

Ethics Goes to the Movies III

The VADM James B. Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership, located in Luce Hall in room 201, offers this set of short facilitator guides, each centered on ethical themes explored in a recent film. The Ingersoll Library, located in the Stockdale Center, houses many movies that focus on ethical dilemmas. Each summer, newly graduated Ensigns and Second Lieutenants work with Center staff in crafting discussion guides around these films. Some films are chosen based on work in a course, Philosophy at the Movies, taught each year by Stockdale Center Assistant Director, Dr. Shaun Baker.

This document is the third volume of such guides. Each facilitator's guide in this document is a self-contained brief on the film it focuses upon.

Each guide first presents the Stockdale Center's ethical decision-making model, based upon research on the psychology of ethical decision making. The model presents a procedure that has been distilled from that research. The four-step procedure also allows incorporation of more traditional ethical theories and outlooks, while paying attention to stresses and emotions involved in such dilemmas. The guides then give brief synopses of each film. They conclude with a selection of carefully crafted discussion questions that focus on the ethical dimensions of the films, and the psychological and emotional factors that are portrayed.

Each of these films can be checked out for use in Saturday training or other such venues. They can also be found at the Nimitz Library. Midshipmen may also contact the Stockdale center (ethics@usna.edu) if there is a movie not currently available that they would like to have included in the library. If the suggestion is approved, a discussion guide will be created for that movie. Each year, a selection of new discussion guides is added to the library.

This volume presents discussion guides for the following movies:

- Catch Me if You Can
- Charlie Wilson's War
- Courage Under Fire
- Flight
- Lone Survivor
- Scent of a Woman
- Thank You for Smoking

Training Officers/Sergeants: If you are interested in using this program for SMT/GMT or other purposes, please contact the center to set up a time to check out the movie.

Thank you for using our resources. We hope you find them stimulating and thought-provoking.

Catch Me If You Can

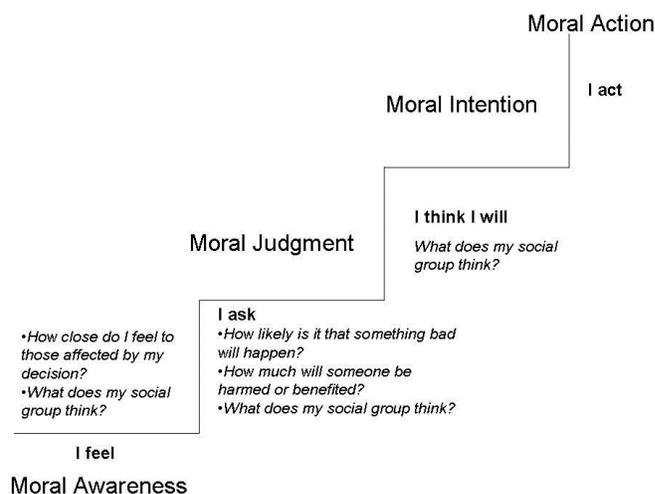
Ethical Decision-Making Movie Discussion

Movie Summary:

Frank Abagnale, Jr. (Leonardo DiCaprio) worked as a doctor, a lawyer, and as a co-pilot for a major airline -- all before his 18th birthday. A master of deception, he was also a brilliant forger, whose skill gave him his first real claim to fame: At the age of 17, Frank Abagnale, Jr. became the most successful bank robber in the history of the U.S. FBI Agent Carl Hanratty (Tom Hanks) makes it his prime mission to capture Frank and bring him to justice, but Frank is always one step ahead of him

Ethical Decision-Making Basics:

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The questions at each step reflect the work of Thomas Jones, who followed up on the work of Rest. They show how people's ability to make ethical decisions is affected by different moral intensity factors. The most common ones include:

- How much a particular social group (peers, friends, family) agrees that a given action is good or bad and what they will think about the decision maker
- How close the decision maker feels to the people affected by your decision
- How much the decision maker's actions harm or benefit someone
- How likely it is that something good or something bad will happen

Here's how the steps in the model work.

In the "I feel" step, *you feel something about the situation in your body*. Decide if this situation raises a moral issue by asking:

1. Am I violating my moral emotions if I do nothing?
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Check whether moral intensity factors are affecting you by asking:

1. Would my social group see a moral issue here?
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In the "I ask" step, *weigh different choices to distinguish right from wrong, better from worse, and between competing tensions*. To weigh those choices, ask the following:

1. If I take action, is that fair or unfair? Morally right or morally wrong?
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Ask whether moral intensity factors are affecting your judgment:

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In the "I think I will" step, *decide what to do or not to do*, using the questions below:

1. What do I think I should do?
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In the "I act" step, *carry out your intention, even if there is great opposition*. These questions may be helpful:

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This model can be used for everyday decisions, along with those that have more profound effects. This guide outlines the ethical dilemmas in *Catch Me if You Can* and then presents some examples for discussion. You can use many of the dilemmas or examples to illustrate this ethical decision-making process.

