooperation of others who are willing to work together with you on achieving a common, positive goal.

4. Furthermore, behaving morally, being decent, is the easiest way for an individual to be. It will suit one's temperament. Being kind and considerate to people will make it more likely that they will treat you the same way. Doing so 'greases wheels' and levels paths. It tends to make life more pleasant and it pays forward to make this world better for all of us to live in, including oneself.

5. There is ancient wisdom found in many cultures that is known as the "Golden Rule." One form of The Golden Rule is: 'Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you.' In other words, do no harm: live ethically. {Rules are Systemic values. See, for an explanation as to what this means and what it implies, the booklet by this author entitled ETHICS: A Systematic Approach to learn about the Dimensions of Value. A link to it is offered at the end of this book in the Bibliography.}

6. Being ethical is being human, for all the reasons we learned earlier from Dr. Tetsuro. Being ethical is the default position of a human being, and we have empirical evidence for this claim; namely the innocence of a baby -- until that innocence is impacted negatively by the culture in which a child is immersed. Acting against our inherent nature results in causing ourselves internal strife.

Being unethical and/or immoral is self-defeating and counterproductive, for thus we then experience needless stress. We cease to have peace of mind. We sacrifice our serenity whenever we act against our nature.

7. We can also demonstrate the above point theoretically as well. We can test this default principle by assuming its opposite and seeing where that would lead us. What if no one could trust anything anyone else said or did because everyone behaved immorally all the time? Wouldn't that society soon fall apart? Wouldn't it soon self-destruct? We thus conclude that it is universal and necessary to behave morally.

8. Being ethical, having morality, endorses and promotes values such as compassion, democracy, no one is above the law when it is a good law, the common good, empathy, and attaining a better world in which to live and thrive.

9. There are other reasons to be moral and thus reap the benefit. For example, self-respect and its counterpart: other-respect, respecting the basic dignity of others. The advantage is enjoyed by all of society.

Ultimately moral goodness is only "good" insofar as it is harmonious with that which is smart, wise, and efficient. No one wants to be stupid, foolish, or inefficient. So, if you conduct yourself morally, you will focus on being wise, efficient and effective. [Socrates was wise but not efficient and effective because he was eventually pressured to drink the hemlock.; he did not live to see his goal attained.] You will learn the basic principles of Ethics, the science; you then may aspire to practice those principles, put them into action. Demonstrating loving goodness toward others will make you feel more fulfilled as a person. As you come to understand more about it, you will want to "pay it forward," to be a person with a generous disposition, wanting to share, and to contribute to society. You will thus be among the enlightened ones. You will thus allow the benefits to flow.

For all the reasons mentioned above and more, being ethical and having morality makes sense. Good reasoning will help us figure things out. Science fosters good reasoning habits.

At the end of the next chapter we will differentiate between being efficient and being effective, which is a good distinction to know.

How does one tell who has a good character, or who a bad one?

Henceforth, for convenience, GC will stand for those of Good Character (also known as decent people), and BC will be an abbreviation for the Bad Character, the bad actor. We are not claiming that human beings must be one or the other. These are not rigid categories. Current research into brain neurology is exploring the causes of morally-questionable behavior and how it arises in the first place. Empirical facts show that some mostly-good characters slip very easily into expressing horrible, even evil behavior such as violence, and moments later behave saintly again.

Let us now formalize earlier points by setting up two sets, the GC set of traits or qualities, and the BC set. Then we shall towards the end of this treatise, after discussing Applied Ethics with examples, offer the reader a few research inquiries that are currently in process. Now we present two questions that readers will shortly find it easy to answer.

What properties does 'a good character' eventually possess?
And how best to describe 'a bad character'?

To respond adequately to these questions, one would present the tentative elements in the GC set (sometimes informally referred to as 'the good set.')

To help one do this, we will list some additional specific attributes that are good for an individual to have. After reminding us of some familiar attributes, the GC set will be enlarged and improved. Then we shall follow up with a contrary, tentative, cluster of bad or evil qualities which are some of the elements of the BC set.

It is important to be aware that there is more to this than merely an opportunity to review, and build upon the 'good set' by offering more of its descriptive attributes. The science also makes a

‘deep dive’ into the nature of morality, as will be seen in a later chapter, as well as showing how these sets of attributes can be applied in daily life.

Good Character

Let’s start with some of those you already know, and then as we proceed we shall be enhancing this GC set by adding even more descriptive features that a GC may have: Authentic, honest, has transparent motives, is empathic, compassionate, kind, willing to share and to cooperate, gentle, amiable, sincere, generous, appreciative, optimistic, and reliable.

Furthermore, such a fully-developed GC individual who possesses the above traits, may also manage to continually stay in balance, and may be one who does not let chaos or conflict disturb serenity. He or she ideally stays well-informed, and is non-violent, non-coercive, seeks consent, seeks common-ground, admires and works for unity-within-diversity and for diversity within a unity. This GC sort of person is loving, friendly, considerate, respectful, willing to be helpful, is dependable, wants to keep moving forward, cares about future generations, has an attitude of gratitude, has courage, is efficient and effective, etc.

Bad Character

In contrast, an individual who has a BC may possess, for example, one or more of these traits:

mean, selfish, corrupt, has *inconsistent principles* (which means that an attribute of a bad actor is that s/he has a double standard (one for oneself but different ones for others.)

Further attributes one might find in a 'bad guy' are these: extremely hypocritical, readiness to lie and to cheat, dogmatic, has a tolerance of violence. This BC-type may well be vicious, predatory, brutal, cruel, and often has sociopathic tendencies.

Such a character is pathetic, and may be vain, rigid-thinking, extremely Narcissistic, self-centered, extremely opportunistic, unable to admit to a wrong or a mistake, is manipulative, and/or dangerous. He or she is, or may also be, a con-artist, a compulsive liar, exploitative, or self-righteous, sadistic, deviant with criminal tendencies, is a cheater, untrustworthy, etc.

This character usually believes "any means to my end; anything goes." In other words, he believes that the end-in-view, the goal, justifies the means used to get to that end, no matter how morally-questionable those means are!

The scientists of Ethics allude to this cluster of traits as 'the bad set,' since at least one of these features describe the BCs. The BCs, as was noted, are also known as 'bad actors.'

This is not to say that human beings are either one or the other, GCs or BCs, but not both; it is not a black-or-white matter. People are more nuanced than that. What is important *is to recognize BCs early* before they climb to power, and to be careful not to facilitate their climb, since once they gain power the damage is done.

