

# Ethics & Decision Making Workbook



Student Conduct Office

Offices of the Dean of Student Life

Student Services at White Creek

Revised Fall 2018

<http://studentlife.tamu.edu/sco>

Workshop Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Parking & Bus Information:

- Bus #3 Yell Practice stops at White Creek, Wehner, and MSC
- Any Valid Permit: Lot 110 (off Discovery Dr.)
- Paid Parking w/ credit card:
  - Lots 122A & 122B (off West Campus Blvd. \*limited spots\* )
  - Lots 72A & 72B (Other side of Wehner Bldg. Enter from Olsen Blvd. \*It's a long walk!\*)
- The workshop is 2 and half hours, so we don't recommend 30 minute parking

**This workbook will serve as an introduction to the Ethics and Decision Making (EDM) workshop. The workbook should be completed before arriving to the workshop, so during the workshop you and your peers can continue reflecting these concepts in activities and discussions. Bring the workbook with you to the workshop.**

- **This workshop is an opportunity to learn about different ways of making decisions.**
- **This workshop is an opportunity to reflect on your own decision-making.**
  - **This workshop is an opportunity to identify and prioritize values**
- **This workshop is an opportunity to think about how you could use those values to make decisions in the future.**
- **This workshop is an opportunity to visualize the person that you want to be and reflect on how you can become that person.**

# Practicing Intentionality

The act of self-awareness without being judgmental.

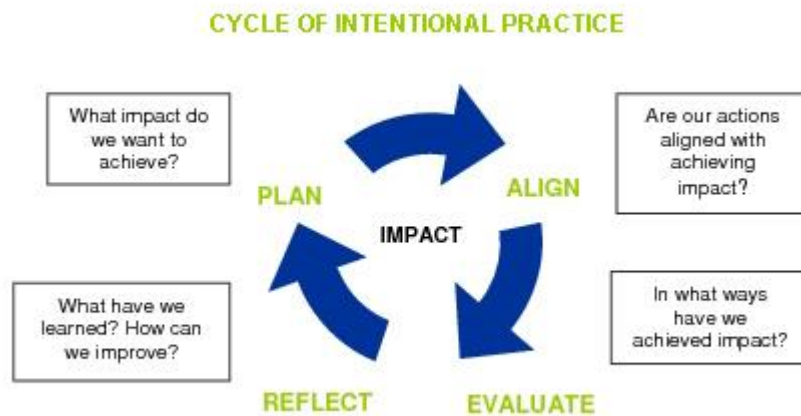
The act of being in the present moment.

The act of being deliberate or purposeful.

In many cases, we engage in mindless activity, whether it is driving a car, sitting in a lecture, or participating in some illicit behavior (vandalism, theft, fights, or just a mean-spirited comment). Upon reflection, we realize that we were acting without thinking, or being aware of what we were doing. In some cases, this mindlessness is harmless, but in others, it results in our doing something that we regret and is inconsistent of how we think of ourselves and what we want from life.

## 3 Steps to Living Intentionally

1. Evaluating reality clearly, to
2. Make effective decisions, that
3. Achieve your goals.



**Thinking about the situation that lead you to taking the Ethics and Decision Making workshop, did you perform each step to the cycle of intentional practice?**

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**What step(s) did you forget or skip and why?**

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**How would the incident have changed had you completed the whole cycle?**

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# Definitions

**Integrity:** Wholeness in the quality of being honest and morally upright.

**Ethics:** A set of moral principles and patterns of choice that guide behavior.

**Morals:** Principles that guide the understanding right and wrong.

**Values:** A set of standards that influence behavior.

These four concepts (values, morals, ethics, and integrity) are building blocks to each other with values as the foundation.

**What does Texas A & M University value?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the Aggie Honor Code?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What does it mean to you to be a part of a community that has values and an Honor Code like Texas A & M?**

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**What do you value? On the following page circle your top 20 values.**

- truth
- curiosity
- efficiency
- initiative
- environment
- communication
- power
- control
- courage
- competition
- excitement
- creativity
- happiness
- honor
- innovation
- obedience
- financial growth
- community support
- effectiveness
- integrity
- peace
- loyalty
- clarity
- security
- love
- intelligence
- hope
- persistence
- sincerity
- fun
- relationships
- wisdom
- flexibility
- perspective
- commitment
- recognition
- learning
- honesty
- originality
- candor
- prosperity
- discipline
- respect
- fairness
- order
- spirituality
- adventure
- cooperation
- humor
- collaboration
- empathy
- family
- open-mindedness
- resources
- autonomy
- dependability
- trust
- beauty
- excellence
- teamwork
- service
- challenge
- profitability
- freedom
- friendship
- influence
- decisiveness
- justice
- quality
- hard work
- responsiveness
- authenticity
- purposefulness
- diversity
- strength
- self-control
- cleverness
- success
- stewardship
- support
- equality
- harmony
- growth
- variety
- productivity
- competence
- health
- risk-taking
- independence
- patience
- simplicity
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

During the workshop we will identify and define your core values, but for now consider how social constructs shape values for yourself, peers, communities, and cultures.