Ethical Dilemmas:

1. In order to get what he wants, Frank Abagnale fraudulently places himself in positions of authority. He willfully impersonated various people in different positions of power in order to give himself what appeared on the outside as a successful life. Why is it wrong to lie and deceive people to give yourself a better life? How does it hurt the people around you? What particular dangers come from posing as a professional?
2. Why did Frank make the decision to come back at the end, and why was it the right decision? What were the pros and cons of staying and of running away?

More About Ethics:

1. Frank Abagnale's father knows what he is doing, but doesn't do anything about it. Is his inaction morally excusable, or just as bad as his son's acts? Why is it wrong to not speak up when you know things are wrong? Should there be exception for family members?
2. In the short term, Frank's actions gave him power and wealth. However, Frank had to pay the price for his decision in the end, spending time in prison and losing everything he had gained. The consequences of unethical and unjust actions may not be immediately apparent, but there is no way around them. Suppose Frank could continue undetected in his fraud. Would he? Should he?
3. By lying about who and what he was, Frank could have placed people's lives in danger. As a Co-Pilot he would be expected to jump on the controls if something happened to the pilot, and as a Doctor, if someone came in requiring some surgery or care that he was unable to perform it could cause that person serious harm. What are some other consequences of convincing people that you are qualified for professional work? What implications does this have for people that prefer to skate by in their professional education?

Examples/Discussion:

1. When getting qualified for your SWO pin, what would be the pros and cons of having someone sign off on your qualifications saying you've been trained in something when you really are not?
2. Your unit is about to be inspected, and the day before the inspection you realize your Marines have not been documenting the weekly maintenance you perform on the LAVs. You know it has been completed every week and your Platoon Sgt is telling you to not worry about falsifying the documents. He says 'it's not that big of a deal, the inspector will just want to know that the maintenance occurred.' Why is it wrong to forge the documents and what are some of the negative consequences that could happen if the inspector marks you down as complete in that area when you're really not?
3. Imagine that you are platoon commander in combat, and one of your comrades takes a shot that is fatal. You had ordered actions that were infringement of the rules of engagement, in order to protect your platoon. But, this order led to the death. Your platoon is on your side no matter what your next action is. Do you falsify your report to avoid court martial or do you take ownership of your actions?

“Charlie Wilson's War”

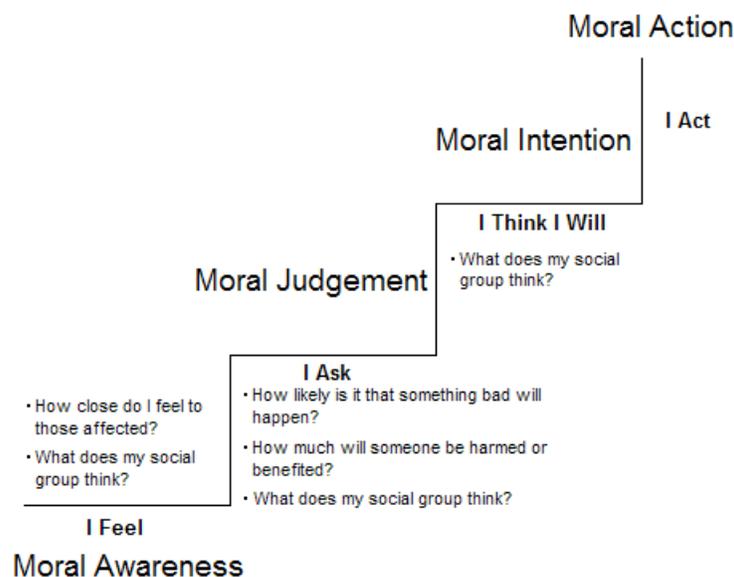
Ethical Decision Making Movie Discussion

Summary

In the early 1980s, Charlie Wilson is a womanizing US congressional representative from Texas who seemed to be in the minor leagues, except for the fact that he is a member of two major foreign policy and covert-ops committees. However, prodded by his major conservative supporter, Houston Socialite Joanne Herring, Wilson learns about the plight of people suffering in the brutal Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. With the help of the maverick CIA agent, Gustav "Gust" Avrakotos, Wilson dedicates his canny political efforts to supply the Afghan mujahedeen with the weapons and support to defeat the Soviet Union.

