

CHAPTER 4

Moral Perspectives II

Care, Fairness, Professional Codes

One characteristic of people with integrity is their ability to care for others and to foster good relationships. Caring for others is more than having sympathetic feelings for them; it requires that one take concrete action to look after the needs of others. Caring for others and fostering good relationships go together for two reasons. First, humans are essentially social creatures—we live and work in groups, and most of us would be absolutely miserable if we didn't have meaningful relationships. So caring about persons means caring about their relationships. Second, we cannot accomplish many of the tasks we need to undertake unless we can foster good relationships. This includes the task of giving care to others.

Let's start with an example and see how caring works. Doug is concerned with trying to salvage an account and wants to send someone to visit the client. Tuan is the most likely candidate, since he has a good working relationship with the client, but he is scheduled to visit another client on a much bigger account. Susan has some experience with this client and has been known to save accounts in similar situations, so she is Doug's next choice. Carlos is a possibility, but he is not as familiar with the product as Susan. Doug recalls that Susan's father is in the last stages of his battle with congestive heart failure, and he wonders whether it would be fair to ask her to go. He calls her into his office, and Susan says that her father would probably want her to go. Satisfied, Doug sends

Susan on the trip, but the account is lost anyway. Did Doug do the right thing? We can now answer this question by asking whether Doug was sufficiently caring.

Care for Others and Fostering Relationships

Care is a basic human capacity to recognize and respond to the needs of others and to moderate our behavior by appeal to the good or harm it might cause to others. Martin Hoffman is a prominent moral psychologist who sees care as growing out of our natural capacity for empathy.¹ This capacity is evident even in newborns, who cry when they hear another baby cry. Later in their development, children become motivated to help whenever they encounter others in distress. Finally, reflection allows us to build on our basic empathic distress at the suffering of others. We then can generalize beyond our immediate experience of someone's distress and imagine the distress of someone who is distant from us. In both cases, we feel impelled to help.

This impulse to help can be undermined in a number of ways: by blaming the victim for his or her own distress, by feeling overwhelmed by the distress of others, or by consciously avoiding the awareness of the distress of others. Further, we have a natural impulse to prioritize the needs of those who are close to us. Hoffman pointed to the natural, evolutionary basis for empathy, but he suggested that we could use this natural capacity to motivate ourselves to be responsive to distant others as well. In other words, we can make a conscious commitment to being caring persons. Because there is a natural basis for care, care can be both a strong motivation for doing the right thing and a basis for recognizing right actions. In this way, caring for others provides the foundation for a moral perspective.

Moral perspectives can be connected to basic human capacities. But there is another way to think about moral perspectives: We can see them as growing out of ideal ways to respond in a certain context. For example, if one thinks about what is involved in doing one's moral best in the context of a marketplace between relatively independent and self-interested strangers, the value of honesty and trust are central. The care

perspective in moral philosophy grew out of looking systematically at what is required to be a responsible member of a flourishing relationship. Sara Ruddick, for instance, looked carefully at what is involved in being a good mother to dependent children.² Many contemporary defenders of an ethic of care, and many historical antecedents such as David Hume and Adam Smith, have thought that one can generalize beyond relationships with our intimates. Thus, once we find out what values motivate a person to be an ideal caring person in an intimate relationship, one can apply those values to situations that involve distant strangers. When one understands what practices best allow us to apply these values in intimate relationships, then one can generalize these practices to other situations.

Though not all defenders of an ethic of care see care as a virtue, we think this is the most plausible way to understand it.³ Like other virtues, care is a general disposition to behave in a particular way. Unlike other virtues, care is what we call a meta-virtue—that is, it provides an organizing principle for all the other virtues. If my overall orientation is to be a caring person, then I will be courageous when what I value is at risk; I will be honest because honesty is usually the best way to care for others; I will want to be prudent because I recognize that I must balance the needs of others with my own needs. So the traditional virtues of courage, honesty, and prudence are organized under the meta-virtue of care.