The facts are that some authoritarian-minded bad actors use propaganda, violence, book bans, seduction, intimidation and corruption to attain their ends. They often aspire to be a 'strong man,' a tyrant. Such a BC will destroy a democracy and enjoy doing it. Many of these BCs are predators who are particularly dangerous. To detect their ambitions at an early stage and then **to alert the public about it is vitally important.**

Because people – especially GCs – are precious, they are to be treasured; therefore to debase them in any way is to express value confusion. Since BCs do devalue others they commit a value fallacy. It is worth emphasizing that (since Ethics is about optimizing moral value) they are thus committing a moral/ethical **fallacy** when they disparage others or dehumanize them.

When a scientist of ethics explains that it is more valuable for everyone all-around to be a GC rather than a BC, and that a GC would be kind, considerate and respectful **even to a bad guy**, one's first impulse might be to exclaim "It won't work!" But it is not a matter of whether it works or it doesn't. It is a matter of whether one has self-respect and has the character that goes with that. On the assumption that you, the reader, are an ethical individual who has self-respect, and who strives to be a decent person, then that is what matters.

Since research findings indicate that it is wise to have as a core value (as a standard to live by) principles such as 'Set a good example,' then – if that is among your core values -- you will be a decent person because that is who **you** are. *That is what **really** matters.*

Explaining how to recognize a GC-set member -- as well as how to spot predatory or evil character traits -- the BC-set -- is only a small part of the new science.

However, to record and to note that an individual has certain traits supplies some of the study data for the science to analyze. Further data on the positive constructive side might be used to show how to encourage more acts of kindness. Or – on the negative side – how to avoid and discourage BC incidents (such as cases of extreme hypocrisy, corruption, cheating, dishonesty, failure to trust others, etc.)

It is safe to assert that to the scientist of ethics such data-sets will likely be of interest for further study. *Although perhaps all*

humans are born with the potential to be unethical, one can learn to modulate one's evil impulses and strive towards the highest good at all times! The devising of improved education techniques will make this even more likely.

One may wonder, is there an end-in-view for the personnel who work in this field?

Yes, there is. The end-in-view is to live in an ethical world, and to continually aim to make the world a better place. The ultimate aim of the scientists doing research in this field is not only to understand the universe in which we live but also to help to provide **a quality life** for one and all.

What is the definition of “a quality life”?

A quality life is one which includes lots of ‘mountain-top’ experiences, lots of time to spend with our loved ones, lots of time to pursue a favorite hobby or interest.

At each interaction with another, the ethical individual may ask himself or herself this central question of a moral life. The question was devised by Peter Demerest who is a certified Life Coach. This central question is:

“What choice can I make and action can I take, in this moment, to create the greatest value?”

The objective is for all parties to an encounter to leave it feeling like ‘a winner.’ They each will part feeling as though they have gained some value.

Let us remind ourselves that the findings of the positive side of the Science of Ethics tend to confirm that to place an emphasis on developing good qualities within individuals is the right way

to go. This view is opposed to the practice [as some rival theories would have us do], of focusing primarily on rules or consequences of actions.

The Science of Ethics imposes no rules! If a person is devoted to living ethically and being a role model, then good uplifting consequences of course eventually often does result; it is likely that good conduct will ensue. A prediction is that careful studies will confirm the truth of this claim.

Being a good person, wanting to set a good example, involves the cultivation of traits in the GC set. Among them are traits that ought not be overlooked such as integrity, and **moral courage**. The latter is often understood as: readiness to expose questionable behavior or corruption in one's own business of- fice, or one's own institution.

Many Life Coaches have concluded that for self-improvement the best policy is for one to focus upon, to accentuate, and to express one's strengths and assets rather than to expend energy on trying to eliminate one's weaknesses and liabilities. They have found, through experience, that the former policy of attending to one's moral development is a more-valuable way to proceed.

Also included in the good set is **justice** ...including social justice. [In furtherance of this, some GCs currently work to improve the quality of their local police departments, to arrange for more community-policing, and for better screening of new recruits to require that they have good- set features, etc.]

It is worth noting that from the basic moral principle, 'Set a good example' scientists, applying the theory, derived at a list of suggested moral principles, not to be confused with traits. Several of those principles will be suggested for consideration in Chapter 3, when "morality" is the main topic.

Ethics, the science, provides a framework for understanding morality as an inherent aspect of an individual's GC. We are to be conscious that a GC works daily to form habits that comply with the GC set of good traits in order to guide ethical decision-making and thus to facilitate one's leading a morally-good life.

It turns out to be the case that the truly 'good life' is an ethical life.

We have discussed what it means to be ethical, and we have given some good reasons why to be ethical. Now let us focus on another major question, namely, is there any point to introducing a new science?

What is the purpose of a Science of Ethics?

Does the world need a science of Ethics? Yes, it does need such a science as a check on the uses made of the physical sciences. This new science serves as a counterbalance to offset the dangers that arise when new technologies are misused. The Science of Ethics, by educating the conscience of good people, will serve to immunize them to those dangers and abuses known as 'the downside of a new technology.' Let us now emphasize this point and offer a concrete example.

The point cannot be stressed enough. Engineers employing Physics produce many wonders that could be of benefit, could make our lives more comfortable and fulfilling. And we appreciate that. However, as Dr. Peter Diamandes has quietly warned us in the first Appendix to his concise and precise (and awesome) little book entitled ABUNDANCE, every technological breakthrough has a potential downside: it may be used to harm as well as to help and enhance life. Thus, as a check and

balance, we need a Science of Ethics to serve as a counter-weight. For example, physical sciences enabled people to develop nuclear weapons; it is in part their sense of ethics that helps people refrain from firing these weapons at each other.

Another example is the invention of the internet. It is digitizing the world of physical operations, serving as the world brain, supplying instant information in any area, relieving supply-chain blockages, and helping the world to become safer, more efficient and more sustainable. However, most of us are aware of the disinformation, the trolls, the false information, the damage the internet can do, and does.

Ethics counter-balances Physics: this alone is purpose enough for Ethics to be a science. For example, when a new technologic breakthrough comes out - say a new electronic device - once we know our Ethics we may [with thanks to a suggested principle by Carl A. Sherer] ask ourselves with regard to the innovation "Does this serve me? Or do I serve it?"

Since we are in this paper describing a scientific theory, a casual reader may get the impression that this is all theory with no action. That would be a misimpression. Of course, action comes in when Ethics is applied. Just reflecting on or conceptualizing alone, just day-dreaming, without lived experience, is mere intellectual play. To live an ethical life, ethical conduct is required. Good-will and good intentions are not sufficient: follow-through, putting the good intentions into action is ethical conduct. At this point before we offer some research questions it could prove helpful and appropriate to re-emphasize some highlights already learned, as well as to add some new points.