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This four-step process applies not only to ethical decisions of everyday life, but also those that have more profound effects. This guide will focus on several key scenes and discussion points to develop the understanding of the ethical decision making process. Use these topics to facilitate a discussion focused around incorporating the four-step process and key scenes from the movie.

Ethical Dilemmas:

1. At the end of the movie, once the conflict is over Charlie Wilson wants to help build infrastructure and schools in Afghanistan, but the rest of the committee refuses. Going through the four step model, does that feel like the right decision? Do nations that intervene or take military actions in other countries have an obligation to repair their damages?
2. In the opening scene, Charlie Wilson is drinking in a hot tub with two strippers while doing business with a couple and then on the way to the airport is doing lines of cocaine in the back of the limo. Is it possible to compartmentalize or separate business and personal life or do the two intertwine? Should voters 'compartmentalize' when considering the politicians that are running for office?

Talking Points:

1. When the decision was made to stop all funding aiding the resistance, was it right to assume that everything would be fine in Afghanistan? Assumptions can be dangerous. In the movie, assumptions led to incredibly poor decisions that continued to put characters in difficult situations, forcing them to lie and eventually kill.
2. When poor decisions are made, they usually result in poor consequences. If no one is willing to take accountability for these decisions/actions, the results tend to compound, resulting in more poor decisions to be made until someone is held accountable. Why is it that people nevertheless 'pass the buck' when it comes to responsibility?
3. All of the secretaries in Wilson's office are attractive young women and he is caught saying "You can teach 'em to type, but you can't teach 'em to grow tits." Is it appropriate to be so upfront and politically incorrect about your lifestyle? If they are all qualified secretaries does it matter, as long as he keeps his views to himself, and does not sexually harass the women?

Examples/Discussion:

1. A message of the film: When you carry out an action make sure you complete it to the fullest, taking pains to avoid any foreseeable and preventable negative consequences. Have there been any situations in which you or a peer had started a task, but did not finish it with appropriate care, causing the situation to end poorly due to the lack of a responsible plan of action?
2. What are daily situations where your personal life and your business life conflict with one another? How do you deal with this? Can you successfully compartmentalize?

Courage Under Fire

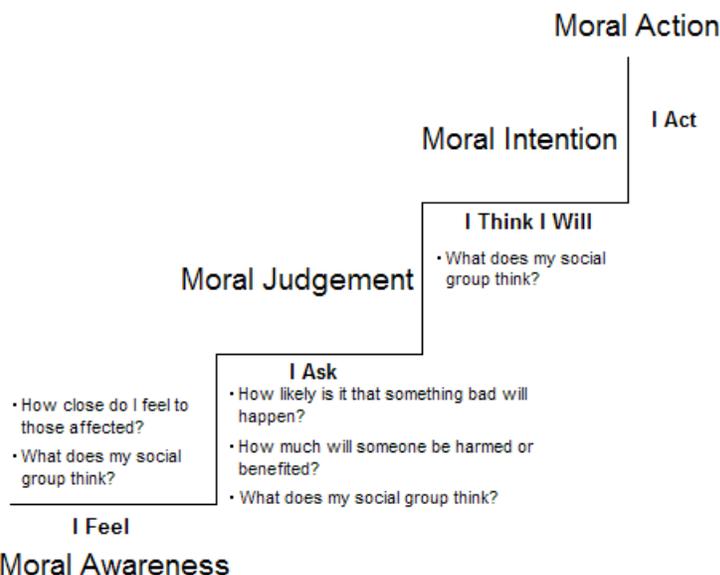
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Lieutenant Colonel Nathaniel Serling is involved in a friendly fire accident during the Gulf War. Accidentally killing his friend, the incident is swept under the rug and Serling is sent to a desk job. Later, he is assigned to determine if Army Captain Karen Walden should be the first woman to posthumously receive the Medal of Honor for valor in combat. At first, everything about the investigation seems to be straightforward and the facts all add up except a single crucial detail. Serling notices a growing number of inconsistencies and begins to grow suspicious. Under the pressure of his commanding officer to just get the case wrapped up neatly, Serling nevertheless seeks out the truth, all the while dealing with aggressive emotional problems of his own.

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Ethical Dilemmas:

1. In Iraq Serling shoots at what he believes to be enemy tanks, finding out after the fact that they are his own men. However, no one in his chain of command says anything about the incident, instead telling the family of the deceased that they had simply 'died in battle'. Is Serling still ethically responsible for 'heat of the battle' decisions? Should he come clean?
2. General Hershberg swept Serling's incident under the rug and did not hold him accountable for his actions. Even though Serling is obviously suffering mentally and emotionally, should Hershberg have pushed for the legal consequences instead of covering up the incident? Is one decision more right than the other? Defend your answer.
3. General Hershberg threatens Serling with bad publicity and being relieved of duty if he does not publish the Walsh story with the positive spin desired. Why is this wrong?
4. The General removes Serling from the case. Serling continues to pursue the truth behind the story. Is he morally obligated to do this even though he is no longer bound to the case? If there are pieces missing to a story, even if the outcome is the desired one, do you still need to find out the truth, even if the effect on morale is severe?