When Carol Gilligan first described the care orientation, she described it as a typically female moral orientation.⁴ However, there is nothing gendered about caring; if it is more prevalent in women than in men, it is because women are socially conditioned to do much of society's caring work—they are more likely to be involved with caring for children and the sick, for example. Care is a basic human capacity and as such it is both possible and important for all of us to be caring persons. Developing our capacity to give care requires that we commit to this ideal and that we practice exercising care. When we truly care about someone or something, we have certain emotions and motivations. If we see someone in dire need, for example, we will feel compassion and will be motivated to do something to respond to the need. Finally, it is not enough to

merely have the appropriate emotion and motivation; care involves an appropriate response.

Caring is not just a response to need; it is a response to a variety of other features of moral situations as well: harm, past promises, role relationships, and so on. In the case of need, our obligation to respond in an appropriately caring way arises when we are able to respond to need. A "need" is different from a "desire": A need is something that is basic to survival and to a minimally decent life, whereas a desire is something that we merely want and that is not basic to survival or to a minimally decent life. Things that humans need for their survival include food, water, clothing, shelter, and health care. Things that humans need for a minimally decent life can be debated. Aristotle cited friendship; Mill cited liberty; and Rawls offered self-esteem. Still, there is no universal, cross-cultural understanding of need. Rather, need is mediated by a number of factors, including family, culture, economic class, gender and sexuality, and disability and illness. Finally, as we respond to needs, we should recognize the vast differences in power that exist and shape the recognition and articulation of needs. Sometimes, people are unwilling to express their needs freely because they fear that their needs will not be met. They may even be in such a state of dependence or despair that they are no longer able to identify their needs.

Harm is another feature of moral situations. Most people understand that being the cause of harming someone else creates an obligation to respond. But causation is a complex idea. We can be part of the causal story even when we don't think of ourselves as the primary cause. Suppose, for example, that you are taking an exam, and you notice the young man next to you looking at some notes written on the palm of his hand. You realize that he is cheating on the exam. Suppose further that this is an exam that is designed to demonstrate competence in a skill crucial for a health-care practitioner. Suppose that you simply look the other way, and later you find out that a patient was seriously harmed because the practitioner really did not understand the procedure he should have followed, and that this procedure was the very one he was being tested on when you saw him cheating. Do you have a responsibility here? We would argue that you do,

though it's not always clear what you can do after the fact. At the very least, you now know that you shouldn't look the other way when you see similar cheating in the future.

There are two other things that mark the moral dimension of a situation that are worth noting here—past promises and role responsibility. When we make a promise, we commit ourselves to a certain course of action. An ethic of care doesn't say that you are always committed to keeping a promise, because sometimes doing so can be harmful to all concerned. But it does impose a moral obligation to respond. Similarly, being in a particular role (for example, teacher) comes with a set of general obligations.

We've now looked at some of the features of situations that suggest that we have an obligation. In order to see what our obligations are in a particular situation, we need to look at the features of an ethic of care. Though humans have always included features of care in their constructive interactions with each other, it emerged only recently as a systematic moral perspective. Nel Noddings's influential book *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* was the first contemporary work that described care in some detail as a moral orientation.⁵ Virginia Held, who has also been an influential defender of this perspective, has most recently extended the concept to the global arena.⁶ There are important differences and similarities in the different descriptions of an ethic of care, but here we will be using the model developed by Rita Manning.⁷

There are four central ideas in an ethic of care: moral attention, sympathetic understanding, relationship awareness, and accommodation and harmony.

Moral Attention

Moral attention is the attention to the situation in all its complexity. When one is morally attentive, one wishes to become aware of all the details that will allow a sympathetic response to the situation. It is not enough to know that this is a case of a particular kind, say a case about

lying or cruelty. In order to understand what our obligations are, we have to know all the details that might make a difference in our understanding and response to the particular situation at hand.

