

ETHICS: all you really never wanted to know about how to be wrong.

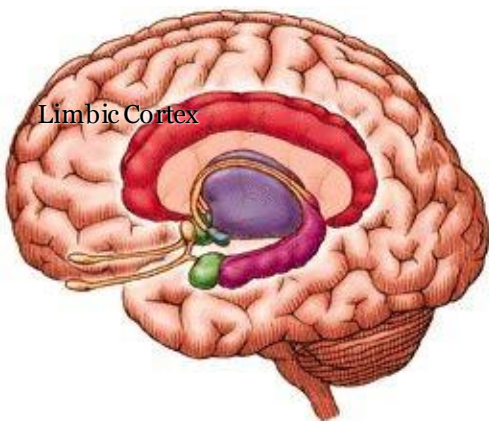
The Texas Institute 2011

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Ethics: a definition

- The process of reflecting on values as those values are translated into action. (Your values)
- A conflict experienced in the intrapsychic realm or in the inter-personal realm.
- Where there is affect (emotional/limbic discomfort) there is likely an ethical issue.
- You are in conflict with yourself.

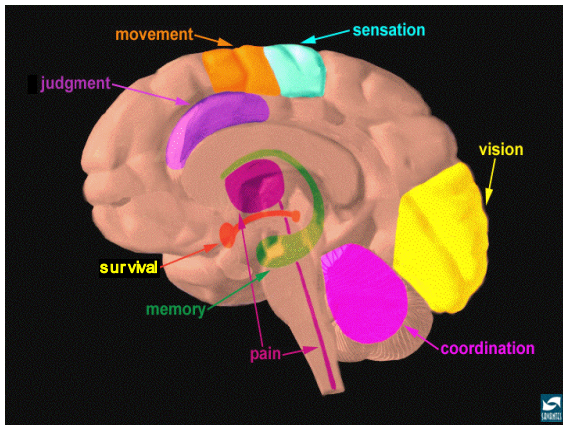
Limbic Cortex



Substance Abuse Counseling

- Cannot separate itself from values and value judgments therefore it is inherently an ethical enterprise.
- Makes assumptions about the way we “ought” to behave and find meaning in our lives.
- Recognizes that we are born into a world of values.

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Biological+Psychological+Social+Spiritual

Vulnerability Liability Context Bankruptcy

equals

Experience

Addiction

Substance Abuse Counseling

- Our ethical challenge is to clarify and resolve the competing claims of obligations, rights, responsibilities, freedoms and wants.
- This is an extremely difficult task and begins with awareness.
- At its most fundamental level - ethics
- **IS A PAIN IN THE ASS!**

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Ethics: a definition

- Socrates: The path to wisdom -
 - Know thy self
- In addition just being short, fat and ugly-
- The real problem was that he asked embarrassing questions of people in power.
- Wisdom?
- Knowledge?
- Information!!

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Ethics: a definition

- Know thyself -
- How many of us do?
- How many of us do and even if we could - how many of us would if given the opportunity to do so.
- One of the great lies.
- "What you see is what you get."
- "Whatever you see - you'll get something else instead."

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Ethics: a definition

- We say we value truth; yet, I, at least, hide from the burden that is truth. I am often willing to tell the truth just as long as I do not get caught even by my closest friends.
- If so – what are we to do.
- What are the values that govern our discipline and propel us into action?
- Can we save ourselves from ourselves?
- To be ethical requires the willingness to be wrong and an ability to sit still in your own discomfort!

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Ethics: a definition

- We profess that “addiction” is a disease; yet, talk about it as a choice.
- We celebrate the triumph of “REASON” over emotion; yet ignore the overwhelming evidence that it is our limbic system is really in control.
- We ignore the science behind limbic resonance and embrace short term cognitive therapies.
- We commit to honesty; yet, do not recognize the inescapable limbic distortion in us all.

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Categories of Ethical Decisions

- **Upward perspective**
 - Focus on inspiration
 - Look at the “big picture”
- **Downward perspective**
 - Seeks to protect
 - Is specific and concrete

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Categories of Ethical Decisions Deontological

- Rules and Principles independent of consequences.
- **Dogmatic and Absolute:** the Ten Commandments are not the the ten suggestions.
- Not Situational.
- Universal.

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Kant's Categorical Imperative Assumptions

- Moral Rules Exist.
- The only good that needs no qualification is a good will.
- A good will is one that acts out of duty alone.
- The ethical life is a **STRUGGLE!!!!**

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Kant's Categorical Imperative Assumptions

- Freedom is a practical postulate: we cannot “prove” we are free but because we all believe and “act” like it, it must be so.
- Autonomy is a defining principle: you must act out of your own truth with **NO** outside interference.
- Any Authority deciding for you is not an option!

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Kant's Categorical Imperative

- “Always act as if you could will the rule of your action to be a Universal Law.”

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Categories of Ethical Decisions Teleological

- Utilitarian.
- John Mills - “The Happiness Principle.”
- Stresses situational evaluation - Consequential.
- GOOD = “the greatest happiness for the greatest number.”
- Radical freedom is a necessary precondition for ethical action.

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Values and Assumptions: “sacred cows”

- Sobriety/abstinence is a virtue and is always better than active use (for the addicted).
- Alcohol/drug abuse is bad.
- Denial is bad.
- The use of alcohol/drugs to defend against the problems of life is a cop out.
- Women who use drugs are bad mothers and should be reported to DSS.