Summing up

Scientific analysis of the data reveals that good characters are intensely honest. They don't lie or cheat. They are caring, sharing, and cooperative people. They live ethically and morally. They get a high score in

Morality, a concept about which we will get more specific in Chapter Three. As you know, GCs are ready to be of service. In addition they not only have good intentions but they follow through and put their good will into action. Furthermore, they want to stay will-informed – which includes being aware of the latest insights or highpoints of this science. What about BCs though?

Bad guys may be clever con-artists: they don't mind misleading you. They are unfeeling, lack a capacity for empathy; they could murder or hold slaves, or hostages, or work someone until he or she drops, it wouldn't bother them at all.

Research Questions

What percentage of human beings shift smoothly from one type of character to some other; or are some people more stable and dependable? What made them that way? Is it more genes or up-bringing? Or is it the culture in which they were raised?

If they are bad actors, were they unwanted by one, or by both, of their parents?

Can we ever, as we evolve as a species, develop a world where most people are decent? What would it take?

Are human beings fundamentally creative?

And so forth. There is much yet to learn.

in the next chapter we shall explain not only what a science is but also why Ethics is a genuine science. We will also discuss the best way to reach a goal that one seeks to attain. Let us attend to these matters now as we open a new chapter.

Chapter 2

WHY ETHICS IS NOW A GENUINE SCIENCE

People may wonder, what is “science”?

Let’s explain what is meant by the word “science.” The word refers to three elements: a logical framework, a set of data, and the bridge laws (rules of interpretation) that connect the first two components.

The framework – which employs logic, and might at times have some math models -- when applied to the unordered or unexplained data (by means of the bridge laws) serves to order and explain that data.

This framework also, when a time factor is introduced, enables prediction. For ethics, the data consist of acts of kindness, taking responsibility, acts of generosity, civility, good manners, appreciation, humility, sharing, etc. Or they may be bad conduct, acts that do some kind of harm, or that inflict needless suffering.

Sciences in this sense (such as Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Medicine, and Ethics) are hypothetic-deductive disciplines employing induction along with deduction, and which use scientific methods as they proceed. [For more details, see Chapter 3 in M. C. Katz, ETHICS: A college Course. There one will find an explanation as to how scientific methods can easily be applied to the field of Ethics.] Furthermore, the Science of Ethics provides a framework which defines some key terms and shows how they are related to one another. This also is helpful in order to grasp the big picture. Let us now spell out the procedure.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD

The scientific method is a process that helps scientists investigate a topic and discover the facts. Here, idealized, are the steps involved (not necessarily always in this order):

The first step is to decide your purpose -- ask a question about something. Next, research the topic and see what's already known. The third step is to form a hypothesis. This is your guess of the answer to your question. Then you suggest some experiences (or frame an experiment) to test your hypothesis.

Next, you analyze the data from the experiment. Did the experiment add confirmation to your hypothesis? Or did it disprove the denial of the hypothesis? Your analysis will create your conclusion, which you can then share so that others can learn from your work. This process enables understanding to spread and increase.

Also as a result of the process scientists working in the field of ethics are enabled to then share their findings so everybody can learn from their work. We will say more about this later.

A conventional definition of science is: "the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena." In other words, the search to know more. A rigorous framework provides the theoretical aspect within which terms are defined with some precision and the data is explained.

There is no reason why matters that are of concern to ethics cannot be put through this scientific method process, and this in fact is currently being done in real time by the Moral Psychologists. In what follows we shall describe what they do.

The experimental branch of the Science of Ethics is currently known as Moral Psychology. It is also known as the science of the moral sense. The following is a description of it with special attention given to its work in moral development.

Moral Psychology is a field of study that investigates the psychological processes involved in moral judgments, moral reasoning, and moral behavior. Using scientific method, and peer-rated experimentation, it seeks to understand how individuals develop moral beliefs, make moral judgments, make moral choices, and act in accordance with moral principles. It investigates the cognitive, emotional, and social factors that shape our understanding of right and wrong, and influence our moral choices

By doing an experiment the scientist may seek to answer a question such as: What role does social influence play in shaping our moral behavior?

One key area of study is moral development, which examines how individuals acquire their moral beliefs and values over time. This research often draws upon the influential theories of moral development proposed by Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg and by Dr. Carol Gilligan. These scientists explored, tested, and confirmed some of the cognitive processes that individuals employ when making moral judgments and evaluating moral dilemmas. Their colleagues today work to understand how people reason and arrive at moral judgments.

They investigate the role of emotions in moral decision-making. For example, they investigate how emotions like empathy, guilt, and moral outrage influence our moral judgments and motivate moral behavior. We will have more to say about this below, and will provide details. Research in this area also often considers the interplay between reason and emotion in moral decision-making.

Moreover, Moral Psychology examines the social and cultural influences on moral beliefs and behaviors. It investigates how societal norms, cultural values, and social dynamics shape our moral judgments and guide our moral actions. This includes studying moral identity, moral socialization, and the impact of social institutions on moral behavior.

And this branch of ethics research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between psychological processes, moral judgments, and moral behavior. Ethical Scientists in this field shed light on the factors that contribute to the formation of moral values.

Some scientific methods used by these scientists of Ethics are the experimental studies which allow researchers to manipulate variables and examine their effects on moral judgments and behaviors. This method helps establish causal relationships and identify factors that contribute to moral decision-making.

These moral psychologists also use neuroimaging techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), to examine the neural correlates of moral judgments. By scanning participants' brains while they engage in moral tasks, researchers can identify brain regions involved in moral processing and understand the neural mechanisms

underlying moral decision-making. In addition, they often conduct developmental studies with children to explore the development of moral reasoning. Longitudinal studies tracking children's moral development over time are also conducted. Researchers often use surveys and questionnaires to gather data on people's moral beliefs, attitudes, and judgments; and they may also study how cultural factors influence moral beliefs and practices.

Moral development is the way a person decides to consider what is ethical, or what is right vs. wrong. Carol Gilligan's theory of moral development outlines how a woman's morality is heavily influenced by caring about personal relationships. She claimed that females tend to express more empathy and compassion than males.

Dr. Gilligan's theory is a modification of her professor Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Gilligan's theory is called "Ethics of Care." Through her research, she found the idea of care to be essential when considering the development of all people, and that all humans value the ability to create and maintain relationships. Here she is in accord with Dr. Tetsuro.

The three levels of Gilligan's stages of moral development, which she adopted from Dr. Kohlberg, are pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. In the pre-conventional stage, a person only makes decisions for the benefit of themselves. In the conventional stage, decisions are made to make someone else feel better regardless of how it makes the decision-maker feel. In the post-conventional stage, there is a balance between making decisions that are best for both parties and taking accountability for the consequences.

Kohlberg's theory is based on the belief that people go through several stages of moral reasoning, and that men are more likely to focus on justice and universal law-type thinking than women.

