2. Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics

1. Determination of what is right or wrong behaviour is not an easy task. This task is complicated by the fact that the criteria of judging what is right or wrong is neither absolute nor universal, but variable depending on the person, place and time.

2. Two aspects of human nature
   1. Higher self: When you live for the benefit of the others; when you live according to your ideals; when you listen to your voice of conscience.
   2. Lower self: When you live for your pleasure, your happiness, etc.

3. Source of ethics
   1. Historically ethicality of human actions were decided based on religious standards. The religious texts and other religious institutions decided the rightness and wrong.
   2. In modern times the ultimate source or guide of ethics is the constitutions of the countries that set out the desirable goals and the values to be observed. Judiciary also decides what ethical human behaviour is. Supreme court judgement on stray dogs, Jallikattu are an example. Supreme court judgements on night shelters, rights of the under-trials etc., have also broadened the ambit of expected ethical behaviour.
   3. Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct of organisations decide the ethical behaviour of bureaucracy of in both public and private organisations.
   4. Cultures and traditions.
   5. Family and Friends.
   7. Rational thinking.
   8. Personal experience.

4. Good vs evil
   1. They are complementary. Ex: Black vs White.
   2. They are relative. No one is absolutely good or evil.
   3. They are subjective. Our concept of good and evil depends on
what we are. A poor sees the world differently than the rich. A powerful person’s concept of good and evil are different than that of a powerless one. An educated person perceives the world differently than an uneducated person.

4. **Circumstances.** People behave differently working in government and private sector.

5. Every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future -- Oscar Wilde.

5. **Determinants of ethics**

1. **Person:** Depends on mental make up of individual. It depends upon how the person has internalised personal attitudes and values regarding ethical behaviour.

2. **Place:** It refers to the external environment which includes family, school, etc. For example, as kids we were told by our parents and teachers to not to steal things. As we grow up we tend to carry such knowledge and apply it to real world. Similarly, work place teaches us ethics of teamwork, punctuality, responsibility, etc.

3. **Time:** Different individuals, societies and culture have different set of moral codes at different times. It was once considered ethical to own a slave. But today such a practise is unethical.

4. **Object:** It is unethical to lie despite any circumstances, purpose or intention. Telling a truth to intentionally harm a person is also unethical as the intention of telling a truth is not pure.

5. **Circumstances:** Stealing is unethical. But a poor person stealing to feed her children reduces unethically of the act. Such situation ethics bring subjectivity as it often makes morality subjective.

6. **End purpose:** To give donation to a poor person is good but if such donation is to lure poor person to do something for you, then it becomes immoral.

6. **Importance/consequences of ethics**

1. **Human need:** Being fair, honest and ethical is considered to be a need for many people.

2. **Credibility:** Any organisation or person driven by good values is respected by society. Thus credibility among people increases.

3. **Leadership:** An organisation driven by values is also revered by its employees.
4. **Improving decision making:** Decisions driven by values are sustainable, equitable, fair and just.

5. **Long term gains:** Ethical companies are profitable in the long run. Ex: Tata's.

6. **Safeguarding society:** Often ethics succeeds law in safeguarding the society. Ex: Technology is growing at a fast pace. By the time a law comes to regulate it, its dimensions easily change. So laws can’t probably safeguard its misuse only ethics can.

7. **Self-realisation:** Helps a person to critically evaluate his/her choices and decisions.

8. **Politics:** A successful political system requires trust and commitment from the citizens. This trust comes when only ethics are high. Thus ethics is very important for our democratic fabric.

7. **Evaluation of an action**

   1. **Free will:** If a person has multiple choices, and freedom to pick one within those choices, only then we can debate it on ethical ground. If someone has only one choice, we cannot term it as ethical or unethical.

   2. **Knowledge:** We cannot exercise free will in an ethical manner, unless and until we have knowledge of its consequence. Ex: Baby’s action of destroying something is not unethical, because she do not have knowledge of it.

   3. **Fear:** If someone tries to kill you and you kill him in self defence, you’re acting under fear for your life. So, it’s subject to legal scrutiny but not ethical scrutiny.