Sympathetic Understanding

When one sympathetically understands the situation, one is open to sympathizing and even identifying with the persons in the situation. One tries to be aware of what the others in the situation would want one to do, what would most likely be in their best interests, and how they would like one to carry out their wishes and interests and meet their needs. We call this attention to the best interests of others maternalism. It is done in the context of a special sensitivity to the wishes of the other and with an understanding of the other's interest that is shaped by a deep sympathy and understanding. When it is hard to be sympathetic, one may try several strategies—perhaps imagining others as oneself in an earlier crisis. As one adopts this sympathetic attitude, one often becomes aware of what others want and need. Finally, as we respond to others, we look to satisfy their needs in ways that will preserve their sense of competence and dignity while at the same time addressing their needs or even ameliorating their suffering.

Relationship Awareness

There is a special kind of relationship awareness that characterizes caring. A person recognizes that others are in a relationship with him or her. First there is the most basic relationship, that of fellow creatures. There is the immediate relationship of need and ability to fill the need. Another relationship is created when you are the cause of harm to someone else or have a past history that implies obligations. One might also be in some role relationship with the other that calls for a particular response, such as teacher-student. A caring person is aware of all these relationships as he or she surveys a situation. He or she is aware of the network of relationships that connects humans, and cares about preserving and nurturing

these relationships. As caring persons think about what to do, they try not to undermine these relationships and try to nurture and extend the relationships that are supportive of human flourishing.

Accommodation and Harmony

Related to the notion of relationship awareness is accommodation. Often-times there are many persons involved in a situation and how best to respond is not obvious. The desire to nurture networks of care requires that one tries to accommodate the needs of all, including oneself. It is not always possible, or wise, to do what everyone wants. But it is often important to do what you think is best while at the same time giving everyone concerned a sense of being involved and considered in the process. When we do this, we have a better chance of preserving harmony. If you do what you think is right without consulting anyone, you risk upsetting the harmony of the group. Of course, not all harmony is worth preserving. The oppressive society may be pretty stable and harmonious, but at the price of ignoring those at the bottom. An ethic of care would be opposed to this type of superficial harmony, since it is dependent on treating some as though they do not deserve the same care as others. Ideally, we should aim for the harmonious society in which all are treated with care.

Putting It All Together

Let's return to Doug and see how he might have thought about the situation with the account that was at risk if he'd been more skillful at caring. Doug did not really think about Susan's situation very carefully. He should have realized that she was upset about her father's illness. Since we are all distracted when something this serious is going on in our lives, she was probably also worried that her concern might put her job performance in jeopardy. Doug should not have taken her words at face value, because it's hard to believe that her father really wanted her to go. Perhaps he was just being a good father and trying to put Susan's needs

above his own. Very likely, he was worried about how his illness was affecting her. He might have told her to go to give her some time off or to protect her job.

Doug also did not give much thought to how well Susan would be able to interact with the client while her father was dying miles away. The result of his action was a lost account and considerable discomfort for Susan. This lack of care on his part probably will affect his relationship with Susan and her effectiveness in future negotiations. Whenever she has to go visit a client, she may be reminded of that precious time she lost with her father. Doug should have given more thought to finding other alternatives to sending Susan on the trip during this trying time. It looks like Doug failed at caring in a number of ways. He did not focus moral attention on the situation in all its complexity. He was unsympathetic, because he did not realize how Susan and her father felt at this difficult time. He failed to notice that his decision interfered with Susan's ability to care for someone who was close to her, and he missed the opportunity to make a decision that would have led to harmonious relationships between Susan and her father, between Susan and himself, and between his organization and its clients.

The Care Voice and the Justice Voice

Now that we've seen how the care perspective works, let's turn to a brief history. Carol Gilligan's pioneering work, *In a Different Voice*, was the first systematic attempt to describe the voice of care and to distinguish it from what she called the voice of justice. Since then, psychologists and philosophers have been elucidating the central concepts and testing for various aspects of the two voices.

Gilligan began by responding to the views of Lawrence Kohlberg, who developed a theory about how people reason and develop morally.⁸ His theory of moral reasoning posited that people reason morally by applying principles to cases, thus yielding judgments about what they ought to do. Moral development, on Kohlberg's account, is cognitive and proceeds to progressively more general principles, with ideal moral development culminating in principles that are universal and binding on all persons.

