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Ethics in Nursing

Chapter Seven

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Nursing 50

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Topics for today:

- Values, morals, laws & ethics
- Key concepts in ethics
- Ethical systems
- Application of ethical theories

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Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

Values:

- ideals or concepts that give meaning to an individual's life
- derived from societal norms, religion and family orientation
- serve as framework for making decisions & taking action in daily life
- change as life situations change, as person ages and when situations cause values conflicts

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### Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

**Morals**

- fundamental standards of right and wrong that an individual learns and internalizes, usually in early childhood
- based on religious *beliefs*, but society plays an important part in the development
- behavior* is in accordance with a group norm, customs or traditions
- valued behaviors and beliefs

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### Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

**Laws:**

- rules of social conduct made by humans to protect society
- based on fairness and justice
- to preserve the species & promote peaceful and productive interactions between individuals or groups by protecting rights
- enforceable by some type of police force
- applied equally to all persons

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### Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

**Ethics:**

- declarations of what is right or wrong and of 'what ought to be'
- usually presented as systems of value behaviors and beliefs
- serve the purpose of governing conduct to ensure the protection of an individual's rights
- exist on several levels- individual or small group to entire society
- no enforcement for violation of ethics

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### Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

Code of Ethics:

- written list of professional values and standards of conduct
- framework for decision making for profession

Ethical Dilemma:

- situation that requires an individual to make a choice between two equally unfavorable alternatives
- no simple right or wrong answer



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### Key Concepts in Ethics

1. *Autonomy*- right to self determination, independence and freedom (eg. make own decisions)
2. *Justice*- obligation to be fair to *all* people: race, marital status, medical diagnosis, social standing, religious belief, sexual preference, etc.
3. *Fidelity*- obligation of an individual to be faithful to commitments made to self and others. (Accountability!)

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### Key Concepts in Ethics

4. *Beneficence*- primary goal of health care is 'doing good' for clients
5. *Nonmaleficence*- 'do no harm' to clients, intentionally or unintentionally
6. *Veracity*- principle of truthfulness. Healthcare worker *must* tell truth and not mislead intentionally

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### Key Concepts in Ethics

7. *Standard of Best Interest*- decision made about a client's healthcare when they are unable to make the informed decision themselves(healthcare worker and family together)

DPOAHC- durable power of attorney for health care- legally designated person to make decisions for an individual

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### Key Concepts in Ethics

8. *Obligations*- demands made on an individual, a profession, a society or a government to fulfill and honor the rights of others

-legal: formal statements of law and are enforceable under the law

-moral: based on moral or ethical principles, but are not enforceable by law

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### Key Concepts in Ethics

9. *Rights*- something owed to an individual according to just claims, legal guarantees, or moral and ethical principles

-welfare: (aka legal) based on legal entitlements to some good or benefit

-ethical: (aka moral) based on moral or ethical principles

-option: based on fundamental belief in the dignity and freedom of humans

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### Ethical Systems

Utilitarianism

- called 'teleology' or situational ethics
- ethical system of utility
- defines good as happiness or pleasure
  - \*doing the greatest good for the greatest number
  - \*the end justifies the means

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### Ethical Systems

Deontology

- based on moral rules and unchanging principles
- duty-based ethics- standards exist for the ethical choices and judgments are fixed and do not change when the situation changes
- useful in making ethical decisions in healthcare because it holds that an ethical judgment based on principles will be the same in a variety of similar situations regardless of time, location, or individuals involved

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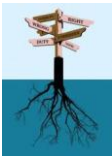
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### Application of Ethical Theories

Nursing Code of Ethics

- the ethical principles that govern nursing, and offer guidance to the individual practitioner in making decisions



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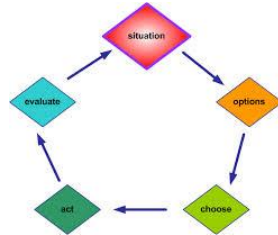
## Ethical Decision-Making

Goal: to determine right and wrong in situations where clear demarcations are not readily apparent

- \*collect, analyze and interpret data
- \*state the dilemma
- \*consider the choices
- \*analyze the advantage & disadvantage of each course of action
- \* make the decision & act on it



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See you next class.....

Please do your readings & bring thoughtful questions!

