### The Community/Action Lens Conceptual Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>World of Reason</th>
<th>World of Emotion</th>
<th>World of Spirit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Question</strong></td>
<td>What is a fair system?</td>
<td>What is appropriate subordination of own rights to that of the group?</td>
<td>What is my place in web of life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory</strong></td>
<td>Justice Ethics/ Communitarianism</td>
<td>Social Appraisal</td>
<td>Sacred Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author</strong></td>
<td>Rawls</td>
<td>Fischer</td>
<td>Fuller</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Tools and Practices** | Tradition  
Group Activities                                                     | Ability to evaluate and respond to emotional climate of group                      | Commitment to Justice, Service                                                  |
| **Key Phrase** | I am part of a tradition                                                         | I am part of the group                                                           | I am part of all that is                                                      |
| **Goal**       | Set of processes to assure a just/fair community                                | Correct evaluation of event based on group response                              | Awareness of place in sacred community                                          |
| **Gifts**      | Participation in economic ecosystem                                              | Connection to persons in community                                               | Awe of all that is; generosity, forgiveness; balance independence and interdependence. |
| **Challenges** | Balance between equal opportunity and equal outcome; Respect of individual rights.| Finding appropriate emotional response to event                                  | Exclusiveness                                                                  |
| **Risk**       | Authoritarian                                                                    | Entrainment                                                                      | Over-identification with group                                                 |
| **Hubris**     | Exempt                                                                          | I don't have to evaluate                                                         | I have the “truth”                                                            |
| **Vice**       | Ambition                                                                        | Group think                                                                      | Elitism                                                                       |
| **Crisis**     | Separation                                                                       | Guilt and Shame                                                                  | Lack of Meaning Isolation                                                      |

Chapter. 9 Pg. 250
Let Justice
flow like water
and Integrity
like an unfailing stream.

The Prophet Amos

Chapter 9

Community/Action Lens
Relationship Focused Ethics

The third ethical lens calls us back to the Deontological tradition where we look at the decision maker’s rights and responsibilities. However, the question moves now from a consideration of the individual to seeing how that individual fits into the community and the responsibilities that we all have for assuring that the community and the supporting institutions are healthy. Drawing upon the idealist traditions of Plato, St. Augustine, and Luther, and Kant, the theorist on the edge of the postmodern world who began to moves us toward a consideration of the community through a
moderation of individual rights is John Rawls (1921-2002). Rawls places himself in the tradition of those who consider the social contract as foundational for our community. However, he critiques the Hobbesian notion that we subject ourselves to the community because of a self-serving desire for security. Hobbes seems to argue that “if a citizen in a relatively secure state desires to commit an illegal act and is confident that he can avoid detection” there is no reason for him either ethically or morally to refrain from acting on that desire. Rawls seems to argue that meeting our agreements should not depend on our particular situation. The core of Rawls’ theory is twofold. First, we should be committed to social agreements regardless of our particular position in the community. This means that we can make commitments which will last in perpetuity, beyond our own particular interest. Second, our ignorance about the intricacies of a particular rule should not govern whether we follow them. Rather, as we learn more about our responsibilities to the community, our commitment to the underlying social contract will grow.

Working from the central concept of ethics as finding the correct process by which decisions should be made, the community-action lens invites each of us consider what social agreements we would make if we didn't know who we were in the community and wanted to assure fundamental fairness fo all persons. Rawls invites us to move to an impersonal position as an ideal observer where we make decisions without knowing anything about ourselves or others in the community. In that role, we are also invited to consider whether the agreements we make would satisfy us if we found ourselves as the least advantaged in the community. Rawls thus anticipates the postmodern approach to ethics where the process by which the rules of the community are decided is more important than the actual rules themselves. Rawls anticipates that the rules themselves may change but asserts that the process will help us avoid acting only out of self-interest.