   4. **Pathological status:** Husband suffering from schizophrenia mistreats his wife. This is not subject to ethical scrutiny because he’s suffering from a mental disorder so he lacks the knowledge and free will. Same way the mistake of mentally unstable person falling in tiger enclosure in Delhi is beyond ethical scrutiny.

   5. **Habit:** Since childhood, Japanese are trained to apologise profusely even for slightest mistake or discomfort caused to another human. If an American working in Japan doesn’t behave in similar fashion, it can’t be termed as unethical. Because its not in American habits.

   6. **Value system:** A fallen Samurai would prefer to commit ritual suicide rather than suffering torture by his enemies. Because it is
part of his Bushido honour code. If a fallen American soldier doesn’t commit suicide, it can’t be evaluated on ethical grounds.

8. **Ethics in public administration**
   1. **Legal:** A public servant should not cut the corners for achieving efficiency. Observance of rules and procedures are paramount.
   2. **Just and fair:** No discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, etc.
   3. **Responsibility:** For his personal actions, actions of all his subordinates, etc
   4. **Accountability:** A public servant is accountable to common people, ministers, courts, media, etc.
   5. **Commitment:** He is not allowed to do any business, profession or social work.
   6. **Responsive:** On duty 24/7. He cant say no to the requirements of public anytime.
   7. **Transparent:** Explain reasons for taking a decision.
   8. **Integrity:** He must not follow corrupt practices nor allow his subordinates to do the same.
   9. **Moral conduct:** Must maintain highest level of moral conduct in his personal and professional life. They must follow all conduct rules prescribed by the government. He/She should not do anything to embarrass the government.
   10. **National interest:** Must not criticise government policies.

**Ethics in Private and Public relationships**

1. **Importance of relationship**
   1. **Effective relationships** are of great benefit to us. We can extend our knowledge, skills and productiveness by interacting with people on personal and professional level and we experience immense pleasure, ranging from commercial to psychological, from a variety of intimate friendships.
   2. Personal relations can have a considerable influence on the morality of human beings. Because, a person is not born with a ethical system, he develops an ethical system by his interactions with people. Thus ethics shown in private relations forms part of his morals.
3. People also prefer to deal with moral, principled people because they are productive and dependable. They represent a value, not a threat.

4. Sometimes, a public relation can become a personal relation. For example, a Govt servant can get closely connected with people in an area he is working. But it should be kept in mind that, never should a personal relation be mixed with public relation. This may lead to nepotism, partiality and corruption.

2. **Public and private relation**
   1. In private relations we look to get intimacy, loyalty, love and affection. In public relations we look to get respect, attention, power, authority and materialistic benefits.
   2. In private relations, you usually involve with people sharing similarity with you in value system. In public relation, you may have to deal with people having completely different temperament from you.
   3. In private relationship, your duties are voluntary, self imposed and informal. Ex: Standing by your friends or loved ones in the good and bad times, providing good facilities to your children, raising them in responsible manner etc. If you fail, still relationship may remain intact.
   4. In public relations, your duties externally imposed and formally mentioned in codes. For example, All India civil service conduct rules, prevention of corruption. Failure to oblige usually ends the relationship.

3. **Separation between private and public**
   1. So that private life doesn’t affect his public life and vice versa. Involvement of private life in public works may invite unethical practises such as favouritism and corruption.
   2. It may create dilemmas in executing unbiased decisions and maintaining integrity and impartiality.

4. **Why tight separation isn’t possible**
   1. Personal life often affects the work of the individual and affects her role in public spheres of life.
   2. Ethics in private relations helps in humanising public relations and plays an important role in forming the moral system of a person. If someone values honesty in his private life, he will most likely be honest in his public life too.
3. If a person becomes bankrupt because of his lavish private lifestyle, then he is automatically ineligible from various constitutional public posts in India. Because if such financially distressed person is holding a public office, he is more likely to accept bribes.

4. If a person is holding a higher post in public, certain things which is personal to her private life may become a matter for reasonable public interest.

5. Certain values like honesty, respect, empathy, trust, equality and efficiency etc which are considered to equally guide our actions in both professional and private sphere. Ex: If want interpersonal trust of friendship to be reflected in our relationship with government.

