



scribe connect
TeamConnect

September
2016

FEATURE STORY

IN THIS ISSUE

How We Arrive at Wrong and Right

by Kasaan Hammon

When we think of dramatic moments in medicine, what probably comes to mind are moments of great ethical dilemma – whether and how to jump in to help a patient in distress, whether to end life-sustaining therapy or not, how to deliver bad news to a patient or family member, whether to try the riskier procedure with the potentially better outcome... Whether or not we will ultimately have to face these types of decisions is unknown. But it is often fascinating to hypothetically explore our own possible reactions in these situations, if only to understand ourselves, others, and our profession better.

Since its adoption in 1847, the AMA Code of Medical Ethics has defined and set the bar for the values to which physicians must commit themselves as members of the medical profession. But whether you are a physician trained to handle situations which constantly demand the highest ethical standards and emotional demands, or a patient or family member facing these decisions totally unprepared, there is a certain degree to which we are all in the same boat – how we arrive at the decisions we make.

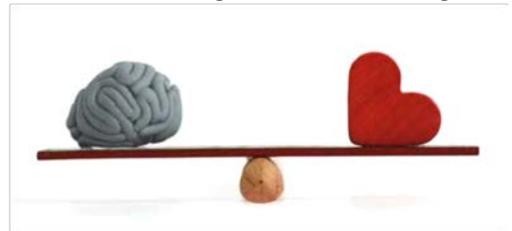
Ethics are the moral principles that govern a person's or group's behavior. Morality is defined as the extent to which an action is wrong or right, and it can be influenced by many cultural, social and individual factors. Numerous theoretical models explore how moral judgment plays into our decision-making.

Philosopher Hume proposed that moral judgments cannot be derived from reason but only from emotion. However, according to Joshua Greene's "dual process model," there are two systems that influence our moral judgments: an explicit, rational system and an implicit, emotional system. Greene's model proposes that making rational decisions takes longer when the dilemma is personal versus impersonal. Greene suggests this is because cognitive control has to override our immediate emotions. Other evidence suggests that decisions result from an integration of reason and emotion rather than the overriding of one or the other.¹

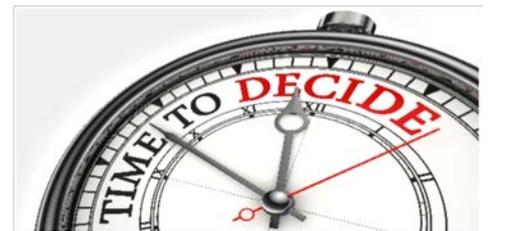
When observed on a broad scale, most people do not consistently take one moral stance. (Continued on Page 4)



Managers Team Meeting
ScribeConnect's management team met in Santa Monica in August. (Page 2)



What would YOU do?
Ethical scenarios to consider and discuss with peers. (Page 4)



Physicians' Top Ethical Dilemmas
See what over 10,000 physicians shared about key ethical issues. (Page 5)

Semi-Annual Managers Team Meeting

SANTA MONICA, CA – AUGUST 27, 2016

ScribeConnect’s management team met in Santa Monica, California for its semi-annual gathering to discuss client services, scribe training and growth. As the company rapidly expands to new sites in the Midwest and on the West Coast, hot topics were recruitment, training updates, and enhanced communication portals for clients and employees.

The team also looked forward to attending the ACEP 2016 conference in Las Vegas this October.



From left: Stephanie Ramirez (Site Manager, Inland Empire), Kasaan Hammon (Administration), Jon Dreiling (Site Manager, Santa Monica), Alec Nielsen (Director of Implementations, Nationwide), Sasha Mozelewski (Regional Manager, Southern Illinois), Melanie Melillo (Site Manager, Long Beach), Erich Rempel (CEO), Jacob Pascual (Site Manager, Los Angeles)



Welcome aboard our newest scribes!

Alex Y, Holly W, Prince M, Simran A (Los Angeles, CA);
Rebekah M, Sohaib H (Southern Illinois).

New Sites, New Scribe Opportunities!

We are rapidly expanding sites in Southern California and Southern Illinois. If you know qualified scribe candidates, send them to the employment portal at ScribeConnect.com.

Quality of the Month: Ethics

"Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do."

-Potter Stewart

"Obviously everyone wants to be successful, but I want to be looked back on as being very innovative, very trusted and ethical, and ultimately making a big difference in the world."

-Sergey Brin

"During my 87 years, I have witnessed a whole succession of technological revolutions. But none of them has done away with the need for character in the individual or the ability to think."