Other Ethical Questions:

1. Monfreiz lies and says "She's dead." when the rescue helicopter picks them up. Why didn't Illario say anything then? Why didn't he say anything to Serling when first questioned? Would you say anything? Is Illario morally/legally obligated to tell the truth?
2. As an officer in a high stress situation, when threatened with a mutiny does morality get thrown out the window or should you hold fast though your life and the mission may be threatened?

Examples/Discussion

1. Is it right to lie or stretch the truth to produce a good example? For example, the soldiers involved in the case lied to Serling about the exact details of what happened. However, they still made Captain Walden out to be a hero. Why isn't this ethically sound? Tailor your answer to a consideration of what the tradition of the Medal of Honor represents.
2. As an officer, is it your duty to try and destroy double standards? During the movie the men laugh when they kill the enemy, yet they curse the enemy when they do the same to them. We are taught that the dehumanization of our enemy is not ethically sound. If it is the only coping method available? Does this make it any better?
3. Can your moral bearing change when you experience significant life events?
4. Why do you think some people choose to live with a lie? Is there ever a good reason?
5. Even if you 'know' someone is going to die, do you still rescue them? Should assumptions ever guide your moral decisions?

Flight

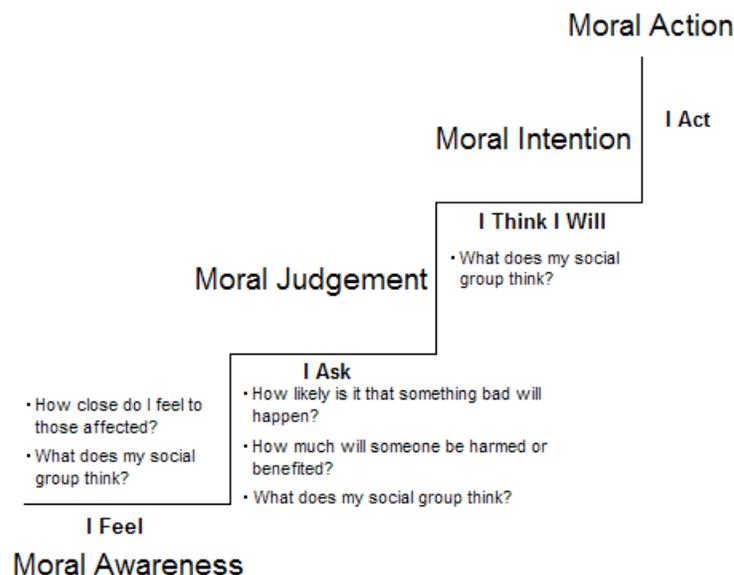
Ethical Decision Making Movie Discussion

Summary:

Whip Whitaker is a commuter airline pilot. While on a flight from Orlando to Atlanta something goes wrong and the plane starts to fly erratically. With little choice Whip crashes the plane and saves almost all on board. When he wakes up in the hospital, his friend from the airline union introduces him to a lawyer who tells him there's a chance he could face criminal charges because his blood test reveals that he was intoxicated with alcohol and cocaine during the flight. He denies being impaired, so while an investigation is underway, he is told to 'keep his act together.' However, letting go of his addiction is not as easy as it seems...

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Ethical Considerations:

1. It might be said that lawyers Hugh Lang, and Charlie Anderson were 'doing their jobs' attempting to prove that Capt Whittaker was not drunk and high while flying the plane, even though they were fully aware of the truth. Is it wrong for them to do so? Do lawyers, in their professional roles as defenders or advocates, merit moral exemptions? Is there a conflict between social utility and integrity?
2. When Lawyer Hugh Lang and Charlie Anderson arrive at the hotel room on the day of the trial they find Capt Whittaker passed out drunk in the bathroom. They call Harling Mays, the drug dealer. They want to get Capt Whittaker high in order for him to be able to put on a show? To what lengths would you go in a similar situation? How far does your professional obligation require you to go in making your client look his best for court?

