

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The central question of Ethics:

“what ought one to do?”

In seeking to answer this question we are left with some enduring truths....

- Ethics is about relationships
- It's about struggling to develop a well-informed conscience
- It's about being true to the idea of who we are and what we stand for
- It's about having the courage to explore difficult questions
- It's about accepting the cost



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Ethics is a matter of practical concern.

Plato records Socrates as having asked the fundamental question of ethics,

“What ought one to do?”

- Whenever one seeks to answer that question then one is operating in the ethical dimension.
- There are a number of things that should be noted about this question.
- The first thing to note relates to what Socrates did **not** ask!
- Socrates did not begin by asking questions such as, “What is good, what is evil?” or, “What is right, what is wrong?” rather, he asked an immensely practical question that confronts people whenever they have a decision to they are in a position to exercise their **capacity to choose**.



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Our aim is to make you unconsciously competent when confronted with a choice to be either ethical or unethical.

- Many professionals find it difficult to accept the generality of Socrates' question as they often operate under what they call a code of ethics.
- The difficulty arises because much of what is placed within such a code is better understood as rules of professional conduct; including rules of etiquette, rules to regulate competition and so on.
- These codes do contain and invariably are based on ethical principles.
- However, their traditional formulation and composition often tends to distort understanding of the fundamental character of the ethical dimension of life.