Carol Gilligan noted that Kohlberg's subjects, though culturally diverse, were all male. She began to apply his tests to female subjects of various ages. Her conclusion was that some people, notably females, appealed to what she called a care voice, which stood in contrast to the principle-based justice voice of Kohlberg. The care voice involves a thorough understanding of the context of a situation and a willingness to balance the needs of self and others in a way that preserves both. For Gilligan, moral development was thus both cognitive and emotional—it involved growth in one's ability to see a situation from the perspective of self and others and to care about one's self as well as others.

She illustrated the differences in moral reasoning with two eleven-year-olds, Jake and Amy. Jake and Amy are both given Kohlberg's Heinz dilemma to solve. A druggist has invented a drug to combat cancer. A man by the name of Heinz has a wife who needs the drug, but Heinz does not have the money to buy it. The druggist will not give it to him. The children are asked whether Heinz should steal the drug. Jake quickly answers affirmatively and defends his answer by appealing to the relative importance of life over property. Amy begins by saying that it depends. She points out all the things that could go wrong if Heinz steals the drug—perhaps he will get caught and go to jail and his wife will be worse off. She suggests instead that Heinz and the druggist should sit down and work it out to everyone's satisfaction.

Jake fits easily into Kohlberg's schemata: He imagines himself in Heinz's position and applies a principle that quickly yields an answer. He does not need any more information about Heinz, the druggist, Heinz's wife, etc. Amy, in contrast, is virtually impossible to analyze on Kohlberg's scale because she never states or even implies a principle that will yield an answer. Instead, as she imagines herself in Heinz's shoes, she sees the complexity of the situation and realizes that its solution requires that Heinz and the druggist and Heinz's wife recognize their involvement in a relationship and that they honor this awareness by working out a solution that will enable them all to survive and, if possible, flourish. For Jake, the solution is cognitive: Heinz merely reasons about the situation and takes action on the basis of that reasoning. Amy sees a real solution as necessarily involving growth in moral sensitivity and commitment.

There is an additional way to sort out the differences between the care and justice voice, and that is in terms of self-understanding. This was suggested by Nona Lyons, who argued that a particular self-understanding, a "distinct way of seeing and being in relation to others," explains the moral agent's preference for a particular moral voice.⁹ Lyons identified two different self-understandings: what she called the separate/objective self and the connected self. Persons who fit the separate/objective self model describe themselves in terms of personal characteristics rather than connections to others. Connected selves describe themselves in terms of connections to others: granddaughter of, friend of, and so on. This suggests that the separate/objective self sees oneself as distinct from others in a more profound sense than the connected self does. The separate/objective self might, for example, see oneself as connected to others only through voluntary agreements. The separate/objective self might value autonomy more highly than good relationships with others.

Lyons described further differences. Separate/objective selves recognize moral dilemmas as those that involve a conflict between their principles and someone else's desires, needs, or demands. Connected selves, in contrast, identify moral dilemmas as those that involve the breakdown of relationships with others. Separate/objective selves fear connection and dependence, and hence value autonomy and independence. Connected selves fear separation and abandonment, and hence value connection and responsiveness.

We can see then how these self-understandings support different moral orientations. Separate selves understand themselves as distinct from others. They conceive moral dilemmas as arising from the conflict between their moral principles and the needs, demands, desires, and principles of others. As such, they must mediate their interaction with others in the voice of justice—in terms of ground rules and procedures that can be accepted by all. This is the only foundation for interaction at all, since ties of affection are not seen as strong enough to provide a basis for interaction, especially in persons who fear connection and dependence. This fear of dependence and attachment also explains why they value the objectivity and impartiality that can stand between themselves and inti-

mates. At the same time, separate/objective selves recognize that interaction with others plays a role in one's satisfaction, so they value community and relationship insofar as these play a role in individual satisfaction.

