

## **Applied Ethics**

Applied ethics is the term used to refer to how we apply our ethical system to the world and the situations that arise within that world. It includes morality as well as professional ethics such as medical ethics, business ethics etc.

Morality and personal ethics are what we will examine in detail in this session.

### **Introduction**

*Consider a situation where ethics and morality are important.*

*What would be the primary consideration in that situation?*

*What would your actions be in that situation?*

*Why?*

These first questions are designed to lead us into the discussion on applied ethics. What is a situation that requires ethical consideration? Why is that the case? How would we react to that situation, and why?

### **Situation 1**

### **Situation 2**

### **Situation 3**

### **Other ideas?**

Is there more to analysing a situation than our own ethical code? Should we be concerned with any other system of analysis? Is there a case for amorality (the absence of morality) when considering a situation?

These questions lie at the heart of applied ethics. They underpin the whole philosophy and allow us to actually make meaningful statements about morality.

*What is morality?*

*Can we always apply our own morality to a situation?*

### **Conclusion**

So, what is morality? How can we apply it to our everyday lives? These are the questions that have been posed during this session. There are no objective answers to them. Unlike ethics, which could be explained through psychology and biology, the application of that ethical system cannot. There are too many variables, many of which have been discussed.

*Is it worthwhile to discuss morality if it is ultimately subjective?*

*What does morality mean to you?*

Arthur Dobrin, a Humanist philosopher made these observations about ethics and how they are applied:

Do no harm to the earth, she is your mother.  
Being is more important than having.  
Never promote yourself at another's expense.  
Hold life sacred; treat it with reverence.  
Allow each person the dignity of his or her labor.  
Open your home to the wayfarer.  
Be ready to receive your deepest dreams;  
sometimes they are the speech of unblighted conscience.  
Always make restitutions to the ones you have harmed.  
Never think less of yourself than you are.  
Never think that you are more than another.