5. Thus, private life does have bearing on the public life of a person. We can’t look at them two as isolated compartments. Civil administrators are increasingly became public figures in age of media. Our world is moving toward integration of work and life due to availability of technical know how.

**Personal and professional ethics of civil servants**

1. Personal ethics refers to the code of conduct that an individual identifies to be morally and ethically right in everyday life. These are firmly instilled over one's life time and consist of individual morals and values, universal human values, religion and social norms.

2. Professional ethics for civil servants are a set of principles, norms and rules of behavior and moral requirements that they have to adhere to in the official discharge of their duty. They largely consist of code of conduct at workplace, law of the land, constitutional values like fairness, justice, honesty, accountability in the discharge of official duty.

3. Professional ethics may require a civil servant to promote issues not considered the best possible by the civil servant himself, causing a moral conflict. For example, A police officer may personally believe that a law that he is required to enforce is wrong. Ex: IPC 377. However, under the Code of Conduct, he is required to enforce that law.
4. Though, logically they may be distinguished but the distinction between professional and personal ethics is not very strict because both in public and private lives, one has to live by same ethical values in general. It is also very important that the relationship between personal and professional ethics of civil servant is not necessarily that of conflict. If there is wide gulf between the two, it may lead to frustration, guilt and cognitive dissonance.

5. Hence, a convergence between personal and professional ethics is essential not only to avoid cognitive dissonance and frustration but also for effective performance of duties.

How to be honest when the entire system is corrupt

1. Maintain personal integrity: You must first practise integrity before you preach it to others. Be honest by conviction and not by fear or by compulsion.
2. Know your job well: You must know the laws, rules and procedures better than your subordinates to guide them in right path.
3. Courage: Show courage to give your honest opinion to the bosses orally and verbally. Show courage to over rule your subordinates.
4. Divide and rule: Support the honest and sideline the dishonest. Appreciates publicly the good work done by any employee.
5. Inspire people by being the change you want to see.
6. Be compassionate to sub-ordiantes and support them during their tough times. Show emotional intelligence.
7. Follow the law. Don't cut corners for expediency. A single illegal act can haunt you forever and can harm your reputation. This also reduced your trustworthiness.
8. Be a leader. Don't develop the habit of passing the responsibility up or down.
9. Suffer for your principles. Honesty is not without pain. Be always ready for transfers. A clear conscious is the softest pillow.

Role of family, society and educational institutions

1. Role of society
   1. Man lives in society for his mental and intellectual development.
Society preserves our culture and transmits it to succeeding generations. Society brings morality and ethics in individuals.

2. Society can impose certain moral restrictions on individual behaviour and make sure people adhere to them. Individual discipline is brought by society only.

3. It brings tolerance and national integration. If you’re living in a building with people from variety of caste, religion and regional background, you develop tolerance.

4. Society removes the evils of social indifferences like caste through collective struggle.

5. The society imbibes conformity. A person is forced to mimic what his peers does. If they are smoking, he will smoke, if they’re living in nuclear families, he too will feel to separate from his joint family and so on.

2. **Role of family**

   1. **Family provides informal way of learning.** Love, compassion, self-sacrifice and values of sharing and caring develop implicitly within a child. For instance children are taught to share their lunch boxes with their friends and share their toys with siblings, spirit of charity and brotherhood are developed in them.

   2. The emotional attachment with family is very high. This also is a powerful tool in the hand of family to persuade one of the members to behave ethically. It can be used to give up bad habits like smoking, alcoholism etc.

   3. **Children observe and unconsciously imbibe values.** Looking at the mother who cooks and care for whole family values of compassion is imbibed. If female members are treated with respect in the family then respect for women is inculcated in the child.

   4. Freedom to pursue a career of their interest. It may be sports, arts, fashion, etc. They only they can enjoy their rest of the life.

   5. **Provide the necessary emotional support, caring and counselling to get him out of such negative thoughts.**

   6. **Encourage extra curricular activities to reduce pressure.** Take him to movies, talk joyful things at home. These all can re-energise a child.

3. **My family**
1. If parents informally talk bad things about a particular caste or religion, if they knowingly violate traffic rules, child will imbibe the same.

