

A Dilemma

Karen has a rare disease. Her doctor says she will die unless she receives a very expensive medicine. A druggist in town had discovered the medicine and charges ten times more than it cost him to make it.

Mark, Karen's husband, tried everything he could to borrow enough money to buy the medicine for her, but he could only get half the amount he needed.

Finally, he appealed to the druggist and told him Karen would die without the medicine. He asked the druggist to sell it at a reduced price or to let him pay for it a little at a time. The druggist however, refused, saying "it took me a long time to discover this medicine, and I'm going to make money on it."

Mark felt very discouraged and upset. That night, he broke into the drugstore to steal the medicine for Karen.

Stage description	Example of moral reasoning in support of Mark's Stealing	Examples of moral reasoning against Mark's stealing
-------------------	--	---

Pre-conventional Morality: Morality of self-interest

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Avoids punishment | "If you let your wife die, you will get in trouble" | "You shouldn't steal the drug because you'll get caught and sent to jail if you do." |
| 2. Gains concrete rewards | "If you steal the drug, your wife will live." | "He may not get much of a jail term if he steals the drug, but his wife will probably die before he gets out." |

Conventional Morality: Morality of law and social convention

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 3. Approval/ avoid disapproval | "If you steal the drug, your wife will live and you'll be a hero." | "It isn't just the druggist who will think you're a criminal, everyone else will, too" |
| 4. Does duty to society/ avoids dishonor or guilt | "If you have any sense of honor, you won't let your wife die because you're afraid to do the only thing that will save her." | "You'll always feel guilty for your dishonesty and lawbreaking." |

Post Conventional Morality: Morality of abstract principles

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| 5. Affirms agreed-upon rights | "His obligation to save his wife's life must take precedence. The value of human life is logically prior to the value of property." | "It is so hard for people to live together unless there are some laws governing their actions." |
| 6. Affirms own ethical principles | "If you don't steal the drug, you would have lived up to the outside rule of law but you wouldn't have lived up to your own standards of conscience." | " If you steal the drug, you won't be blamed by other people but you'll condemn yourself because you won't have lived up to your own conscience and standards of honesty." |