As we use the tools of the community-action template, we are invited to use our mind and the tools of reason how we fit into our community, what relationships are important to sustain. The sticking point for many is that
whatever process they agree to must be followed by all persons. Thus, Rawls invites us to consider the whole community and in particular the claims of those who are least advantaged as we make choices about how best to live.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BASED THEORIES**

*(Community/Action Framework)*

**Definition:** An act is ethical if it supports a framework for continuous systemic ethical improvement for both the organization and the institutions supporting it.

**Questions for determining right action:**

- How does the process which is used to implement the decision assure that all stakeholders are considered and heard in the decision?
- How does this decision support my responsibility for assuring that the community and its institutions are healthy and effective?
- How does this decision enhance the achievement of the organization's goals, responsibilities, and values?
- How does this decision enhance the relationship of my organization to the community at large?

**Values which flow from these theories:**

- *Fair treatment:* Persons who are similar to each other in the relevant respects should be treated similarly; persons who differ in some respect relevant to the job they perform should be treated differently in
proportion to the difference between them.

- **Fair administration of rules**: Rules should be administered consistently, fairly, and impartially.

- **Fair compensation**: Individuals should be compensated for the cost of their injuries by the party that is responsible for those injuries.

- **Fair blame**: Individuals should not be held responsible for matters over which they have no control.

- **Due process**: The individual has a right to a fair and impartial hearing when he or she believes that personal rights are being violated.

**Nuances of theories of morality.**

While Rawls calls us to consider what an ideal observer would do in a given situation, Robert Bellah and William Frederick invite us to personalize the conversation. Rather than taking position which is removed from the actual hustle and bustle of a real world, those who are part of the communitarian movement invite us to consider not just our individual acts but how those acts support a healthy community and vibrant institutions.

Bellah and Frederick both use the concept of a moral ecology to call us to greater responsibility for the community. Ecology, in sociological terms, is the study of the relationships and adjustments of humans to their geographical and social environments. For Bellah, moral ecology is the notion that we must understand that “the individual is realized only through community” so we need to consider how to build and maintain health institutions which are the matrix from which healthy character is formed. Frederick reminds us that corporations need to attend to those life-conserving values which both create and sustain human collective life. The moral lens invites us to see ourselves as part of an ongoing web of life where our business systems and institutions support the community.
The crucible of spirituality

Those who are committed to justice for all find themselves part of this tradition. At some point we realize that all of humanity is profoundly connected and we are each part of all that is. At that point the differences begin to dissolve and we understand that if our brother or sister hurts, we hurt as well. The difference between dependence and interdependence is subtle. Those who embrace interdependence know that we all need each other. At the same time, we each are responsible for assuring that we carry out our own part of the bargain as well.

One of the most profound images of the 20th century was the picture from outer space of the blue globe we call our home. No boundaries were present, no nations were seen – we were all one. As the environmental changes of one continent affect the environment of another, we begin to realize how we are all profoundly connected. As we then commit ourselves to work for others, for the good of the whole, we can stand in awe of our wonderful life together. In the process we can learn the gifts of generosity and forgiveness.

Using the Relationship Template

John Rawls invites us to consider what processes and procedures were would put into place in our community if we did not know who we were or what our role in the community would be. Rawls is concerned with ethics as fundamental fairness, a call to justice in distribution of the burdens and benefits of the community. Rawls also invites into a process which he calls “reflective equilibrium” where we constantly balance the needs of individuals against the needs of others in the community. In the process he invites us to consider those who are least advantaged, those without access to power and privilege.

At the end of any analytical process, we have to explain why a particular option was chosen and why others were not. The following process helps us work through each of the options. As we become more skilled, the analysis
will become easier and we can begin to identify the core values which, for us, trump other competing values. However, even when we think we know the answer, the process can help clarify our thoughts.

