



Facing a tough choice right now?

For times when we are tempted to do the wrong thing, the Institute has developed a series of simple tests to serve as guideposts through those tricky right-versus-wrong situations. If you are facing a situation in which there is both right and wrong, before taking action we encourage you to quietly examine your thinking in the light of these five practical, profound, yet simple, tests:

1. **The Legal Test.** Is your choice against the law? We know that it is wrong to pass a stopped school bus, to steal, or to cut trees on your neighbor's property. It is also wrong to bribe public officials, to pass bad checks, or to beat your spouse or partner. Although you may break the law either by mistake or on purpose, in our society we say it is wrong to break the law.
2. **The Stench Test.** Does this choice feel wrong deep within your gut? Often our intuition can determine right from wrong even before our brains have thought it through. A physical reaction, such as gut feelings, often indicates a need for more thought before taking any action.
3. **The Front Page Test.** How would you feel if your decision were headlined on the front page of the local newspaper? In imagining this, you are holding up your decision to be seen by everyone you know. How would your community react if it read about your actions?
4. **The Mom Test.** Think of a person you respect, someone whose values and behavior you admire. If this person had to make the same decision you have to make, what would he or she do? Sometime imagining how someone else would decide can help clarify your choices.
5. **The Regulations Test.** Is this choice consistent with the standards of conduct followed in your profession? If you were to make this choice in the presence of your colleagues, how would they react?

These five tests form part of our Ethical Fitness[®] training, and are copyrighted by the Institute for Global Ethics

If none of these five tests is particularly helpful, you are probably facing a situation that's more akin to right-versus-right. The Institute has almost 20 years experience in right-versus-right ethical dilemmas. If you would like further information about right-versus-right, explore the services we offer.