Carol Gilligan criticized Lawrence Kohlberg's theory, stating that it was biased towards men. Gilligan held that his theory was derived by only studying boys and men and did not consider a woman's way of thinking or patterns of behavior. Men and boys, she claimed, tend to organize relationships in a hierarchical order, and are more likely than women to subscribe to human rights and to legalities when justifying their choices. Women and girls are more sensitive and empathetic.

These days, however, due to more-recent research we know that this applies to some men, and to some women. Dr. Gilligan it seems was over-generalizing about gender, since further research by other scientists concludes that there are today two major orientations: the empirical facts are that women may invoke the justice orientation, and men often appeal to the caring, or to the relationship orientation. It is not simply a matter of gender.

The role of emotions in ethics

A research question for the scientists is this: Do emotions play a role in determining our ethical conduct?

Martha Nussbaum, Ph. D. is a prominent professor, writer, and deep thinker, especially with regard to the relationship between emotions and moral conduct. She is a genius and is an activist for a better world. She has written extensively to promote ethical character traits such as compassion, empathy, and courage.

In her writings, she argues that emotions, including even disgust, exasperation and revulsion, are an important aspect of moral reasoning and that they play a central role in our ability to make moral judgments and act morally. She points out that emotions are not inherently good or bad, but that they can be either helpful or harmful depending on how they are directed and expressed.

She contends that emotions can be cultivated and trained in ways that will result in individuals being considerate of one another. According to Dr. Nussbaum, emotions can inform our moral judgments by providing us with important information about the situations we encounter and the people we interact with. For example, feelings of sympathy or anger may prompt us to actually do something to help those who are suffering, or to protest against injustice. However, she warns that motions can also cloud our judgment and lead us to act impulsively or irrationally.

To avoid these pitfalls, Nussbaum argues that we need to develop emotional intelligence, which involves recognizing and regulating our emotions in a way that will tend to encourage ethical behavior. A sense

of empathy will enable us to understand and relate to the experiences of others. It will also work in our moral efforts to develop self-awareness and self-control. She explains that, "Understanding our emotions helps us not only to build a morally just society but also to relate to one another in a way that is deeply respectful and moral. Such understanding helps us extend our humanity toward people we have previously rejected as "the other."

Cultivating good habits, and a sense of empathy, will help us to manage our own emotions and thus respond to situations in a way that is consistent with our values and principles. In sum, Dr. Nussbaum's writings suggest that emotions are a crucial component of moral conduct and that cultivating emotional intelligence is essential for moral/ethical behavior.

Dr. Albert Ellis, one of the founders of Cognitive Psychology, had some important views on this topic. He was an influential psychotherapist, who devised an approach which he titled Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy. He emphasized the relationship between emotion and cognition. According to Ellis, our emotions are not directly caused by external events but rather by our interpretations and beliefs about those events. He believed that it is our thoughts, or cognitions, about situations that ultimately lead to negative or painful emotional responses.

Ellis used a metaphorical concept called the "barometer" to illustrate this relationship. He described emotions as being similar to a barometer, which measures atmospheric pressure. In this metaphor, our thoughts and beliefs about a situation act as the "pressure" that influences our emotional reactions. Just as changes in atmospheric pressure cause the barometer to rise or fall, changes in our thoughts and beliefs can lead to different emotional responses.

However, it's important to note that Ellis did not claim that this cognitive-emotional relationship applies to all cases of emotional display. While he believed that thoughts and beliefs play a significant role in shaping emotions, he also recognized that there are other factors involved, such as physiological responses and certain innate emotional reactions. Ellis's perspective primarily focused on the idea that our interpretations and

evaluations of events – our moral values -- strongly influence our emotional experiences.

There is, of course, more that needs to be known about feelings and emotions. Hence further research is needed to add to our understanding of emotions and good or bad behavior, one's moral or immoral conduct.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

Are these two concepts the same, or can they be differentiated? Let us now attempt to show the contrast in the following discussion.

According to the conventional view, effectiveness is getting something done, actually accomplishing it with maximum efficiency. According to this view, efficiency is defined as utilizing the least expenditure of time, cost, and energy: It is 'doing the most with the least.' However, if efficiency is maximized, some damage may be done to human beings, resulting in needless human suffering. In striving to reach the intended goal with the least cost in time, material, and energy, it may involve 'trampling on people.' This would be unethical. So enlightened GCs don't want maximal efficiency; instead, they want to be effective but with *optimal efficiency*.

Effectiveness is a well-defined term in the Science of Ethics. It is understood as more than merely getting to a goal; it is getting there with the least harm, and with the most value added. Thus, in a sense, while Efficiency is doing the most with the least, Effectiveness is reaching the goal with the most impact. Hence effectiveness does the most with the most. Allow me to explain:

Effectiveness entails that while focusing on the end-in-view we are careful that the means or steps employed to get there are moral/ethical means. They are actions that a GC would tend to perform. Let's now clarify what morality means in the Science of Ethics. This calls for a new chapter.

Chapter 3

UNDERSTANDING MORALITY

“None are so blind as those who will not see.”

“To get more out of life, put more into it.”

{With regard to the truth of that second maxim, if one is generous or is innovative, one finds that life is more meaningful, and thus one gets more out of one’s life.}

Morality is defined in dictionaries as a noun meaning: a system of values or principles according to which intentions or behaviors are judged to be good or bad, right or wrong.

Speaking of right and wrong, according to the Science of Ethics – as the reader may have figured out by now -- for an individual to have a good character - and to show it by good conduct - is **morally right**, but to have a bad character, and to express it with one’s morally-questionable behavior, is morally **wrong**. That is how one may distinguish right from *wrong*.

At this point it is logical to spell out more details as to how an individual may be morally wrong, and thus expand on the negative aspects of the science:

To say that a BC engages in morally-questionable behavior is not a controversial claim. By the phrase morally-questionable behavior (or MQB) is meant: doing harm, being corrupt, being mean, or cruel, vicious, lying, bigoted, dishonest, exploiting, domineering, dehumanizing, violent, cheating others, or disparaging others, etc.

More MQB is being unable or unwilling to ever admit one is wrong. This too is a sign of a bad character, as is also: extreme hypocrisy, extreme narcissism. Believing that any means or practices are okay if 'they get me to my goal,' is another mark of a bad character, or of more MQB. Often, as noted earlier but well worth reiterating, a BC thinks that "the end justifies the means" no matter how morally-questionable those means may be.

Ethics as science explains why it is so important for people to have a good character, and to be wary of those who have predominantly bad characters. Rosalind Hursthouse is a leading exponent of what historically was spoken of as Virtue Ethics. Here is a reference to a book she wrote on *Virtue Ethics Theory* (simply referred to these days as VT.)