-Bernard M Baruch



SC Spotlight

Stephanie Ramirez Site Manager, Southern California

Stephanie has been part of the ScribeConnect family since 2015 and manages several sites in Southern California's Inland Empire including Fontana, Upland, Eastvale and West Covina. Providers and colleagues recognize Stephanie for her organization and commitment. As a manager, she makes communication a priority to make sure everyone is on the same page. She also values empathy and makes it a goal to be as flexible and understanding as possible on a day-to-day basis. Stephanie says of her team, "I love my scribes, and they make my job worthwhile."

Stephanie's favorite thing about working for ScribeConnect is meeting new people, learning new things about the people she works with, and learning more about medicine. She says, "I genuinely enjoy meeting new people. The moment I step into the office I never know who I'm going to meet or whose story I will be listening to. I also love interacting with my co-workers and learning new things about them." About the job of being a scribe, she tells us, "There is never a day that goes by that I don't learn some new term or medical diagnosis. I love that I'm constantly learning and growing."

According to Stephanie, the most challenging thing about her work is balancing being a peer and a manager. After being promoted internally, she found herself overseeing scribes she had been working alongside as a scribe. As she describes it, "Initially, it was difficult to find the right place and time to be a manager and a peer. What helped me transition immensely was my group of scribes." Stephanie appreciated the support and encouragement of her team as she transitioned into a management role. "They are all amazing and super hard workers which makes my job easier."

Stephanie also appreciates the bigger challenges and learning opportunities that come with the job. "An ethical dilemma we face on a daily basis working in an underserved community is providing quality healthcare to undocumented populations. It's very difficult to provide them with the medication and services they deserve and require when they don't have proper health insurance or are afraid to seek help due to their status. I feel the answer is educating the underserved, undocumented population of the many services offered so they are not left with only emergency routes."



Outside of medicine, Stephanie loves to eat. "My whole office knows all I talk about is food. If they ever need advice, I am the one to go to for the best restaurants. They know I love chocolate and milkshakes." Luckily, in addition to eating all that good food, Stephanie enjoys CrossFit and hiking with her dog Jax, a very energetic red Siberian husky puppy. At the top of her list, though, she says, "I love being around my friends and family. I have a huge Hispanic family that loves to have reunions frequently. My aunt loves to spoil us and always cooks the most amazing Mexican dishes!" Of course, she circled back around to food.

We asked Stephanie for some recommendations on entertainment that makes you think. "Two shows that have left me with interesting ethical questions are Code Black and House. Both are medicine-related shows about people who have to overcome obstacles to treat patients involving moral questions that they do not have time to fully think through." She likes that both shows are very fast-paced and show how physicians have to make quick judgments in order to save patients' lives.

Stephanie graduated from Pomona College in 2014 majoring in psychology. She is currently in the process of applying for medical school. She plans to be a family practice physician and looks forward to being a resource to her community.

Nicole Bell

Scribe, Fontana/Upland, California

Nicole joined ScribeConnect in 2016 and is appreciated for her organization, work ethic, and her ability to constantly communicate with providers to see what is needed. She loves the close-knit team dynamic of ScribeConnect and the constant pursuit of learning. Her favorite thing about working at a family practice is the relationships that she gets to develop with families. Nicole finds that the most challenging part of her job is keeping organized and completing all charts thoroughly and efficiently when they have a busy day. How does she keep up? Nicole tells us, "I keep a notepad open and jot down anything that I was unable to complete on a previous patient or chart. Then when I have downtime or at the end of the day, I go back to it and can ensure that the charts are done well. Keeping organized is essential."

We asked Nicole how she approaches tough situations or decisions. "I think at some point everyone must decide what set of values or standards they will use to determine right or wrong. For me, it is my faith that guides me through these dilemmas. I believe that it is important to understand different backgrounds and perspectives. You may not always agree, but it is important to always be respectful."

Nicole graduated from California Baptist University and is currently applying to medical school. When she's not working, she loves to work out and be active. Nicole shares, "I love being outdoors and spending time with my husband. I also love curling up on the couch with a good book." We asked Nicole what she'd recommend when you're in the mood for some good mind-stretching entertainment. Her pick: V for Vendetta.



How We Arrive at Wrong and Right (continued from page 1)

(cont.) Oftentimes, people are greatly influenced by contextual factors such as how personal the moral dilemma is, how difficult it is, and other emotions and circumstances. First and foremost, moral decision-making is dependent upon proper or improper perception of the facts. Factors which directly influence perception of the facts are the ability to comprehend details and weigh their relevance, physical circumstances such as pain or fatigue, or the distracting effect of various stimuli on what is perceived.

