

AGW 22 Deciding Right and Wrong

One definition of philosophy is “the system of values by which one lives.” The following fictional situations as you to consider how you make decisions and what the consequences of those decisions might be. In considering these situations and possible courses of action, you are thinking about ethics. Ethics is one of the subjects Greek philosophers wrestled with centuries ago. Read each scenario. As you read, be sure to mark up each scenario with highlighting, underlining and annotating margin comments with reactions to each highlighted point.

Scenario 1: Too Good To Be True

Vivi and Pat are partners on a science project. It has been frustrating from day one. Both of them believe their project should work but the data they are getting does not add up. The night before they had to turn in their results, Vivi calls Pat. She is elated.

“I ran the numbers for the last experiment again,” Vivi says. “They came out just the way we thought they would from the beginning. The project is a total success.”

Pat agrees this is good news. But after she hangs up she thinks: *I don't trust Vivi*. Before Pat writes up her part of the project she would like to be sure Vivi did not falsify these new results. But it is already 10:30 at night. If Pat asks the teacher for more time, Vivi will know that Pat doubts her. It would be so much easier to go with Vivi's results. No one will ever know if they were faked.

Scenario 2: Just Helping Out

Joey's mother has been out of work for months, and she is getting discouraged. Joey has heard her talking to his dad late at night. She would like to get back to bookkeeping but she needs the latest software to practice. Its too expensive for her to. Buy. Joey tells this to his best friend Tim. “I think I can help,” Tim says. The next day he tells Joey , “My dad has the software. He's willing to let your mom install it on her computer for free, He says not to tell anybody because it is illegal, but he'd like to help her out.

Scenario 3: Don't Worry We Won't Get Caught

Harold is always a little wary when his twin sister Jill proposes to “do something fun.” Jill has gotten both of them in trouble more times than Harold can count. This time it sounds simple enough, They will go to the movie plex and buy tickets for a PG movie. Once inside, they will walk by the theatre showing the PG movie and go into a different movie and see an R rated action movie. “What could be simpler?” Jill says. “What will we tell mom?” Harold says. “We will tell her we will see the PG movie,” Jill answers. “I won't do that,” Harold says, “I am not going to lie.”

Scenario 1: Too Good To Be True

What should Pat do? Why? What will the consequences be?

Scenario 2: Just Helping Out

What should Joey say to Tim? What should his mom do about this offer? What are the likely outcomes of the different courses of action in this scenario?

Scenario 3: Don't Worry We Won't Get Caught

What do you think Jill will say next? What should she say? What are the consequences of Harold's ethical stand on lying?