

# Heinz Steals the Drug

- In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but could only get together about \$1000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper, or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug—for his wife. Q: Should the husband have done that?

# Kohlberg's Studies

- 1958
- 72 boys from middle- and lower-class families in Chicago
- Ages 10, 13, and 16
- Later, in 1963 and 1970, added younger children, delinquents, and both genders from other US cities and other countries

# Lawrence Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development:

## **Level 1 Preconventional Morality**

### **Stage 1 Obedience and Punishment Orientation**

Child-like mindset. Fixed set of rules that one must obey no matter what the situation.

Punishment means that whatever you did was wrong.

Response to Heinz's Dilemma:

"It's bad to steal." or "It's against the law." Why?....

"Because you'll get punished."

## Stage 2 Individualism and Exchange

A person understands that there are different points of view. Therefore, a person is free to do what is best for her *individual* interests.

Punishment is a risk and something one wants to avoid. These people have an “if I scratch your back, you scratch mine” attitude.

Response to Heinz’s dilemma:

“Maybe they had children and he might need somebody at home to look after them. But maybe he shouldn’t steal because they might put him in prison for more years than he could stand.”

## **Level II Conventional Morality**

### **Stage 3 Good Interpersonal Relationships**

Stage 3 works best in a family dynamic or person-to-person conflict.

A person (or child) at this stage bases her sense of morality on the idea of being a good person.

A good person has concern for others.

Motives play a factor. Also, is this how any member of the community would respond?

These values often come from the community and/or parents.

Response to Heinz's dilemma:

"It was really the druggist's fault, he was unfair, trying to overcharge and letting someone die. Heinz loved his wife and wanted to save her. I think anyone would. I don't think they would put him in jail. The judge would look at all sides, and see that the druggist was charging too much."

## **Stage 4 Maintaining the Social Order**

Stage 4 considers society as a whole.

Much importance is placed on obeying laws and respecting authority. It is important that social order is maintained.

Response:

“If everyone did as he wanted to do, set up his own beliefs as to right and wrong, then I think you would have chaos. The only thing I think we have in civilization nowadays is some sort of legal structure which people are sort of bound to follow. Society needs a centralizing framework.”

## **Level III Postconventional Morality**

### **Stage 5 Social Contract and Individual Rights**

It is important to keep a society functioning, but not at the cost of individual rights.

This person is interested in what makes a “good” society.

A good society considers the rights of the individual and has a democratic procedure for changing any unfair laws.

Response:

“It is the husband’s duty to save his wife. The fact that her life is in danger transcends every other standard you might use to judge his action. Life is more important than property.”

## Stage 6 Universal Principles

Ex: Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Believe that the principles of justice are universal. All people have “certain inalienable rights.”

Matters of justice and morality should be handled impartially.

Equality

A solution is reached by putting oneself in each person’s “shoes” in order to reach a decision.

Civil disobedience—if a law is unjust, then one has a moral obligation to disobey these laws—but one accepts the penalties for breaking the law.

There is no example for this stage because very few people ever reach this stage. Some might respond to certain dilemmas and fall into this stage, but not all their responses land them in this category.



# Summary:

Stage 1: the right thing is to obey authority and avoid punishment

Stage 2: Because there are multiple perspectives, the right thing to do is to pursue one's own interests. Making deals and favors can be useful.

Stage 3: The right thing to do is based on a respect for values, norms, and the expectations of society. Act as a "good person."

Stage 4: Combined with Stage 3, but considers society as whole as well.

Stage 5: more concerned with a good society over a well-functioning society. A good society considers basic rights, and must have a democratic system to determine what is right and wrong.

Stage 6: Based on principles that determine what is most just. Civil disobedience is ok.

# Let's look at some characters...

Where does Mattie fall?

Kaffee in the beginning? Kaffee by the end?

Jo Anne?

Sam?

Downey?

Dawson at the beginning? Dawson at the end?

Colonel Jessup?