2. Parents taught me the value of money.

3. Mom taught me how to overcome stage fright.

4. Father ensured discipline through punishments and reward (Chocolates).

5. Mother taught me environment ethics by asking me to switch off lights, reduce food wastage, etc.

6. If child raised in an authoritarian manner, he will show less concern for democratic values.

7. If a boy raised in an environment where girl child is treated as a second citizen, he will treat his wife in similar fashion and find nothing wrong in it.

8. If parents are meticulous about cleanliness in both private and public spaces, child will follow the same.

4. Role of teachers and educational institutions

1. If child participates in sports, he develops value of sportsmanship, team spirit etc. If a college kid participate in college festival, he is learns leadership, event management, etc.

2. Aristotle was the private tutor of Alexander the great. He taught moral doctrines to Alexander. When Alexander concurred empires, he never forced his culture upon people unlike the other kings.

3. Gokhale was a political guru of Gandhi and in many ways he shaped the ideology and outlook of Gandhi towards India and life.

4. If teacher is promoting his private coaching class during official class in the school, he is indirectly imparting materialistic values in students that education is a commodity that can be sold.

5. A child who was unduly punished by the teacher will develop a wrong attitude. When same child goes to college, he would think it is right to rag juniors, when he becomes father, he would think physical punishment is right way to discipline children and if he becomes a cop, he would think custodial torture is justifiable to extract confession from criminal and so on.

5. Thus, both the family and the school shape up the moral and social
persona of an individual – the former initiates the process of socialization and the latter fine tunes it.

6. **Ideal teacher**
   1. **Student himself:** An ideal teacher always strives to learn and evolve his understanding of the subjects. Such a teacher is in a constant pursuit to be well versed in the subjects he teaches.
   2. **Dedication:** Teaching for the teaching’s sake is not going to help anyone. A teacher must be committed to improve learning standards in schools and he must set example for his students.
   3. **Open to questions:** Such a teacher appreciates the values of inquisitiveness in the student. He or she knows that curiosity should be appreciated and guided in right directions.
   4. **Set standards:** A good teacher is not one who just teaches well. He should also be someone who students can look up to in emulation. For example, by treating everyone equally he can set example of equality.
   5. **Optimistic:** Such a teacher always tries to make his students remain hopeful and full of zeal. A good teacher should inspire hope, ignite the minds and instil a love for learning.
   6. **Creative:** A teacher must try to make his students never lose interest in the subject. Such a teacher always connects the subjects with real life practical examples. For him a subject is much beyond the four walls of classroom.

7. **My teacher**
   1. **Weekly sessions** and 10 min time to each students to present one new topic not taught in class. This helps us to learn and teacher to improve.
   2. **Dedication.** He used to come to class 5:45 AM, even though he was 55 yrs old.
   3. Never dictated anything and encouraged discussions. He made himself available for doubts clearing in uneven times too.
   4. Treated everyone equally irrespective of our academic performance, a very quality in school level teachers. Taught me importance of equality irrespective of differences.
   5. **Inspirational talks** occasionally by citing his experiences and hardships and how he overcame it.
   6. Did personal talking to improve.
8. **Role of education**

1. **Science increases rational thinking** and questioning old age beliefs which in turn makes a person ask questions against orthodoxy and bad practices in religion and social life.
2. **Literature** helps us understand human nature and prevalent **social values** of a given era.
3. An **account of life history** of great leaders like Gandhi’s train journey to Pretoria shows how he stood against injustice.
4. **Content of a textbook** plays important role in imparting value system. For example, if a textbook has passage which **show women as only homemakers**, it imbibes age old gender roles in the minds of children.
5. Education also teaches important **values** through stories and real life examples. For example, **lesson on Hellen Keller** teaches importance of grit and **determination** despite hardships. Similarly, **lesson on 3 fishes** shows importance of **vision**. Similarly a lesson on M Vishweshwaraya’s shows importance of not misusing public resources.

9. **How to impart social values among children**

1. **Taking them to old age homes** will imbibe values of compassion and altruism in them.
2. **Taking them to museums**, cultural centres will imbibe values of **tolerance and secularism**.
3. **Tree plantation**, street cleaning will imbibe **environmental values**.
4. **Yoga** will help in internalising child’s mind. Once his mind is focusing inward, they will have **more clarity of thought**.