I. Step 1: Be Attentive

A. Identify the ethical actor.

Imagine that you find yourself the subject of a science-fiction movie. You are hovering in space, not connected to your body and looking down at a business setting. You have a vague notion that you know something about that setting, a situation where people are scurrying around trying to solve some difficult problems. You also have a sense that you might be one of those persons—but you don’t know which one. You know that you are looking at a business, an organization which manufactures something to sell to others or which provides services for people. You know that in this business people sometimes get along and sometimes they fuss with each other. You have a sense that if you cooperate with each other you might be able to get good results. You know that people measure success by how much money they make, and so you know something about economic theory. Basically, you know enough about this situation to make some intelligent guesses about how people will respond to the answers chosen.

As you watch, you notice that people don’t particularly care about what other people do, they are mutually disinterested. If someone says they want to get ahead in an organization, people will support them in that decision. If another person wants to slow down a bit to care for their family, people will generally support that decision as well. People tend to be rational, in that they...
want more of the basic goods of life and are willing to do what is required to get more of the good things.7

You also notice that they cooperate, that they seem not to be envious, preferring to gain in primary goods even if others gain more than they do.8 You aren’t exactly sure about this last insight. You remember reading somewhere that people who are envious prefer that no-one get a particular good if they can’t have it.9 You have seen Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner in War of the Roses and know that in divorces people will go to the death swinging on a chandelier, rather than share their resources. You have also watched business people take each other down rather than amicably divide the resources after dissolving a partnership or corporation.

However, you do know that you have to make a decision that will affect all of these people – and you don’t know who you are. How will you make a decision that you will be willing to embrace even if you are the CEO or the groundskeeper?

The above scenario plays out the notion of being an “ideal observer” who operates behind a “veil of ignorance.” Rawls asserted that if we focus only on our own self interest, we in fact do not attend to the needs of the community as a whole. Going behind the veil of ignorance is difficult. However, if we try to see the world from the point of view of others, we can make decisions which move toward a systemic solution rather than just individual happiness.

B. Determine the stakeholders.

The next step is to identify the constituents – the people who will be affected by the decision. Building on the notion of being behind the veil of ignorance, Rawls next invites us to consider which constituent is the least advantaged in the situation. In our community we have power from three sources: access to autonomy, knowledge, and economic resources. As we determine what social and economic inequalities are present, we can look at
the situation to determine who has an inequality in voice and inequality in access to resources which results in inequality of power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders – from most to least power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicians: with whom the PPO has employment contracts to provide services;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The committee which has to make the decision;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPO: with whom the ethics committee has a contract to act in the best interest of the PPO;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens of the state: with whom the PPO has a social contract to follow the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients: with whom the PPO has contracts to provide health care who may not know the law and who need to be treated for their illness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those persons who have autonomy feel free to speak up and have their voices heard. They believe that they are independent actors and thus can, in some measure, control their destiny. To the degree that people are marginalized or silenced, either because they do not believe that they have a right to speak or because they are not invited to the table, they will lack autonomy.

Access to resources include both knowledge and money. As a person knows what resources are available, what systems are in place to access the help, and how to negotiate the various systems of our community, they have a great deal of power. People who have knowledge are better able to gain for themselves the goods which are important to them. Economic resources clearly open doors. The more economic resources we have the more freedom we have to make different choices and have flexibility in our lives.

People who do not have autonomy or resources lack power. A core touchstone for a just act is how well it cares for those without power. A key concern for ethics is assuring that each of us do not abuse our economic or personal power as we carry out our work. Images of firemen hosing innocent children rather than allowing schools to be integrated in accordance with the law seared the minds of many and fueled the Civil Rights Movement. While we know that the work of police officers is dangerous, we cringe when we hear of an officer who used his brute power rather than a search warrant to intimidate a person into a search of his premises.

C. *Attend to the context.* Rawls invites us to evaluate the constituents in
light of each person’s access to knowledge, resources and power. We are asked to determine who is the least advantaged in a situation and then work our analysis from there. We have to be careful because the least advantaged person may not be immediately obvious. One Director of Human Resources related a conundrum where a woman came to him and wanted to report an incident of sexual harassment. The woman asked that the conversation be confidential; the HR person knew that he had an obligation to the company to report sexual harassment and discipline the person who was responsible. At first blush the woman appeared to be the least advantaged. However, by requesting that the HR exec violate the company rules and put the company at risk in exchange for the information, she actually was wielding considerable power and the HR exec was the least advantaged – do you help the victim or put the company at risk. Thus as we consider the context in which the decision has to be made, we need to attend to the resources available to all persons and the nuances of power which attend the situation.