**List 3 examples of influencers within each category**

**Laws & Policies: a. b. c.**

Ex: TAMU Student Rules

**Personal Experiences: a. b. c.**

Ex: Traveling Abroad

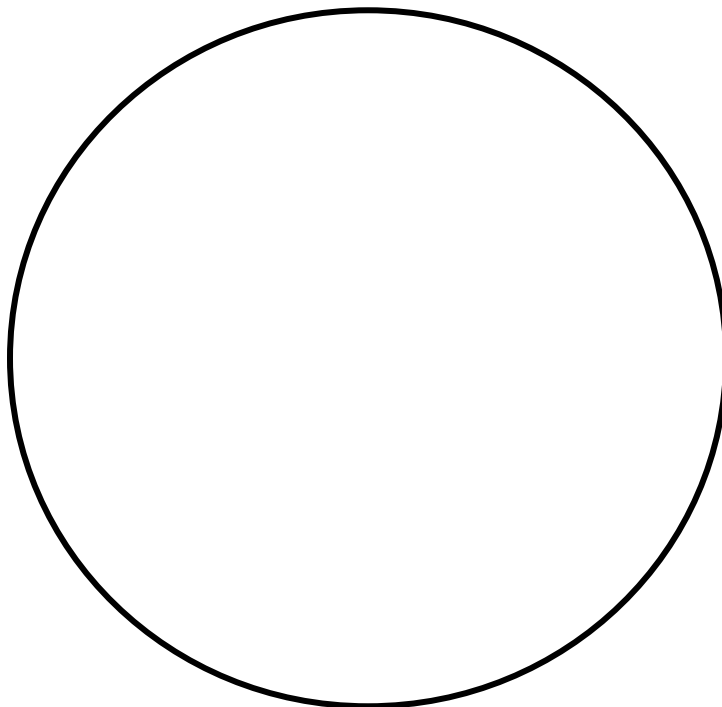
**Organizations: a. b. c.**

Ex: Employer

**Social Norms: a. b. c.**

Ex: Geographic Location

**Then within the circle create a pie chart by dividing the circle into 4 quadrants. They don't have to be equal, but all 4 category need to be included. The quadrants will represent your opinion of how much (in percentages) each category influences values.**



## Components of Moral Actions

1. Moral Sensitivity (recognition): The recognition that even routine choices and relationships have an ethical dimension.
2. Moral Identification: The ability to identify important issues, determine priorities, and sort out competing values.
3. Moral Evaluation: Using analytic skills to evaluate options.
4. Tolerating Moral Disagreement: Functioning as a team when there's a difference in values and courses of action.
5. Moral Competence: Anticipating possible ethical dilemmas, leading others through the ethical decision making
6. Moral Motivation: Identifying the motivation behind the moral behavior.

### Alligator River

Once there was woman named Abigail who was in love with a man named Gregory. Gregory had an unfortunate accident and broke his glasses. Abigail, being a true friend, volunteered to take his glasses to be repaired. The repair shop was across the river, and during a flash flood the bridge was washed away. Poor Gregory could see nothing without his glasses, so Abigail was desperate to get across the river to the repair shop. While Abigail was standing forlornly on the bank of the river, clutching the broken glasses in her hand, Jordan glided by in a rowboat.

Abigail asked Jordan if they would take them across the river. Jordan agreed on the condition that while Abigail was having the glasses repaired, Abigail would go to a nearby store and steal the new iPhone Jordan had been wanting. Abigail refused to do this and went to see a friend name Ivan who had a boat. Abigail told Ivan the problem, Ivan said he was too busy to help and didn't want to become involved. Abigail, feeling that she had no other choice, returned to Jordan and told Jordan she agreed to Jordan's plan. When Abigail returned the repaired glasses to Gregory, she told him what she had done. Gregory was so mad at what Abigail had done that he told her he never wanted to see her again.

Abigail, upset and heartbroken, turned to Kyle with her tale of woe. Kyle was so sorry for Abigail that he promised her he would get even with Gregory. They went to the school playground where Gregory was playing ball and Abigail watched happily while Kyle beat Gregory up and broke his new glasses.

