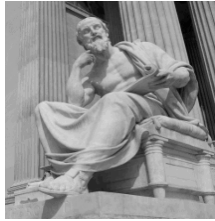


## Nursing Ethics



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## Objectives

1. Identify concepts of human valuing essential for ethical decision making
2. Identify selected ethical theories and principles basic to ethical decision making
3. Identify current and future ethical issues related to nursing practice
4. Analysis relationships between ANA Code of Ethics and personal morality/values in relationship to nursing practice

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## Continue Objectives

5. Apply ethical decision making process to specific issues encountered in nursing practice
6. Identify community resources available to patients facing difficult choices
7. Develop a curiosity in the study of ethics by researching resources identified in SIMON.
8. Utilize NIC, NOC, and NANDA with Nursing Care Plans.

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## Nursing Ethics

What is nursing ethics?

Healthcare Ethics or Physician Ethics?

Subcategory of Bioethics  
Physician Ethics  
Nurse Ethics



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## What is Ethics



The formal systematic study of moral beliefs using philosophical theories as foundations and guides to identify and resolve ethical issues.

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## Ethics/Morals/Values

These are all terms used in the discussion of ethical issues and sometimes it appears that they are used interchangeably

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## Values

### Values

- Values are the rules by which we make decisions about right and wrong, should and shouldn't, good and bad. They also tell us which are more or less important, which is useful when we have to trade off meeting one value over another.
- [Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com) defines values as:  
n : beliefs of a person or social group in which they have an emotional investment (either for or against something); "he has very conservatives values"

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## Morals

### Morals

- Morals have a greater social element to values and tend to have a very broad acceptance. Morals are far more about good and bad than values. We thus judge others more strongly on morals than values. A person can be described as immoral, yet there is no word for them not following values.
- [Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com) defines morals as:
- n : motivation based on ideas of right and wrong

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## Good vs Evil



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## Ethics

- **Ethics**  
You can have professional ethics, but you seldom hear about professional morals. Ethics tend to be codified into a formal system or set of rules which are explicitly adopted by a group of people. Thus you have medical ethics. Ethics are thus internally defined and adopted, while morals tend to be externally imposed on other people.
  - If you accuse someone of being unethical, it is equivalent of calling them unprofessional and may well be taken as a significant insult and perceived more personally than if you called them immoral (which of course they may also not like).
- Dictionary.com defines ethics as:
- The rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a profession.

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## Choices?



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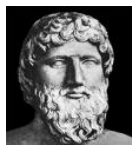
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## Ethical Theories

- Teleologic Theory or Consequentialism  
Utilitarianism
- Deontologic or Formalist Theory

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## Utilitarianism

Bentham, Jeremy - 1748–1832, English philosopher, jurist, political theorist, and *founder of utilitarianism*. Educated at Oxford, he was trained as a lawyer

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## Jeremy Bentham



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## Utilitarianism

- Outcome focused
- Morality of an act is determined solely by its consequences
- “The ends justify the means”
- “The greatest good for the greatest number”
- Consequences are evaluated in light of their ability to promote group good

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## John Stuart Mills



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## Immanuel Kant



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## Deontology

- *Deontological* ethics, beneficence and nonmaleficence. Introduced John Stuart Mill, of the *founder of Deontological Thought*. John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), British philosopher, economist, moral and political theorist, and administrator, was the most influential English-speaking philosopher of the nineteenth century.

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## Deontology

- Immanuel Kant-believed that an act was moral if it originated from good will
- Act or Rule Deontology
- Act -the right thing to do comes from gathering all the facts and then making a decision
- Rule-principle guide our actions( always keep promises)

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## Deontology

- Basic principle governing behavior is duty
- There is a particular rule which must be followed regardless of his/her desires or any foreseeable results
- No control over the nature of his/her duty
- Entirely concerned with the actions, not the consequences
- Does not allow for choices
- Importance of the individual person, not the group

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## Approaches to Ethics

Meta-ethics

Applied ethics

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## ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses Provision 1

- “The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of the health problem.”

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## ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses Provision 2

- “The nurse’s primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group or community.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 3

- “The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 4

- “The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse’s obligation to provide optimum patient care.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 5

- “The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence, and to continue personal and professional growth.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 6

- “The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining, and improving health care environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality health care and consistent with the values of the profession through individual and collective action.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 7

- “The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.”

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ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses  
Provision 8

- “The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs.”

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## ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses Provision 9

- “The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy.”

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## Ethical principles

- Permit people to take a consistent position on issues
  - Autonomy - own decisions
  - Beneficence - do no harm
  - Nonmaleficence - duty to do no harm (Hippocratic oath)
  - Veracity - telling the truth (foundation for trust)
  - Fidelity - honoring one's promises
  - Justice - all treated equally

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## Autonomy

- A person's right to be what she/he is and to be dealt with according to that uniqueness
- Personal independence and self-directedness
- Self-freedom and self-determination
- Nurses respect a patient's right to be unique and to be involved in the decision-making process

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## Veracity

- The imparting of knowledge to another when this knowledge will do that other some good or at least do more good than harm
- Truth-telling
  - “The life of a sick person can be shortened not only by the acts, but also by the words or manner of a physician....Avoid all things that have a tendency to discourage the patient and to depress his spirit” (Medical Association Code of Ethics , 1847)
- Requires that the nurse accept the truth concerning the unique nature of the patient

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## Fidelity

- Adherence to the terms of an agreement
- Live up to a patient’s reasonable expectations
- Fundamental to the nurse/patient relationship
- Commitment to the obligation that a nurse has accepted when accepting the role of nurse

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## Justice

- The act of establishing proportionality on behalf of one whose rightful purposes have been interfered with by another or who has lost the product of his actions through the actions of another
- Fairness

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## Ethical decision-making model

- Identify the ethical issues and problems
  - State nature of the ethical dilemma
- Identify and analyze available alternatives for action
  - List all possible actions, not only your own
- Select one alternative
  - Step back and consider the situation
- Justify the selection
  - Communicate thoughts during explanation of reasoning process

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## Nursing Care Plan

- Assess
- Identify
- Intervene
- Evaluate

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## Patient's Bill of Rights

- Consideration of privacy
- Informed consent for treatment
- Refuse treatment
- Confidentiality
- Right to know all rules and refuse research
- Continuity of care
- Explanation of bill

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**Patient Self-Determination Act  
of 1990**

- Advance directives
  - Living wills
  - Durable power of attorney for health care
- Any institution receiving federal money must provide written information to patients regarding the right to make health care decisions including right to refusal, appoint a proxy, writing advance directives to guide treatment

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**Bioethical issues**

- Physician assisted suicide
  - The patient’s self-determination right
  - vs.
  - The physician’s rule to “do no harm”
  - The health care provider’s right not to perform an act she/he believes to be immoral
  - The patient’s right to decide his/her own fate

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**Bioethical issues**

- Reproductive technology
  - artificial insemination
  - surrogate motherhood
  - vitro fertilization
  - genetic research
    - stem cell
    - cloning
    - human genome project

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## Bioethical Issues



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## Bioethical issues

- Allocation of resources
  - fair and equal treatment
  - transplants
  - solutions
    - rationing
    - use of technology
    - preventive care

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## Which Choice to Make?



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“It is the nurse’s ethical obligation to uphold the highest standards of practice and care, assume full personal and professional responsibility for every action, and commit to maintaining quality in the skill and knowledge base of the profession.”

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