II. *Step 2: Be Intelligent*

A. *Pinpoint the Issue.* What is the central problem which must be resolved? As we look at the problem, Rawls wants us to consider the systemic issues as well as the individual issues. We need to attend to processes which create or perpetuate injustice. Rawls asserts that if we reach procedural fairness then we will have substantive fairness.

B. *Explore the values in conflict.*
Values in conflict:
The two values in conflict are autonomy and predictability or safety. Patients have been told that their relationship with the doctor is confidential, thus we want to assure that we maintain the privacy of our patients. The patient-physician privilege is important to the medical profession to assure that the physician gets full information prior to beginning treatment. On the other hand we want to assure that a highly infectious disease does not spread further. Our commitment to the community requires that we do all we can to minimize the spread of disease.

Etched deep into the American consciousness is the notion that as individuals do well, the community will prosper. However, as Robert Bellah reminds us as he gives a long description of the game of Monopoly, an unrestrained market economy leads to those with power being able to leverage that power into more resources and more power. As Bellah notes “[a] game that begins with equality of resources among all players ends with only one winner and the rest dispossessed.”

Thus, given the rules of the economic game, those who are rich get richer and those who are not suffer. While the “trickle-down” economic theories sound good, in practice they don’t work. We are used to considering our economic gains and losses as individual rather than seeing them as part of the fabric of the whole. Thus, this lens invites us to consider the rights and responsibilities of individuals in light of the claims of the community and its institutions. When should we subordinate our own desires and goals in order to assure that the community as a whole may flourish?

C. Identify options for action.

Options for action:
1. Tell the patient about the reporting requirement before doing the blood work.
2. Do not tell the patient about the reporting requirements before doing the blood work.

Again, the ethical agent has the opportunity to determine an array of options. As you choose, look for options which address the systems in place and which bring into focus the tension between supporting a healthy community and institutions and the individuals.
III. Step 3: Be Responsible

A. Hone critical thinking skills: determine the least advantaged and determine how the interests of the least advantaged can be balanced against those of the advantaged.

Rawls moves away from rigidly determining the principles we are supposed to follow or calculating happiness as a guide for what we should do. Rather, Rawls suggests that in complex situations we need to balance among the competing claims of the constituents. He advocates using a process which he calls “reflective equilibrium.” After we have considered the situation from behind the veil of ignorance, we identify principles which will lead to justice. As we actually test those principles against the concrete situation, do just results emerge. When we deliberate about what to do, what tweaking needs to be made either in pruning or stretching as the situation requires or change the stipulations about the original positions. Rawls advocates a “back and forth” method of testing, in which “eventually we shall find a description of the initial situation that both expresses reasonable conditions and yields principles which match our considered judgments duly pruned and adjusted.”

As we practice “reflective equilibrium” we become more skilled at both attending to situations where the least advantaged have not been considered and noticing nuances in the context which before were not seen. Leaders in our community are expected to exercise discretion as they carry out their responsibilities. Discretion carries with it the expectation that we will be prudent in our decisions and carefully consider the implications of action. This critical thinking skill enables us to make better decisions.
B.  **Apply the ethical content:**

Rawls has a three step process which we can use to evaluate our options.

1.  **First Question: What are basic liberties**

Rawls writes from the tradition of democracy and so is interested in assuring that his system of ethics upholds the basic principles of a free, self-determining society. The first task is to define what basic liberties all persons should have because they are part of our community. As Rawls asserts:

> Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.¹³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic liberties:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A primary liberty is the right to notice, to having information about one's life from which one can make deliberate choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Health care itself is not a basic liberty. Different amounts of health care are given to people based on ability to pay and other factors. As a community we could not afford to give each person exactly the same amount of health care, and so this benefit is distributed unequally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This statement is much more narrow than it first appears. The notions is that everyone has exactly the same access to rights that everyone else has. When we think of a list of rights, we tend to think of rights to food, shelter, education. But no-one has the same amount of any of these things. We don’t even have access to the same amount of air: those who live high in the mountains don’t have much oxygen; those who live in industrial settings have lots of pollution in their air.

