

Ethical Decision Making

1. Recognize a Moral Issue

- ◆ Is there something wrong personally, interpersonally, or socially? Is there conflict that could be damaging to people, to animals or the environment? To institutions? To society?
- ◆ Does the issue go deeper than legal or institutional concerns? What does it do to people as persons who have dignity, rights, and hopes for a better life together?

2. Get The Facts

- ◆ What are the relevant facts of the case?
- ◆ What individuals and groups have an important stake in the outcome? What is at stake for each? Do some have a greater stake because they have special need (e.g., those who are poor or excluded) or because we have special obligations to them? Are there other important stakeholders in addition to those directly involved?
- ◆ What are the options for acting? Have all the relevant persons and groups been consulted? If you showed your list of options to someone you respect, what would that person say?

3. Evaluate The Alternative Actions From Various Moral Perspectives

- ◆ Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm?
- ◆ Which option respects the rights and dignity of all stakeholders? Even if not everyone gets all they want, will everyone be treated fairly?
- ◆ Which option would promote the common good and help all participate more fully in the goods we share as a society, as a community, as a company, as a family?
- ◆ Which option would enable the deepening or development of those virtues or character traits that we value as individuals? As a profession? As a society?

4. Make A Decision [After taking into account the two questions below]

- ◆ Considering these perspectives, which of the options is the right thing to do?
- ◆ If you told someone you respect why you chose this option, what would that person say?

5. Act, Then Reflect On The Decision Later

- ◆ How did it turn out for all concerned? If you had to do it over again, what, if anything, would you do differently?