

Ethical Dilemmas: Morality is a highly philosophical and debatable topic. Is morality subjective or objective? How do you determine what is right and what is wrong? Is it merely because of social convention? Listed are three different scenarios requiring you to use your ethics in order to make the “right” decision. What is the right thing to do in each scenario?

1. **The Burning House:** A house is on fire and a priest and your uncle are in the house. Please note that this uncle is one of your nice uncles, not your molesting uncle. You only have enough time to save one person. If you try to save both, you will risk your own life and the life of the person you are trying to save. Is it more ethical to save the priest since he will contribute more to this world, or is it more ethical to save your uncle since he is your blood relative?

2. **Euthanasia:** Your friend is dying from cancer. She is in great pain and she wants to perform euthanasia (doctor assisted suicide). She asks that you take her to Oregon where euthanasia is legal. If she dies prematurely, her friends and family will be sad. They want her to stay alive as long as possible even though her health is deteriorating and she is in great pain. What is the ethical thing to do?

3. **The Water Raft:** There are 10 people stranded on a water raft in the middle of the ocean. Help is coming soon but there are only enough rations to ensure the survival of 7 people. How will the group determine which seven people should live? The occupations of the ten people are listed below.
1. **Business owner:** He is a 48 year old business executive who owns a small company that employs 300 people. His company designs software for education use.
 2. **Educator:** She is a 38 year old high school History teacher. She is popular because her classes are fun and she is very influential. She has been teaching for over 10 years.
 3. **Hooker:** She is a famous 25 year old hooker and stripper from Las Vegas. She has a cliental base of over 30 wealthy men a month. She brings in over \$10,000 a month and donates 10% of her income to local charity.
 4. **Lawyer:** He is a 45 year old public attorney from San Francisco who devotes his life to insure that people from the less privileged class receive a fair trial. He has been a lawyer for over 15 years and has helped reduced the sentence and fines for thousands of clients.
 5. **Child Prodigy:** She is a 12 year old child prodigy who has an amazing ability to memorize information and solve complex mathematical problems.
 6. **Comedian:** He is a famous 40 year old comedian from the city of New York who uses a lot of political satire in his jokes to inform his listeners of corruption in government. He is also a critic of our consumer society.
 7. **Doctor:** She is a 58 year old doctor from Stanford Medical Center. She has published many articles on heart disease prevention and has performed heart surgery on hundreds of patients.
 8. **Priest:** He is a 60 year old priest from the city of Oakland. He likes to counsel people from the general public, and he helps to oversee 10 homeless shelters throughout the Bay Area. He is very successful in helping people with their problems.
 9. **Novelist:** She is a 46 year old famous novelist from Los Angeles. She has written many national best sellers. Her last book was about person discovering his identity and achieving true happiness in a fast pace, consumer society.
 10. **Actor:** He is a highly educated 28 year old emerging Hollywood actor. He majored in philosophy and psychology at the University of Chicago, Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley, and studied film and acting in New York. He is highly selective of the roles that he plays. He will not accept a script unless he feels that the story will move the audience in a profound way. The last role that he chose to play was about a person going against social convention and overcoming many personal, financial, and social obstacles to become an influential political organizer who helped to spark a revolution in his home country. The movie was based on real events.