Connected selves see themselves in terms of others, so relationship is central to self-identity, rather than seen as voluntary and incidental. The problem of interaction is not then conceived of as how to get others to interact on terms that would be acceptable to all, but how to protect the ties of affection and connection that are central to one's very self-identity. Moral dilemmas arise over how to preserve these ties when they are threatened, and these dilemmas are mediated by the voice of care. Since the primary fear is of separation and abandonment, a strong value is placed on community and relationships.

Care and Other Moral Perspectives

At this point in the discussion of an ethic of care, we want to make a meta-ethical point. We are not convinced that in some ethically preferred world, everyone would adopt the same moral theory or the same way of dealing with the moral realities of life. We are certainly not convinced that in this world, everyone can do so. Rather, we think that each moral theory has insights to offer and sheds light on a different aspect of our moral lives. We also think that each of us has a particular history and moral narrative that limits our ability to adopt new moral perspectives, regardless of how we may evaluate one moral theory against another. Finally, we think that when we try to make moral theories guides to action in the rough-and-tumble world of complex and difficult choices, we ought to take comfort where and when we can. If one particular moral theory sheds new light on a difficult and novel issue, then we should comb it for every bit of insight we find useful. It is for these reasons that we prefer to speak of moral perspectives rather than moral theories.

It is also important to distinguish between an ethic of care and an ethical approach to caregiving. One need not subscribe to an ethic of care as a moral perspective to realize that there are special issues that arise for any of us in our various roles as caregivers. We think that an ethic of care will shed

light on a range of issues, certainly including the ethics of caregiving, but we are not committed to the view that moral perspectives are necessarily incompatible. They are often complementary. Care and Confucian ethics are similar in some important respects, for example. Ideal Humanness (*jen*) and propriety (*li*) play a central role in Confucian ethics. Jen is analogous in some important respects to care, while li, like accommodation, reminds us that the good society must value harmony among its members.¹⁰

One helpful way to connect moral theories is to notice that they each focus primarily on a different component of our moral experience. Utilitarianism and other consequential views invite us to be sensitive to the consequences of our decisions and actions. Kant reminds us of two things. First, our motivation and not just the outcomes of our actions are morally significant. Second, persons have a special place in the moral hierarchy. The moral rights view provides a way of understanding the implications of this special place in the moral hierarchy. Virtue theories focus not just on actions, but on the agents who are responsible for these actions. They direct our attention to the character traits that underlie our actions and our commitments. They also focus our attention on how concepts of the good life both anchor our views about the good society and grow out of particular societies.

An ethic of care adds yet another dimension. It reminds us of the importance of human relationships. It places moral value on communities as well as persons and asserts that our actions take place in the context of relationship: Our decisions should consider existing relationships and are often carried out via social action. Doing the right thing and living the morally good life must be understood in the context of trust, reciprocity, and concern for others.

► Decision Procedure

1. Direct your moral attention to others.
2. Be open to sympathetic understanding.
3. Be aware of the need to sustain and preserve networks of care.
4. Act so as to preserve harmony insofar as you can.
5. Shortcut to action: What would my ideal caring self do?

► Exercise 4.1

Suppose you were just hired as the manager of a technical writing group. You are told that one of your first tasks will be to lay someone off. The technical writers all write documents for a group of project managers. One of the writers is a single mother who has a child with a fairly serious disability. The project managers all give her unfavorable reviews. Another writer is a single young woman who is independently wealthy and works just to keep herself busy. She gets strong reviews. A third writer is a married man whose wife is a well-paid lawyer. He is the life of every party and is largely responsible for the wonderful cohesion of the group. The fourth is a quiet and industrious former engineer who knows the technical details of the product better than anyone else. He was unemployed and homeless for several years because of problems with alcohol. Now, using the perspective of care, what should you do, and how should you do it? Look at this example again from the point of view of respect for persons. Finally, look at it from the perspective of Utilitarianism.