The rights that all of us have the same amount of access to are procedural rights. Thus, we have a right to participation. When Rawls talks about a “total system of equal basic liberties” he invites us to assure that the process by which decisions are made include everyone. As we design processes for determining what action will be taken, actions which will affect the well
being of our constituents, we need to assure that people have a right to voice and vote. We need to remember that the right to participate is not a right to a veto. Rather, it is a right to notice, to comment and to meaningful voice.

In order for an option to be ethical, it must include a process of comment. If the option does not include a meaningful process for assuring that all have a voice in the decision, the agent can include the process. Adding the process may make a decision which looks unethical, ethical as all embrace that particular possibility.

2. **Second Question: Does this option meet the requirements of the “just savings principle.”**

We are able to meet all of our needs in the immediate time, but meeting those needs and desires may result in a squandering of our resources. When we are viewing the problem from the position of the ideal observer, we don’t know what generation we are part of. We may be our own children or grandchildren.

The Western states are in the middle of a vigorous conversation about the right use of water. As communities in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona grow, a fierce battle rages for who is going to get what water. The mantra of growth fuels conversations about drilling more wells or finding ways to bring water across mountains. However, we are finding that the water is not inexhaustible. The Ogalalla aquifer is not being replenished as quickly as water is being taken out. The Colorado and Rio Grande rivers are at all time lows. Given the precariousness of our water, is it appropriate to issue building permits when a developer can identify a five to ten year source of water or should a longer trajectory be taken?
Equality of opportunity:
1. The first option, telling the patient, does give the patient equality of opportunity. By knowing what the options are and the consequences of choices, the patient can make his own determination about the risk that he wants to take.
2. The second option, not telling the patient, does not give the patient equality of opportunity. By not knowing the risk of being reported (which for many people is a small risk), the person doesn’t have the choice of determining how he would prefer to proceed.

3. Third Question: Does this option arrange the social and economic inequalities so that they are attached to offices and positions which are open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity?

This question is also a process question: does everyone have notice of the opportunities and thus are able to make choices about whether or not to participate. With this criteria, Rawls wants to make sure that we move to equality of opportunity rather than focusing on equality of result.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title IV) is a poster-child for this principle in action. The law was passed as Congress was made painfully aware of the systemic barriers which kept African-Americans out of the mainstream of political and economic life. As companies determine whether or not they have met the requirements of the law, they have to ask whether they have made the job information available to all who might want to apply. Are the criteria for hire applied the same to all persons? Once people get jobs, do they have the same opportunities for advancement.

Again, the systemic barriers can be subtle. A woman who was a trade rep to an agricultural association went to the national meeting. She had taken golf lessons so that she could fully participate with the men, who were the vast majority of those at the conference. When she went to sign up for the tee time, she was told that women had never played golf with the men at this
meeting and would not be starting now. She was more than welcome to play
with the women, but the “wives” tournament was scheduled for the same
time as the business meeting at which she was presenting. As a young
executive, she was not prepared to face this level of systemic discrimination.
At one level it is only a game. However, all who are familiar with business in
America know that much gets accomplished on the links, if nothing more
than important relationships which facilitate business. If women are
systematically excluded from the social events, they will not be able to do	heir jobs as well.

Rawls does not expect a quota system nor does he require cranking numbers
to assure equality. While looking at the spread of people in particular jobs or
income brackets might be instructive as to how well the goal of equal access
of opportunity is met, we are asked to carefully look at the stated and
structural barriers to equality.

4. Fourth Question: Does this option arrange the social and economic
inequalities so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged.

