

Types of Ethical Reasoning

Ethical Approach	Description	Arguments Against
Utilitarian	Moral principle that holds that the morally right course of action in any situation is the one that produces the greatest balance of benefits over harms for everyone affected.	So long as a course of action produces maximum benefits for everyone, utilitarianism does not care whether the benefits are produced by lies, manipulation, or coercion.
Egoism	Moral principle that holds that the morally right course of action in any situation is the one that produces the greatest balance of benefits over harms for the individual.	So long as a course of action produces maximum benefits for the individual, egoism does not care whether the benefits are produced by lies, manipulation, or coercion.
Deontology	Moral theory that holds that the right course of action is the one that adheres to the duty, law or rule.	Rejects consequences as a measure of morality, instead focusing on fulfillment of duty to a moral code, and it holds that duty to be the only intrinsic good.
Relativism	Moral theory holds that morality is relative to the norms of one's culture. That is, whether an action is right or wrong depends on the moral norms of the society in which it is practiced.	Rejects universal and individual moral beliefs for the social norm.
Justice	Moral principle holds that equals should be treated equally unless there is a sufficient reason to treat anyone (or anything) unequally.	Justifying criteria for differential treatment are numerous and can be controversial therefore making it difficult to apply the theory to practice.

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