Further Ethical Points:

1. Capt. Whittaker assumes that he can handle his alcohol problem on his own. His friend Nicole tries to help him through the situation by taking him to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and talking to him about his situation, but he ignores her and keeps trying to do it on his own. Assumptions can be dangerous. In the movie, assumptions led to incredibly poor decisions that continued to put characters in difficult situations. We all must make assumptions about our own capabilities, but need to be wary of bad mistakes such as Capt. Whittaker's. How would you avoid such pitfalls?
2. Capt. Whittaker showed tremendous courage and skill in landing the aircraft. Should this mitigate our moral condemnation of his bad choice to pilot the craft while intoxicated?
3. During the trial, Capt Whittaker would not put the blame for the existence of the vodka bottles on the deceased Katerina Marquez. If he had done so he would have been free of all charges; however, he did not want her career to be tarnished postmortem. Would you be able to accept blame for something like this rather than push it onto someone else who cannot defend him or herself?

Ethics, Integrity and Mission:

1. Imagine that you are in Pensacola and there is a training accident. If you are the pilot and happened to have gone out drinking the night before, would you tell anyone about it, or would you keep quiet about it hoping that it never comes up?
2. During a port visit, you are pressured into going out and only having one drink. One drink turns into two and before you know it you are blacked out the night before you are OOD with responsibility of driving the ship out of port. What do you do the next morning? Can you get yourself fit for duty? If not, then what do you do?

Lone Survivor

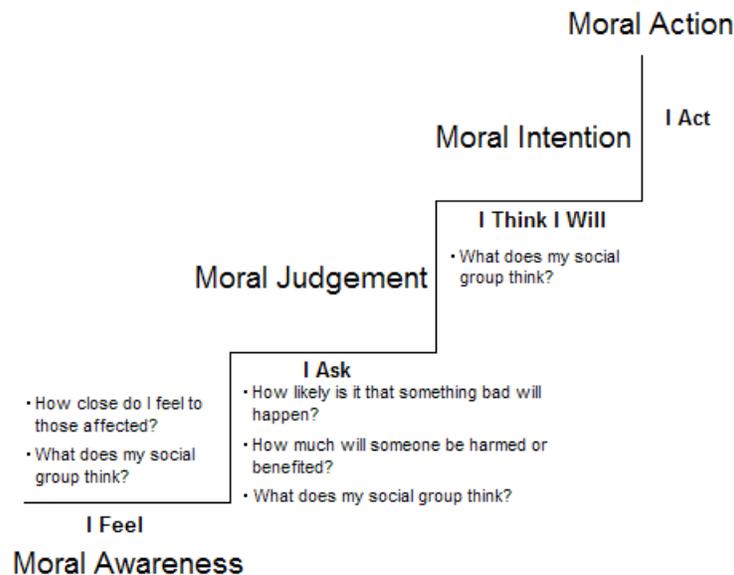
Ethical Decision Making Movie Discussion

Summary:

Marcus Luttrell, a Navy Seal, and the rest of his team set out on a mission to capture or kill notorious Taliban leader Ahmad Shah, in late June 2005. After running into mountain goat herders and capturing them, they were left with no choice but to follow their rules of engagement, letting the herders go, thereby risking sure envelopment by Taliban. They could have killed the herders. Their consciences would not allow it. Marcus and his team are left to fight for their lives in one of the most valiant efforts of modern warfare.

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Ethical Dilemmas:

1. Marcus Luttrell, Michael Murphy, Danny Dietz, and Matt Axelson debate whether or not they should kill the goat herders, leave them tied up, or let them free. The latter choice puts them in the most danger. Using the model which decision would you make and why?
2. LT Michael Murphy attempts to save the lives of Marcus Luttrell and Matt Axelson by putting himself in danger in order to try to send a signal back to the base camp. He exposes himself to enemy fire and loses his own life. SEALs back at base receive the signal and attempt a rescue mission. Go through the model and try to recreate the thoughts of LT Murphy.

More Ethical Considerations:

1. When the base was contacted by the SEALs on the mountain, the signal was minimal, conveying very little information. Should they have started making preparations to save the team or assume that they would be able to carry out the mission?
2. Was it a poor decision to abort the mission after the team had been discovered? Should they have attempted to continue?
3. Why does Gulab try to save Marcus? He puts himself, his son, and his whole village at risk to save a man that he does not know. He follows the tradition of his village in order to save a stranger. Do you think Gulab had any doubt about doing this? What moral obligation does Gulab have in this circumstance? Should you do the same if it meant your family would be in danger?