Even when we attend to the systems and make them as fair as
possible, inequalities still exist. In these situations we are asked to reconsider
two previous steps. First, who are the least advantaged? What kinds of
policies do we need to put into place to assure that the inequalities are to the
greatest benefit of the least advantaged. As we think back to life behind the
veil of ignorance, we have to ask whether we would be willing to be that
person and take our chances at getting the good things in life.

At this point we reconsider differences between negative rights and positive
rights. The Rights and Responsibilities focus emphasized negative rights. The
community would provide certain goods as long as no transfer of wealth was
required. Any other goods that we purchase would be with our own nickel.
This system assumed that all of us would begin with about the same
resources, sort of like the proverbial Monopoly game where we all start with
a die and $200 in the bank. The notion was that those who were strongest,
smartest and the most ambitious would then rise to the top, like cream. Those who came to the top would do so on merit not by an accident of birth. The Darwinian notion of survival of the fittest meshed well with this ethical philosophy.

The difficulty is that we all know in our hearts of hearts that we are not the brightest and the best. First, we know that we are born into a family. The very way our body gets put together depends on whether our mother took good care of her body while she was carrying us. We have no control over whether we are born into a family where the mother was healthy, took all of her prenatal vitamins and had access to good health care or whether we are born into a family where the mother was an alcoholic, or had access to an OB/Gyn who could monitor the health of the fetus. In this situation the baby is clearly the least advantaged. If any of us were behind the veil of ignorance, we would want the best shot at being able to care for ourselves. Thus, many people support transferring community wealth to provide preventative health care for pregnant women and well-baby care for the newborns.

Next, we know that our ability to care for ourselves as adults is going to depend on both receiving good care when we are children and a solid education. Thus, the next place where we might consider transferring wealth is for pre-school and K-12 education for all people. Not only do each of us need the best education possible, but the community needs to assure that we have well trained people who will be productive to carry on when we are no longer able to work.

**Social Inequalities:**

1. The first option, telling the patient, does tip the balance to the least advantaged, the patient. The patient is between a rock and a hard place — getting treatment and possibly being placed on a “list.” By giving full information, the patient can make a choice that makes sense.

2. The second option, not telling the patient, does not tip the balance to the least advantaged, rather the physician keeps the power balance by making the choice for the patient.
Thus we see that the process of attending to the least advantaged both invites us to consider where we need to pool our resources as well as notice where life is most fragile. The decisions always have to be made in dialogue. We need to consider the tradeoffs as we assure that each of us has enough incentive to work and to care for ourselves at the same time that all persons have an opportunity to become self sufficient adults.

C. Apply the moral content

The final step is to determine which of the remaining options contributes best to an ecology of care, a value which notes that we are all deeply interconnected. As we look at an ecology of care, we note that this is perhaps the place where American’s are the weakest. We have been so careful to assure autonomy that we failed to notice that our very institutions become frayed if we don’t pay attention to them.

William Frederick (as noted in Chapter 3) took the lessons of biology and the emerging study of environmental ecology and applied them to our business organizations. He noted that while the notion of survival of the fittest is true on the margins of biological systems within the ecosystems themselves rich interdependencies allowed many different species to survive. Whether one looks at the tiny fish which clean the backs of dolphins or plants and insects which are mutually interdependent, we see that no species is radically independent and thus able to survive by itself. Surprisingly we notice that those ecosystems which lose their diversity are in fact more weak than those with teeming with a variety of life. If one species gains preeminence over the others, the entire system becomes weak.

A parallel is seen in business life. Our antitrust laws are designed on the notion that with a variety of products and choice our economy does better. However, each person really hopes to be the next Bill Gates and corner a particular market. As we have seen, however, with the viruses which attack the MicroSoft products, if all of us have the same operating system we are as vulnerable as a forest which only has one kind of tree. Thus, we need to
nurture diversity and cooperation within our communities. As we apply the moral lens, we decide which option (and if necessary with appropriate procedural modifications) best accomplishes the following ecologizing values.

