

**ethical principles:  
some principles without theories  
and  
theories without principles**

**some major moral principles:**

1. **the principle of nonmaleficence:** *we ought to act in ways that do not cause needless harm or injury to others*

2. **the principle of beneficence:** *we ought to act in ways that promote the welfare of other people*

3. **the principle of utility (POU):** *we should act in such a way as to bring about the greatest benefit and the least harm.*

a1. total benefit: 100  
total harm: 40      total utility: 60

a2. total benefit: 60  
total harm: 0      total utility: 60

a3. total benefit: 80  
total harm: 10      total utility: 70

POU\*: *we should act in such a way as to always bring about maximal happiness.*

4. **principles of distributive justice:** *“similar cases ought to be treated in similar ways.”*

4.1 **the principle of equality:** *all benefits and burdens are to be distributed equally*

4.2 **the principle of need:** *those with greater needs ought to have those needs met*

4.3 **the principle of contribution:** *every person ought to get back that proportion of social goods that is the result of his or her productive labor.*

4.4 **the principle of effort:** *the degree of effort made an individual ought to be the determine the proportion of social goods received by that individual.*

5. **the principle of autonomy** *rational individuals should be permitted to be self-determining.*

some possible restrictions to the autonomy principle:

**the harm principle:** *it is okay to restrict an agent’s autonomy if it is necessary to prevent that the agent from harming others.*

**the principle of paternalism:**

weak version: *it's okay to restrict an agent's autonomy if it is necessary to prevent the agent from harming himself.*

strong version: *it's okay to restrict an agent's autonomy if it will benefit the agent more than than not violating his autonomy.*

**the principle of legal moralism:**

a: *it ought to be the case that there are legal penalties for immoral behavior.*

b. *it's okay to restrict an agent's autonomy if it will prevent the agent from performing a morally wrong action.*

**the welfare principle:** *it's justifiable to restrict individual autonomy if doing so will result in providing benefits to others.*

**theories without principles:**

2 things to mention here:

(1) The claim that any of these theories are operating without (or are reducible to a set of) principles is itself controversial.

(2) These theories come in a large variety, Munson only provides you with sketches of these theories. What you read is far from the whole story.

**virtue ethics:**

VE: An act token A is morally right if and only if in performing A, the agent acts as a virtuous person would act in the same situation.

**some examples of virtues:**

moral: benevolence, compassion, courage, honesty charity, sincerity, sympathy, respect, thoughtfulness, loyalty...

practical: rationality (intelligence), tenacity, capability, patience, prudence, skillfulness...

**a problem for virtue ethics:**

Doctor Hacker's alternatives:

a1. turn himself in to authorities, and resign as a doctor.

a2. not turn himself in, and allow Reba to break the story.

1. If VE is true, then neither a1 nor a2 is morally right.

2. It's not the case that neither a1 nor a2 is morally right.

3. Therefore it's not the case that VE is true. 1, 2, MT