Examples/Discussion:

1. Various assumptions in operational planning for the mission in Lone Survivor did not pan out. This led to the loss of the entire team except for Marcus. What assumptions have you made recently that have turned out to be wrong? Did the consequences hurt others? What would have been a better way to go about dealing with the situation? Assumptions and expectations set scenarios or create bad situations for others, often without their knowing. What responsibilities do we have to insulate others from these effects?
2. We see incredible moral heroism in the selfless bravery of Murphy and Gulab. What are daily things that you can do to start putting others ahead of yourself?
3. Imagine that you are in combat, and you come across an unidentified wounded soldier? How far would you go to save him and what would your actions be?

Scents of a Woman

Ethical Decision-Making Movie Discussion

Movie Summary:

Charlie Simms (Chris O'Donnell) is a student at an exclusive New England prep school. Unlike most of his peers, Charlie was not born to a wealthy family. To pay for a flight home for Christmas, Charlie accepts a temporary job over Thanksgiving weekend looking after Retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Frank Slade (Al Pacino), who Charlie discovers to be a cantankerous blind alcoholic.

Prior to starting his job, Charlie and classmate George Willis, Jr. (Philip Seymour Hoffman), bear witness to several students setting up a prank for the school's headmaster Trask (James Rebhorn). Following the prank, Trask presses Charlie and George to divulge the names of the perpetrators. When Charlie refuses to talk, Trask offers a bribe, a letter of recommendation that would virtually guarantee his acceptance to Harvard. Charlie continues to remain silent but appears conflicted.

Immediately after starting his job, Charlie is forced to go to New York City with LtCol Slade. Upon arrival in the city, Slade glibly states the goals of the trip, which involve enjoying luxurious accommodations in New York before "blowing his brains out". Charlie is taken aback and does not know if Slade is serious.

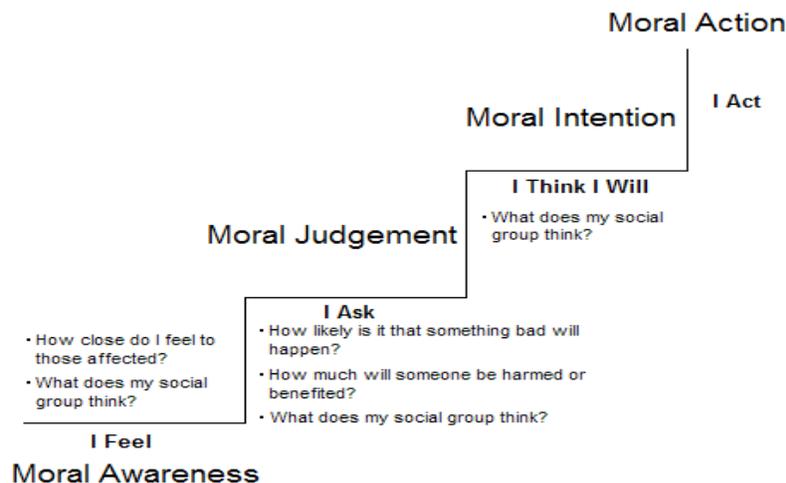
During the trip, Charlie tells Slade about his complications at school. Slade advises Charlie to inform on his classmates and go to Harvard, warning him that Willis will probably be pressured into not maintaining silence.

When the two return to New England, Charlie and Willis are subjected to a formal inquiry in front of the student body and the student/faculty disciplinary committee. Charlie must decide whether to accept the bribe and turn in his classmates, or stay true to initial decision of being quiet.

Scents of a Woman explores issues of loyalty, honor, and staying true to oneself

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Ethical Dilemmas:

1. Upon witnessing their classmates setting up a prank on the headmaster, Charlie Simms (Chris O'Donnell) does nothing while George Willis (Philip Seymour Hoffman) actively attempts to distract Mrs. Hunsaker. Is one act more dishonorable than the other? By not immediately revealing his classmates intentions, does Charlie become part of the crime?
2. Charlie Simms and George Willis initially decide to lie about what they have seen. Should they be punished for something that they didn't do? Can Charlie be punished when he had no malicious intent? Can Trask, the headmaster, force them to tell?
3. The Baird School values its tradition of honor, similar to the Naval Academy. Trask asserts that Charlie and George must turn in their classmates to "preserve the reputation of Baird". Is this true? Simms later describes their situation as "it's us versus them, no matter what". Can loyalty to one's classmates trump honor?
4. Upon arriving in New York City, LtCol Slade reveals his intention "to blow his brains out". What is Charlie's responsibility at that point in time? Are you required to intervene when someone tells you they are contemplating suicide, or is it his or her decision to make?
5. As predicted by Slade, George confesses to seeing his classmates setting up the prank. Does coming forward with the truth at a later time erase a lie? Should George be punished for not coming forward initially? Should his classmates be upset at him for coming forward?
6. Does "Scent of a Woman" have it wrong? Should Charlie Simms have turned in his classmates and gained entrance to Harvard? Would he be acting dishonorably if he did turn his classmates in? How is turning his classmates in not the right thing to do? Does it make a difference if he does it without the enticement of Harvard beckoning him to do so?