(A) Linkage – those connections which give life, provide shelter, create safety nets, extend the realization of genetic potentialities, permit an efflorescence of life forms, nurture collectivities of organic beings, and regularize and pattern the interactions that life units have with and within their oftentimes threatening environments. Many times those connections which provide life are the institutions of our community.

Institutions such as families, churches, social organizations, professional groups or even book clubs provide a place where relationships can be nourished. If we are lucky the institutions in which we work provide us with a support structure where we can grow and mature, learning our craft and becoming more effective in our work. Our task then is to assure that we support and strengthen those institutions which nourish us.

(B) Diversity – those options which support variability and a diverse life web, a diverse context. Many of us like to clone ourselves at work. We want to have people around us who think like us, have the same values, and make us comfortable. What we know, however, is that if only one voice is heard other options are lost. As difficult as listening to other people may be, both the organization itself as well as the individuals within it do better when we have many different cultures and ideas represented.
We also want to do one thing well. What diversity teaches, however, is that multiple approaches to the same problem may in fact result in a better solution. Again, the tension is between “sticking to our knitting,” as management guru Tom Peters advised and looking at a variety of ways to accomplish our goals. Many universities are facing this situation as more students want their education delivered in multiple ways. On-line education, accelerated classes, and community based learning is starting to make the old model of a professor in front of a room obsolete. Each method of delivering education has strengths and concerns. None is by definition more legitimate than another.

(C) Homeostatic succession – a process of change that occurs within continuity. How well will the option allow for the ongoing evolution of the community. As we attend to diversity we also have to attend to change. The most healthy organizations are those which understand the life cycle of a business and a product. As one product is reaching maturity, another is being nurtured and brought on line. As one set of senior executives is reaching their peak, another set is being mentored so that leadership continues. Too rapid change disorients people and often has disastrous results. No change leads to stagnation. An excellent leader is one who has a vision of change and gradually changes the culture and puts the structures in place to achieve that change.

(D) Community – those options which are able to achieve the necessary degree of integration and cooperation to make life tolerable. We are social creatures. Whether we gather around water coolers or giggle in cubicles, each of us need to be wanted and included. One strategy used by slave owners to maintain control on the plantations was to forbid their slaves to communicate, fearing that through communication they would be able to strategize for freedom. The enslaved African-American’s learned to build community through their songs and often transferred essential information in their spirituals which did in fact contain strategies for emancipation.

The worst punishment in our jails is isolation from others. The worst
working conditions in our companies and factories are those which expect us to be automatons and not full human beings who are part of a community. As cheesy as the company functions may seem to those who are introverts, the t-shirts and parties provide opportunities for people to play together as well as work together. We get a sense of belonging to a community which then enriches our work life.

IV. Phase 4: Be Responsible

A. Rank the options from least preferred to most preferred.

Having determined the what liberties are essential and then evaluated the options against the criteria of (1) how does this assure that our children will have an inheritance; (2) how do we assure that the positions are available to all; (3) how do I assure that the least advantaged receive the benefit; (4) and how do we attend to the ecologizing values, rank the options from least preferred to the most preferred.

As the options are ranked, summarize why the ranking of options was made and demonstrate the primacy given to community: (a) because we can only thrive if we have processes in place which will assure a fair process; (b) and we need strong communities and institutions in order for individuals to thrive.

B. Correct for bias:

The risk that we run as we use this lens is that we will become authoritarian and paternalistic. While we must attend to the institutions, we
must avoid the notion that “father knows best.” Assuring full participation assists in this process.

I gave an assignment to a class to practice shared decision making. One student, a retired Army sergeant was absolutely convinced that the process would not work. He was the manager of a company that manufactured seat belts. They were getting new equipment and had to make a decision about how to rearrange the plant. To humor the instructor he created a committee and had them meet in his officer. It turned out the two of the senior women who were on the assembly line commuted together. They kept working at solving the problems and then talked to everyone else in the plant. Thus, when the committee was finished with its work (which did take longer than it would have had he made the decision), the decision was better than the one he fashioned and he already had buy-in from all of the employees. He was (reluctantly) converted.