<https://www.amazon.com/Virtue-Ethic=pla-432479954638#customerReviews>

The case that advocates of VT would set forth may be of interest to readers. VT's central idea is that rather than focusing on specific actions or rules, VT suggests that ethical decisions should be made by considering what a virtuous person would do in a given situation. Virtue ethicists argue that by cultivating virtues, individuals can lead morally fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society. In this way, they claim, one will manage to live the Good Life, the moral life.

These philosophical thinkers have had a strong influence on the scientists who do research in the Science of Ethics. Philosophers often use vague and ambiguous words to discuss a topic; whereas in contrast, in a science one tends to find that more precise well-defined terms, along with highly-correlated relations, are among the concepts used to explain its findings.

According to Dr. Rosalind Hursthouse, Dr. Martha Nussbaum, and many other prominent philosophers, ethics encourages people to strive for excellence in their actions and choices. The qualities it endorses are not mere external behaviors but rather are ***internal dispositions***. And it is these habits that shape one's ethical conduct.

The Science of Ethics serves at least two purposes. Firstly, it provides a framework for understanding morality as an inherent aspect of an individual's character. And secondly, as you have discovered, it emphasizes the cultivation and practice of good traits to guide ethical decision-making and lead a morally-good life. Let us at this point introduce readers to a scholar who focused on what the present writer refers to as 'the 'negative aspect' of this framework.

The late Dr. Bernard Gert Ph.D., a longtime Dartmouth University professor, who worked to order and explain bad behavior. In Chapter 4 we will offer some of his brilliant ideas and insights on that negative aspect; but in the remainder of this chapter which focuses on the positive topic of morality, the influence of Bernard Gert is also apparent. He penned a book entitled, MORALITY, in which he wrote this:

“Morality is an informal public system applying to all rational persons, governing behavior that affects others, and includes what are commonly known as the moral rules, ideals, and virtues and has the lessening of evil or harm as its goal.”

With gratitude to him, the current author will rephrase the concept this way in an effort to upgrade and improve upon our understanding of this key concept, morality.:

Ethics is a system applying to all rational persons, governing behavior that affects others, and includes *morality*. As it is understood in this science, morality is a set of moral principles that have among their goals the increasing of good, as well as the lessening of evil or harm. Thus, morality also (reflecting the science as a whole) has two sides, a Positive side and a Negative side. As was implied earlier, a tacit ultimate goal for moral research by scientists is to provide a Quality Life for everyone.

Dr. Gert in another book he wrote entitled COMMON MORALITY (Oxford University Press, 2004 said this: "common sense morality is far more concerned with prohibiting (and discouraging) evil than it is with requiring (or encouraging) people to enhance goods or benefits." Scientists in this field will however need to do more-extensive research to verify whether Gert's assertion is indeed true.

In response to the question Why act morally? Gert would answer: If you don't, someone will be harmed; and acting immorally will corrupt one's own character, and that some forms of immoral action can make the

world inhospitable to oneself; and thus, it would be irrational to behave this way. Further confirmation studies may reveal that only those, who have a bad character most of the time, would be likely to conduct themselves in this irrational manner thereby making the world feel inhospitable to themselves.

Morality is a key term in the science of Ethics. People devoted to goodness, and who know the benefits, want to be ethical and moral. It would be helpful for students of the science to acquire a clear understanding of what morality means in theory and in practice. Therefore, in what follows, we present the modern perspective – the latest upgrade – describing and explaining the term “morality.”

Morality is designed to eventually become society’s ethos, although it is not currently, with regard to conduct that affects one’s own interest, and that affects others. Those who have morality strive, as mentioned, for the lessening of evil and for the increase of goodness and well-being. (What well-being means becomes clearer the more we learn about nature and human nature.)

As people become more enlightened, as they gain a clearer understanding of the benefits that come from living the Good Life, which is the ethical/moral life, they will work to lessen badness and to increase goodness and value.

There are two components to it. The first is this: One has morality if one lives up to a set of personally-chosen positive moral standards (also known as moral principles.) This set is an open set and it forms part of one’s self-image. Ideally this set would be added to, supplemented, throughout life, as one grows in moral awareness and insight. This in the science is termed: The Moral Development Principle.

Note that this adopting of further principles to live by, is voluntarily done by the individual without compulsion or imposition by anyone else. An individual merely informs his or her friends and contacts: “It works for me.”

The second component is applied when one who is devoted to the ethical way of life non-coercively influences one’s contacts (and the other members of one’s in-group) to study up on the basics of this new science and to compile for themselves their own set of positive norms,

actually live by them, and then, with the consent of the recipients, to share their list. This process is just another way to set a good example.

Hence, to help one get started on this process of designing his/her own personal list, some suggestions as are now offered here as to what guides or standards might be adopted into one's personal list of moral principles, if one cares to do so.

1) Honor and respect every individual as much as you can. If you can't respect them, at least be civil and courteous, for that reflects your character.

2) Everyone is doing the best one knows how. If we knew any better we would do better. If we had the know-how or the skills we likely would express them. Furthermore, if we are not suffering from stupidity, or some form of brain damage, it is mainly due to ignorance as to why we behave badly. ...This includes ignorance of know-how, of skills, and of how to live ethically with an awareness of the benefits that ensue.

3) We are all in this together. We're all just trying to make a life. We are all inter-dependent. We are all fallible. We will all eventually suffer or grieve in some way.

4) Work for mutually-beneficial relationships. What really helps you, helps me; and the reverse is also true. We are each other's support.

5) Strive for excellence in performance! Aim to be a good person, one who values deeply yourself and others.

6) We can ask of ourselves: What action can I take here and now to create the greatest all-around value? {Some have referred to this as 'the central question of the moral life.'}

7) Provide everyone the full opportunity to express their creativity.

8) Empower the individual to express more of his full potential. Help others to rise!

9) Look to creative design to solve problems. [The more that superior designing manages to do this, the less need there is for taxation.]

10) Be consistent: Do not have double standards, one for yourself, and other standards for other people.

11) Include as many as possible into your in-group. Widen your moral compass. Be inclusive.

12) Help those in need. Figure out ways to lift the less fortunate.

13) Do not deceive others. Be truthful.

14) Do not violate the law, unless it is an immoral, unjust law: a law that can be shown to violate one or more principles of Ethics.

15) Acknowledge every individual's right to autonomy: acknowledge a person's right to make personal decisions, and to have freedom over his/her physical body; and freedom from being used as a slave.

16) Also acknowledge a person's right to justice, to due process, compensation for harm done, and fair distribution of benefits. Work to gain Social Justice for one and all. Support efforts to improve policing, to encourage community policing, and to discourage the use of violence, especially of deadly force.

