

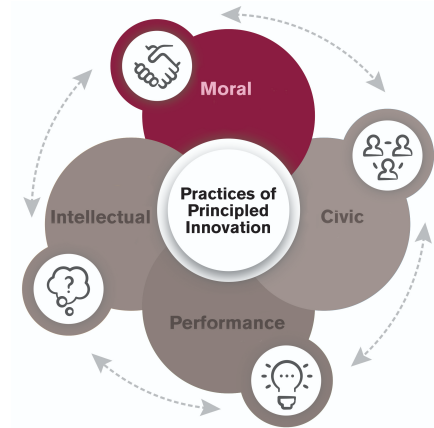
Moral Imagination

Introduction

What is it?

Media and morals

Moral dilemmas are situations in which two or more moral values are in conflict with each other, and the nature of the decision we must make forces us to abandon one or more of our values. Moral imagination allows us to think about the situation from multiple perspectives and make a decision that is both ethical and effective.



Why use it?

Books, television, movies, and news stories are full of dilemmas and challenges that can be used as a catalyst for discussions around moral and ethical decision making. Use this activity to engage moral imagination and begin to explore how our decisions impact others.

What you need:



2-4 hours total (including watching a tv show, movie, or news program)

- The attached instructions
- 3 or more people
- An age appropriate television show, movie, or news story (identify shows ahead of time, or ask students to choose their favorite)
- Something to write with
- Imagination

Moral Imagination

Instructions

Step 1: Immerse

Ask your students or team members to spend an evening watching a television show, a movie or a news program and then reflect and write out the following questions:

- What are the difficult choices the characters needed to make during the story?
- What are the moral values that were in conflict for the character (e.g. honesty and compassion, justice and humility, etc.)?
- What assumptions or judgments did the characters make?
- How did they listen and remain open to all perspectives?
- How could biases or perspectives influence the approach taken and decisions made?
- How could they have recognized and acknowledged what others were experiencing, thinking, and feeling?
- What character assets did they use to navigate their decision?
- How did their decisions affect others and their environments?

Step 2: Reflect

Work in pairs or in small groups. Invite everyone to share about the show they watched and their observations about dilemmas, values, and character assets then have a discussion about the following questions:

- Did you agree or disagree with the way the characters navigated their choices? Why or why not?
- What values did the character use to navigate their decisions?
- Did the characters have other options? What could they have done differently? How do you think the result would have been different?
- What factors could have influenced the decisions the characters made? Was this the right decision for the characters?

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- What are reasons a decision might be a fit for one person and not for another?
- Have you ever been in a similar situation as the characters in the show? How did you make your decision? Was it the right decision for you? What did you learn from the experience?

Step 3: Act

Invite everyone to rewrite the storyline of the show and imagine what would have happened if the character made a different choice.

- How would it have been different?
- What could have happened?
- What values would they use to guide their decision?
- How might the character's life have been different if they made the different decision?
- What are the intended and unintended consequences of the decisions and actions of the characters?
- Would things have changed for others who would have been affected by the decision?
- How does this activity apply to your own life?
- How might you use your decision making practice to impact the culture of your community or school?