**Trusteeship principle of Gandhi**

1. **Mahatma Gandhi**, unlike Marx, viewed that **property** should not be snatched away from the rich or capitalist people, rather they should consider themselves as **trustees of the property**. This would bring a lasting benefit to the society and State at large.
2. He envisaged that food, cloth and shelter are the **basic needs of the human beings**. So, the **excess wealth** or property of the rich can add **welfare** to the society in which they are present.
3. **It has the following features**
1. **A hammer for capitalism**: Trusteeship is aimed at reforming the capitalist society. It advocated that rich people should change themselves and should come forward to use their property for the betterment of society.

2. **State regulation**: The State should come forward to regulate the system. In that case there would be no discrimination. It will be done in the most peaceful way so that violence will not occur.

3. **Self satisfaction**: Under trusteeship, any rich man cannot use his extra wealth for his satisfaction. He also cannot use the wealth for promoting anti-social activities. The state should guide the rich how to utilise the wealth for the benefit of the State.

4. **No private ownership**: The wealth should not be won by any private fellow. It can only be done by the consent of the people in the society at large. Further, social welfare must form a part of this programme which the State or the people in the society will direct.

5. **Fixed maximum income**: Under this system, a maximum income will be fixed by the State. A fair wage should be fixed for the working class people. The State should see that there exists a reasonable balance between the maximum income and minimum living wage.

6. **Social welfare**: The trusteeship system should aim at social welfare. Under no circumstance, the welfare of the society will be hampered. The rich people should come voluntarily to join their hands with the common people and decide measures for the welfare of the society by the appropriation of the extra wealth possessed by the rich people.

4. However, Gandhian concept of trusteeship was quite difficult to apply in a democratic setup like India. It had reduced a man to a slave who should be pawn in the hands of the State for fulfilling the latter’s desire. The positive side of this was that, it tried to abridge the gap between the rich and the poor.

**Seven Sins of Gandhi**

1. Wealth without Work
2. Pleasure without Conscience
3. Science without Humanity  
4. Knowledge without Character  
5. Politics without Principle  
6. Commerce without Morality  
7. Worship without Sacrifice  

Gandhi's Talisman

1. **Gandhiji’s talisman**—“whenever in doubt, think if the decision would empower or marginalize the poorest?” provides an ethical test to judge everyday actions. It champions the cause of ‘Sarvodaya through Antyodaya’ implying the welfare of all through the weakest of the society which lies at the core of Indian Constitution.

Moral thinkers

1. **Buddha**
   1. **Social equality:** He renounced four fold division of Indian society and propounded equality of caste.  
   2. **Gender equality:** He preached for equality of women and reducing discrimination against women.  
   3. **Simplicity in teachings:** He taught in simple language which can be understood by all.  
   4. **Compassion:** Buddha also emphasised on cultivating loving kindness (metta) and compassion (karuna).  
   5. **Pragmatism:** Buddha also emphasised on controlling desires, as they are the sole reason for unhappiness and sorrow. Buddha emphasises on middle path.

2. **Moral rationalism of Kant**
   1. According to Emmanuel Kant an act is good based on motive of the actor and the only motive that makes an act good is respect for duty or law.  
   2. Acts are good if they can be universalised. That is, we should act in the way everybody else in the same circumstances would act. He argues that the essential element in determining morality is human reason.  
   3. If its okay for you to lie, then it’s okay for everybody to lie. But if
everyone lies, then no one will ever believe anything anyone says. And, thus, lies would become completely ineffectual. Therefore, lying is a rationally inconsistent activity. It leads to its own conceptual destruction.

4. **Categorical Imperative** can be understood as whenever we want to know what to do it must be possible to understand it as a command such as ‘Never steal’ or ‘Always respect others’. However criticism of Kant’s theories include the fact that if categorical imperative does exist, it would not explain the morality of actions taken when no law exists to command such actions.

**Role model**

1. The public administrators often face **ethical dilemmas** due to diverse nature of job and great responsibilities. Ex: Mysore state Diwan Sir M. Visvesvaraya has been my role model. Sir Visvesvaraya has been an epitome of ethical conduct.

