

Week 5 Discussion: Kant's Ethics and Our Duty

Option 1

Morin (2020) states that morality refers to a system of social norms and ideals that govern how individuals interact with one another, their surroundings, and communities. There are significant values at risk; rules and norms to protect these values, implicit obligations in social roles and positions that can help develop these values and promote these rules, and human qualities or talents that enable us to behave appropriately. Several ethical factors help in determining the moral position of an individual in a society. Beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy, fairness, truth-telling, and promise-keeping are essential ethical concepts to consider in a moral position (Varkey, 2020, p. 18). Beneficence is defined as an act of compassion, mercy, kindness, and doing good for others, as well as a moral duty. This means that, by all means, we should protect the rights of animals by all means.

On the other hand, nonmaleficence teaches that we do not cause pain, suffering, incapacitate or kill (Varkey, 2020, p. 18). This implies that people should never hurt animals, but they should try to avoid, discover, and alleviate any damage from their actions. This also means that those doing research using animals as samples should use the precautionary principle and abstain from performing planned studies unless they can comprehend, prevent, and minimize possible risks to animal subjects. When implementing the concept of nonmaleficence, two non-exhaustive categories deserve consideration, vulnerability, and secrecy. Self-determination or self-governance are essential ethical concepts to examine when considering an individual's ability to exercise autonomy.

Moral autonomy is the ability to decide and provide oneself with moral rules rather than blindly obeying the dictates of others (Varkey, 2020, p. 19). To have personal autonomy is having the ability to make decisions and follow a course of action independent of moral values. Self-governance is to have choices recognized, appreciated, and listened to. To argue effectively, fairness should be at the forefront of our thoughts. To look critically at current problems, fairness must be present. Compassion is shown by treating animals with fairness, respect, justice, and care regarding the environment. Rachels and Rachels (2019) state that we should respect animals' rights, protect their welfare, and not harm them (201). Ideally, we should invite and empower all people with diverse perspectives on a current problem to engage in an open dialogue that improves judgments.

References

- Morin, A. (2020, November 9). *What does morality really mean?* Verywell Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-morality-5076160>Links to an external site. Rachels, S., &
- Rachels, J. (2019). *The elements of moral philosophy* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Varkey, B. (2020). Principles of clinical ethics and their application to practice. *Medical Principles and Practice*, 2021(30), 17-28. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000509119>Links to an external site.