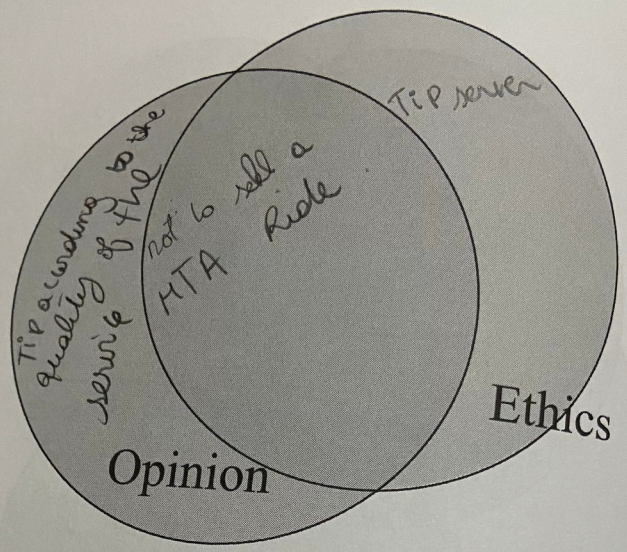
## Activity #12

### What Kind of Problem Is This?

For each of the following situations, identify how the action might be viewed within the various decision-making spheres (ethics, law, economics, self-interest, religion, opinion). State the origin of the problem in each case.

1. A man fed expired parking meters in town. When he did so, he saved the owners of the cars from getting parking tickets. It turned out to be against the law to feed people's meters unless they had given permission. The man was fined for his actions. The intention of the man comes from a good place. Unfortunately, it's the law, and he didn't know. (action is law)
2. A newspaper ran a front page photo of a family grieving over their child's body. The boy had just drowned in a local lake. The picture was used by newspapers throughout the nation because of the intense visual grief. In newspaper language it was "a hellova picture." Although the picture was taken in public, the family considered it a very private moment. opinion. This case is very hard to categorize. However, I do believe that it can be related to opinion as two parties are involved and they have different perspective.
3. The local public high school offered a course in meditation. However, the school did not allow a Christian student group to meet for daily public prayers on campus. the action here is purely religious because it does not allow a christian group meet.
4. An infant was willingly placed by her parents in temporary foster care. Although they expected her to be in foster care for no more than a few months, it was five years before they were able to take her back. At that point, they petitioned the court to return the child to their custody. The foster parents said that they wanted to adopt the child and argued that the child had now bonded with them. The court returned the child to her biological parents. this is an intresting case. However I do believe that it is about self-intrest because the foster parents knew that the child was supposed to stay just for a few months. They use bonding with the child as an excuse.

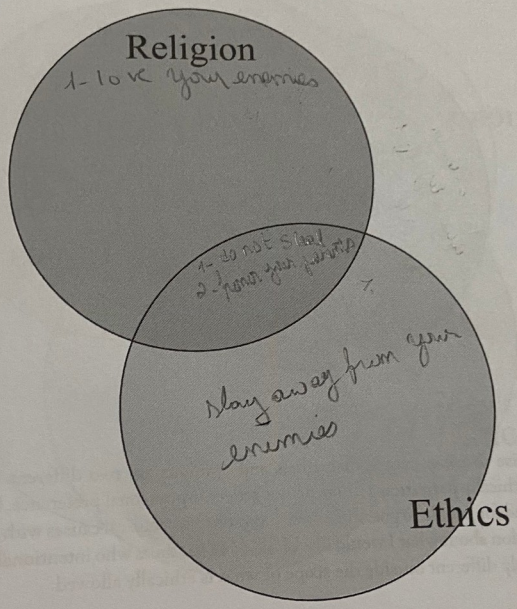



It is a surprise to some people that ethics and opinions are two different decision-making spheres. Some ethically permitted actions do not reflect my personal preference. For example, it is ethically permitted for people to give their time and money to political causes with which I disagree. My personal opinion about what I would like to see done to adults who intentionally hurt children's feelings is definitely different outside the scope of what is ethically allowed.

1. Here is an example of a personal opinion that is outside of the ethics sphere:
2. Here is an example of something that is within the ethics sphere that is independent of my personal opinion:
3. Here is an example where my personal opinion and ethics coincide:

**ation:** Come up with an opinion that you hold that is unethical. Come up with an example of n that is ethical, but which you personally would choose not to do.

