Ethics And Decision Making Essay, Research Paper

Making decisions is never easy, especially when considering ethics and morals. Since we were children, our parents have taught us the difference between right and wrong. Society, religion, media, and our peers have also influenced our thinking and definition of good and bad. The word ethic comes from the Greek language, meaning character and custom. Ethics are defined as our principles or standards of human conduct, sometimes called morals (Encarta 1997). Each person bases their decisions on the ethics and morals, which they have attributed throughout their lifetime. Decisions are based on conscience. Conscience, refers to the inner sense of right and wrong in moral choices, as well as to the satisfaction that follows action regarded as right and the dissatisfaction and remorse resulting from conduct that is considered wrong (Encarta 1997). Our conscience is developed as we grow and mature as people. Our conscience begins with religion, and continues to advance based on our environment, parental upbringing and heredity. Morals and ethics are driven into our conscience mind every day, which helps us make decisions throughout life. Saint Paul referred to conscience as the law written on the human heart (Romans 2:15). For Paul, the scrupulous conscience brings not only illumination but also agony: It relentlessly exposes the inner battle that human beings must wage against their own impulses (Romans 7:15-20). He viewed that conscience is an inner witness to divine law and that it is common to all human beings. Every decision a person makes, whether it is moral or immoral, is based on their conscience (Encarta 1997). There is a widespread feeling that morality and religion are connected. Religion provides a ground for morality, it is said that without religion there is no morality (Satris, 1992). If there is no God in our lives, there is moral chaos. Moral chaos can be played out in societies where crime rate is high. If a person does not believe in any God, then they will confront moral chaos and become liable to permit anything without any moral or ethically bearings. This often what happens when people turn to a life of crime. Religion our primary source of morals and ethics. Without it, people would be lost in their moral decision making process.According to theologians of the Middle Ages, the conscience is divided into two parts. Synderesis, is the faculty in human beings that knows God’s moral law. For example, if a person decides to kill another person, their conscience will tell them the ethics and morals behind their decisions according to the natural law of God. It is then up to that person whether they choose to follow their conscience or go against it. Conscientia, the second part of a person s conscience, is the faculty by which human beings apply the moral to concrete cases; it dictates what should or should not be done under particular circumstances (Encarta 1997). This part of the conscience, known as the little voice inside your head, that tells you what you should or should not do. It is this voice, which reminds a person of the ethics and morals they were taught throughout their lives.

Not everyone listens to his or her conscience. Some people get curious, which is why they do immoral and unethical things. People who break the law, although they know that it is morally wrong, do so because their conscience has not been completely developed. It is possible for people to have undeveloped consciences, which may cause them to break the law. These people may not have been taught the difference between right and wrong, so they need to experience it for themselves (Satris, 1992). Sigmund Freud an Austrian physician, neurologist, and founder of psychoanalysis, said that a person who commits and immoral act is a sufferer. This person suffers on one hand from the pains of his own affliction and yearns to get well, even if the act was intentional (Encarta 1997). At the same time, the person suffers from traitorous conscience impulses and right against the good, moral thoughts he or she was raised to believe and live by. The conclusion to Freud s research in this topic was that people want to be immoral at certain times in their lives. Satisfaction and normality are gained by acting out against their conscience minds and the need to be ethical and moral at all times (Satris 1992).The nineteenth century Danish philosopher named Kierkegaard, reacted against Freud s tradition by insisting that the highest good for the individual is to find his or her own unique definition of moral. As he wrote in his journal, I must find a truth that is true for me . . . the idea for which I can live or die (Encarta 1997). Other writers have echoed Kierkegaard’s belief that one must choose one’s own way without the aid of universal, objective standards. These theories prove many personal beliefs to be wrong. Many people along with more modern philosophers and psychiatrists believe that morals and ethics and are based on conscience and religion, like Freud had said.Throughout our lives, we will be faced with many decisions. If the forces which drive us to make certain decisions, such as religion and conscience, are fully developed. We should be able to make moral and ethically decisions. Although it is merely impossible to be completely moral and ethical and at times in our lives, we should continue to develop our conscience and listen to the moral that we have been taught. It is important that we do not allow our impulses to drive us and make our decisions for us. We must remain strong, by continuing to educate ourselves on the topic of morals and decision making. Learn from your mistakes, listen to your conscience and follow your religion.

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