Fairness: Social Contract Views

It is hard to be a good person and an effective leader if you are seen as unfair. Fairness is an important value in the United States. We learn to resent unfairness at an early age, though most of us are not really sure about what fairness is. For example, coauthor Rita Manning's daughter made the honor role at school. Children on the honor role are supposed to be able to buy lunch before the other kids. This is an important reward when you go to the typical junior high in California—like most of the other California schools, this one is huge and overcrowded. When Rita asked her daughter how that was going, she said that the teachers were not doing it all the time because they wanted to be fair. Rita asked her what she meant by fair, and her daughter said it meant treating all the kids equally. The author suggested that being fair might mean following the rules. Who is right? Philosophers have had wonderful arguments about

this question for over 2,000 years, and it is a good exercise to think about this type of situation for yourself and see what you think. What we will offer here is a way to think about how to be fair that has a history in the West dating back to Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. John Rawls is a contemporary defender of this tradition, which is called Social Contract Theory.¹¹

Social Contract theories differ from one another, but they share a common insight. Basically they state that the right moral rules are those that would be chosen by rational persons under the right circumstances. We can use a thought experiment to see what is involved in being a rational person and what the right circumstances would be. Suppose you found yourself shipwrecked on a deserted island with fifteen other people, and that five of you were injured and unable to help gather food and build shelter. Suppose further that one of the five was exhibiting extreme mental confusion. Imagine that seven of the uninjured people were so strong that they could impose their will on the rest of you if they wanted to do so. Now let's suppose that you have a meeting to decide what rules to adopt to increase the odds of survival until you are rescued. Would you be willing to go along with the suggestion that everyone should go it alone? How about the suggestion that things be decided by unanimous vote and that everyone should have an equal vote, even the person who was extremely confused? Would you be willing to give an equal voice to people who refused to be informed about what the problems were? Would you be willing to let all the strong people take what they needed regardless of whether there was enough left for everyone else? Suppose that some of the people in the meeting said they would be willing to talk about rules, but that they would decide from day to day whether or not they wanted to follow them.

Now think about your answers and see if you don't agree that any such meeting would have to meet the following conditions. First, you would have to find a way to keep people from simply voting for whatever was in their self-interest. Second, you would not want anyone to be able to coerce the rest of you into doing things their way. Third, you'd probably want people to be willing to live by the rules. Finally, you would probably want everyone who could vote to be informed about what the issues were and to be able to make a clear and rational decision.

These insights are what prompted John Rawls to come up with his version of the Social Contract: The right moral rules are those which would be chosen by rational bargainers, in the Original Position, behind the Veil of Ignorance.¹² He uses a bit of interesting jargon in this definition, so let's take it piece by piece. First, rational bargainers are people who are mentally competent and aware of the relevant facts. The Original Position (OP) is an imaginary bargaining situation where we all commit ourselves to live by whatever rules are chosen. The Veil of Ignorance (VI) is like a veil that falls across our eyes that makes us forget those things we know about ourselves that would allow us to act in our self-interest. It serves as a device to make sure that bargainers don't know enough about themselves to bring self-interest to bear. We think it is useful to think in terms of a forgetting pill. We imagine that when we take this pill, we no longer know whether we are male or female, strong or weak, hurt or healthy.

We use this whole picture to decide on moral rules. This is how it works. First, we imagine that we really are in a position to make the moral rules and that we would really be willing to live by them. Second, we assume that everyone involved in the rule-making process is rational and fully informed. Third, we imagine that we've all taken a pill that causes us to forget all those things about ourselves that would allow us to bring our self-interest into the discussion.

Rawls made some interesting assumptions about this imaginary bargaining session. One important assumption is that we would all be averse to exposing ourselves to catastrophic risk. Rawls thinks we would protect ourselves by imagining how each rule would affect us if we turned out to be the least well off person in the situation. He used the notion of the least-well-off person a bit differently from the way we will use it here, but we think that our use is a bit less controversial. We encourage you to read Rawls and see if you agree with us.

Since these rules must make it possible for us to live together in a relatively stable society, and since we could each be one of the least well off once the Veil of Ignorance is lifted, the rules chosen must be acceptable to the least well off. This doesn't mean that the rules will automatically benefit the least well off. We might turn out to be one of the best off. But

just in case we are the least well off, we want to make sure that we could live with the rules. Now that we have the whole picture in mind, we can summarize the decision procedure.

