

DILEMMA EXAMPLES

DILEMMA EXAMPLES

1. Snake Patrol	191
2. A Sewage Deal or Not?	193
3. Habitat Protection or Human Survival	195
4. A Graduation or a Wetland?.....	197
5. Birds or Bucks?.....	199
6. Habitats or Highways?.....	201
7. Alaska Fishing: The Thrill or the Threat?	203
8. Competitive Advantage or Clean Air?	205
9. Coral Corruption: A Dilemma from Down Under	207
10. John's Farm Jam	209
11. Pollution Predicament.....	211

Illustrations from *artville.com*. Activities from other sources are credited within the activity.

Building Ethical Fitness First Edition © 2001 by the Institute for Global Ethics

D I L E M M A SNAKE PATROL

At Camp Ponderosa, Casey has been the counselor in charge of snake patrol for several years. If a snake is discovered in a highly populated part of the camp, he is responsible for speedy capture and relocation of the snake. He knows he has to be very careful with the rattlesnakes not only because they are very poisonous, but also because they are an endangered species, making it illegal to harm or kill them. One afternoon, a rattlesnake is seen swimming within the camp buoys in the lake. The lifeguards try to scare it away with no success, and without consulting Casey, they shoot the rattlesnake, to be safe. When Casey finds out, he is angry that he was not consulted and is even more concerned that an endangered snake has been killed. Casey knows he should report this offense and that proper action should be taken to ensure the protection of the rattlesnakes, but he also loves his job and knows he will probably be fired if he reports the incidents to authorities. What should Casey do? If he keeps quiet, others might shoot rattlesnakes, jeopardizing their endangered population. On the other hand, if he reports the shootings, he may lose his job and be replaced by someone who isn't as capable of relocating snakes as he is, causing even more snakes to be killed illegally.

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- TRUTH VS. LOYALTY
- SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM
- SELF VS. COMMUNITY
- JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD CASEY DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Casey reports the killings, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if he keeps quiet, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULES-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Casey might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Casey follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Casey puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, Casey should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
 YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A A

A SEWAGE DEAL OR NOT?

Bridgewater, a small but growing town on the outskirts of New York City is attempting to stem the steady encroachment of the city's suburbs on their area. One step they took was to buy the last remaining fully functioning farm in their community. An added benefit to this transaction was that town sewage by-products could be used at the farm as fertilizer, saving the farm the expense of commercial fertilizer and saving the town the expense of waste removal to a distant facility.

However, neighboring residents of the farm are not happy with this arrangement. While the practice seems to save a lot of money for both the farmer and the town, the resultant smell is undesirable, and claims about plummeting real estate prices and health problems are cropping up more and more.

The town manager needs to make the final decision about whether to continue this arrangement or not. Without the financial advantage of using town sewage as fertilizer, the viability of the farm is questionable.

What Should the town manager do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- TRUTH VS. LOYALTY SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM
 SELF VS. COMMUNITY JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD THE TOWN MANAGER DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If the town manager goes ahead with the sewage deal, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if he doesn't, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULES-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that the town manager might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If he follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If the town manager puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, the town manager should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?

YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A HABITAT PROTECTION OR HUMAN SURVIVAL?

In Luisa's home, Llano de San Juan, a small, northern New Mexican village, the majority of people heat their homes in winter with wood. Winter temperatures fall to -15 to -25 degrees F. A few families can afford propane heaters or solar boosters, but the majority heat their homes with wood, as their ancestors have for the past 400 years. It is both tradition and an economic necessity. The primary source of wood is dead standing piñon pines that are also the primary habitat of the New Mexican spotted owl, an endangered species.

To protect the owl, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a ban prohibiting the cutting of dead standing piñon. Tradition notwithstanding, the majority of people, including Luisa's family, do not have the money to purchase, install, and run propane heaters. She knows that they could continue cutting the wood for a while before the EPA could catch them, but as a young naturalist, she is also very keen on protecting the habitat of the endangered spotted owl.

Her family is looking to her for advice; what should she recommend?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

TRUTH VS. LOYALTY

SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM

SELF VS. COMMUNITY

JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD LUISA DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Luisa recommends that her family continue cutting wood, what do you think will happen?

On the other hand, if Luisa doesn't, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Luisa might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Luisa follows the rule that seems best, what action will she take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Luisa puts herself in the position of each of the others, what will she do?

If _____ is the other, she will _____

If _____ is the other, she will _____

If _____ is the other, she will _____

So, Luisa should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
 YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D A GRADUATION OR A WETLAND?

I
L
E
M
M
A

Two weeks before Todd's graduation, he was hiking in the woods behind his high school when he encountered a large plateau of dirt and debris extending thirty feet high and covering almost an acre of land. He could see the pile was beginning to encroach on a natural wetland. Closer investigation revealed that the sediment from this pile was beginning to clog a stream that ran through the center of the wetland. It was clear that the mound was a dumping site for the school, and he could see where debris had been recently added to the pile.

