

Establishing a Consistent Value System

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this tutorial we will be looking at how action is necessary for consistent ethics. Our discussion will break down like this:

1. [Acting According to Belief](#)
2. [Consistent Action in Practice](#)

1. Acting According to Belief

To begin with, recall that ethics aims to evaluate all actions in an objective and systematic manner. This means trying to find out why something has moral worth. Once you've found true moral values you must act on them consistently.

➔ **EXAMPLE** If you believed that we should do everything in our power to save human life, then you might become an organ donor or give blood.

There are many other examples of putting your beliefs into practice. Sometimes it might be tougher to do this because following through on your beliefs requires a lot of you.

IN CONTEXT

If you thought that human suffering should be avoided at all costs, then you would do everything you could to minimize suffering.

For instance, if you thought suffering was largely unavoidable, you would refuse to have children, since they would inevitably be subject to suffering.

In this instance, you would have sacrificed having a family to consistently follow your ethical values. But it's not always so demanding to follow through with ethical values.

➔ **EXAMPLE** If you thought that friendliness was a virtue, then you would make sure to be polite and welcoming to everyone you met.

2. Consistent Action in Practice

Now let's look in a bit more detail about how you can consistently put an ethical value into practice. We will look at two cases, and the following will be provided for each:

1. A principle for action and the type of value it rests upon
2. The ethical theory that this is related to
3. Three examples of actions that you would be required to do in light of this principle

Here is the first case.

All humans should be treated equally, because everyone has the same rights.			
Ethical Theory	Since this is based on a rule for action, it's connected to deontology.		
Examples of Required Actions	Support legislation to close the gender pay gap.	Join groups that promote awareness of racial prejudice.	Vote for those who aim to support the poor.

And here is the second case.

I think animal cruelty is wrong because their suffering should be stopped.			
Ethical Theory	Since this is based on the outcome of action, it's connected to consequentialism.		
Examples of Required Actions	Stop consuming products that contribute to the cruel treatment of animals.	Support charities that promote animal rights and raise awareness of their abuse.	Vote for those who aim to bring better regulation of the meat industry.



BIG IDEA

In both cases, if you subscribe to a principle but don't then act on what that principle commits you to, you would have used ethics inconsistently.



SUMMARY

We started this tutorial by looking at what's involved in **acting according to belief**, focusing on the fact that it can sometimes be hard work to be ethical and follow through with ethical values. Then some specific cases of **consistent action in practice** were presented, showing how a certain principle can commit someone to various actions.