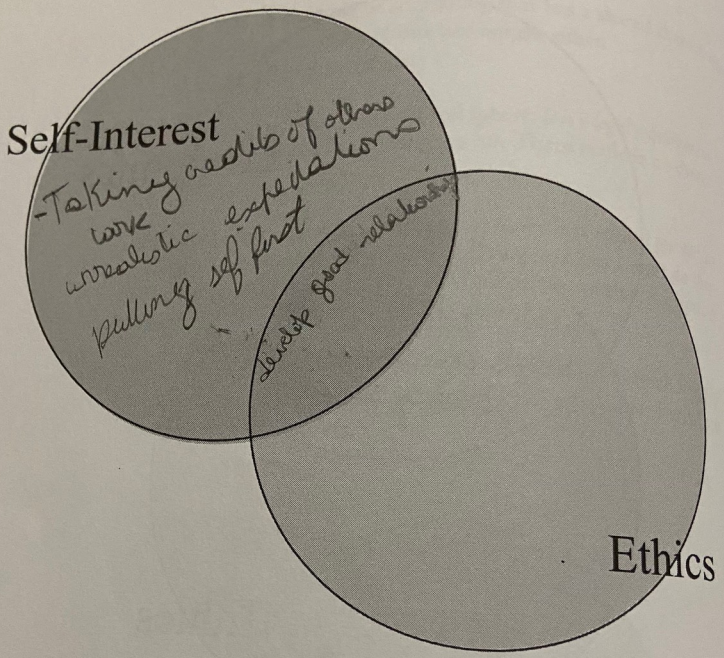
p. **Ethics & Religion**




Some people think that ethics is the same as religion. Not so. Some religious rules are ethical and some are not. For example, many religions command: Do not murder. But, religions also provide rules that have nothing to do with treatment of others. For example, a religion may require devotees to go to church every week.

1. This action is religious, but is outside of the ethics sphere:
2. This action is ethical, but is not addressed by a particular [illegible]ion:
3. This action follows religious rules and is [illegible]l as wel[illegible]

C. Ethics & Self-Interest

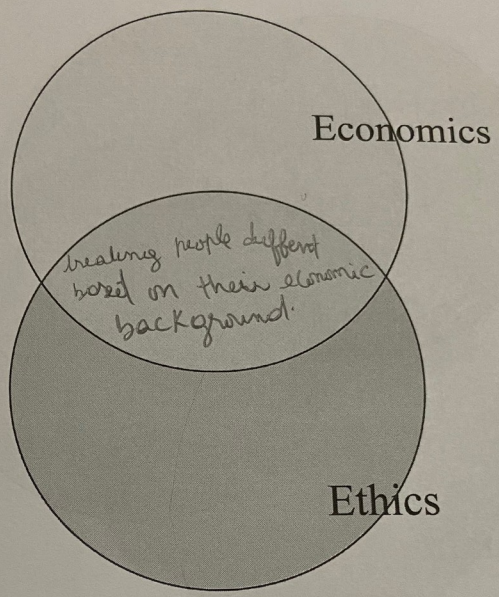



Ethics and one's own self-interest are not contradictory. It is possible to do something that is in one's self-interest (also called a prudential choice) and not cause unjustified harm.

1. This meets my self-interest and has no ethical impact:
2. This is an ethical choice in which my self-interest is not involved:
3. Here is a choice that is both ethical and prudential:

**Variation:** A choice that is in your self-interest

**B. Ethics & Economics**




1. This is an action that is in my economic interest, but does not impinge on ethics:
2. This is an action that is an ethical choice, but that has no economic consequence:
3. This is an action that has both ethical and economic implications:

**Variation:** Think of a choice that is economically sound but unethical; think of a choice that is ethically sound but not the best, economically speaking.

## Activity #11

### Practice with Decision-Making Spheres

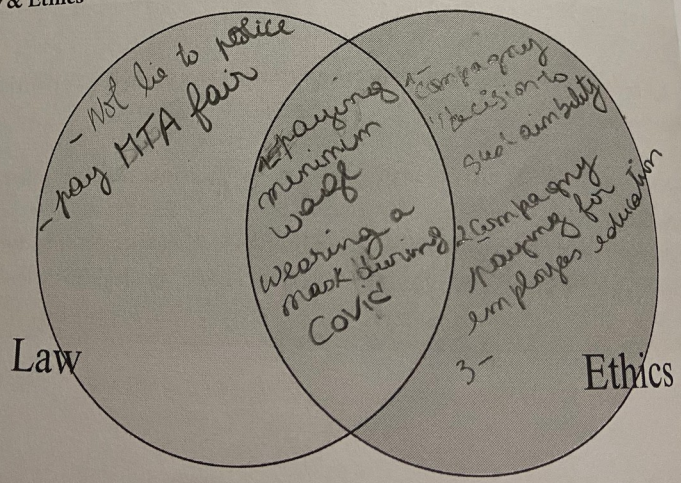
For each circle combination, find an example of something that has a shared characteristic in both circles and examples that have characteristics of one but not the other.
Here is an example of how to complete this exercise:

1. An action in the legal sphere but not within the ethical sphere: *It is a legal requirement that I have up-to-date car registration when driving my car.* There really is no direct connection to ethics here.

2. Action in the ethical sphere but not within the legal sphere: *It is ethical for me to volunteer my time and effort to help a community cause; no law says that I must do this.* Notice that something "not being in the legal sphere" does not mean that the action is against the law (illegal).

3. An action that is in the intersection of the legal and ethical spheres: It is both legally and ethically required that I report to authorities what I have seen when I witness a crime that causes serious harm to others.

**A. Law & Ethics**




1. This is a legal action that is outside of the ethics sphere:
2. This is an ethical action that is not addressed by law:
3. This is an action that is