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Values and Assumptions: "sacred cows"

- A drug is a drug is a drug, (once addicted to one you are addicted to all).
- Tobacco is "OK" or at least it isn't as bad as alcohol, cocaine and the like.
- Caffeine is addictive – there is a withdrawal syndrome.
- We should not ask the alcoholic in TX to "give up" his alcohol and cigarettes at the same time.

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Values and Assumptions: "sacred cows"

- Alcoholism is a disease.
- Once an Alcoholic always an Alcoholic.
- To recover the addict must see themselves as an addict.
- AA/NA is the answer for most people.
- AA/NA is not a religion.
- If a person isn't motivated for TX they need to "go out" and try it their way (hit bottom).

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Contemporary Ethical Issues

- Language.
- "Drug of Choice."
- Dirty Urine.
- Clean Time.
- Disease Vs Volitional Anomaly.
- Autonomy Vs Paternalism.
- Program Plans Vs Individualized TX Plans

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Contemporary Ethical Issues

- Boundaries (nurture, touch, and sexual contact).
- Professionalism Vs Experience.
- Professional Competence.
- Dual Relationships.
- Public advocacy vs. anonymity.
- Transference and COUNTERTRANSFERENCE!
- Limbic Resonance. **Brush your teeth.** How do you manage your own time? Self care -
- HIV
- Policing our own.

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Contemporary Ethical Issues

- Gender specific treatment.
- Age specific treatment.
- Adolescent specific treatment – kids are not small adults nor young adult – they are kids in big bodies.
- Pharmacological supports for recovery.
- Prevention is a waste of time.
- We can scare our children into abstinence.
- At least Johnnie is only drinking beer.
- Not connecting the science to prevention or treatment.

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Ethical Decision Making

- **Rule #1**
- Respecting confidentiality
 - Ask your colleague, including your supervisor
 - Ask your neighbor, if they are in a different profession
 - If you are really worried, ask an attorney
- **Rule #2**
 - There is no rule #2 but there is a process

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Levels of Ethical Decision

- LEVEL 1 The Existential: Values and Content:
 - The “Gut” Check.
 - When faced with a ethical conflict does my action feel right.
 - Room for considerable error, unconscious, and preconscious issues abound.

CEISO

Levels of Ethical Decision

- LEVEL 2 The Legal: Rules and Norms:
 - Agency and professional rules.
 - Values set down in propositional form strengthened by sanctions.
 - Reflection upon the concrete situation asking the question “why does this feel right or wrong.”
 - Involves **Justification**.

CEISO

Levels of Ethical Decision

- LEVEL 3 The Formal: Principles and Virtues
 - Principles are ethical values in propositional form which either have or are presumed to have universal applicability.
 - Principles imply internalization of norms and rules.
 - Principles lead toward consistent behaviors or virtues.
 - Principles are not situational.

CEISO

Levels of Ethical Decision

- LEVEL 3 The Formal: Principles and Virtues
- Principles lead toward consistent behaviors or virtues.
 - Truth ----- honesty
 - Trust ----- trustworthiness
 - Justice ----- fairness
 - Respect ----- civility
 - Congruence --- consistency

CEISO

Levels of Ethical Decision

- LEVEL 4 The Philosophical: Visions and beliefs
 - Principles questioned at a fundamental level.
 - What kind of a person do I want to be and how would that person act.
 - What do I value.
 - How do I ascribe meaning to life and define the nature of man/woman kind.

CEISO

Case Study

- You are selling your house.
- The bank needs an updated appraisal and recommended a respected firm in town.
- A secretary sets up the appointment for a Mrs. Brooks to come by on 8/1/06.
- You meet Mrs. Brooks at the door and she turns out to be a former pt (4 years ago) who has gotten married thus the name change.

CEISO

Case Study

- You are in recovery. (Does your recovery matter to this case?)
- John is a temporary counselor at your agency.
- John shares his recovery openly with patients
- You see John in a public place drinking and “acting intoxicated.”

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Case Study

- You run the out pt after care program.
- Jim Davis is a 4th grade teacher trying to complete TX during the summer recess.
- Jim encounters some difficulty during TX and the team feels involvement in your men’s group is important.
- Your daughter comes home after her first day at school excited about her new teacher Mr. Davis.

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We admitted that we are **not** powerless over addictions and that we can help our patients lives become manageable.
- We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves (the collective wisdom of scholars, plus a well defined educational program and a disciplined training commitment) could help us help our patients restore their lives to sanity.

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We made a decision to place our professional growth ahead of personal gain and found appropriate clinical supervision **no matter what the cost.**
- We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves and promptly **got ourselves into therapy.**

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We admitted to our therapist (with God listening) our areas of woundedness and our fears and began to accept ourselves as good enough.
- We were entirely ready to accept our fallibility, always sensitive to the unavoidable countertransference with our patients which we openly discuss and **celebrate** in supervision.

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We humbly accept that we do not have all the answers and are consistently evaluating our theoretical models, improving our clinical skills and **actively embracing change as the field grows.**
- We acknowledge our mistakes, learned from them and continued our professional growth.

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We addressed our issues of countertransference directly and **embrace our impotence as our greatest therapeutic tool.**
- We continued to work on our personal growth and sought more intensive therapy when our therapeutic relationships raised personal issues.

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12 Steps toward an Ethical Practice

- We sought through clinical discipline and skill to improve our empathetic relationships with our patients asking to meet their wants, address their treatment plans and put our needs and the needs of our agencies second to the wants and needs of those we serve.
- Having made a professional commitment to the spiritual discipline of addictions treatment, we carry the message of hope and recovery to other medical disciplines and we will not allow ignorance nor tradition to overlook our central role in the health care field or in the individual medical care of our patients.

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