► Decision Procedure

1. What are the possible rules?
2. For each rule:
 - a. Would it be chosen by rational bargainers in the OP behind the VI?
 - b. Would it be acceptable to the least well off?

► Exercise 4.2

You are on the school board and have to make substantial cuts in the budget. The only reasonable options are: (1) cut the budget for students with special needs, or (2) cut the music and art budget. Assuming that there are no legal restrictions on what you can do (such as state laws mandating a special-needs program, or a music and art curriculum), use the Social Contract model to decide what to do.

Professional Codes of Ethics

Another characteristic a person with integrity needs is a familiarity with and respect for relevant professional codes of ethics.¹³ These are rules of conduct for members of particular professions; they are often written down, but sometimes they are merely implicit. One of coauthor Rita Manning's friends, a plumber, used to say there were only two things a plumber needed to know: that sewage doesn't flow uphill, and that payday is Friday. Of course he was joking. There really are norms of professional conduct for the building trades, though they may not always be written down. Other professions have explicit codes of ethical conduct, some of them, like the Hippocratic Oath for physicians, dating back over 2,000 years.

One preliminary question is, What is a profession? Why do we describe some activities as professions and some as mere careers, or even jobs? The traditional view of the professions is that they involve individ-

uals who each have a high degree of autonomy. They are personally responsible for their decisions because they are not in a position in which they are expected to follow orders that they had no part in creating. Second, the professions themselves are described as dedicated to the common good. Third, members of professions collectively assign moral responsibility to their members and articulate that responsibility in the form of professional codes of ethics.

Professional codes are designed to summarize a shared view of moral standards for particular professions, to provide a standard for teaching and discipline, and to guide the behavior of members in difficult situations. They must be sensitive to the possible harm that particular professions can cause and the temptations to do the wrong thing that face professionals. Engineers, for example, have a code that makes protecting the public from harm a central concern. This makes sense when we recognize that civil engineers are responsible for projects like building bridges. Health-care professionals are privy to personal information about patients and thus have codes that make confidentiality a prime obligation.

Like all moral rules, professional codes of ethics must be defended. The defense can be made by appeal to their centrality to the furtherance of a particular institution and the utility of that institution, or on other moral grounds (for example, respect, care, virtue). Let's see how this works. In the United States, lawyers are obligated to zealously defend the interests of their clients. Criminal lawyers must defend their clients regardless of their personal opinions about any particular client's guilt or innocence. This obligation is defended in terms of our legal system, which is an adversarial system that assumes people are innocent until proven guilty. The adversarial system of justice is in turn defended as the best possible way of seeing that justice is done, and the presumption of innocence is defended in terms of the Constitution. Both the adversarial system and the Constitution can be defended in terms of rights, utility, or care. So although an individual lawyer may at times be a bit uncomfortable with her clients, she can be comfortable that in defending them she is defending the adversarial system and the Constitution.

But notice that professional codes are not absolute. We needn't assume that every professional code was carefully drafted or that it should be

followed in every possible case. When we have some concerns about a particular professional code, we need to look to see what institution it is protecting and what moral views provide its justification. There are other codes adopted by organizations besides professional codes. The same procedures used to evaluate professional codes can be used to evaluate these organizational codes.

Sometimes, members of organizations are called upon to help develop an organizational code of ethics. Whether the organization is a professional group or some other type of group, it may be helpful to answer a few questions before deciding how to set up the code. Is there a professional code that governs some of the activities of the organization or profession? What is the purpose of the organization or profession, and is this a worthy goal? Is the organization or profession organized maximally to achieve this goal? Can the proposed organizational or professional code be defended in terms of moral values? A decision procedure can be summarized as follows:

► Decision Procedure

1. Describe the morally relevant features of the situation.
2. List the professional codes involved.
3. Evaluate the professional codes, or clauses of codes, involved.
4. Describe the action required by the appropriate code.