2. **Reasons**
   
   1. **Spirit of service:** In his own words, your work may be only to sweep a railway crossing, but it is your duty to keep it so clean that no other crossing in the world is as clean as yours. He was a dedicated engineer and public servant, who took his work passionately. He was a dedicated, punctual public servant.
   
   2. **Honesty:** Sir Visvesvaraya used to have two set of candles. One for office work and one for personal use. He never used office privilege for the personal gain. His high integrity, no misuse of public office etc are few of many qualities which made him my role model.
   
   3. **Simplicity:** He never showed off his status. He used to simply dress, and believed in high moral standards.
   
   4. **Others:** Humility, service to humanity.

3. **Shivaji**

   1. **Tackling problem:** Shivaji was prepared during meeting with Afzalkhan who invited him for meeting and tried to kill him, but he himself got killed. Some people may try to put your image down, attack on you, cheat you etc. But, one has to be well prepared and alert always.
2. **Check on officials:** He introduced a new revenue collection system and kept check on his officials that subjects are not harassed. This quality will ensure good governance to fight corruption, scams etc.

3. **Respect:** He showed respect for all religions and specially for women. This quality will keep a check on human rights violation.

4. **Influence on masses:** Shivaji himself was so devoted to motherland that people too were ready to die for motherland. Devotion by civil servant can influence people and help in various schemes like Swacch Bharat, Beti bachao beti padhao etc where people’s participation is important.

4. **Role models inspire individual actions.**

**Upholding values**

1. **Upholding and being true** to one’s value system was never easy. It needs a man of strong character to uphold one’s values whatever situation may come.

2. **Conflict within value system:** Honesty vs materialism. If someone values money more than anything, he won’t hesitate in compromising his value of honesty.

3. **Borrowed values:** Lack of conviction in values can lead to break down of values. If someone does not believe in non violence but still try to practice it, he may violate it at some point.


**Meaningful life**

1. **Constituents**
   1. One should pursue one’s passion.
   2. Living life according to own principles without straying.
   3. Value people more than materialistic things.
   4. Find a way to give back to the society and be compassionate.
   5. Leave behind a legacy worth recounting.

2. **Narayana Murthy**
   1. Started his own company and laid foundations of IT in India. Never
gave up his dream even during times of extreme difficulties.
2. He led a simple life. Never changed his habits even after becoming wealthy and influential. Ex: He cleans his own toilet, etc.
3. Sent their children in Auto rickshaw even though they can afford a car, just to improve their children’s human connections.
4. Compassionate capitalist.
5. He inspired a generation of entrepreneurs. His suggestions and methods are highly valued today.

Ethical guiding principles
1. India’s ethical guiding principles
   1. Members of the society have equal access to power. All members enjoy universally recognised freedoms and liberties.
   2. Regular elections that are free and fair both in terms of procedure and in substance.
   4. Non-interference in other nation’s internal matters. India does not interfere in the internal or external affairs of any other State.
   5. Providing positive discrimination to the vulnerable section of society.
   6. India cooperate with other nations, irrespective of the differences in their political, economic and social systems, in the various spheres in order to maintain peace and security and to promote welfare of general people.
2. As the violence and instability is increasing in the world, thus for maintaining peace in society development of ethical standards at societal level is must. India’s ethical principles are in tune to the present need of the society as it takes care of maintenance of internal as well as external peace in the society.

National duty vs Ethical universalism
1. Preserving the national interest is the highest duty of a citizen. One may get confronted with situational ethics where national interest and ethical universalism may conflict with each other. When we take few examples from history, the greatest patriot of country Subhas Bose escaped his house arrest and went to Nazi Germany to ask for help and also approached Japan another Fascist regime.
2. Similarly killing a human being is wrong in every society. But if my country is at war then I as a soldier at border will have to take up the task of killing soldiers of other side. My loyalty and duty towards my country and
fellow citizens will take precedence over respect for human life.
3. But sometimes a country may indulge in espionage of other countries in the name of national interest. There an individual must use reason, objectivity, official code of conduct, guidelines, suggestions of seniors and one’s own inner conscience. Eg: Edward Snowden went for revelation against his own Government but still his act is regarded as moral.
4. Hence I will give primacy to national interest but national interest must be distinct from narrow political interest of the Government of the day.