Later, Todd confronted his environmental education teacher, who told him that the school dump had been started in that spot back in 1953—long before there were any regulations about filling in wetlands. Back then, as today, it was cheaper for the school to dump its waste in the woods than to ship it to a disposal station.

After hearing this, Todd met with a friend who was an ecologist in the area. When his friend saw the dump, he admitted to Todd that the cost to clean up or stop the spread of the dump would be enormous, and that they would have to operate through the various bureaucracies responsible for protecting wetlands. The risk was that the battle could get very messy and could jeopardize Todd's graduation plans if the school felt threatened. Todd knew it was right to report the dump to the public and regulators in hopes that it would be contained, protecting the wetland, but was it worth risking getting kicked out of school? What should Todd do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

TRUTH VS. LOYALTY SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM

SELF VS. COMMUNITY JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD TODD DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Todd takes on the school and fights to contain the dump, what do you think will happen?

On the other hand, if he keeps quiet, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Todd might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Todd follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Todd puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, Todd should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
[] YES [] NO
If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D BIRDS OR BUCKS?

I
L
E

At the Chesterfield Nature Center and Bird Sanctuary, local neighbors often bring in sick birds to the staff, thinking they will be eager to heal the birds, and then release them after they were well again. The staff knows that the best thing for individual birds might be to help them heal, but the best thing for bird populations as a whole is to humanely kill sick birds. Releasing the birds back into the population adds these birds' weaker genes back into the gene pools of the various species, weakening them as a whole. In addition, many wild animals do not do well once they are released back into the wild after captivity, and the cost of caring for these sick birds is enormously high.

M
M

Yet the Center worries that if they try to explain the need to kill these birds to the public, they will not understand. The Center relies on the loyalty, volunteer time, and financial resources of these people to run the many programs they offer. Yet if they tell the truth about what should be—and often is—done with these sick birds, the Center could surely lose the support of many of them.

M
A

What should they do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

TRUTH VS. LOYALTY

SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM

SELF VS. COMMUNITY

JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD THE CENTER DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If the Center tells the truth publicly, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if they don't tell, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that the Center might follow? List as many as you can.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If the Center follows the rule that seems best, what action will they take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If the Center puts itself in the position of each of the others, what will they do?

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

So, the Center should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
[] YES [] NO
If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D HABITATS OR HIGHWAYS?

I
L
E
M
M
A
A
Mr. and Mrs. Caruthers live in Westminister County, New York, and own more than one hundred acres, which includes wooded areas and meadows. The Caruthers recently approached a local conservation group about deeding their land to them. The land would belong to the conservation group, but the Caruthers would have use of it during their lifetimes, subject to a few limitations. The advantage to the Caruthers would be that they would no longer have to pay expensive real estate taxes on this land because it would be given to the public.

It would obviously be better for the Caruthers if the conservation group accepted their land, but what about the larger community of the town, which would have to make up the lost real estate tax money if the property were taken off the tax roles. Should this group take the land and protect it or should they take into consideration the fact that when they accept land, it means less tax money for the local towns for schools and other programs?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- TRUTH VS. LOYALTY SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM
 SELF VS. COMMUNITY JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD THE CONSERVATION GROUP DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If the conservation group accepts the property, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if they reject the property, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that the conservation group might follow?

List as many as you can.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If the conservation group follows the rule that seems best, what action will they take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____

If the conservation group puts themselves in the position of the others, what will they do?

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

So, the conservation group should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?

YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D
I
L
E
M
M
A
A

ALASKA FISHING: THE THRILL OR THE THREAT?

Last summer, Noah went to Alaska to work on his aunt and uncle's fishing boat. He helped them set nets at salmon sites and take the fish to a cannery. He had a great time there and made a lot of money for college in the process.

Now it is early spring and he is trying to decide what to do this summer. In school this year, he learned a lot about the commercial fishing industry and the depletion of the ocean's stocks, which has made him question whether or not he wants to be part of the Alaskan commercial fishery. On the other hand, he needs to make enough money this summer to go back to college in the fall, and he knows he would be unlikely to find a job that pays as well as the fishery does.

From what Noah knows about the Alaska Fish and Game Department, he thinks they do a pretty good job of protecting the population and monitoring the industry for the present, but he's concerned that maybe not enough is being done to protect the species in the long run. His aunt and uncle are waiting to hear from him about his plans.

What should he do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- TRUTH VS. LOYALTY SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM
 SELF VS. COMMUNITY JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD NOAH DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Noah fishes for salmon with his aunt and uncle, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if he doesn't, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Noah might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Noah follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Noah puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, Noah should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?

YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OR CLEAN AIR?

Malina is the project manager for a proposed electrical generation project in the north of Ecuador. The project calls for the development of a power station that would burn an inexpensive fuel, which gives Malina's company a competitive advantage. The trade-off for the fuel's low cost is that it burns dirtier than most other fossil fuels. However, all indications are that the plant would be in compliance with all local emissions regulations.

The proposed plant is in competition with another proposed facility nearby, and only one can be built. Once one company announces that it has secured financing, the other will have to cease its development efforts. This is a particularly important plant for Malina's company since it would be her firm's first successful international development, establishing them as players in the international power development industry.