17) Acknowledge a person's rights to life, information, privacy, free expression, and safety. This implies we are to, as soon as possible, pass the Equal Rights Amendment recognizing both women's rights and gender rights.

18) The Principle of Justice directs individuals to lead a balanced life. It directs people to uphold social justice and elect for public office only those who will work for social justice and for the common good. Such candidates and officials would comply with the description of a morally-good government. It is one that governs efficiently, effectively, and very democratically.

A good government is one that continuously upgrades and improves the quality-of-life of its citizens and facilitates their helping one another; and doing this especially with a concern for the less-fortunate among us. It works constructively and humanely to eliminate homelessness. When

the jury system was devised as a means of dispensing justice, that was a social invention. When police academy courses in how to enhance social justice were devised, that too was a social invention. So was psychotherapy as a way to cope with mental-health issues, another social invention.

When the Science of Ethics is taught in Junior-High and in High School, perceptive students will recall the lesson on how to tell right from wrong:

To have a good character is (morally) right. To have a bad character is (morally) wrong. And that is one good way to tell Right from Wrong. This indicates the need for an individual to sensitize one's conscience so that one can better discern one of these types from the other – the BC from the GC.

Reviewing and clarifying some points from Chapter Two earlier, good characters are intensely honest. They don't lie or cheat. They are caring, sharing, and cooperative people. They mostly live ethically – which is the default state for human beings. Many who fall into this category would get a high score in *morality*. They are ready to be of service. They not only have good intentions but they follow through and put their good-will into action.

Bad guys, in contrast, may be clever con-artists: they don't mind misleading you. Many of them are unfeeling, lack a capacity for empathy; they could murder or hold slaves, or work someone until he or she drops. It wouldn't bother them at all! Let us now probe more deeply into the negative side of the theory, as we turn to a new chapter.

Chapter 4

SYSTEMATIC MORAL ANALYSIS

“Now is the time for all good humans to come to the aid of their species.”
-----Anonymous

“Rise by lifting others”

---Robert Ingersoll

Have you heard about SMA? It is an abbreviation for Systematic Moral Analysis. It offers some questions to ask, and some steps to follow, as a way to avoid corruption. Systematic Moral Analysis is a tool that helps us think through ethically complex situations before acting. And it can also help us analyze the ethical dimensions of a complex situation after the fact.

The steps that will be presented below follow from the original moral principle which, you may recall, can be derived from the axiom of the Science of Ethics. That axiom reads: Ethical individuals want to make things morally better. More pointedly, that axiomatic principle is implying that we are to “Make things better. If they are already good, make them even better!” From that assumption, and from the definition of what it means to be ethical, the entire system follows. The system did not load us up with obligations, loyalties, and duties. Our only obligation is to be good, and to create value especially in our interactions with one another.

You may recognize this principle as one which is acknowledged in the ancient Oath of Hippocrates. {We alluded to it at the outset of this essay. Only three simple words comprise that moral principle. It was addressed in Chapter 1 when the negative aspect was given attention.} That generative principle is of course: Do no harm!

Systematic Moral Analysis is a tool that may logically be incorporated into the synthesis which is the Science of Ethics. Let us now present a clear explanation of what it is, and then offer some examples as to how it is applied in practice. After that, in the next section, we will show how Dr. Bernard Gert modified it with his own interpretation of morality, and other related matters.

Here is a general overview of the steps involved in SMA:

Identify the moral issue: Clearly define the ethical problem or dilemma that requires analysis.

Gather relevant information: Collect all pertinent facts, data, and information related to the issue at hand.

Identify stakeholders: Identify and consider the individuals or groups affected by the decision or issue, including those who may have a vested interest or be impacted by the outcome. Identify moral principles and articulate the values, or ethical theories that are relevant to the situation.

Apply moral principles: Analyze the moral principles in relation to the specific case and determine how they apply. This involves assessing the rights, duties, consequences, and other moral considerations involved.

Evaluate alternative actions: Generate and evaluate different courses of action or solutions that could address the moral issue.

Assess the consequences: Consider the potential consequences of each alternative action, both short-term and long-term, for all relevant stakeholders.

Based on the analysis and evaluation of the alternatives, make a reasoned decision regarding the most ethical course of action.

Justify the decision: Provide a clear and coherent explanation for the chosen decision, based on the moral principles and reasoning applied during the analysis.

Here, with some help from AI, are a few examples to illustrate how SMA could be applied:

Example 1: Ethical Dilemma in Healthcare

A healthcare professional is faced with a situation where a patient is in critical condition, and administering a particular drug could potentially save their life. However, the drug is experimental and not yet approved by regulatory authorities.

The healthcare professional could use SMA to analyze the moral implications, considering principles such as beneficence (acting in the best interest of the patient), autonomy (respecting the patient's right to make decisions), and non-maleficence (avoiding harm). By applying SMA, the healthcare professional would weigh the potential benefits and risks, consider alternative actions, and make an ethical decision.

Example 2: Environmental Ethics

A company is considering expanding its manufacturing facility, which would result in increased pollution and potential harm to the environment. Using SMA, the company could identify the stakeholders affected, such as the local community and ecosystems, and analyze the situation based on principles such as environmental sustainability, responsibility, and the well-being of future generations. The company would evaluate alternative actions, assess the consequences, and make a decision that aligns with ethical considerations.

Example 3: Business Ethics

A business executive is faced with a decision about whether to lay off a significant number of employees to cut costs and maintain profitability.

Applying SMA, the executive could consider principles such as fairness, justice, and the well-being of employees. The decision would involve evaluating alternative actions, considering the consequences for both the affected employees and the business as a whole, and making a decision that upholds ethical standards.

These examples demonstrate how SMA provides a structured approach for analyzing ethical dilemmas and making informed decisions based on moral principles and considerations.

Moral dilemmas often involve clashes between two core values, both of which are considered to be positive. Some common “right-versus-right” dilemmas, for example, are: truth versus loyalty, short-term versus long-term, individual versus community, and justice versus mercy.

One relatively-recent form of SMA was developed by the late Dr. Bernard Gert, who we introduced earlier. According to Gert, harm (or "evil") is the central moral concept for ethical theory. Gert believes harm is what all rational creatures seek to avoid. He advances the following five-concept account of harm: “

death

pain

disability

loss of freedom

loss of pleasure

Here is a dilemma that Dr. Gert brought up in his classes for students to discuss.

An example (of how you may use SMA and apply it) is this: if you were to consider breaking the law, in order to run a red light.

Using Gert's version of SMA, "you evaluate the scenario and notice that there are no cars around and running the red light will not cause any harm, however, you do not want other people to know that they can run red lights too, because that would lead to more car accidents, which is indirectly causing pain and death." Therefore, on those grounds, Dr. Gert would object to one's running that red light.