**Rank the 5 people in the story from least (1) to most (5) morally sound.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Decision Making Formats

<b>Kidder's Ethical Check-Points:</b>	<b>Nash's 12 Questions:</b>	<b>SAD:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognize that there is a problem</li> <li>2. Determine the actor</li> <li>3. Gather the relevant facts</li> <li>4. Test for right-vs.-wrong issues</li> <li>5. Test for right-vs.-right values</li> <li>6. Apply the ethical stands of perspectives</li> <li>7. Look for a third way</li> <li>8. Make the decision</li> <li>9. Revisit and reflect of the decision</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you defined the problem accurately?</li> <li>2. How would you define the problem if you stood on the other side of the fence?</li> <li>3. How did this situation occur in the first place?</li> <li>4. To whom and to what do you give your loyalties as a person or group and as a member of the organization?</li> <li>5. What is your intention in making this decision?</li> <li>6. How does this intention compare with the likely results?</li> <li>7. Whom could your decision or action injure?</li> <li>8. Can you engage the affected parties in a discussion of the problem before you make your decision?</li> <li>9. Are you confident that your position will be as valid over a long period of time as it seems now?</li> <li>10. Could you disclose without qualm your decision or action to your boss, family, or community?</li> <li>11. What is the symbolic potential of your action if understood?</li> <li>12. Under what conditions would you allow exceptions to your stand?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Situation Definition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of facts</li> <li>• Identification of principles and values</li> <li>• Statement of ethical issue or question</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p><b>Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weighing of competing principles and values</li> <li>• Consideration of external factors</li> <li>• Examination of duties to various parties</li> <li>• Discussion of applicable ethical theories</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p><b>Decisions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rendering of moral agent's decision</li> <li>• Defense of that decision based on moral theory</li> </ul>



**What do you like about each of the 3 formats?**

Kidder: \_\_\_\_\_

Nash: \_\_\_\_\_

SAD: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personally, what do you think would be the hardest part for each of these formats when applying them to a situation?**

Kidder: \_\_\_\_\_

Nash: \_\_\_\_\_

SAD: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ethical Perspectives Theories

When considering ethical perspectives, there are a few things to keep in mind...

- Don't expect perfection from any ethical perspective. Ethical approaches, like leaders themselves, have their strengths and weaknesses.
- Two well-meaning leaders can use the same ethical theory and reach different conclusions.
- Whenever possible, you should practice ethical pluralism by applying more than one perspective to the same problem.

Ethical Perspectives	Pros	Cons
<p><b>Utilitarianism:</b> Do the greatest good for the greatest number of people</p> <p>Ex. Whistle blowers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Easy to understand</li> <li>❖ Is frequently used</li> <li>❖ Forces us to examine the outcomes of our decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is difficult to identify and evaluate consequences</li> <li>- May have unanticipated outcomes</li> <li>- May result in decision makers reaching different conclusions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kant's Categorical Imperative:</b> Do what's right no matter the cost</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Promotes persistence and consistency</li> <li>❖ Is highly motivational</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates respect for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exceptions exist to nearly every "universal law"</li> <li>- Actors may have warped consciences</li> <li>- Is demonstrated through unrealistic examples</li> <li>- Is hard to apply, particularly under stress</li> </ul>
<p><b>Justice as Fairness:</b> Guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities behind the veil of ignorance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Nurtures both individual freedom and the good of the community</li> <li>❖ Highlights important democratic values and concerns for those less fortunate</li> <li>❖ Encourages leaders to treat followers fairly</li> <li>❖ Provides a useful decision making guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Principles can be applied only to democratic societies</li> <li>- Groups disagree about the meaning of justice and fairness</li> <li>- Lack of consensus about most important rights</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communitarianism:</b> Shoulder your responsibilities and seek the common good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Discourages selfish individualism</li> <li>❖ Foster dispersed leadership and ethical dialogue</li> <li>❖ Encourages collaborative leadership strategies</li> <li>❖ Promotes character development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evangelistic fervor of its proponents</li> <li>- Promotes one set of values in a pluralistic society</li> <li>- May erode individual rights</li> <li>- Fails to resolve competing community standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Altruism:</b> Love your neighbor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ancient yet contemporary</li> <li>❖ Important to society and leaders</li> <li>❖ Powerful and inspiring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Failure of many who profess to love their neighbor to act as if they do</li> <li>- Many different, sometimes conflicting forms</li> </ul>

**Applying two of the above decision making formats and perspectives, how would you handle the following situation if you were Dayton?**

Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the Gazette newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, had been arrested for shoplifting 20 years earlier. Reporter Dayton found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted, actions, which would be very out-of-character now. His shoplifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but build a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading constructive community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions in the state. Reporter Dayton wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson’s earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a news story could wreck Thompson’s chance to win.

**Perspective 1:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Decision Making Format:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Perspective 1:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Decision Making Format:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Information within this workbook was gathered from “Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership” by Craig E. Johnson (2009), specifically chapters 5 and 7. Additionally, Randi Korn & Associate’s website.



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