

# Ethical Decision Making

Beth Garza

Enter your emotional intelligence scores in the graph below:

Self-awareness	Managing emotions	Motivating oneself	Empathy	Social Skill
38	20	26	36	20

Answer each of the following questions fully with at least 1 paragraph containing at least 5 sentences for each question. **Answer 1 question at a time. Do not skip ahead. Nurses are known for their integrity. The Gallup Poll has ranked nursing as the #1 most honest profession for 18 years in a row!**

Imagine that you are involved in a shipwreck situation. A ship has started to sink in the middle of the ocean. Eleven people have jumped into a lifeboat that has been designed for a maximum of ten people only, and the lifeboat is also starting to sink.

1. What should the passengers do?
  - a. The passengers need to try to calm themselves and each other. When one person openly panics that can lead to others around them to panic. After everyone is as calm as can be considering the situation, that is when they should try to think about other possible ways out of the situation. There are too many people in the small boat that was not intended for so many. This added to the general panic of the passengers can lead to a worse situation.
2. Do you throw one person overboard to save ten lives? – Discuss benefits and losses of the possible choices.
  - a. The passengers should try to think and discuss the possibilities of other options. Ships are usually equipped with multiple lifeboats to accommodate as many souls as possible during a situation such as this. The people should keep trying to maintain a calm demeanor. This is because trying to come up with plausible solutions during a life and death situation while panicking is not going to end with a good resolution.
3. Discuss your thoughts and arguments as if you were the one chosen to be thrown overboard.
  - a. I would like to believe that I would be totally okay with being chosen to be thrown off. I cannot swim anyways, so I would be afraid to be on the little boat the whole time. I would not care too much about being chosen to be thrown off. I am chunky anyways, so I would have to agree with the consensus of the group.
4. Discuss your thoughts as if you were the one to decide who will be thrown overboard; and you cannot volunteer yourself, you must pick someone, it is solely your decision.
  - a. If I had to be the one to choose who would have to be thrown off the boat to save others, then I would try to weigh the benefits. I usually make a pro/con list with every big decision I make. This would help me to decide who to send to their death. Nobody would want to be in that situation. So making a list about who would benefit the crowd and who would hurt the crowd of people would be a good way to approach the decision.
5. Or do you stick to the principle of "do not kill", which means that everybody will drown?
  - a. I would not pick that choice because it would kind of be pointless with so many lives lost. I would rather just jump off the little boat myself than to have everyone die. Not because I'm a great person, but because I'm a terrible person to be around when I am annoyed. I do not like direct sunlight, crowded areas, or the sea. All of this would make me so miserable and I would complain the whole time and that would annoy everyone. They all might want to either throw me off anyways or jump to their own demise just to leave the situation.

Now consider a slightly different situation where lives are at stake. There is a global pandemic. This is still life and death scenario.

1. What are the benefits or needs of staying home?
  - a. The benefits of staying home are for the greater good. Leaving the house if should only be for essentials. If staying home would benefit others, then it just needs to be done. There is not another

# Ethical Decision Making

## Beth Garza

argument. If going out for pleasure or boredom happens, then it puts everyone else at risk. This would essentially be like sending people to their death.

2. What are the benefits or needs of going out?
  - a. The needs would be food and supplies. The benefit would be for the ones that need to food or supplies. And when going out; it should be done quickly and cautiously. There should not be any stops along the way that are not needed. There also should be a well thought out plan to utilize the time needed for the tasks. That will allow for less trips needed outside.
3. You live with your family. Food supplies are exhausted, and water is contaminated, it is not suitable for drinking. There is no protective equipment, who goes for supplies? Choose only 1 family member and it cannot be you; you cannot volunteer.
  - a. I would pick the more reliable person to go. The person that goes needs to be tough, quick, and essential. If it were my immediate family, then I would not ever be an option because I always forget a lot of things when going shopping. This makes me have to go back to the stores that I was just at. The person that has to go needs to be someone that goes shopping more often and is familiar to the shops and areas.
4. The family member that went for supplies has returned but has also been exposed to the deadly pandemic. Do you allow them back in the house? If so, all will die from exposure.
  - a. In my head I sent my husband out to get supplies. We have 3 small children so I would let him in and then let us all die. It would not matter to me after that. I think that would be the best option because we would all die eventually. Why leave our deaths up to the suspense? If he dies, then I would have to be the one to go out and get supplies. I am too lazy for that. I barely learned how to pump gas and I have never had to go grocery shopping alone. I would not know where to begin. I also would have to take care of the kids by myself and I am not about that life. That is not my thing. My husband is the one that cooks, cleans, tends to the kids, and takes care of me.
5. The family has decided to have a closed meeting to decide their fate. While left outside, what are the thoughts of the family member that gathered the supplies.
  - a. My husband would know without a doubt what the decision would be. There would not need to be a long conversation. My kids cannot talk yet. It would just be me deciding his fate and he knows I cannot manage myself and the kids without him. There would not be any real thoughts about this scenario. I would just open the door and let him in.
6. While you were waiting for the return of the family member (it took several days), you had a little cabin fever and “needed” to get out of the house. So, you snuck out of the house and went to a party in the middle of the night and you were successful in staying undetected coming back in. What are your thoughts as you are sitting in this meeting?
  - a. I do not understand this question. I really do not understand what the question is asking. I am sorry I cannot answer it. But I would not have had cabin fever that soon. I do not like being outside. My regular life is like social distancing because I do not have friends or family besides my husband and kids. Like, I would not have anywhere to sneak out to.
7. You realize that you can keep silent about sneaking out and push to allow the family member back in, no one will ever know; you can literally take this secret to the grave. What are your thoughts? What are your fears or concerns? What are your acknowledgements?
  - a. My thoughts would be that of acceptance of death, hopefully. I would be able to die surrounded by my whole family and friends my husband and kids. I also would not have to keep the secret from anyone. I tell my husband everything. And since he was the one that went out and got exposed, then we would have even more in common. And the kids would not even understand if I were to tell them anything at all. They still cannot have conversations and they really do not understand anything that is going on.