

**MORAL CONUNDRUMS TO THINK ABOUT!****MORALITY IS NOT ALL GOOD**

A train will kill five people. Do you pull the lever to derail it so it will kill one instead? You are sacrificing one for five. Many say that is right but others say it is evil for you are denying that life is inherently sacred and there is no limit to the value it has. It is obvious though that neither letting things run their course or killing the person by directing the train at him is really good. Life is one big train problem. The poor starve so we can have bread.

Whatever you choose to do any time you embrace badness and are trying to choose the least bad thing. That is why we must never see morality as being about songs and flowers. Religion tends to promote the flowery perception which makes it a cruel and immature placebo. Morality will do more harm than good if its scary side is watered down or ignored.

**GOD**

Believers in God say that morality is innate and comes from God. Others say it comes from evolution for evolution has made us as community and social animals. Others say that our morals might seem to be innate but are actually learned. Our morality as we have seen from the trolley problem is not as rational as it likes to appear. Could it be that we are innate hypocrites more than innate moral beings?

The morality we have is too tricky and changeable to be really implanted by a God. If you start saying God is as tricky and changeable as you are there are going to be huge problems. You are then claiming divine backing when you think robbing the bank is justified so that you can educate your children. If you are not then you should be.

**INFANTS**

Paul Bloom's research has shown how terrible infants are. There are two infants - strangers to each other. There are two cookies. Each infant will try to take the two cookies. What if the cookies are to be shared - one to each child? Each infant will refuse it if it means the other child is going to get one. He will cut off his nose to spite his face in order to feel superior to the other infant.

**"DO THINGS RIGHT" NOT "DO THE RIGHT THING"**

People today tend to stress how to "do things right" instead of "do the right thing". The difference is that do things right cares about good results and do the right thing often means "adhere to a moral code." The first is about the consequences and the second is about obeying rules even if it is for the worst.

Socrates said we must suffer evil rather than do evil. Was he right? Surely you are doing evil to yourself when you turn down monstrous human beings who say, "We will boil you to death in oil unless you steal your father's money for us"? Socrates showed how strong the drive for self-approval is.

**UNCERTAINTY**

Some people are so lethargic with depression that they will not kill themselves until they get energy through medication. Nobody can really know what to do. Each year is so different from the last which means last years problems are not this years so you cannot really argue, "In past research, it is better to give them the meds for the suicide rate declined by x%." Past research is not relevant in a year with new circumstances and problems. If a wife cares about her husband's happiness and not her own or the relationship, then is it okay for him to have an affair? Or is it more okay than it would be if she cared about the relationship?

**SOMEBODY ELSE WILL DO IT ANYWAY**

You create a device that people will find useful but which damages the environment. Should you do this on the basis that somebody else will do it if you don't? Do we choose between "People should help their friend and Amy is my friend which is why I help" or "Amy needs help"? The best person helps her not because of who she is but because she needs help. That would be telling Amy that if she is not your friend you will help her as if she were.

## MORE CONUNDRUMS

We should return all good done to us. It is an impartial matter. You return out of a sense of duty and not because you feel you want to do it. What about partiality such as love? Should those who we love be prioritised when returning back good for good?

Naturalism is the doctrine that all that exists is just down to blind natural forces and chance. People worry that it seems to say that we are machines that think they are not machines but free agents. If there is no free will then the person who kills babies is not really any different from a person from one who saves them.

People think, "If morality is refuted by naturalism or there is no morality for things just are and are neither good or bad then morality is a stupid error." But to say things just "are" is to invoke morality. It is saying it is morally wrong to say morality exists! You end up in contradictions. So you are both saying morality is real and that it is not.

If it is true that there is no morality or wisdom then how could morality even if false be stupid and an error? It is not possible. People still will think that we have no reason to behave in the way a moral person would even if we are not really moral agents but machines. But the argument says more than that. It says not only do we have no reason but we should do harm or not do harm. There is a should in there. If naturalism means nothing has meaning and meaning is only imagined then it is not true that naturalism can refute morality. It cannot refute anything. It just is.

If we feel rewarded at seeing how happy somebody is because we helped them then is the reason that we are fulfilling our nature which is to do good? Yes! This makes goodness automatically a reward.

Which is worse? Having nobody to love or not being loved? Are they equally bad? To say yes they are equally bad is to say you must love your neighbour as yourself. This raises a problem if you think people should care for others and have no thought for themselves. It means real altruism is impossible and evil.

Considering feelings and what we feel we WANT morality to be is actually important. A morality that is all about reasoning will not satisfy us. We must let intuition have a say. Intuition need not oppose reason. We must try to let the two sit together even if they don't sit that well. We must not however let morality be all about intuition or too much about it. Most people make it too much about social instinct or God instinct and that is bad. Morality regarding people when looked at globally and collectively is not very successful. It is like a flu vaccine that misses the majority of flus.

No matter what moral system you espouse, the fact remains that there will be people who will be unable to intuit that it is true or should be followed. But morality itself tells us always to hold, "Many of these and we don't know which are in fact only lacking in a moral sense because of the moral code and if they had a different one they might gain a moral sense. The morality is just not right for them".

Our perceptions and intentions that lie in the subconscious are the norm. The ones we are aware of are actually the exception. We don't know as much about those things that the self has as we think we do. It is no surprise if the self itself is another mystery.

What is the self? Nobody knows for sure. But all we have is hints. All agree that the self comes from something – it is derived from something. Some say it comes from experience. You have a sense that you are alive and a person. Others say it comes from your thoughts. As morality is about looking after your self and the self of others morality is suspect for we do not know what the self is!

Looking for meaning is a human quest not a religious one or a spiritual one. We prove this by showing how many non-spiritual people love their lives. We prove this by showing how people have to put the meaning on to their lives. It is furnished not discovered. Religion corrupts this truth so how could religion be an ethical entity? It is only appearing to be ethical.

The utilitarian argument that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is what matters argues that hedonistic happiness is not as good as the kind of happiness that comes from helping others and being artistic. But that automatically says a baby has less right to happiness and to life than an older child with a developed mind. Even if you are not utilitarian you will be sometimes and the moral logic appeals to you. It will influence you.

It seems that not knowing how animal minds or human minds work does not give us the right to torture them or to not care if they are tortured or not. If pleasure is good and pain is bad does that mean it is worse to hurt an animal not a person for

the latter is capable of being bad deliberately? Yes!

These conundrums are few out of many. They show why we hate authority even when it seems to be doing good - we know it might not command what it best or know what it is talking about. Even when we do trust it to do its best we know that morality is flawed and confusing in itself. That creates additional issues. Remember the trolley problem.