

How can the solution be honest when the conversation is not?

Guideline for learning (From: *The Measure of Our Success: A letter to My Children and Yours*, Marian Wright Edelman-Twenty-Five Lessons For Life)

- *Don't feel entitled to anything you don't sweat and struggle for.
- * Never give up. You can make it no matter what comes. Nothing worth having is ever achieved without a struggle.
- *Always remember that you are never alone. You are loved unconditionally.

Guideline for Critical Thinking

- * Know and understand the assumption of the question
- * Know and understand your assumptions towards the question
- * Question all assumptions

Guidelines for achieving sound ethical judgment (*From: Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues*, Vincent Ryan Ruggier)

1. ***Be aware of your first impressions.*** Note them carefully. Knowing the way your thinking inclines is the first step toward balancing it (if it needs balancing).
2. ***Check to be sure you have all the relevant facts.*** If you do not have them, get them. An encyclopedia is usually a good place to start. Almanacs also provide a wealth of information. For books and articles on the issue in question, check your library's online catalog. Also, ask your librarian what indexes, abstracts, and computer databases would be appropriate to consult. (A section on using the Internet follows these guidelines.) Occasionally, you may be unsure whether a particular statement is a fact or an opinion. In such cases, ask whether the statement is generally accepted by knowledgeable people. If it is, consider it a fact; if knowledgeable people disagree about it, consider it an opinion. By checking several sources, you can get a good idea of whether agreement exists.
3. ***Consider the various opinions on the issue and the arguments that have been (or could be) used to support them.*** The position that directly opposes your first impression is often the most helpful one to consider. If your impression is wrong, this step will help you find out. If it is not, then you can return to it with confidence and present it more effectively for having considered alternatives to it. Do not make the mistake, common today, of ignoring what religious thinkers have to say about moral issues. As long as they are presenting the reasoning of their ethical tradition (as opposed to simply stating their theological doctrines), their contributions to moral discussion are entirely relevant and should be welcomed. If you refuse to consider those contributions, you will be denying yourself the insights that historically enriched the subject of ethics and helped form the foundation of our system of laws.
4. ***Keep your thinking flexible.*** Do not feel obligated to your early ideas. The process of ethical thinking entails entertaining many ideas, some of which you will accept, some of which you will discard as inferior. No judgment is your official judgment until you endorse it publicly in speaking or writing, and even then you may choose to revise it. So change your mind as often as you like as you analyze an issue. The more fully and un-prejudicially you explore the issue, the better your judgment is likely to be.
5. ***Express your judgment precisely and explain the reasoning that underlies it.*** It is all too easy to say something you don't quite mean, especially when the issue is both complex and controversial. The best way to avoid this problem is to experiment with several different ways of expressing your judgment instead of accepting the first version

you produce. If your judgment is not a simple "yes" or "no" but a form of "it depends," be sure to specify what it depends on and exactly how your judgment would vary in different circumstances. Finally, no statement of your judgment is sufficient by itself. Be sure to explain, in as much detail as necessary for understanding, what line of reasoning led you to that conclusion rather than to some other one.