Decisions are also influenced by the anticipated outcome in terms of level of regret versus satisfaction.² According to one study, anticipated regret due to inaction may prompt behavior often expressed later as “the path not taken” or “if only I had done something” response.³ Once a decision is made, if regret is experienced due to the outcome, it will impact future decisions. People can often get consumed with examining the other options that were available.⁴ Regret is magnified when individuals revisit the other available options and imagine the satisfaction the other option would have brought them. The way someone contemplates regret versus satisfaction is also affected by the “reversibility factor,” meaning whether the decision is considered reversible once made.⁵

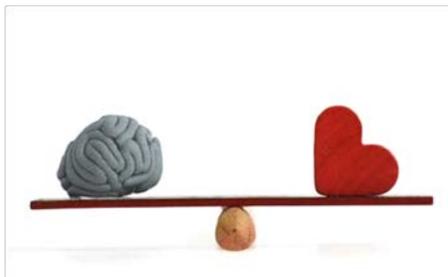
Relationships can play an integral part in how we exercise moral decision-making. These relationships include those with our family, friends, clients or patients, our workplace, our profession, our religious or cultural traditions, our fellow citizens, and our nation. Our rights and moral obligations derive largely from our defined role in these relationships. We may have different obligations to family, as in a parent’s moral duty to care for their child, than those obligations we have as a member within a professional group. In addition to our role in the relationship, the history of that relationship can influence our decisions.⁶

Relationships can also be used to inform our ethical decision-making. It has been shown to be valuable to discuss moral

questions with others. By doing so, we can get a better picture of the full range of considerations, draw on experiences other than our own, and improve the quality of our decision-making by learning from the reasoning processes others use. When discussing moral dilemmas with others, confidentiality and legal restrictions must be properly taken into account.

When next approaching an ethical dilemma, the decision-making process may be simply outlined in the following nine recommended steps (7): Recognize the moral dimension; identify the interested parties and their relationships; identify what values and principles are involved; sketch out options; weigh the benefits and burdens; look for analogous cases; discuss with relevant others; determine how this decision accords with legal and organizational rules; and ultimately, ask yourself if you are comfortable with the decision, i.e. can you live with it?

(1) Nina Wang, “How We Make Moral Decisions,” Huffington Post, May 2015; (2) Cindy Dietrich, “Decision Making: Factors that Influence Decision Making, Heuristics Used, and Decision Outcomes,” Inquiries Journal, 2010; (3) Abraham and Sheeran, 2003; (4) Sagi & Friedland, 2007; (5) Gilbert & Ebert, 2002; (6) Chris MacDonald, “Moral Decision-Making,” EthicsWeb, June 2002; (7) Chris MacDonald, “A Guide to Moral Decision-Making,” EthicsWeb, September 2010.



QUICK FIX: Common Errors (July 2016)

Were you able to find these errors in the HPI provided?

1. Contradictory statement in the first paragraph. States chest pain and then later denies.
2. Contradiction between first and second paragraph. No nausea in first paragraph. Admits nausea in the second.
3. 2nd paragraph: Patient doesn't mention the vomiting. It might appear the scribe missed it when the patient was giving their history, but instead they got it from EMS.

Answers courtesy of Alec Nielsen

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Inviting deeper discussion with peers...

Though we might not all have to face decisions like this, it's interesting to think about what you might do...

You are an ER physician.

A baby is being transferred through the ER from another department in the hospital. The baby is to be flown to a higher level of care facility. The baby loses its pulse and stops breathing (codes) while being transferred through the ER. The baby is in the care of the flight staff only. As the ER physician, do you help treat the baby? The baby is not your patient, and it would actually violate your physician's license if you were to step in.

Do you risk your license to help save this baby's life, or do you consider your long-term career and protect your license/credentials? How do you balance the immediate potential to save this one life with your future potential to help many others?

Consider the scenario above and discuss with your peers.

Brain Food

SURVEY

Physicians' Top Ethical Dilemmas

See what over 10,000 physicians shared about key ethical issues.

CASE STUDIES

Cases in Medical Ethics

Student-led discussions on applied medical ethics.

ENTERTAINMENT

Lorenzo's Oil

Movie classic about parents fighting by all means necessary to find a cure for their son.

What are you reading? Send us your recommendations, and we may include them in an upcoming "Brain Food."

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GROUP DISCUSSION



Defining Your Ethical Boundaries

1. What are the top 3 factors that influence your own day-to-day decision making?
2. What is a personal experience of yours that would influence your next steps if faced with an ethical dilemma?
3. Who are 3 people whom you consider "moral benchmarks" that you might turn to when faced with an ethical dilemma?
4. What do you imagine would be the hardest ethical dilemma to face as a physician?

What did you learn about yourself? Discuss your discoveries with your peers at your next site meeting.