Another bias to watch for is entrainment, where we all get so caught up in the excitement that we forget to ask the hard questions. While we all like “team players,” many a disaster has happened because people didn’t believe that they were able to speak up in the face of impending disaster.

C. Attend to the common good:

This lens invites us to look at individuals – but not in the same way

---

**Correct for bias:**

The physician will have to be careful not to coerce the patient into a treatment that is not desired. While the physician wants to assure that patients are treated, we all have the opportunity to reject treatment – and take the consequences. The physician needs to listen carefully and not turn to guilt or shame to force the patient to do something against the patients desires. I also have to look for any tinge of homophobia or bias against someone who happens to carry the AIDS virus.

---

**Announcement:**

The ethics committee has decided to assure that all patients get full informed consent, even if they are carrying communicable diseases such as the AIDS virus. Patients will be told of the reporting requirement so that no-one is surprised by the results. To assure that the patients are treated with dignity, physicians will be asked to assure that the process of informed consent happens in a setting where the concerns of patients can be addressed.
as the rights and responsibility lens. In this lens we are asked to consider those without power, those without a voice. As those of us with power are able to share our power to assure that all have an opportunity to participate in our community, we will find ourselves strengthened.

D. Choose an action:

Draft the short statement that will be placed on the company bulletin board. Articulate the statement so that you answer the core questions of this particular lens.

V. Step 5: Returning to Awareness

In a brief paragraph, discuss whether or not the ethical analysis made sense. Did you like the result? What were the problems with the process? What are the sticking points with the process? How did you see the process enhanced or modified by adding the world of emotion or caring?

A. Continuous Improvement

The process of continuous improvement involves evaluating the result of the action. This particular lens requires that you carefully balance between the prerogatives of individuals and the needs of the community. One trial attorney described the process over time of making sure that settlements for personal injury cases were appropriate. If the settlements were tracked, the pattern would look like a sine curve. If the insurance companies were too miserly with their offers, attorneys would take the cases to trial. If attorneys demanded too much, insurers would take the cases to trial. Those who were in the business constantly calibrated their antennae, noticing where in the curve the current offers were. In this way, the interests of those who were injured were always balanced against the need to place appropriate blame and the need to shoulder responsibility.

B. Crucible of Spirit
As we are called to balance, we need to make sure that we don’t over-identify with a group to the exclusion of an individual. As we realize that none of us, neither individuals nor communities, have a corner on the truth, we can make sure that we attend to the good of the whole without trampling on the needs of the few. If we truly serve others, we will put aside our own ambitions and needs for power to make sure that the least advantaged have a shot at the good things of life. In the process we will find joy in our work and meaning for our lives.

Continuing the Conversation

1. Using either the third problem in the simulation or another fact pattern, analyze the situation using the Community/Action lens. Was the problem easy to do, indicating that this might be your preferred method of working ethical problems? Was the process difficult indicating that this may not be your ethical home?

2. Read an op ed piece in your local paper or a national paper and find examples of deontological thinking. In what ways did the author appeal to the fairness of the reason for acting being a way that all people should be treated? In what way did the author appeal to treating people as they have agreed to be treated, the notions of contract?

3. In light of issues raised by this lens, reflect on ways that you attend to imbalance, whether concerning power or in your personal and professional life. How do you know when you are improperly using your personal power? How do you know when your life is not in balance? What strategies do you have to bring your life back into balance?

Notes:

1. Amos 5:24
7. Rawls, 143.
8. Rawls, 143, 148-149.
10. Bellah, 83
11. Rawls, 48ff
12. Rawls, 20
14. When the law was passed, “gender” was added as a floor amendment. Thus, the legislative history focuses on the discrimination against African-Americans. It turns out that women were anxious to be rid of their systemic barriers to success as well.
15. Frederick, 136-139.
16. Frederick, 139 - 142
17. Frederick, 142-145.