Within the Science of Ethics framework, one engaged in analyzing this dilemma, would come to the same conclusion. Understanding the good side of the theory, one concludes that the right thing to do in this case is for automobile drivers to set a good example! That too is a central concept. "Be a role model." Based upon those governing moral principles one is not to run the red light. This means auto drivers would wait a few minutes for the light to change. [A further pragmatic consideration is that you never know who might be watching; it could be a child who would later follow a bad example that the child sees, or it might well be police officers on duty observing that intersection.]

Behavioral Ethics

Behavioral Ethics has been defined as the study of systematic and predictable ways in which individuals make ethical decisions and judge the ethical decisions of others that are at odds with intuition and the benefits of the broader society. It is to be noted that these researchers adopt Dr. Gert's analysis of harm. In doing this, they have modified SMA along the lines what Dr. Gert suggested; and applied it to teaching students in general education courses offered in colleges mostly in the south of the United States. They have collaborated to design courses for students that have proved to be effective in guiding many of these students toward living an ethical life. The videos the behavioral ethicists produced are quite creative and interesting to view because they are on themes relevant to current issues and events. Here are links to some of the videos:

<https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/>

<https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/video/systematic-moral-analysis>

In addition, the behavioral ethics teachers have worked out some well-thought-out Discussion Questions which they propose for students, parents, professionals and the general public - once they have recently had an opportunity to view a relevant video.

To give readers an idea of how the behavioral ethicist apply Dr. Gert's analysis, here is an excerpt of what was written, and narrated in video form, by Dr. Demi Elliott, Ph.D. a behavioral ethicist. Deni Elliott is a full professor and Chairwoman of Media Ethics and Press Policy in the Department of Journalism & Media Studies, College of Arts and Sciences, The University of South Florida at St. Petersburg. By examining some of her teaching notes that students are given, one may sense how she has managed to incorporate some of the findings of Dr. Gert. So we offer here an excerpt of her notes.

Teaching Notes for Systematic Moral Analysis by Dr. Elliot

"Students know cheating is wrong, and that it's a violation of school policy to smuggle notes into an exam, or to copy a neighbor's answers. But what if a friend, who's failing the class, asks you for answers to a test? Or if you see someone you don't know cheating? Does it matter if you report it or not?"

Consider this scenario: Some people in your class got a copy of last year's final.

You know that at least half the class has already looked at the questions. Now, you're offered a copy.

What should you do?

.... The first step of SMA is conceptualization.

If no one is likely to be harmed, then there's no ethical problem. But how do we really know if anyone is about to cause harm

Dr. Gert developed a list of moral rules that can help us identify ethically questionable acts. [The first seven points are ways of doing harm]:

- 1) Do not kill.
- 2) Do not cause pain.
- 3) Do not disable.
- 4) Do not deprive of freedom or opportunity.
- 5) Do not deprive of pleasure.
- 6) Do not deceive.
- 7) Do not cheat.

And now, some positive points in Dr. Gert's list, which were also emphasized by Immanuel Kant:

- 8) Keep your promises.
- 9) Obey the law.
- 10) Do your duty.”

Demi Elliot tells her students, “So if you decide to take a peek at the old exam, then you're violating Rule #7: Do Not Cheat. According to Gert, cheating causes harm because "the cheater gains an advantage over other participants in the activity, by violating rule #10, the rule that every-one is expected to follow: Do Your Duty.

As a student in the class, you have a responsibility to abide by the rules that you agreed to follow, rules that were set out by the professor and the university. In addition to violating Rule #10, you are also violating Rule #6: Do Not Deceive. Etc.”

Let us now give attention to Social Ethics which -- along with Individual Ethics – is a branch of the Science of Ethics. Each branch is divided into two sub-branches, one which is the Theoretical part, and one which is the Applied part. Here, for example, is a research question that would arise in the field of Applied Social Ethics:

Is it true that when people are more comfortable, are more well-off, there is a decrease in crime because these affluent people have less incentive to acquire goods illegally?

If the facts show that it is the case that there is a strong correlation between the two factors mentioned above – greater affluence vs. tendency to commit crimes -- then to lower the crime rate it would be wise to make people more comfortable. One way to manage to do this is to raise the safety-net higher by instituting “social security for everybody.” Let’s clarify this in the following paragraphs.

We need to find creative ways to relieve extreme poverty and hopelessness. One such social invention has been devised, and these days it is most commonly known as a “U.B.I. plan.” Comprehensive details of world-wide experiments in Universal Basic Income are available in Wikipedia.

And although this article is now somewhat dated, a very good explanation of UBI, and report on both the current and then-recent programs in the United States, this article is well-worth reading in its entirety. We refer interested readers to check out an article published on May 12, 2022, at the online site FORBES Advisor.

Such social experiments are designed to decrease the degree of extreme poverty in the U.S.A., but showing that a U.B.I. plan works on a small scale is not sufficient. It is best to put it into effect nation-wide; this would require the initiation of a 'sovereign wealth fund.'

One such fund has worked, and still is working, very successfully in Alaska where some of the income from the oil industry is put by the state government as a set-aside to fund the plan; it is a plan in which all of Alaska's citizens participate. They receive a contribution from the 'wealth fund,' and they like it. The plan meets with very-widespread favor!!

The citizens of Alaska would resist any attempt to deprive them of their Wealth Fund; it is so popular. Its existence has not caused them to lose their incentives to work at occupations useful to society. The main objection to UBI plans is that it will result in people losing their motive to do any useful work. Yet, in this writer's considered opinion, if a society has such a program, and most citizens were dropouts who just laid back and became spectator-sports fans instead of active participants, but the society (that has a strong safety-net such as a UBI plan) produced each generation one occasional Mohandas K. Gandhi, one Jeff Bezos, one Albert Einstein, one Nelson Mandela, and /or one Tim Berners-Lee type, it would make the entire plan worthwhile.

There has recently been a couple of successful examples of this. Here are links that describe the places the experiments were initiated, put into effect, and the reports on the results produced.

One extensively-researched result is known as 'The Stockton experiment'. The quite-creative Mayor of this small city in California, named Stockton, had heard about Basic Income, and he decided to try it. He initiated a plan which guaranteed income for only a qualified group of working mothers. The program paid more than one hundred residents \$500 a month with no strings attached. Its first year was a success. Researchers found that the plan managed **to** improve the recipients' financial stability and health, but in its second year with the pandemic at its

height those effects were much less pronounced because the women, in order to stay alive, did not go into their workplace site. Many of them of course stayed home for the sake of safety during the pandemic.

Dr. Amy Castro is the founding director of the Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University of Pennsylvania. She, and fellow researcher, Stacia West, studied the Stockton program. They wrote: "The Stockton program is one of the few modern U.S. experiments in regular cash payments with complete, published results." They found that the program [by the end of its first year] did manage to reduce "income-volatility and allay financial, emotional, and psychological distress."