► Exercise 4.3

Find out if there is a professional code that governs your work-life. If there is, get a copy of it. Review each clause carefully and assess the entire document. Do the same for any organization that you belong to.

► Hints for Developing Integrity

1. Remember that developing integrity is a life-long project.
2. Integrity has three components: deciding what is right, being motivated to do what is right, and having the appropriate emotional re-

sponse. Work on each of these components. You will improve your ability to decide what is right by using the decision procedures in this chapter and Chapter 3. Working on your motivation will be the hard part, but remember, practicing integrity gets easier as it becomes a habit. Notice what your emotional response is in moral situations. Now compare your emotions with what you think would be the right thing to do. Since emotion has a large cognitive component, thinking things through will help to reinforce appropriate emotional responses.

3. Seek out a support group of like-minded people and stay in touch.
4. Finally, remember that it is not just what you do, but how you do it that counts.

Conclusion

We have now sketched the most common Western strategies for making moral decisions. In the next chapter, we will turn to perspectives from around the world. Many, if not most, of these world perspectives will have a great deal in common with the perspectives we have outlined so far, so at this point, we think we've given you a fairly broad picture of what is involved in living a life of integrity.

► Study Questions for Chapter Four

1. What are the central features of care?
2. What are the four central ideas in an ethic of care? How would you use this ethic to make a moral decision?
3. List some ways in which the care voice differs from the justice voice.
4. What is the common insight that all Social Contract theories share?
5. Describe John Rawls's version of Social Contract Theory. Make sure you include the following: *original position*, *veil of ignorance*, *least well off*.
6. How can you use Rawls's theory to make moral decisions?

7. What is a professional code of ethics? How should you use a professional code of ethics to make moral decisions?
8. How does a professional code differ from an organizational code of ethics?

NOTES

1. Martin Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
2. Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).
3. Michael Slote is a virtue theorist who also sees care as a virtue. See *Morals from Motives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
4. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).
5. Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986; 2d ed., 2003).
6. Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political and Global* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
7. Rita Manning, *Caring: A Feminist Perspective on Ethics* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1992).
8. Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981).
9. Nona Lyons, "Two Perspectives on Self, Relationship, and Morality," *Harvard Educational Review* 53 (1983), 125–145.
10. For a comparison of Confucian ethics and care, see Julia Po-Wah Lai Tao, "Two Perspectives of Care: Confucian *Ren* and Feminist *Care*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 27, no. 2 (June 2000), 215–240.
11. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).
12. In our discussion of Rawls, we are simplifying to a certain extent in order to get the main points across. We invite you to take a look at *A Theory of Justice* for the important and interesting details.
13. For a very comprehensive list of codes of ethics, see <http://www.ethicsweb.ca/resources/professional/codes-of-ethics.html>.

CHAPTER 5

Ethics around the World

So far, we've looked at a number of moral perspectives: Utilitarianism, respect for persons (Kant, moral rights), virtue theory, Social Contract Theory, and care. Professional codes, when they can be justified, offer an additional way to think about one's moral obligations. While these views are not exclusively Western, they tend to capture much of moral theorizing in the West. But we live in an increasingly global world, and there is certainly no reason to think that the best insights come from the West. Even if you feel comfortable with this particular mix of moral perspectives, it is important to broaden your horizons so that you can work with people who share different moral orientations.

There are three things to keep in mind as we venture beyond the West to see what other cultures have to say about living a moral life. The first is that we needn't leave the West to find other moral orientations. In the West, many people have made critiques of some of the views we've looked at and offered alternatives of their own. We will return to a discussion of some of these views following our look at different traditions.

The second thing is that there are tremendous differences in moral orientation within cultures. We've already seen differences in "Western" perspectives: Utilitarianism and Kantianism have very different views of individual persons; virtue theorists may have very different ideas of the good society and consequently what virtues people should cultivate. The same multiplicity of perspectives exists around the world. In what follows, we will be painting with a broad stroke, but keep in mind that within these perspectives, there is a great deal of disagreement. There are