Other Ethical Questions:

1. Slade tells Charlie:
"You break my heart son. All my life I've stood up to everyone and everything because it made me feel important. You do it because you mean it. You got integrity Charlie."
To what extent can the motivation or the reason behind ones actions determine whether or not they are honorable? If actions lead the same result, do the motives behind them really matter?
2. Bribes are widely practiced in many organizations and cultures. Are there situations in which bribes are ethical or acceptable practices? Does Trask's bribe change Charlie's situation at all? Is it less morally acceptable of him to turn in his classmates knowing he will gain admission to Harvard? Is it more acceptable if he does it despite any self-interested motivations?
3. An old slogan of the United States Marine Corps is "Loyalty Above All Else, Except Honor." Is this statement true? What are some situations in which loyalty would exceed honor?
4. Charlie and George are originally not revealing the full truth in order to protect their classmates. Are some lies worse than others? Can lying be acceptable?
5. When returning to your room one evening you witness some individuals in your company signing Taps and then leaving the hall to go back downtown. Later that evening, the Officer of the Watch is in your Company Area looking for these individuals and asks you if you have an idea where they are. Are you obligated to tell the OOW you saw them leave the hall? Can you lie in order to protect your company mates?

Thank You for Smoking

Ethical Decision-Making Movie Discussion

Movie Summary:

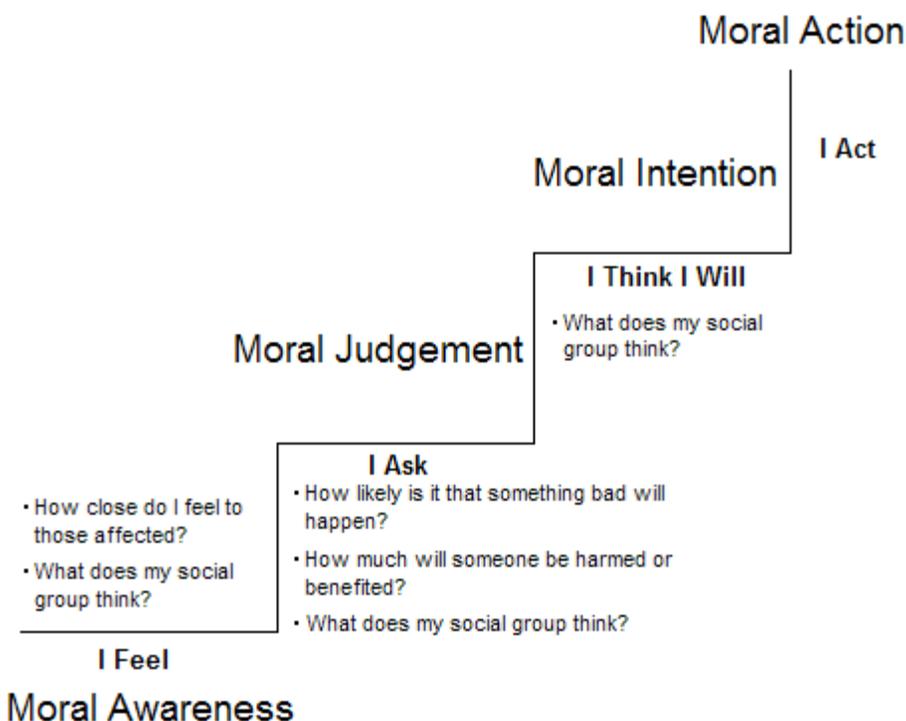
Tobacco industry lobbyist Nick Naylor has a seemingly impossible task: promoting cigarette smoking in a time when the health hazards of the activity have become too plain to ignore. Nick, however, revels in his job, using argument and twisted logic to place his clients in the positions of either altruistic do-gooders or victims.

His best friends are Polly Bailey who is a member of the 'Moderation Council' of a successful alcohol business and Bobby Jay Bliss of a gun business advisory group 'SAFETY.' The three frequently meet each other in a bar calling themselves the 'Mod Squad' or 'Merchants of Death,' arguing over which industry has killed more people. Nick's greatest enemy is Vermont's Senator Ortolan Finistirre, who proposes a bill in the Senate that would require the use a skull and crossed bones symbol on cigarette packages.

This film explores many issues including the ethics of lobbying, compartmentalization or separation of personal beliefs and occupation, and the rights and responsibilities of multinational corporations.