Scientists in the field of Ethics will spend time and effort exploring concepts as to how smoothly to fund a national Wealth Fund while encountering the least resistance from factions who, perhaps mistakenly, argue it is not wisely designed, and that they think it harms them. This national plan may be given the title "Social Security for Everyone."

It is predictable that some objection to this plan will come from the set of bad actors and from aristocratically-minded oligarchs who do not want to see the emergence of a strong middle-class. This 'power elite' believes in keeping some of the population in desperation. One might ask: Why?

It is because these BCs think irrationally on this topic. They hold that it is necessary to have an economic class that is so poor that those impoverished folks will be willing to do the menial jobs, the boring and routine jobs, as well as the laborious work. They are, however mistaken for the following reason.

Actually automation, creative software, and robotics are gradually eliminating such work. This occurs especially as people become enlightened-enough to design and apply AI and human intelligence to the project. Today we find that a division of a well-known processed-food company is offering this sort of humane dull-work-elimination service to other businesses; they will for a fee put their engineers and coders to work eliminating laborious and routine functions in their client's company. We can predict that this trend to automate, to use robotics, in order to eliminate boring work, and hard labor, will accelerate as the human species

evolves and gains a respect for science. Also in the area of education and instruction, new more efficient and more-humane methods of teaching will be devised as scientific Ethics courses are taught in the schools – as people become more ethical and caring, thus wanting to improve education techniques in the drive to be effective.

Let us now discuss another application of ethics to education by posing the following question., and then explaining in some detail how and why it is relevant.

Is kindness alone enough?

The Wheeling, Illinois Public School District has a program called “Show Kindness.” Here is a news report with information about it:

“As part of their multicultural literature class, a group of Wheeling High School students raised over \$1,500 to donate to Journeys, a local homeless organization.

Since 2012, Christine Pacyk, a Wheeling High School teacher, has run the Compassion Project, which allows high school seniors in her multicultural literature class to research and identify a cause they can support. This year, students chose Journeys.”

“Monday marked World Kindness Day, and fourth-grade students at Field Elementary School in Wheeling, Illinois did their part by paying a surprise visit to London Middle School to put up cheerful signs and Post-it notes.

Wearing "Be Kind" T-shirts, the Field fourth-graders crossed Dundee Road to visit nearby London, where they will attend grades 6-8. A few London students were in on the surprise and helped the younger Field students as they moved around the building to attach colorful signs and notes to lockers and on walls.” The fourth-graders suggested that each class in the school make kindness cards to give to their buddy classroom, which they did.

Students didn't know, however, that other classes were also creating kindness cards for a school-wide exchange. The cards were paired with small gifts, like boxes of crayons, keychains, water bottles, or small toys, donated by local organizations.”

"Our students are so kind and thoughtful, and it was incredible to watch them through this process," said Kate Lapetino, fourth grade teacher at Field Elementary School. "Their excitement was palpable as they were creating cards for their buddies. Seeing the surprise and appreciation on their faces when they realized they had received kindness cards in return was so rewarding."

"The surprise coincided with World Kindness Day on November 13. Throughout the year, Field students have focused on ways to show kindness through random acts like greeting someone in the hallway, holding open a door, or offering to help. Students track acts of kindness - performed by themselves and others, within and outside of the school."

The scientists of Ethics find that kindness alone is not enough; it is necessary also to continue to grow in moral development throughout one's life. What is needed for a Quality Life, they have concluded, is *not only kindness but also for each of us to commit to moral improvement*. What does this involve in more detail?

In order to make it better for yourself, your behavior is to more-and-more approximate your image of your ideal self. This happens as you learn more of the moral principles that actually work in your life and devote yourself to living them in practice. The science when applied counsels: You also better yourself as you come to know yourself, to accept yourself as you are (with all your flaws and weaknesses), yet you make the conscious choice to be true to your best self. Then you are to create yourself (i.e., develop your talents, gifts, and capacities.) And then you give yourself. (Express for the world these gifts.) That is the process, Dr. R. S. Hartman taught his students, for truly bettering yourself, as well as improving the world in which we human beings live.

What is involved in moral improvement toward the goal of becoming one's ideal self?

The more one gains knowledge of moral principles that work, that create value in one's human interactions, and the more one lives up to these self-chosen principles, one is evolving morally. These principles are not rules! They are merely guidelines for making the world one lives

in better, for that is the long-range goal. As we draw this essay to a close a summary may prove helpful.

Summary and Review

Ethics, as understood in this treatise, is the discipline that arises when persons are viewed as unique, as of high value, and as having a story to tell. They are seen as special in their own special way.

With this in mind, a conclusion reached by the people doing research within this discipline is that if one has a good character, all else being equal, one will tend to perform worthwhile actions, set a good example, assume responsibility, and will tend to “do the right thing.” Therefore it would seem that developing such a character and making it a daily habit, maintaining it, would be the wise thing to do and the best way to live.

The axiom for the entire theory and practice is “make things better.” An ethical, moral person wants to continuously improve. Just as people feel a need to eat and to sleep, the way to have one’s life filled with order, peace, and fulfillment is to be devoted to goodness.

If one genuinely wants to be, one can be morally good; but if one does not care at all about the welfare of others, or if one is indifferent, then that individual does not know his own self-interest, namely how much better life would be if one manages to be kind to one another, and to live in a world inhabited by decent people who democratically engage in mutual aid. Such people of good conscience, who know what is in their true interest, strive to be ethical all the time, and see the benefits flow.

Let us be aware that Ethics is about making things better; and this includes creating value in human interaction; and ethics is about developing oneself to be the best one can be. Let us keep moving forward – keep making progress of the moral/ethical kind. For if there is that kind of progress it is going to contribute to the positive evolution of the human species. And that is a worthwhile goal to keep in one’s awareness, and for which to strive.

Those who do research in the Science of Ethics believe that they can help human beings evolve in an ethical direction. This means that individuals will acquire more and more of the GC traits, and eventually form a greater sense of community.

APPENDIX

A motto for the Ford Foundation that guides their work is this: 'Justice begins where inequality ends.'

We're building a world where everyone has the power to shape their lives. It turns out that their grants, usually less than \$200,000 each, do encourage and enhance civic awareness, and do advance education and opportunity. In addition, they write:

"We believe in the inherent dignity of all people. But around the world, too many people are excluded from the political, economic, and social institutions that shape their lives.

Across eight decades, our mission has sought to reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement."

They award grants in keeping with this viewpoint. This is Applied Ethics at its best! See: The Ford Foundation Mission Statement here:

<https://www.fordfoundation.org/about/about-ford/mission/>

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