One day, Malina learns that the only way to remain in compliance with local requirements is to double the height of the stack to disperse emissions over a wider geographical area. Other options for reducing emissions are not cost effective and would cause their project to be too expensive to build. While legal, this approach would force the plant to operate with emissions that exceed the standards in the United States. This practice could hurt the company's long-term image as an environmentally responsible power developer. However, if Malina does not increase the stack height, allowing the plant to proceed quickly, they could lose this opportunity in the international power market, potentially putting them out of business. What should she do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

TRUTH VS. LOYALTY

SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM

SELF VS. COMMUNITY

JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD MALINA DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Malina agrees to heighten the stack, what do you think will happen? _____

If Malina doesn't agree, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Malina might follow? List as many as you can.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Malina follows the rule that seems best, what action will she take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Malina puts herself in the position of each of the others, what will she do?

If _____ is the other, she will _____

If _____ is the other, she will _____

If _____ is the other, she will _____

So, Malina should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
 YES NO
If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A C O R A L C O R R U P T I O N : A D I L E M M A F R O M D O W N U N D E R

As a young university graduate, Cody finds a job working for a scientific research organization studying pollution damage to coral on Australia's Great Barrier Reef. The organization has a problem common to all scientific research: how to get enough funding to carry on the work.

All their worries appear to be solved when, quite out of the blue, a large multinational corporation offers significant ongoing financial support. There is a "hitch" however. The company has recently suffered adverse publicity through an article claiming they are responsible for some of the pollution. In return for financial support, the multinational company not only wants the research company to refute these claims, but to study a section of the reef where there are no pollution problems. Cody knows that without the necessary funding, they could not begin to solve the barrier reef's problems.

So is it better to make a short-term compromise and accept the money and the terms in order to carry out work that could benefit the environment for the long term, and that otherwise might not be possible? Efforts to find other sponsors have not been successful. Or is it better to refuse the money and put the research on hold until they find other funding, even at the risk of the reef's continuing deterioration? What should Cody do?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TRUTH VS. LOYALTY | <input type="checkbox"/> SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SELF VS. COMMUNITY | <input type="checkbox"/> JUSTICE VS. MERCY |

WHAT SHOULD CODY DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If Cody agrees to go along with the funding, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if he doesn't agree, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that Cody might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If Cody follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If Cody puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, cody should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?

YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A A JOHN'S FARM JAM

John has recently graduated from high school. He plans to enroll in college next year, but for now he is working on a large animal breeding farm located near a small river in his town.

John knows that the farm's animal waste is stored in large, on-site lagoons, and that periodically the waste is removed and sprayed as fertilizer on fields that are used to grow crops. He has recently read about lagoon spills into aquatic systems that have caused environmental damage and economic hardships to others.

One day John notices that the farm's main lagoon is leaking animal waste into the river. He believes that, as a result, some environmental damage will occur and the problem will intensify if nothing is done. John approaches the farm owner—a man he respects—with his concerns. In reply, the farmer points out the long hours and financial responsibility of managing a large animal breeding farm and describes the rising costs and smaller profit margins under which the farm is being forced to operate.

The farmer does not volunteer to fix the leakage problem; rather, he makes it clear that such repairs would create a hardship for him. Should John keep quiet about the problem or take the next step and inform the local Environmental Protection Agency inspector?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- TRUTH VS. LOYALTY SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM
 SELF VS. COMMUNITY JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD JOHN DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If John informs the local inspector, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if he keeps quiet, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that John might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If John follows the rule that seems best, what action will he take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If John puts himself in the position of each of the others, what will he do?

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

If _____ is the other, he will _____

So, John should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
 YES NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

D I L E M M A POLLUTION PREDICAMENT

As part of their community service requirement, a group of students decides to study water-pollution levels in a river near their school, where people fish and swim. Every week they take samples from the stream back to school and analyze them in the school lab. From the very beginning they detect significant amounts of pollution that indicate leaks from nearby household septic systems.

When they inquire what it would mean for home owners to fix the problem, they are surprised to learn that it can take thousands of dollars to repair a septic-system leak, since the entire system often needs to be replaced. The students know that the families in this neighborhood are unable to afford such high costs. How should they proceed? If the students blow the whistle, it may mean great hardship for these families. On the other hand, if they don't, what will that mean for the river, the people who spend time there, and the general health of the environment?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TRUTH VS. LOYALTY | <input type="checkbox"/> SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SELF VS. COMMUNITY | <input type="checkbox"/> JUSTICE VS. MERCY |

WHAT SHOULD THE STUDENTS DO?

ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If the students blow the whistle, what do you think will happen? _____

On the other hand, if they keep quiet, what do you think will happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that the students might follow? List as many as you can.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If the students follow the rule that seems best, what action will they take? _____

CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If the students puts themselves in the position of each of the others, what will they do?

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

If _____ is the other, they will _____

So, they should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
[] YES [] NO
If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____