Ethical Decision-Making Basics:

Ethics can be described as standards of behavior that one uses to decide how to respond to situations that have a moral component. In ethical decision making, a person uses standards of behavior to come to a decision and then act. Although this process may seem intuitive, research shows that there are steps we all take in making ethical decisions. The four-step model shown below, based on the work of James Rest, describes how we move from moral awareness through moral action.



The questions at each step reflect the work of Thomas Jones. They show how people's ability to make ethical decisions is affected by different moral intensity factors. The most common ones include:

How much a particular social group (peers, friends, family) agrees that a given action is good or bad and what they will think about the decision maker.

How close the decision maker feels to the people affected by your decision.

How much the decision maker's actions harm or benefit someone.

How likely it is that something good or something bad will happen.

Here's how the steps in the model work.

In the "I feel" step, you feel something about the situation in your body. Decide if this situation raises a moral issue by asking:

1. Am I violating my moral emotions if I do nothing?
2. Am I putting anyone at risk if I do nothing?
3. Is something bad likely to happen here?

Check whether moral intensity factors are affecting you by asking:

1. Would my social group see a moral issue here?
2. How close do I feel to the people involved in this situation?

In the "I ask" step, weigh different choices to distinguish right from wrong, better from worse, and between competing tensions. To weigh those choices, ask the following:

1. If I take action, is that fair or unfair? Morally right or morally wrong?
2. What would someone I respect think is the best option?
3. If I take action, is that decision in line with my organization's or my society's rules and culture?

Ask whether moral intensity factors are affecting your judgment:

1. What would my social group think about my actions?
2. How much harm could come to someone if I take action? What if I don't take action?
3. How likely is it that this situation will turn out badly if I don't take action? What about if I do take action?

In the "I think I will" step, decide what to do or not to do, using the questions below:

1. What do I think I should do?
2. How much will what other people think about me influence my decision?
3. Do I intend to act on that decision?

In the "I act" step, carry out your intention, even if there is great opposition. These questions may be helpful:

1. Do I follow through on this intention?
2. What may prevent me from acting on my intention?
3. What may help me follow through on my intention?

This model can be used for everyday decisions, along with those that have more profound effects. This guide outlines the ethical dilemmas in *Thank You for Smoking* and presents some examples for discussion. You can use many of the dilemmas or examples to illustrate this ethical decision-making process.

Ethical Dilemmas:

1. Lorne Lutch, the original “Marlboro Man”, is offered a large sum of cash from Big Tobacco (Naylor’s company) as a gift. As a former employee of a large cigarette company who now has lung cancer can he accept the gift? What if he offers to donate the money to charity? What is expected of him in reciprocation for the gift?
2. Vigilantes decide to kidnap Nick Naylor in attempts to scare Big Tobacco. Is it ever ethical to take the law into your own hands? Are illegal actions such as kidnapping or even murder justified in some cases?
3. Nick Naylor argues he does his job “for the mortgage.” What are some of the problems with this approach to a profession? Can a person separate job from other aspects of life (family, religion, etc.)? Is compartmentalization a necessary feature of daily life?

Other Ethical Questions:

1. Thousands of Americans work in industries that can be given the label “Merchants of Death” (Alcohol, tobacco, and firearms) in the film. Even industries not usually associated with that label share the same risks (automobile manufacture, for instance). Nick Naylor, is one of these individuals, and in the movies appears to be very good at his job. Is it ethical to work for such an industry? Why or why not?
2. Lobbying is a large part of the United States system of government. What are the pros and cons of the lobbying system? Is it ok to lobby for a firm and use tactics such as those in “Thank You for Smoking” to influence law? Are some of the practices in the movie worse than others? Where is the line?
3. Should products potentially harmful to consumers be required to be labeled as such, or is it up to the consumer to become informed about the products they are using?
4. Do multinational corporations deserve a “fair trial”, or are some rights reserved for individuals?
5. Should marijuana be legally offered to the public? As an American is it your right to smoke cannabis if you want to, or does the United States government have a responsibility to protect either others or yourself from the negative effects of smoking?
6. How is the marijuana legalization effort like the lobbying effort portrayed in *Thank You for Smoking*?

Examples/Discussion:

1. You are a practicing Catholic attending the United States Naval Academy. The United States decides to enter into a war which conflicts with the beliefs of the Church. Can you continue to serve knowing that the U.S. military is going to be involved in something with which you religiously disagree? Can you be in the military “for the mortgage”?
2. You are an advisor to the commanding officer of your ship. A proposal comes up that would greatly benefit your division but could potentially harm the rest of the ship, even though the risk is low. Is it ok for you to work hard for the benefit of your people? Or must you always work for the benefit of all divisions and the ship as a whole?